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ASSAILANTS HIT CAIRO NIGHTCLUB, KILLING 16

KUWAITIS IN EGYPT SAFE: AMBASSADOR



150 Fils



Min 07°

Max 15°



CAIRO: An Egyptian forensic member checks the gate of the nightclub which was attacked in Cairo yesterday. — AP

56 KILLED ACROSS SYRIA

BEIRUT: Heavy government bombardment of rebel-held towns across Syria yesterday killed at least 56 civilians, more than a quarter of them children, a monitoring group said. The bloodiest attacks were in Eastern Ghouta, a rebel stronghold east of Damascus, where at least 41 civilians were killed, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. "Regime warplanes targeted the towns of Jisreen and Kfar Batna in the Eastern Ghouta region", leaving 35 killed, the Britain-based Observatory added. Six children were among the dead there and dozens of people were wounded. But the opposition National Coalition, the leading anti-regime group in exile, blamed the Jisreen strikes on Russia. "Russian warplanes targeted a public market... leaving 11 killed and 50 wounded" in Jisreen, the Coalition tweeted.

Another six civilians, including two children, were killed in regime rocket fire on the flashpoint Eastern Ghouta town of Douma, the Observatory said. Government forces regularly bombard Eastern Ghouta, a populated suburb of Damascus largely controlled by the powerful Jaish Al-Islam rebel group. In a video posted by an online activist group in Jisreen, a distressed man in a debris-strewn street screamed: "Syrian flesh for sale!" And footage posted by the local SMART news agency depicted men carrying bloodied victims out of destroyed buildings on stretchers as sirens wailed.

Eleven people, four of them children, were killed in government air strikes on the opposition-held town of Talbisseh in central Syria, according to the Observatory said. In the southern province of Daraa, four children were killed when the regime bombarded the town of Hara. And four civilians died in shelling of Sanamayn, 30 kilometers east of Hara. Observatory director Rami Abdel Rahman could not specify if the Sanamayn attack was by regime or rebel forces. Also yesterday, at least 14 Islamic State group jihadists were killed in an air raid in the northeastern province of Hasakeh, the Observatory said.

The monitor said it was likely the US-led coalition had conducted the strikes, which targeted a school that the group had taken over as a base. The Observatory relies on a network of activists, medical staff and fighters on the ground who identify warplanes based on model, flight patterns and munition types. Syria's conflict has taken the lives of more than 250,000 people, and another four million have been forced to flee since it erupted in March 2011. Beginning as an uprising against President Bashar Al-Assad, the conflict has evolved into a multi-front war increasingly dominated by jihadist fighters. IS has seized swathes of territory across northern, central, and eastern Syria, but rebels, Kurdish militia and the US-led coalition as well as Russian warplanes have sought to fight them back. — AFP

CAIRO: Assailants attacked a Cairo nightclub yesterday with petrol bombs, killing at least 16 people in the ensuing blaze, following an apparent dispute with the staff, the Interior Ministry said. Police were hunting for the perpetrators of the pre-dawn attack on the El-Sayad club and restaurant. "Sixteen people were killed and three wounded in the fire that broke out in a nightclub in the Agouza district after Molotov cocktails were thrown at the establishment," an Interior Ministry statement said. "The preliminary investigation conducted by the security services found that there was a dispute between employees and other people who then launched fire bombs at the nightclub in revenge," it said.

A security source said the attack followed an argument between employees and a group of youths who frequented the establishment. A thick cloud of smoke was seen billowing from the club after the attack. Firefighters extinguished the blaze before it could spread to neighboring buildings. Forensic investigators later inspected the charred entrance, taking photographs and collecting evidence in plastic bags. Police imposed a security cordon outside as a crowd of onlookers gathered.

The disaster is likely to renew concerns about safety standards in the country, where dozens have died in blazes in recent years. In July, 26 people were killed when a fire tore through a three-storey furniture factory north of Cairo. The nightclub had only one exit, which may have prevented some of the patrons from escaping. A manager at the club said that the wooden ceiling had caught fire and collapsed. While there was no indication of any jihadist link, the arson comes with Egyptian security forces on heightened alert following a series of attacks including in Cairo.

Islamist militants have killed scores of policemen and soldiers, mostly in the Sinai Peninsula, since the army overthrew Islamist president Mohamed Morsi in 2013. Attacks have also targeted policemen and government buildings in the capital, several of them claimed by an Islamic State group affiliate. They often claim that their attacks are in retaliation for the deaths of hundreds of pro-Islamists in a police crackdown, and the detention of thousands. The jihadists have also claimed responsibility for bombing a Russian passenger plane after it left the south Sinai resort of Sharm El-Sheikh on October 31, killing all 224 people on board. They claimed they had smuggled a small bomb on board the plane, in revenge for Russian air strikes in Syria.

In another development, Kuwait Ambassador to Egypt, Salem Ghesab Al-Zamanan, said yesterday that no Kuwaitis were hurt as a result of the bombing that happened in Al-Giza. The ambassador reminded the citizens that the diplomatic mission is reachable round the clock via telephone for any help they may need. — Agencies

Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: Photo shows one of the antique buildings in Kuwait. Antique buildings constitute historic record of Kuwaiti architecture. — KUNA

KUWAIT SIGNS THE AIIB ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT

KUWAIT: Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) signed an Articles of Agreement of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). KIA said in a press statement yesterday that KIA managing director Bader Mohammad Al-Saad signed the agreement on behalf of the Kuwaiti government at the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing. The signing ceremony was attended by Kuwaiti Ambassador to China Mohammad Saleh Al-Thwaikh, representative of KIA office in Beijing Abdulrazaq Al-Baijan.

The ceremony was attended by Deputy Director General of the legal treaties Department of the Chinese Foreign Ministry An Sun and representatives from finance ministry and AIIB. Kuwait, represented by KIA, is one of the early founders of AIIB and it has contributed in all stages of its establishment. AIIB capital amounts to \$100 billion with shareholders of 57 countries; quotas of each country are distributed according to the size of its GDP. The agreement will be presented to Kuwait National Assembly for ratification in accordance with the constitution.

Boosting Kuwait, HK trade

In another development, Kuwait's Consul General in Hong Kong and Macau Khaled Al-Mutairi and Deputy Executive Director of the Hong Kong Commerce and Economic Development Bureau Raymond Yip yesterday discussed means of boosting trade ties between Kuwait and Hong Kong. Al-Mutairi said yesterday, that Hong Kong has huge expertise in banking and commerce services. He added that Yip, during the meeting, encouraged Kuwaiti companies to benefit from great investment opportunities in Hong Kong.

Yip said that free trade agreement that was signed between Hong Kong and China allows foreign companies in Hong Kong to invest in China as well. Al-Mutairi added that Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority was established to allow companies in Hong Kong to practice any trade activities directly in Kuwait without the need to have a local partner. Al-Mutairi handed over a booklet on Kuwaiti investment laws, noting that the Gulf country is striving to attract many foreign investments. — Agencies

SHEIKHA HESSA SAAD AL-ABDULLAH GRABS 'BUSINESS WOMAN OF THE YEAR' AWARD

LONDON: Chair of the Arab Businesswomen Council (ABC) Sheikhha Hessa Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah was yesterday awarded "Business Woman of the Year" - a category of the Arab Women of the Year Awards 2015. The annual event, held in the London in cooperation with the Arab British Chamber of Commerce (ABCC) was attended by Kuwaiti ambassador to the UK and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, Khaled Al Duwaisan, a representative of the London mayor and a huge number of Arab businesswomen and envoys.

The Achievement in Culture and Education 2015 award was offered to Chair of Bahrain Authority for Culture and Antiquities (BACA) Sheikhha Mai Al Khalifa. Achievement in Literacy prize was awarded to Algerian writer Ahlam Mosteghanemi. Lebanese Majida El-Roumi was awarded the Achievement in Music. The Young TV Presenter and the Achievement in Cinema awards 2015 were respectively given to Egyptian actress Yousra and Jordanian Ola Al-Faris. Talking to KUNA after the honoring ceremony, Sheikhha Hessa Al-Sabah voiced great pleasure - dedicating the prize to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and all the Kuwaiti people.

She said that Arab women have

made giant steps in the field of business. She stressed the significant role of women in economic development, through business, politics and social life. The progress of a society is closely related to women's ability to take part in economic and social development, she said. Meanwhile, the ABC Chair Sheikhha Hessa Al-Sabah and ABCC Chief Executive Afnan Al-Shuaibi separately discussed means of enhancing trade between the Arab countries and the UK. Sheikhha Hessa Al-Sabah said that they also agreed to organize a conference on empowering Arab women, London, late in 2016. — KUNA



LONDON: Sheikhha Hessa Saad Al-Abdullah receiving the Arab 'Business Woman of the Year' award. — KUNA

KUWAIT ACCLAIMS UNESCO'S ROLE IN PROMOTING TOLERANCE, PEACE

NEW YORK: Kuwait has applauded the pivotal role played by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in promoting the universal values of peace and tolerance among different people across the world. In a speech delivered at a UN General Assembly debate on the maintenance of peace worldwide on Thursday, the Third Secretary of Kuwait's delegation to the United Nations Fahad Mohammad Ismail Haji warned that the culture of peace is growingly threatened by the sprawling violence and conflicts among states and

organizations and individuals.

These conflicts are nurtured by the spreading extremism, terrorism, religious and sectarian tension, he said. Haji attributed the growing number of conflicts to the lack of respect for different viewpoints, spreading exclusion and the fading of co-existence values.

He underlined that the international community has to exert more efforts and boost cooperation to put an end to the culture of hatred and extremism and to replace it with the culture of tolerance, dialogue and co-existence. — KUNA



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KUWAIT: The National Guard celebrated the graduation of First Aid Course for Ministry of Electricity and Water and Public Authority for Civil Information employees at the National Guard officers club. Support Commander Brig Staff Tallaa Abdelrazaq distributed graduation certificates to participants.

NEW BRITISH ELECTRONIC VISA SYSTEM AVAILABLE FROM APRIL

KUWAIT: Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Waleed Al-Khabeizi has announced plans to introduce a new electronic visa waiver (EVW) system for Kuwaiti visitors to the United Kingdom. In a statement to KUNA after inspecting the EVW system introduced by Head of Political Section at the British embassy in Kuwait Michael Holland, Al-Khabeizi said that "the smoother and more efficient system" will be in effect starting next April.

Al-Khabeizi lauded the new EVW system, which will be up and running after a brief trial and error period. All Kuwaiti passport holders will be eligible to use the EVW system, "which will be available in the Arabic and English languages." Moreover, the Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs revealed that the

new EVW system permits Kuwaiti citizens to stay in the UK for a maximum period of six months. Kuwaiti passport holders wishing to travel to the UK are required to fill out an online form no later than 48 hours before the date of departure, Al-Khabeizi announced.

The new system would spare travelers the need to apply in person at the British embassy or administer their biometric information. The new hassle-free system, to be completed online, requires the payment of a 15 Euros (6.8 KD) fee, a far cry from previous visa fees that cost hundreds of Dinars. The procedure is expected to take no longer than 15 minutes. Al-Khabeizi also noted that the new EVW system asks for brief passport and trip details, giving Kuwaiti travelers easier access to a U.K. visa.

The new EVW system has thus far been used by a group of 50 Kuwaiti citizens as part of a trial and error period to last until March. The travelers were very satisfied with the system's "simplicity and convenience", Al-Khabeizi said. The new EVW system encompasses all forms of travel including educational, business, medical and leisure, the Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs noted. All users will also have their own username and password details, which would facilitate processes such as visa renewal and modification of arrival and departure dates. Al-Khabeizi thanked the British Government for introducing the new EVW system for Kuwaiti nationals, calling it a step towards further cementing long-standing bilateral ties. —KUNA

BILL GATES TO RECEIVE 'INFORMATICS MEDAL'

KUWAIT: The 15th Session of the Sheikh Salem Al-Ali AlSabah Informatics Award will offer Microsoft founder Bill Gates its "Informatics Medal" as the major player in the field over the past four decades, and one who stood behind innovations that led to the global information revolution. His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah will decorate Gates with the Informatics Medal at Bayan Palace on Monday, the Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award added in a statement.

The Award's Board of Trustees selected Gates for his achievements that contributed to promoting global knowledge performance, after he manifested great skills and interest in computer programming when he was only 13. In 1975, at the age of 20, Gates and his friend Paul Allen founded Microsoft, that came to be the world's largest software business over a short period, the statement added.

It noted that Informatics Medal is the highest prize offered by the Sheikh Salem Al Ali AlSabah Informatics Award to a public figure or a juridical person that has played a prominent role in human development. According to the statement, Gates was offered major world's awards and titles in addition to honorary doctorates from leading universities.—KUNA

GATES FOUNDATION - QUEST TO IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES

KUWAIT: Bill Gates, the techno-titan turned philanthropist, has shown the same strong passion in every quest he pursues, technology and philanthropy. Co-founding Microsoft that dominated the software industry for many years, Gates surely contributed massively to the advancement of computer technology, driven by his thirst to seek new challenges that eventually revolutionize the way people use computers.

However, Gates' philanthropic endeavors were not new to him. His mother, Mary, whom he had close relations with, devoted her time working on civic affairs and with charities. Gates and his wife Melinda established the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in 2000, an organization aims

at improving quality of life of people in developing countries, in addition to focusing on supporting initiatives to improve global health and education.

The couple, co-chairing the foundation, kicked things off in their organization by donating \$28 billion. The foundation struck partnerships with leading organizations around the globe to help people lead healthy and productive lives. It focuses on improving people's health and giving them the opportunity to lift themselves out of hunger and poverty. The foundation also seeks to ensure that all people in the US who have minimal resources have access to means they need to succeed in school and life.

Foundation's total asset

The foundation's total asset trust endowment as of September 2014 amounted to \$42.3 billion, while total grant payments since inception until September last year were \$31.6 billion. The Seattle-based foundation believes that collective efforts are needed to address numerous challenges facing the world in general and the most vulnerable people in particular. It does its work in collaboration with its partners by pushing for new solutions for problems around the globe, along with harnessing transformative power of science and technology. The foundation believes that collective efforts also depend on support of government, private sector, communities and individuals.

The foundation works on several domains. First is global health which aims at providing vaccines, drugs and diagnosis for the needy people, in addition to discovering affordable and reliable medical solutions. It invests massively in vaccines to prevent infectious diseases like HIV, polio, malaria, pneumonia and tuberculosis. The foundation also supports the development of integrated health solution for family planning, nutrition, maternal and child health. The foundation is also active in global development, taking into consideration that around 2.5 billion people worldwide live on less than USD two per day.

Through its global development, the foundation contributes to addressing several challenges facing agriculture, emergency response, family planning, financial services for the poor, maternal, newborn and child health, nutrition, polio, vaccine delivery, in addition to water, sanitation and hygiene. The foundation is also active in global policy, as it builds strategic alliances with governments, public and private sectors to contribute to fostering greater public awareness of urgent global issues, for example tobacco control and charitable sector support.

This global policy engagement also aims at strengthening philanthropic partnerships in the US and around the world. The foundation is also active domestically, with the prime focus on making sure students graduating from high school are prepared for college and have a chance to earn a degree that would meet labor market

demands. The US program supports development of innovative solutions in education that are unlikely to be generated by institutions alone. The program also addresses social inequity and poverty in Gates' home State, Washington.

The foundation is also in constant dialogue with the people benefitting from the programs along with its partners, in order to guarantee sustainability of development, thus achieving the goals. One of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's contributions is to support small business owners or help start new businesses to improve production thus income. Small businesses are important in the development of economy, for example the foundation announced a USD four million Agribusiness Systems International (ASI) project, which aimed at doubling incomes of small-scale fruits and vegetable farmers in India.

Support and outreach

The project's goal is to provide a unique blend of farmer support and tailored outreach to women to meet specific marketing demands in order to boost farmers' competitiveness. Another example will be the foundation's announcement of \$48 million grants, provided jointly with its partners, to help hundreds of thousands of small cocoa and cashew farmers in sub-Saharan Africa to increase their incomes so they can lift themselves out of hunger and poverty, therefore building better lives for themselves and their families.—KUNA



KUWAIT COMMITTED TO ERADICATING TRAFFICKING

GOVERNMENT BODIES SHOULD COMBAT CHILD ABUSE: SHEIKHA FARIHA

BEIRUT: Kuwait is at the forefront of humanitarian work and has passed legislations criminalizing human trafficking, said Director for Expatriate Labor Housing in Kuwait Falah Al-Mutairi. He specified that the new Kuwaiti labor law for 2013 deals with human trafficking in addition to the 2015 domestic workers law. For victims of human trafficking in Kuwait, there is an expatriate labor housing center, headed by Al-Mutairi, which takes care of these victims until their status is improved by providing them with sustainable jobs.

In similar remarks to KUNA, executive director of the Kuwait institute for human rights, Adel Al-Qallaf, said the meeting shed light on the necessity for civil society organizations and governments to address together the problem of human trafficking. He reiterated Kuwait's commitment to root out this international scourge. Beirut is hosting this regional meeting in conjunction with The International Organization for Migration (IOM) with participants from governments and civil society organizations in the countries of the Middle East and North Africa.

In another development, President of the Kuwait Association for the Ideal Family Sheikha Fariha Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah has stressed the importance of having the legislative and executive authorities as well as other concerned bodies to collaborate to stop any form of violence against children. Sheikha Fariha told the press yesterday, that domestic abuse against children, verbally and physically, would threaten the fabric of the society; hence, it should be stopped. She demanded to apply strictest punishments against those who inflict such abuse on children.

Child issues should be dealt with through providing social and physiological consultations, she pointed out. One of the strictest measures that should be applied is taking the child's custody away from their abusive par-

ents; this measure should be done by the government. Nonetheless, parents should still pay child support for their kids; if they couldn't the government would establish institutes that would take care of those kids. She reit-

erated the importance of having concerned government bodies such as health, social, security and educational institutes to work together to put an end to violence against children. — Agencies

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KUWAIT: Iqama Affairs Detectives arrested 16 domestic helpers and four drivers for violating the Residency Law. Information received indicated that a Syrian placed an advert about 'hiring housemaids on hourly basis', so investigators raided the flats. All were arrested and sent to concerned authorities.— Photo By Hanan Al-Saadoun

GCC WELCOMES IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL - BUT CONCERNS REMAIN

BRUSSELS: A leading western expert on the Arab Gulf region said on Thursday that although the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) had not been included in the Iranian nuclear negotiations, yet the six-member regional group had been very supportive of the negotiations and has welcomed the nuclear deal. Dr Christian Koch, Director of the Geneva-based Gulf Research Centre, pointed out that the GCC foreign ministers in a statement on August 3 said once the nuclear deal is implemented, it will contribute to the region's security, including by preventing Iran from acquiring military nuclear capability.

"For the GCC war was never an option for resolving the Iranian nuclear

case," stressed the German analyst. He was speaking in a meeting organized by the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with the Arab Peninsula on the topic "Regional impact of the Iran nuclear deal". Iran and the P5+1 signed on July 14 in Vienna the joint comprehensive plan of action to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue. Koch, however, noted that there are some fundamental reservations in the Gulf region about the deal itself, which are related to the actual implementation that the GCC states believe will still prove to be difficult.

He referred to a strong conviction that it was the international sanctions that "compelled" Iran to go to the negotiating table and with the sanctions being slowly lifted; Iran will become as

"intransigent" as it was before. The example of this can be seen in the attitude of Iran towards the Syrian and Yemeni crises, he noted. There is also a belief in the Gulf region that Iran will continue to pursue its military nuclear capability and that Iran will use the time and the agreement to enhance its capability and its research activities, stated Koch.

What happens when the agreement ends in 10 years?, he asked, adding that there are also concerns of what will happen in 10 years when the new Iranian leadership comes to power. Among the consequences of the Iranian nuclear will be proliferation of nuclear reactors in the region for peaceful purposes, he added. — KUNA

AL AHLI BANK PRESENTS 'LONG SERVICE RECOGNITION AWARDS' TO ITS STAFF

KUWAIT: 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. For more information on Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait please visit www.eahli.com, contact an ABK representative via 'Ahli Chat' or a customer service agent via 'Ahlan Ahli' at 1899899.



News

In brief

KOC surveys Kuwait Bay and Burgan field

KUWAIT: Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) has launched 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.

Kuwait and Pakistan officials discuss bilateral cooperation

KUWAIT: Ministry of Interior Undersecretary for Criminal Security Affairs Major General Abdulhamid Al-Awadhi and a visiting Pakistani delegation on Thursday discussed boosting bilateral cooperation, in particular combating drugs, and other issues of common concern. Al-Awadhi held talks with chief of Pakistan's Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Brigadier Zahid Abdullah and ANF special investigation department Lieutenant Colonel Qasim Obeidullah, the Interior Ministry's Security Media Department said. During the meeting, Al-Awadhi reiterated Kuwait's keenness on modernizing the security investigation department through using the latest anti-crime technology, the statement added. He also briefed the Pakistani delegation on the structure of the criminal investigation sector and departments. For his part, the ANF chief lauded the technical progress of the General Department of Criminal Investigation. He also appreciated warm welcome. The talks were attended by senior officials of the criminal investigation sector.

Kuwait calls for coordination among Red Crescent societies

GENEVA: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) called for increasing coordination and communication among Gulf Red Crescent societies in order to overcome recent turmoil and crisis in the region. The region is currently going through a critical stage, KRCS' Honorary Treasurer Saad Al-Nahedh stated to KUNA Thursday on the sidelines of the coordination meeting of Gulf Red Crescent societies in Geneva, stressing the importance of bolstering joint cooperation in order to exit these crisis and restore peace and stability in the region. Gulf Red Crescent societies have a distinctive role in implementing humanitarian projects in crisis-stricken countries, Al-Nahedh added, pointing out Gulf societies' unified role toward joint agreements and principles with the GCC General Secretariat, reaching a full coordination in facing disasters and boosting humanitarian action. He also said the meeting has addressed several issues such as unifying the stands of GCC Red Crescent societies and authorities at regional and international organizations toward a number of international topics and issues.

KUWAIT'S GHANAEM OFFERS AID TO ROHINGYA MUSLIMS

KUALA LUMPUR: Kuwait's Ambassador to Malaysia Saad Al-Asousi has handed over financial aid to two charity organizations to deliver to the Rohingya Muslims. Talking to KUNA on Friday, Al Asousi expressed pleasure for the donation to be channeled to the Rohingya through the Al-Madinah International Foundation (MIF) and the Malaysian Humanitarian Foundation (MHF). Kuwaiti donors follow in the steps of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, who is a staunch supporter of humanitarian and charity work, he said.

The donation, worth \$238,000 was presented by the Kuwait-based Ghanaem charity foundation to support the Rohingya Muslims, Al Asousi said, adding that he was briefed on the efforts of the two Malaysian organizations to assist the Rohingya refugees. For his part, MIF General Director Bahar Al-Din Abdul Rahman expressed thanks to the Ghanaem foundation for its charity work inside Kuwait and abroad. He added that Ghanaem had entrusted the MIF with humanitarian projects on Myanmar. The MIF is coordinating with the MHF which enjoys abilities in the country.— KUNA

International

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2015

Saudi to host Syrian rebels ahead of talks

8

UK court convicts Maoist cult leader of rape

10

India rains ease, poor urban planning feeds misery

11



JAGEL: French President Francois Hollande (center) and French Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian (3rd L) arrive on France's Charles de Gaulle aircraft carrier yesterday off the coast of Syria. (Inset) A 'Tornado' aircraft of the German Air Force photographed at the airbase in Jagel, Germany, yesterday. — AFP/AP



HOLLANDE VISITS FRENCH AIRCRAFT CARRIER OFF SYRIA COAST GERMANY JOINS IS FIGHT AFTER LAWMAKERS' APPROVAL

ON BOARD THE FRENCH AIRCRAFT CARRIER CHARLES DE GAULLE: President Francois Hollande visited France's aircraft carrier off the coast of Syria yesterday, while German lawmakers approved joining the intensifying fight against Islamic State jihadists.

Three weeks to the day since IS gunmen caused carnage in Paris, Hollande was expected to address the crew of the Charles de Gaulle, the ship at the heart of France's air campaign against IS targets in Syria and Libya. After British jets this week began bombing IS targets in Syria, the German parliament yesterday overwhelmingly agreed to the deployment of Tornado jets to fly reconnaissance missions.

Germany will also contribute a frigate and up to 1,200 troops, although only a few hundred are likely to be involved at first. Hollande declared "war" on IS after its followers killed 130 people in the French capital, and European nations have been fastest to respond. France invoked a clause requiring EU states to provide military assistance to wipe out the IS group in Iraq and Syria.

Welcoming the German parliament's approval by 445 votes in favor to 146 against, Hollande said it was "another example of the solidarity between France and Germany." A coalition of 60 countries has been battling IS since August 2014, mainly in Iraq. Many countries had been more reluctant to take action in Syria, with many wary of how military action could actually end up serving President Bashar Al-Assad's regime, which they view as no longer legitimate. But the coordinated attacks by suicide bombers and gunmen in Paris appear to have focused minds. British jets struck an IS-held oil field on Wednesday, within hours of lawmakers backing Prime Minister David Cameron's call to help their European allies. After repeatedly ruling out the use of "boots on the ground", US President Barack Obama has agreed to send as many as 100 special forces to Iraq, with a mandate to carry out raids inside Syria.

Russian planes are also hitting IS targets, but the US accuses it of bombing other rebel groups in a bid to help Assad, a strong ally of Moscow.

Broad German support

Even in Germany, where there has traditionally been reluctance to engage in military missions abroad, the government's decision to take direct action in Syria has largely met with support.

An opinion poll in Die Welt newspaper yesterday showed 58 percent backing for the deployment while 37 percent were against. The support came despite a large majority of 63 percent believing that the risk of a terror attack on German soil will rise as a result of the military action. Germany's Justice Minister Heiko Maas said the case for action was watertight legally. "The Germans can be certain that the deployment to Syria neither violates international law nor the constitution," he told the Tagesspiegel daily yesterday.

"We must stop this terrorist gang of murderers. That will not be achieved with military action alone, but neither would it be achieved without," he said. The package approved by parliament includes six Tornado aircraft which have no offensive fighter capability and specialize in air-to-ground reconnaissance. A German frigate will be deployed to protect

the Charles de Gaulle and tanker aircraft could refuel the planes mid-air to extend their range.

A date has not been set for the deployment which is estimated to cost 134 million euros (\$142 million), although Germany and Turkey were already working this week towards a deal to station the Tornados at the southern Turkish air base of Incirlik. Separately, Germany has also pledged to send 650 soldiers to Mali to provide some relief to French forces battling jihadists in the west African nation.

Meanwhile in Paris, one of the bars sprayed with bullets by attackers on November 13 re-opened. Customers returned to the A La Bonne Biere bar to sip their morning coffee where five people were gunned down. Audrey Bily, the bar's manager, said the past three weeks had been "a nightmare", but the staff had been determined to get back to a semblance of normal life. "The Bonne Biere cafe was a place where people meet and exchanged and shared. That is what we want it to be again today," she told reporters just a few steps from a pile of floral tributes to the victims. — AFP

ON AMERICAN FORCES, IRAQ PM CAUGHT BETWEEN US AND IRAN

BAGHDAD: Iraq's premier wants Washington's assistance against the Islamic State group, but American remarks about anti-jihadist efforts and Iran-allied organizations' strong opposition to US combat troops put him in a bind. Trying to navigate the political minefield, Haider Al-Abadi has issued increasingly strident statements about foreign forces over the past week, most recently saying the deployment of such "ground combat forces (is) a hostile act".

However he feels personally, comments by US officials and the highly negative response they generated in some quarters of Iraq have pushed Abadi to strike a relatively hostile tone.

First, senators John McCain and Lindsey Graham came to Baghdad, called for the number of US troops in the country to be roughly tripled and said Abadi wanted increased American involvement.

US Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter followed that up by announcing that Washington would deploy a special forces contingent to carry out raids against IS in Iraq, where the jihadists overran large areas last year, and neighboring Syria, where they also hold a major amount of territory.

Shiite paramilitary forces dominated by

Iran-backed militias, some of which previously fought US troops, have been among the most effective forces battling IS, and they and allied politicians and parties are extremely influential in Iraq.

'Fight any foreign force'

Two of the most powerful of these groups-Ketaeb Hezbollah and Asaib Ahl Al-Haq-have come out strongly against US combat troops. "We will fight any foreign force, whether it belongs to the American coalition or another," Ketaeb Hezbollah spokesman Jaafar Al-Husseini told AFP when asked about the planned special forces deployment.

"We are determined to crush American soldiers if they are present in Iraqi territory."

And Asaib Ahl Al-Haq accused Washington of attempting "to keep our country weak" and planning to kill those who oppose it, and said that: "We announce... our absolute rejection of this ill-fated project." Despite such remarks, the groups have not attacked the thousands of American military personnel and other international forces already in Iraq, but they do put major pressure on the premier.

"Abadi would not be personally offended if some surgical special forces op takes out a



BEIRUT: Syrian refugee children stand on the stairs of their apartment building damaged during Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war in Beirut. —AP

key enemy target," said Kirk Sowell, a Jordan-based political risk analyst who is the publisher of Inside Iraqi Politics. "But he has zero room for manoeuvre politically-it is not simply that the militia parties oppose it, but

(that) the Shiite street is with them," Sowell said. Abadi "is forced to make these statements out of necessity and in order to protect himself", said Patrick Martin, a researcher at the Institute for the Study of War. — AFP

SAUDI TO HOST SYRIAN REBELS AHEAD OF TALKS

RIYADH SEEKING TO FORGE UNIFIED FRONT AGAINST ASSAD

BEIRUT: Saudi Arabia is hosting Syrian opposition groups and many of the main rebel factions next week in an effort to come up with a unified front ahead of peace talks with representatives of the government in Damascus, scheduled to begin early next year.

The meeting is the first of its kind in the Sunni kingdom, which is a main backer of the Syrian opposition, underscoring how the internationally backed effort is the most serious yet in attempts to end the nearly five-year civil war. The conflict has killed more than a quarter of a million people and triggered a refugee crisis of massive proportions. The rebel factions' participation points to the evolution in the position of many of them that long rejected any negotiations with Damascus as long as President Bashar Assad was in power. Now they are on board to attempt a process that the United States and its allies say must eventually lead to Assad's removal - but with no timetable for it.

At the three-day gathering that starts Tuesday in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, the factions will try to form a unified opposition delegation and a platform regarding what is meant to be a transitional period in Syria, officials who were invited said. "We will be negotiating Assad's departure," said Mustafa Osso, the vice president of the Syrian National Coalition, the main Western-backed opposition group. "If this regime stays, violence will continue in Syria and there will be no stability," he said, speaking from Turkey. Osso will be part of what he said will be a 20-member delegation from the coalition at the Riyadh meeting.

A peace plan agreed to last month by 17 nations meeting in Vienna sets a Jan. 1 deadline for the start of negotiations between Assad's government and opposition groups. The plan says nothing about Assad's future, but states that "free and fair elections would be held pursuant to the new constitution within 18 months."



MOSCOW: Hassan Abdul-Azim, head of the Syrian opposition National Coordination Body speaks at a news conference in Moscow. Saudi Arabia will be hosting the Syrian opposition and some insurgent groups next week as preparations come underway for peace talks between President Bashar Assad government and his opponents by the beginning of next year to try end Syria's deadly civil war. —AP

Among the nations that took part in the Vienna meeting were the United States, Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey. Russia and Iran have been Assad's strongest supporters since the crisis began in March 2011 while Saudi Arabia and Turkey have backed factions trying to remove the Syrian president from power.

In Tehran, Iran's deputy foreign minister denounced the planned gathering in Saudi Arabia, the official IRNA news agency reported. "The action will divert Vienna political efforts on Syria from its natural path and will drive the Vienna talks toward failure," Hossein Amir Abdollahian was quoted as saying.

Most of the main rebel factions have been invited to the Riyadh talks, including the Western-backed Free Syrian Army. Also among the invited are two of the biggest - Jaysh al-Islam and the ultraconservative Ahrar Al-Sham group that has been for months trying to improve its image and market itself as a moderate faction, said Ibrahim Hamidi, a journalist who covers Syrian affairs for the Saudi-owned newspaper Al Hayat.

Spokesmen for Jaysh Al-Islam and Ahrar Al-Sham did not respond to requests for comment on whether the groups would attend. "The time for serious negotiations to find a solution has begun," Hamidi said. — AP

SAUDI INVESTIGATING STRIKE ON AID GROUP IN YEMEN

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia began an investigation yesterday after an aid group said the kingdom's coalition targeting Shiite rebels in Yemen struck one of its clinics, the second such strike in recent months.

Doctors Without Borders said Saudi-led airstrikes Wednesday hit its clinic in the city of Taiz in southern Yemen, wounding nine people. The group said the strikes came despite urgent calls to the military coalition fighting Shiite rebels known as Houthis and their allies around Taiz, Yemen's third-largest city.

In a statement Friday carried on the state-run Saudi Press Agency, the coalition said it began the investigation to "verify whether the news is true." It said it would "publish the findings with the utmost transparency and frankness."

However, the statement also said aid groups needed to have "beforehand coordination" with the military and "remain away from the places where the Houthi militias are present." Doctors Without Borders says it provided the clinic's coordinates several times to the military campaign, but it still was struck. This is the second time Doctors Without Borders has apparently been hit in a Saudi-led strike. An Oct. 26 airstrike destroyed a small hospital the group ran in Yemen's northern province of Saada. Both strikes brought condemnation from United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and others, though it hasn't slowed the pace of strikes.

Yemen's conflict pits the Houthis and army units loyal to a former president against the internationally recognized government and the Saudi-led and US-backed coalition. The war has killed at least 5,700 people since March 26, including 830 women and children, the UN said last month. The war has also pushed the Arab world's poorest country to the brink of famine. — AP



GHOUTA: Syrian men carry a victim following reported air strikes by government forces in the town of Jisreen in the rebel-held region of Eastern Ghouta, on the outskirts of the capital Damascus yesterday. At least 35 civilians were killed and dozens wounded in a series of Syrian regime raids on the rebel stronghold east of Damascus, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. — AFP

UN: 16 MASS GRAVES FOUND AFTER SINJAR FREED FROM IS

IS KILLED THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE IN SUMMARY

IRBIL, Iraq: The UN human rights office in Iraq said yesterday that it has received reports of 16 mass graves discovered near the town of Sinjar after it was liberated from the Islamic State group last month.

The reports were the latest among many instances of mass graves being uncovered in territory wrested from IS militants in Iraq and Syria - thousands of people have been killed in summary and extrajudicial killings by the Sunni militants and the graves have been a dark testimony to the group's brutality.

In June 2014, some 1,700 Iraqi soldiers were captured and then killed by IS militants when they overran Saddam Hussein's hometown of Tikrit. At the time, the soldiers were trying to flee from Camp Speicher, a nearby army base where they were deployed. Mass graves with hundreds of Iraqi soldiers' bodies were found after the city was liberated in April.

There were no immediate details about how many bodies might be inside the newly found Sinjar graves, according to spokeswoman Cecile Pouilly of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. She did not provide the source of the reports but said that her

office has called on Iraq's government to investigate. Sinjar Mayor Mahma Khalil told The Associated Press that a total of 17 mass and collective graves have been uncovered inside Sinjar and on the outskirts of the town. He did not give any further information or estimates on the number of bodies the graves could hold.

The IS group captured Sinjar during its rampage across northern Iraq in the summer of 2014 and killed and captured thousands of members of the Yazidi religious minority, including women who were forced into sexual slavery. The extremist group's rapid expansion in Iraq's north, which included a push toward the city of Irbil - the regional capital of Iraq's Kurdish north - spurred the US-led coalition to

launch a campaign of airstrikes against IS in Iraq and later Syria in August 2014. Whenever a discovery of mass graves is made, experts warn that proper excavation and identification of the bodies could take months or longer as many of the sites identified are in close proximity to active front lines.

The UN uses the term mass grave to refer to a location where three or more victims of what the world body defines as

extra-judicial, summary or arbitrary executions are buried - not those who have been killed in combat, attacks such as bombings or armed confrontation. Pouilly, the UN office's spokeswoman, also expressed concern about increasing discrimination, harassment and violence against Sunni Arabs by other groups in parts of Iraq that have been freed from IS' control, as Sinjar was in mid-November.

She cautioned that many Sunnis who once lived under IS control were forced to obey the extremist group at the risk of punishment or death. Now freed, they are "perceived as having supported" the militant group, which is unfair, Pouilly added. Among the first mass graves uncovered in Sinjar - within days of IS forces being pushed out of the town - was one near the town's center that has been estimated to contain the bodies of 78 elderly women, and another, about 15 kilometers (10 miles) outside of Sinjar, with between 50 and 60 bodies of men, women and children, according to Qasim Samir, the Sinjar head of intelligence. Meanwhile, the US-led coalition aircraft carried out 18 airstrikes on Iraq yesterday, including one near Sinjar that targeted an IS tactical unit, the coalition said. — AP

4 PALESTINIANS KILLED AFTER ATTACKING ISRAELI SOLDIERS

JERUSALEM: Four Palestinians wounded several Israeli soldiers in separate attacks yesterday before they were shot and killed by Israeli forces, the military said, the latest violence in more than two months of almost daily Palestinian assaults against civilians and soldiers. The attacks that began in mid-September are showing no signs of relenting. Violence erupted over tensions at a sensitive holy site in Jerusalem, sacred to both Jews and Muslims, and quickly escalated and spread to the West Bank, Israel and the Gaza border.

In Friday's assaults, three Palestinians stabbed Israeli soldiers in two separate incidents and later, a Palestinian rammed his car into troops at an army post in the West Bank, wounding two soldiers before he was shot and killed by other troops at the scene.

Hours earlier, a Palestinian stabbed a soldier in the neck during a security inspection near the city of Ramallah in the West Bank, the military said. It said troops at the scene opened fire and killed the attacker. Also Friday, two Palestinians attacked a soldier with knives in Hebron, the largest Palestinian city in the West Bank, wounding him before Israeli troops shot and killed them, the military said.

A total of four Israeli soldiers were wounded in yesterday's attacks, two of them were moderately wounded and the other two lightly. Hebron has been a frequent flashpoint in the latest violence. The city is home to 850 Israelis who live in heavily-guarded enclaves, surrounded by tens of thousands of Palestinians. Many of the Palestinian attackers in the past months of bloodshed have been from Hebron.

Since the violence erupted, 19 Israelis have been killed in Palestinian attacks, mostly stabbings and shootings. At least 106 Palestinians have also died, including 71 said by Israel to be attackers. The others died in clashes with Israeli forces.

Israel says the current spate of violence is due to incitement by Palestinian leaders over the Jerusalem holy site as well as videos encouraging violence spread on social media. Palestinians say it is rooted in frustration over years of failed talks and lack of hope of gaining statehood. — AP

UK COURT CONVICTS MAOIST CULT LEADER OF RAPING FOLLOWERS

'COMRADE BALA IMPRISONED DAUGHTER FOR 30 YEARS'

LONDON: A British court yesterday convicted a Maoist cult leader of raping two of his followers and imprisoning his own daughter for 30 years in the London commune that he ran.

Aravindan Balakrishnan, 75, known as Comrade Bala, was at the heart of a communist group in the 1970s. The defendant was stone-faced as the guilty verdicts were read out but one of his former followers shouted: "You are sending an innocent man to prison. Shame on you!"

He "used psychological and sexual oppression and violence to force his followers into believing he was a god," said Baljit Ubhey of the Crown Prosecution Service, which pursued the case against him. Balakrishnan came to Britain from Singapore in 1963 and enrolled at the London School of Economics.

The trial heard that he had brainwashed his followers and fathered a daughter with one of them in 1983. The daughter, who has not been identified for legal reasons, was beaten and banned from going to school, singing nursery rhymes or making friends.

She told the court that her father allowed her to read Harry Potter and Lord of the Rings after her 19th birthday because he believed he represented heroes in both novels—Harry and Aragorn. But when she read the books she said she was instead inspired by her own likeness to Harry and Frodo, both little people fighting an "invincible dark



LONDON: Maoist cult leader Aravindan Balakrishnan arrives at Southwark Crown Court in London. — AP

lord". She fled in 2013 aged 30 with the help of a charity, and Balakrishnan was charged on multiple counts of violence against her and his followers.

"I felt like a caged bird with clipped wings, like a fly in a spider's web," she told London's Southwark Crown Court earlier. Balakrishnan was at the height of his influence in the 1970s but his group later dwindled to six women including his wife Chandra.

Balakrishnan convinced followers he controlled the sun, moon, wind and fire. They believed he had a mind control machine monitoring their thoughts. The two women he sexually abused were "cowed into submission" and forced into "deliberately degrading and humiliating" sex acts, prosecutor Rosina Cottage said during the trial. After raping one woman, he told her he was "purifying her", the prosecutor said. —AFP

DENMARK'S 'NO' HOLDS A LESSON FOR CAMERON

LONDON: If there is a lesson for Prime Minister David Cameron from Denmark's 'No' vote, it may be that complacency could allow Britain to drop out of the European Union when voters decide on membership in a referendum likely next year.

Denmark's voters ignored advice from politicians, business leaders and the media, and said "No" to more EU laws aimed at fighting cross-border crime, underscoring a broader disenchantment across Europe after years of crisis and sluggish economic growth.

Cameron faces a harder task than Denmark's elite. He must convince 27 other EU leaders to grant him a deal and then sell that package to voters who polls show are jaded by EU crises over everything from Greece to an influx of migrants. "The Danish referendum shows you cannot be complacent: You can't as a political elite say 'Ah yes, this is in the bag' because it is not, certainly in Britain," said Sara Hobolt, professor of European Institutions at the London School of Economics' European Institute. Hobolt, who is from Denmark, said the referendum showed how views of the mainstream elite could not be relied upon to sway voters. She added that she would not bet money on the British referendum as the outcome was still far from clear. A divorce between

Britain and the EU would shake, and could possibly sink, the 28-country Union, ripping away its second largest economy and one of its top two military powers. Britain's future is also at stake. Some pro-Europeans warn an exit from the EU would hurt the economy and could prompt another vote on Scottish independence. Opponents of EU membership say Britain would prosper outside and that warnings from pro-Europeans are overblown.

'FIGHTING LIKE MAD'

European Council President Donald Tusk said on Thursday that a discussion with Cameron at an EU summit this month should pave the way for a deal in February, opening up the possibility of a referendum from around mid-year. Tusk, who is leading the EU negotiations with Britain, also wrote on Twitter that he would send a letter to national leaders on Monday with his assessment of the British negotiations.

Cameron is betting the fear of Britain leaving the bloc will focus the minds of other EU leaders so that he can get the deal he thinks he can sell to British voters and his own party.

But some diplomats caution that although German Chancellor Angela Merkel wants Britain to stay, Cameron has previously misjudged her appetite

and capacity to sway the entire bloc behind Britain's demands.

Cameron, who opposes any further transfer of sovereignty to the EU and says voters are unhappy with the current state of affairs, is demanding that EU migrants should contribute for four years to Britain's social security system before they qualify for in-work benefits or social housing.

This is proving an extremely difficult demand and has worried Berlin and other EU capitals as Cameron has repeatedly hinted that he could oppose membership if he doesn't get what he wants, diplomats close to the talks said.

Cameron said yesterday that he was "fighting like mad" to get the substance right and British officials dismissed any sense of complacency, pointing to some of the involvement of Britain's senior politicians and officials in the negotiations. "The chances of Brexit (Britain leaving the EU) have gone up because there is a small chance - small but greater than zero - that there won't be a deal because Cameron asks for something the rest of the EU cannot give him," said Charles Grant, director of the Centre for European Reform think-tank.

"If Cameron can't get a deal then he can't recommend Britain stays in and in that case Britain would vote to leave the EU." — Reuters

CHINA ANNOUNCES \$60BN FUNDING SUPPORT FOR AFRICA

JOHANNESBURG: Chinese President Xi Jinping announced \$60 billion of assistance and loans for Africa at a summit in Johannesburg yesterday, signalling China's commitment to the continent despite a recent fall in investment. China's economic growth has taken a dip this year, triggering a global commodities slump and causing Beijing to slash investment in Africa by more than 40 percent in the first six months of 2015. Xi said that China would "provide a total of \$60 billion of funding support that includes \$5 billion of grants in zero interest loans (and) \$35 billion in preferential facility and export credit loans and concessional loans." In a slew of pledges at his speech opening the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), he also announced drought aid for the continent.

"China is greatly concerned about the poor harvest caused by El Nino in many African countries and will provide one billion renminbi yuan (\$156 million) worth of emergency food aid to the affected countries," he said. The two-day FOCAC meeting is the second time China has brought together African leaders since the forum was launched in Beijing in 2000. Since then, China's trade with Africa has overtaken that of the traditional partners, Europe and the United States. "China is still very active in Africa," Deborah Brautigan, of the US-based China Africa Research Institute, said.

"They are very competitive. They made it clear that Africa is still their business partner (but) this big sum is mainly loans that will have to be repaid."

The money will target 10 areas, including industrialisation, infrastructure, financial services, poverty reduction, and peace and security. Zhong Jinahua, a Chinese diplomat at the summit, brushed off concerns about the recent drop in investment into Africa. "I don't think we need to panic over the fluctuation in trade volumes," he told reporters. "It's only natural for the market to experience some ups and downs."

Mining lay-offs

A fall in mineral prices has hit African countries who relied on Chinese demand, with large lay-offs by mining companies in resource-rich countries such as Zambia and South Africa. "We are keen to explore cooperation with China to ensure the long term viability of African mining," South Africa President Jacob Zuma told the summit.

"This is important in light of the declining demand for commodities." Among the presidents attending were Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria, which is Africa's largest economy, Salva Kiir of South Sudan, Joseph Kabila of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Kenya's Uhuru Kenyatta. Xi accompanied by his wife Peng Liyuan landed in South Africa after a brief visit to Zimbabwe, where Chinese projects have helped prop up an economy plunged into crisis under President Robert Mugabe's rule. Mugabe, who addressed the summit's opening session as chair of African Union, lavished praise on the Chinese leader.

"We say he is a god-sent person," Mugabe said. "President Xi Jinping has made a much anticipated announcement of new measures... to inject vibrancy into that already dynamic relationship between China and Africa. "Our detractors have sought to portray our relationship to purely commercial ties, driven by China's desire to extract our mineral resources, (but) our relations go much deeper." —AFP



JOHANNESBURG: Chinese President Xi Jinping delivers his speech during the opening ceremony of the Johannesburg Summit for the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg yesterday. —AP

18 HOSPITAL PATIENTS DIE IN FLOOD-HIT INDIAN STATE

CHENNAI, India: Eighteen hospital patients died overnight in flood-hit Tamil Nadu, Indian health authorities said yesterday, with local media reporting their ventilators stopped working when the power failed. The private hospital where the intensive care patients were being treated reportedly suffered the power outage late Thursday after days of severe flooding that has already killed hundreds and submerged much of the state capital Chennai. Tamil Nadu health secretary J Radhakrishnan confirmed the deaths at the Madras Institute of Orthopaedics and Traumatology (MIOT), but did not comment on the cause.

"At least 18 patients admitted to the MIOT hospital died," he told reporters. "I have asked health officials to conduct an enquiry into the matter and report back." Hospital officials could be reached for comment. The Hindu newspaper quoted relatives of victims saying hospital equipment failed because of power failures. Broadcaster NDTV said the hospital had been flooded since Tuesday, after some of the worst rains in decades left much of the city under water. It said the hospital had sent out an SOS message Tuesday to say it was running out of food and water.

Thousands of rescuers are racing to evacuate victims of the Tamil Nadu flooding, which has claimed nearly 300 lives since November 9. Weather officials said rainfall in Chennai had diminished since earlier in the week, but parts of the city of 4.6 million people remained submerged. Thousands of stranded passengers had to be evacuated this week from Chennai's international airport, whose runway was completely submerged. Experts at the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) in New Delhi said poor urban planning had likely exacerbated the disaster. "We have forgotten the art of drainage.—AFP

INDIA'S SPIN DOCTORS FACE FLAK OVER 'DOCTORED' MODI IMAGE

NEW DELHI: India's government has faced mockery on social media for tweeting an apparently doctored photo of its image-conscious prime minister surveying the flood-hit southern state of Tamil Nadu. Narendra Modi tweeted an image of himself looking out of a helicopter window as he flew over the area on Thursday, saying he was "pained by the devastation" he had seen. The scene through the window was barely visible, but when the government's press department later tweeted what appeared to be the same image, the view through the window was sharp and clearly showed flooding.

The department later deleted that tweet, but not before thousands of followers had taken screen grabs of the apparently manipulated image. Many shared Internet memes, with one showing Modi looking through the helicopter window as Superman flew by. "Very silly of @PIB-India to photo-shop @PMOIndia aerial survey of Chennai," tweeted Prashanth Rao, referring to the state capital. "Worst photoshop ever!" tweeted Wilbur Sargunraj. "Why does our PM need false and exaggerated propaganda???"

The Press Information Bureau said later that two pictures had been accidentally merged in an "error of judgement". "PIB regrets the release of the above mentioned picture," it said. Modi travelled to Tamil Nadu on Thursday to survey the damage from weeks of flooding that has killed 269 people. The prime minister is a prolific tweeter with more than 16 million followers.—AFP



TAMIL NADU, India : This photograph released by India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his Twitter account (@narendramodi) on December 3, 2015, shows the Indian leader looking out of a helicopter window onto flooding in the southern state of Tamil Nadu.—AFP



INDIA: Passengers who were stranded in Chennai due to the floods were rescued in an Indian Air Force C-17 aircraft walk after the same landed at the Begumpet Air Force Station, in Hyderabad.

SOUTH INDIA RAINS EASE BUT POOR URBAN PLANNING FEEDS MISERY

NEW DELHI: The relentless rains that lashed southern India's Tamil Nadu state for three days eased yesterday, but the misery of tens of thousands of people was far from over, with large parts of the main city still underwater along with the region's biggest airport. As Chennai, the state capital, reeled from the heaviest rains in over a century, experts said the devastation was in large part due to the same breakneck and haphazard urban planning that has marked many of India's major cities.

It's a pattern that's been repeated for at least a decade. In 2005, India's commercial capital Mumbai came to a standstill after several days of monsoon rains. Last year, Srinagar in Indian Kashmir, saw massive devastation as flood waters swallowed a city where unchecked construction had blocked rainwater channels and eaten into wetlands. India's main monsoon season runs from June through September, but for Chennai and the rest of India's southeastern coast, the heaviest rainfall is from October to December - also called the retreating monsoon.

This year's deluge - which experts linked to the El Nino weather pattern, when the waters of the Pacific Ocean get warmer than usual - caught Chennai, with a population of 9.6 million, completely unprepared. One woman told NDTV news channel that she was finally able to get on a rescue boat yesterday, three days after the rains began to lash the city. The government has set up 97 relief camps, which are currently providing food and shelter to an estimated 62,000 people.

Dozens of homes across Chennai remained submerged too despite the rain ebbing. Chennai's airport was closed for a third day. Photographs from earlier in the week showed large parts of the building and runway completely submerged. The Airports Authority of India has said that the air-

port would remain closed at least until Sunday. Power supply has been erratic since the city turned off electricity to prevent deaths by electrocution. Mobile and fixed phone networks have been sporadic. Thousands of people have taken to Twitter and other social media to reach out to friends and family. The Indian Meteorological Department yesterday scaled down a forecast for very heavy rains, but added that more rain or thunderstorms were likely.

"We have repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that our urban sprawls such as Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai, Srinagar etc have not paid adequate attention to the natural water bodies that exist in them," said Sunita Narain, director of the Centre for Science and Environment, an advocacy and research organization. "In Chennai, each of its lakes has a natural flood dis-

charge channel which drains the spillover. But we have built over many of these water bodies, blocking the smooth flow of water," she said. As the government struggled to reach all those impacted by the floods, residents teamed up on their own to distribute aid - packets of food, bottled water and bed sheets - in worst-hit neighborhoods.

"What is heartwarming is that the people of Chennai are helping out," said Arun Ebenezer, who has been forced to stay with a friend for three days after rain began to beat down on Tuesday. Yesterday, he tried to make his way home, but gave up after friends warned him that large parts of the city were still unsafe. "A lot of people built their houses on lake beds. The government should not have approved those projects. Now they are all submerged," he said.—AP



INDIA: Indian army soldiers rescue a man from flood waters in Chennai, India.—AP photos

CHINA VOWS COPYRIGHT PROTECTION FOR ONLINE NEWS MEDIA

BEIJING: China will crack down on illegal reproduction of online news, the country's media watchdog said, days after an influential Chinese news magazine complained publicly about what it described as unauthorized republishing of its stories. China's government has long vowed to rein in intellectual property infringement from knock-off goods to the theft of commercial secrets. But violations remain rampant. While the republishing of other news outlets' articles is common practice in China, some companies in the country's increasingly competitive media industry have become more vocal about what they say is unauthorized use of original content.

"We must strengthen enforcement and increase the strength of punishment for those that do not make corrections," State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television (SARFT) Deputy Director Yan Xiaohong said on Thursday. Yan, also a deputy director at the National Copyright Administration of China, told a forum of media experts and officials from Chinese news outlets that an "efficient and low-cost authorization mechanism" should be created to safeguard copyright.

"The key is that this type of use should be authorized and paid for, and not used as one pleases. Speaking of copyright, orderly, standardized use is an aspect

that we need to work on and reinforce," Yan said, in a speech published by the official Xinhua news agency. A trend towards greater commercialization in Chinese media, still heavily controlled by the state, has put pressure on companies to generate greater profits.

Yan's comments come about a week after the influential news outlet Caixin publicly condemned Shanghai-based news portal WallStreetcn.com for what it said was repeated unauthorized reproduction of its articles. "As news media, WallStreetcn.com news ignores relevant national legal statutes and regulations, infringes on Caixin's rights, violates the most fundamental professional ethics

and baseline values of journalists, and gravely disrupts the normal order of the media market," Caixin said on its website.

The statement, from late November, was the latest in a series of notices from Caixin targeting various outlets for copyright violations in recent years. Some of the news items that Caixin complained about contained openly available information and its own analysis, WallStreetcn.com said in a statement on its website.

It said articles that cited Caixin contained links to the original work. WallStreetcn.com also said it would "clarify responsibility as soon as possible and correct mistakes if any were made". — Reuters

CHINA NETIZENS PROTEST 10-YEAR JAIL TERM FOR STUDENT WHO SOLD BIRDS

CHINA: Netizens in China are crying foul after a court sentenced a university student to 10 years imprisonment for selling rare birds to his friends, which he found near his home. The court meted out a 10-year punishment to the student surnamed Yan on Thursday for selling Eurasian hobbies, a rare and protected falcon, to friends online. Many Chinese took to social media and expressed shock and disbelief over the Zhengzhou court's harsh sentence, saying that it was more than the punishment usually slapped on convicted rapists and drunk drivers.

Miscarriage of justice

#Stole16BirdsJailedFor10.5Years has been trending on Sina Weibo, with more than 15,000 users actively using the hashtag. Reports said more than 60 percent of Chinese netizens have voted in an online poll that they felt the sentence was "too strong" and "shocking."

One of the users, Uncle Tan, said that there is a miscarriage of justice when a convicted drunk driver who kills people is sentenced to three years while a young boy who poaches a few birds and did not kill anyone receives 10 years. Another user, "Dulexin", pointed out that serious criminal offenses such as human trafficking and fatal car accidents, as well as petty crimes like theft and robbery get a few years of jail time and yet a boy who poaches birds gets 10. "This just goes to show that a bird's life is more important than human lives," he tweeted. —Reuters



OKINAWA, Southern Japan: This aerial photo taken Oct 29, 2015 shows US Marine Air Station Futenma in Ginowan, Okinawa, southern Japan. —AP

JAPAN, US VOW TO PUSH OKINAWA BASE RELOCATION

'OUR ALLIANCE STRENGTHENED THROUGH STEADY IMPLEMENTATION'

TOKYO: Japan and the US vowed yesterday to press ahead with the construction of a new air base on strategic Okinawa, and pledged to speed up the return of some land on the island where pacifist sentiment runs high. The announcement came just two days after Tokyo pressured Okinawa in court to try and force its governor to support the controversial transfer of a US Marine air base from one part of the island to another.

Takeshi Onaga, the governor, opposes the move and argues that the rest of Japan needs to share the burden of supporting the country's decades-long security alliance with close ally the United States. He wants the unpopular Futenma air base, located in a crowded urban area and widely seen as dangerous to residents, to move off the island entirely rather than to a more remote and environmentally delicate part as pushed for nearly 20 years by Tokyo and Washington. US Ambassador to Japan

Caroline Kennedy said yesterday that Washington backed the existing relocation scheme, and argued that the planned return of US base properties to Okinawa should ease its burden. "The US government remains committed to executing this entire plan at the earliest possible date," she said in a joint announcement with Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga. "We look forward to working with the government of Japan to make that happen." Under the announced deal, some sections of land now used by US forces, including on Futenma, will be returned to Okinawa as early as in fiscal year 2017, which Japan's top-selling Yomiuri Shimbun reported was at least five years ahead of an earlier timeline. But the land covered under the announcement accounts for less than one percent of the Futenma facility, Kyodo News said.

Suga, meanwhile, emphasized the importance of "our alliance being further

strengthened through steady implementation" of the base relocation deal. The Japanese government and Okinawa fought in an initial court hearing Wednesday where Tokyo is suing to reverse Onaga's decision to stop the government from building the new US base. Okinawa, the site of a bloody World War II battle between Japan and the US, is considered a strategic linchpin for the countries as they face China's increasing military might and the regional threat of North Korean missiles.

Okinawa, which makes up less than one percent of Japan's total land area, is home to about 75 percent of US military bases in the country and more than half of the 47,000 American military personnel stationed in the country. Residents have complained for decades about noise, crimes, accidents and other problems associated with the American military presence. —AFP

THAI MIGRANT CRISIS MEETING ENDS WITHOUT ANY SOLUTION

BANGKOK: Thailand called yesterday for concerted action to tackle "irregular" migration in the Indian Ocean, but no substantial solutions emerged from a regional meeting aimed at preventing this year's "boat people" tragedies in which hundreds drowned. Representatives from Southeast Asian countries met in Bangkok to hash out a framework to deal with tens of thousands of migrants, most from Myanmar and Bangladesh, who make perilous voyages across the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea every year.

The meeting ended with a plan put forward by Thailand which five directly affected countries, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Myanmar and Bangladesh, would consider. "There is still no clarity. We have discussed but not agreed," Apichart Chinwanno, permanent secretary at the Thai Foreign Ministry, said. The document being considered, as European countries struggle to cope with refugees fleeing war in Syria and Iraq, focused on protection of migrants, prevention of irregular migration and prosecution of human smuggling and trafficking networks, he said, but gave few details.

"They focused on an information campaign, that's all. Not about helping people at sea and not about humanitarian assistance," a UN official, who declined to be named, told Reuters. Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai said the region needed "an explicit and efficient mechanism to manage and control the negative impacts of irregular migration". The conference was the second round of talks that were launched in May amid a migration crisis prompted by a human trafficking crackdown in Thailand. —Reuters

US MILITARY OPENS ALL COMBAT ROLES TO WOMEN

WASHINGTON: The US military will let women serve in all combat roles, Defense Secretary Ash Carter said on Thursday in a historic move striking down gender barriers in the armed forces. "As long as they qualify and meet the standards, women will now be able to contribute to our mission in ways they could not before," Carter told a Pentagon news conference. "They'll be allowed to drive tanks, fire mortars, and lead infantry soldiers into combat. They'll be able to serve as Army Rangers and Green Berets, Navy SEALs, Marine Corps infantry, Air Force parajumpers and everything else that was previously open only to men," he said. President Barack Obama called the move a "historic step forward," saying it would "make our military even stronger." "Our armed forces will draw on an even wider pool of talent. Women who can meet the high standards required will have new opportunities to serve," Obama said in a statement Carter said the opening to women would take place following a 30-day review period, after which they would be integrated into the new roles in a "deliberate and methodical manner" as positions come open. The waiting period enables Congress to review the decision and raise any objections.

He acknowledged the decision could lead to more debate over whether women would have to register for the draft, an issue he said was already under litigation. The US military is currently an all-volunteer force, but young men are still required to register in case the draft is reactivated. Asked whether the decision opened the door to women being required to serve in front-line combat positions, Carter said members of the military had some choices but not "absolute choice."

Marines had sought exceptions

The decision drew a rebuke from the Republican chairmen of the armed services committees in the Senate and House of Representatives. But some other lawmakers welcomed the move. "Secretary Carter's decision to open all combat positions to women will have a consequential impact on our service members and our military's warfighting capabilities," Senator John McCain and Representative Mac Thornberry said in a statement. They asked the Pentagon for details on a Marine Corps request for exceptions, which was overridden by Carter, and information on how draft registration might be affected. Two Democratic members of the armed services panels welcomed Carter's decision. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand said it would "strengthen our armed forces" and Representative Niki Tsongas called it a "long overdue" move that would eliminate some of the barriers to advancement that women face in the military. Carter's decision comes nearly three years after the Pentagon first instructed the military to open all positions to qualified women, including front-line combat roles. — Reuters



WASHINGTON: President Barack Obama, center, with from left to right, singer Andra Day, Aloe Blacc, actress Reese Witherspoon, daughters Malia and Sasha, mother-in-law Marian Robinson and first lady Michelle Obama, sing onstage during the National Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony at the Ellipse. — AP

OBAMA LIGHTS NATIONAL TREE, REMEMBERS CALIFORNIA VICTIMS

WASHINGTON: President Barack Obama and his family led the lighting of the National Christmas Tree on Thursday, with charity, thanks, and a moment of reflection for the victims of Wednesday's shooting. "Five, four, three, two, one. Merry Christmas, everybody!" Obama said as the national tree took sparkle for the 93rd year. Flanked by his wife, two daughters and mother-in-law, Obama led the countdown in windy President's Park, across the street from their home at the White House, in a celebration that included performances by pop singer Aloe Blacc and rock band Fall Out Boy.

Using a moment in the festive holiday setting to address the victims of

Wednesday's deadly shooting spree in California, Obama struck a more somber tone, cautioning Americans to "summon the spirit of togetherness" this holiday season. "Now, this is, of course, the most wonderful time of the year. But we would be remiss not to take a moment to remember our fellow Americans whose hearts are heavy tonight - who grieve for loved ones, especially in San Bernardino, California," Obama said in reference to the rampage that left 14 dead and 21 wounded. "Their loss is our loss, too, for we're all one American family. We look out for each other in good times, and in bad. And they should know that all of us care about them this holiday season," he said. — Reuters



WASHINGTON: First lady Michelle Obama with Miss Piggy, left, read 'Twas the Night Before Christmas for children on stage during the National Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony at the Ellipse.

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CALIFORNIA MASSACRE SHOOTER PLEDGED ALLEGIANCE TO ISIS

SAN BERNARDINO, California: One of the two people accused of killing 14 at a holiday party in California posted an online statement pledging allegiance to a leader of the Islamic State militant group, CNN reported yesterday, citing US officials. Tashfeen Malik, 27, and her husband, Syed Rizwan Farook, 28, were killed in a shootout with police hours after the Wednesday massacre at the Inland Regional Center social services agency in San Bernardino, about 60 miles (100 km) east of Los Angeles. The attack was the deadliest mass shooting the United States has experienced in three years.

Malik, a Pakistani native who had been living in Saudi Arabia when she married Farook, posted an online statement of support for a leader of Islamic State on an account using a name other than her own, CNN said. The attack in San Bernardino appeared to be inspired by - but not directed by - the militant group. The investigation has been focused on the motivation for the attack with officials including President Barack Obama and San Bernardino Police Chief Jarrod Burguan saying it may have been motivated by extremist ideology.

The couple left behind a 6-month old daughter. Farook's brother-in-law, Farhan Khan, told NBC News he had begun legal proceedings to adopt the girl and was "very upset and angry" at Farook. "You left your 6-month-old daughter," Khan said. "In this life some people cannot have kids. God gave you a gift of a daughter. And you left that kid behind ... What did you achieve?" Twenty-one people were wounded in the attack, the worst gun violence in the nation since the



CALIFORNIA: The Dar-Al-Uloom, Al-Islamiyah of America mosque stands in San Bernardino, California, frequented by Syed Farook, who the previous day killed 14 people with his wife. The couple had amassed a huge arsenal and carefully planned their attack, authorities said, refusing to rule out terrorism. — AFP

December 2012 shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut.

Farook, a US citizen born in Illinois, was the son of Pakistani immigrants, said Hussam Ayloush, head of the Los Angeles area chapter of the Muslim advocacy group Council on American-Islamic Relations. Christian Nwadike, who worked with Farook for five years, told CBS that his co-worker had been different since he returned from Saudi Arabia. "I

think he married a terrorist," Nwadike said.

Investigators are reviewing the couples' computers and cellphones to see if they had browsed jihadist websites or had contact with militant groups, according to officials in Washington familiar with the investigation. Police said the couple had two assault-style rifles, two semi-automatic handguns and 1,600 rounds of ammunition in their vehicle, with 12 pipe bombs found in their home. — Reuters

BALTIMORE POLICE TRIAL RESUMES AFTER GRAY ARREST VIDEO DRAWS TEARS

BALTIMORE: The trial of a Baltimore police officer charged with manslaughter in the death of a young black man resumed yesterday, a day after prosecutors showed a video of his arrest that reduced his family to tears. Officer William Porter has also been charged with second-degree assault and misconduct in the April death of 25-year-old Freddie Gray. On Thursday, Gray's mother and other relatives wept as a cellphone video, taken by bystander Kevin Moore, showed Gray screaming as he was arrested and people yelling at police.

Gray died a week after being taken into custody for fleeing from an officer and possessing a knife. Porter, 26, is one of three black officers charged in the case. He could be sentenced to more than 25 years in prison if convicted on all counts. He is the first of six officers to go on trial in Baltimore City Circuit Court in connection with Gray's death, which triggered riots and intensified a US debate on the use of excessive force by police, especially against black men.

Gray was handcuffed and shackled but not secured by a seat belt inside a police transport van. He died of an injury that prosecutors have likened to what would be suffered by a diver going into a shallow pool. Gray's friend Brandon Ross also shot a video of a van stop in which Gray was placed in leg shackles. Ross broke down on the witness stand on Thursday as he said officers grabbed Gray by the wrists and ankles and "threw him into the paddy wagon ... It was like they hog tied him." He identified Porter as one of the officers at the scene. Prosecutors contend that Porter ignored Gray's request for medical assistance and failed to secure him in the van. Defense lawyers argue that Porter had no responsibility to strap in Gray and that Gray showed no signs of illness or injury. The other five officers face charges ranging from misconduct to second-degree murder.—Reuters

MUSLIM AMERICANS FEAR DEMONIZATION OF ISLAM AFTER CALIFORNIA MASS SHOOTING

WE'RE ALL WORRIED. WE'RE ALL CONCERNED'

DEARBORN, Michigan: Muslim Americans fear their religion will be demonized and Islamophobia will spread after a young Muslim couple was accused of carrying out one of the bloodiest mass killings in the United States. Across the country, Muslim Americans responded with shock and outrage after a shooting in which authorities said Syed Rizwan Farook, 28, and Tashfeen Malik, 27, stormed a holiday party attended by San Bernardino County employees in California on Wednesday, killing 14 people and wounding 21.

"I was at the gym yesterday while the shooting was taking place and all the TVs were showing that footage and all I could keep thinking to myself is 'God, I hope they don't have any Eastern descent, not just Middle Eastern, anything we'd associate with a Muslim'," said Adam Hashem, 32, in Dearborn, a Detroit suburb with one of the country's largest Muslim populations. "We're all worried. We're all concerned," he said. It was the deadliest US mass shooting since the Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre three years ago. While the motivation remained unclear as authorities investigated the attack, details of Farook and Malik began to emerge. Farook was described as a second-generation American born in Illinois and raised by Pakistani parents. Malik was born in Pakistan and lived in Saudi Arabia until she was introduced to Farook.

San Bernardino police said they found pipe bombs and several thousands rounds of ammunition at the residence of the couple, who died in a shoot-out with police. In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the Attari Supermarket bustled on Thursday with customers shopping for Middle Eastern products. "In every culture and in every religion there are bad apples that will spoil the rest of the apples. That has happened toward us," said Dawod Dawod, a 25-year-old Muslim

American, who manages the store that his family has owned for a decade. Between taking orders over the phone, Dawod said he was concerned that politicians will use the mass shooting as a way to further demonize Muslims. He noted Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's endorsement of the idea of creating a Muslim database. "It's scary," he said. "Ninety-nine percent of Muslims are hardworking, good people."

Muslim community groups condemned the massacre and urged the public not to blame Islam or Muslims. "The Muslim community stands shoulder to shoulder with our fellow Americans in repudiating any twisted mindset that would claim to justify such sickening acts of violence," said Hussam Ayloush, an executive director at the Council on American-Islamic Relations.

Within hours of the shooting, his group had organized a news conference with Los Angeles Muslim leaders and the brother of suspected shooter Malik to condemn the assault. The speed at which they went on live television underlined the depth of concerns in a community already buffeted by a rise in anti-Muslim rhetoric this year and increased public scrutiny after the Nov. 13 attacks in Paris that killed 130 people and were claimed by Islamic State militants. Some Muslims say they have felt singled out during a US presidential race that has tapped a vein of anger and bigotry - from comments by Trump to those by fellow Republican candidate Ben Carson, who said in September Muslims were unfit for the presidency of the United States. There are some 2.8 million Muslims in the country.

'Horried'

Some Muslims questioned whether this week's shooting will embolden supporters of Trump, who is current front-runner to be his party's nominee in the November 2016 elec-

tion and who has backed the idea of requiring all Muslims living in the United States to register in a special database as a counter-terrorism measure. Critics have also accused Trump of stirring resentment toward Muslims by asserting that he saw thousands of Muslims in New Jersey celebrating the destruction of the World Trade Center towers on Sept 11, 2001. That claim has been disputed by public officials.

Faizul Khan, 74, an Imam at the Islamic Society of the Washington Area, said he was "horried" by the San Bernadino shooting. "Unfortunately people don't understand that we as Muslims, we basically want to promote what is good and just for the entire humanity." He said he feared the shooting would strengthen calls to increase surveillance on mosques. Achraf Issam, 22, national spokesman for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association in Silver Spring, Maryland, said it makes no more sense to say that Islam led to the San Bernardino shootings than to say Christianity led to an attack on the Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado last week by a suspect police have named as Robert Lewis Dear.

"No one should say that because this couple is Muslim that it led them to commit those acts," he said. That sentiment was echoed by Sara Nabhan, 20, a junior majoring in biology at the University of Houston who was born in Jordan and came to Texas when she was 2 years old. "Two people's actions do not constitute a whole population's actions," she said. Jersey City real-estate agent Magdy Ali, 52 and of Egyptian descent, said he uses the name Alex when working to avoid conflict with people who distrust Islam. He said he expects Trump to use Wednesday's massacre to push for anti-Muslim measures such as monitoring of US mosques. "We are in a jam right now," he said. — Reuters

Kuwait Times BUSINESS

Global stocks fall as ECB underwhelms investors 17

ECB comes under fire over 'timidity' of policy moves 8

US Congress okays bill to boost infrastructure 20

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2015



US trade deficit up 3.4%, Economy adds 211K jobs 16



VIENNA: Saudi Arabia's minister of Oil and Mineral Resources Ali Al-Naimi (bottom R) is surrounded by journalists as he attends the 168th Ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries OPEC at the OPEC headquarters in Vienna yesterday. — AFP

OPEC STICKS TO OUTPUT POLICIES AS GLUT GROWS

CARTEL TO RAISE COLLECTIVE OUTPUT CEILING TO 31.5 MILLION BPD

VIENNA: OPEC maintained its policy of pumping near-record volumes of oil at a meeting yesterday, according to sources at the group, taking no steps to reduce one of the worst crude gluts in history which has driven down prices. The group, which produces a third of global oil, decided to increase its collective output ceiling to 31.5 million barrels per day (bpd) from the previous 30 million, the two OPEC sources said, in a move that effectively acknowledged that members are pumping well in excess of the current ceiling.

Benchmark Brent oil futures - which are near a six-year low - lost nearly \$2 on the news, falling 1.5 percent to trade slightly above \$43 a barrel by 1455 GMT. It was not immediately clear if rejoining member Indonesia, which produces 0.9 million bpd, was included in the new ceiling. One source said Indonesia was not included. Either way, the decision failed to address growing global supply. The poorer members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) have been piling pressure on its wealthier members, led by Saudi Arabia, to curb

supply. But Riyadh and its Gulf allies decided yesterday to stick to their strategy of defending market share, hoping that lower prices would ultimately drive higher cost producers, such as US shale oil firms, out of the market. The Saudis have previously said they would be prepared to consider a cut only if OPEC members Iraq and Iran agreed to cooperate and non-OPEC members such as Russia joined in. But Moscow repeated this week it saw no chance of joint action, and Iran and Iraq on Friday also showed no willingness to curb supply. Iranian oil minister Bijan Zangeneh said before the meeting that Tehran would be prepared to discuss action only when his country reached full output levels, if and when Western sanctions on the country are lifted next year. Iraqi oil minister Adel Abdel Mahdi said his country would further raise output next year after having steeply increased production in 2015.

Saudi oil minister Ali Al-Naimi said he hoped growing global demand could absorb an expected jump in Iranian production next year: "Everyone is welcome to go into the market".

SUPPLY GROWING

Iran has repeatedly said it would boost production by at least 1 million bpd when sanctions are lifted. This would add to the global glut as the world is currently already consuming up to 2 million bpd less than it is producing.

The Iraqi oil minister said his country would further raise output next year after having steeply increased production in 2015. While the Saudis can claim a partial victory over the US shale oil boom, production from top non-OPEC rival Russia continues to surprise on the upside and world oil stockpiles are at record levels.

For Saudi Arabia, low oil prices and the prospects of big fiscal deficits have already prompted officials to float the idea of potentially unpopular reforms, including introducing a value added tax and cutting energy subsidies. Reduced oil revenue is also causing some of the influential business class to push Riyadh to quickly seek an end to its expensive war in Yemen, the kingdom's biggest strategic gambit in decades, and one that defines King Salman's foreign policy.

However, while it has made steps to cut excess expenditure, the government has indicated it will use its vast foreign reserves and low debt levels to keep capital spending high in coming budgets to maintain private-sector growth.

A report in newsletter Energy Intelligence suggested this week the Saudis might be ready to fine-tune policies and could start pushing for a global deal to curb supply in order to avoid oil prices remaining low for longer.

But Naimi said yesterday the report was "baseless". OPEC abandoned production quotas for individual members several years ago and most members have been producing as much as they want. Russian energy minister Alexander Novak said on Thursday OPEC should bring its production levels close to reality.

Bringing the ceiling in line with real production could help bridge the gap in views between OPEC and non-OPEC. The two had last cooperated almost 15 years ago to cut output and prop up the prices following the 1998 financial crisis. — Reuters



NEW YORK: Laborers work on a footpath and road way construction site in Times Square in New York. The US economy pumped out 211,000 new jobs in November, the Labor Department said yesterday. — AFP

US TRADE DEFICIT UP 3.4% IN OCTOBER TO \$43.9BN

ECONOMY ADDS 211K JOBS; UNEMPLOYMENT STEADY

WASHINGTON: The US trade deficit widened in October, the Commerce Department said yesterday, as exports of US goods fell to the lowest level in more than four years, a reflection of the impact of a weak global economy and stronger dollar.

THE NUMBERS: The trade deficit, the difference between exports and imports, widened 3.4 percent in October to \$43.9 billion, compared to a revised \$42.5 billion deficit in September. Exports of goods and services fell 1.4 percent to \$184.1 billion while exports of just goods dropped an even bigger 2.4 percent to \$123.8 billion, the lowest level since June 2011.

Imports of goods and services were also down in October, dropping 0.6 percent to \$228 billion. The drop in imports reflected in part falling oil prices, which pushed petroleum imports down to the lowest level in nearly 15 years. The deficit with Mexico rose 10.2 percent to \$33 billion, the biggest deficit with Mexico in more than three years. The deficit with China fell 9.1 percent to \$33 billion, still the largest imbalance with any country.

THE TAKEAWAY: A rising trade deficit acts as a drag on overall growth. For October, it means that American manufacturers and farmers were able to sell fewer goods in overseas markets.

KEY DRIVERS: US companies have been hurt this year by a rising value of the dollar, which makes American products more expensive on overseas markets and foreign goods cheaper and thus more attractive to American consumers. US producers have also had to confront economic weakness in key overseas markets such as Europe and China.

BIG PICTURE: Through October, the deficit this year is 5.3 percent higher than the same period a year ago. Economists expect the deficit will continue to worsen next year as American exporters continue to struggle with the dollar's strength and growth in other nations remains subdued.

Job market steady

The US economy generated another month of solid hiring in November, making it highly likely that the Federal Reserve will raise interest rates from record lows this month.

The Labor Department said yesterday that employers added 211,000 jobs, led by big gains in construction and retail. And the government revised up its estimated job growth for September and October by a combined 35,000. The unemployment rate remained a low 5 percent for a second straight month. More Americans began looking for jobs in November, and most found them.

Employers have now added an average 213,000 jobs a month over the past six months. The robust hiring indicates that consumer spending is powering the economy even as weak growth overseas and low oil prices squeeze US manufacturers and drillers. Investors didn't react much to the jobs report, which was generally in line with expectations. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note was little changed at 2.31 percent, and stock index futures were up about 0.5 percent in pre-market trading, roughly the same as before the report was released.

Fed Chair Janet Yellen said this week that the economy appeared to be improving enough to justify a rate hike as long as no major shocks undermine confidence before the Fed meets Dec. 15-16. The Fed has kept its key short-term rate at a record low near zero for seven years.

For the Fed, conditions seem nearly ideal for a period of small and only gradual rate increases in coming months: Job growth has been consistently solid, and wages have begun to rise but not so much as to cause concern about future high inflation. Since the Great Recession ended 6-1/2 years ago, average hourly pay has grown at only about two-thirds of the pace typical of a healthy economy. In November, average hourly wages rose 2.3 percent from 12 months earlier. The

November jobs report shows that the US economy "is strong enough to withstand an initial hike in interest rates from what were seen as emergency record-low levels," said Chris Williamson, chief economist at Markit. "A December rate hike now looks to be in the bag."

Job gains were broad-based across the economy in November. Construction companies added 46,000 jobs, the most in two years. Spending in that sector has reached its highest level in eight years, boosted by more homebuilding and development of more roads and infrastructure.

The sizable gain in construction jobs last month, even as the Fed is preparing to raise rates, suggests that few expect higher borrowing costs to derail home building or sales.

"It was heartening to see growth in construction and that manufacturing held steady as ... both are sensitive to higher interest rates," said Tara Sinclair, chief economist at job search site Indeed.com. Government added 14,000 positions in November, retailers nearly 31,000. But factories shed 1,000 jobs.

Americans are spending more on costly items like cars and homes. Their stepped-up spending has supported the US economy and offset drags from falling oil prices and weak growth overseas.

Auto sales, for example, jumped to a 14-year high in November, boosted in part by Black Friday deals offered throughout the month. Industry analysts expect auto sales to total a record 17.5 million for 2015. Steady job gains this year and low mortgage rates have also boosted home sales, though sales have leveled off in recent months. Purchases of existing homes have increased nearly 4 percent from a year ago. Sales of new homes have jumped nearly 16 percent.

Americans are eating out more often, driving restaurant sales much higher. Retailers have reported weak revenue in recent months, but online purchases were robust on Black Friday. — AP

WARBA BANK CONTINUES 'KNOW YOUR RIGHTS' CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: In line with the instructions of the Central Bank of Kuwait ("CBK") for protecting customers and increasing awareness about their rights while carrying on any banking transactions, Warba Bank continues its "Know Your Rights" campaign. The campaign mainly focuses on the rules of consumer and installment financing services, credit services and the principle of transparency and disclosure thus enabling customers to decide on the bank of choice for meeting their expectations.

In this regard, Warba Bank has taken practical steps for familiarizing and advising the customers on their rights in terms of consumer and installment personal financing and credit cards. The Bank has conducted a large-scale campaign covering its branches, electronic services and social media platforms to communicate CBK instructions of which the latest has been the amendments to the rules and regulations of consumer and other personal installment financing transactions issued on July 5, 2015 in customers' favor.

On this occasion, Khalid Jassim Al-Subaie, Chief of Sales & Distribution Channels Sector at Warba Bank, said: "Warba Bank is keen to enhance customers' confidence in the Bank by full compliance with CBK instructions and communicating such instructions to customers to know their rights and obligations when conducting banking transactions. We have taken vigorous decisions and actions in customers' favor. Through this campaign, we are keen to provide the customer with all details about the finance granted, the customer's budget so that the customer will not bear additional burdens that he has not been aware of which may impact his ability to repay or affect the customer's future relationship with the Bank.

Al-Subaie added: "Within the framework of the Warba's responsibility towards customers, the Bank launched 'Know Your Rights' campaign to advise them on the general rules for customer protection at banks, using posters, brochures in all Bank branches, videos on staff PC monitors and Plasma screens. We have also launched a dedicated section for CBK instructions named 'Know Your Rights' on Warba Bank's official website. We have enabled video uploads under a section titled 'Have an idea?' along with a series of tweets on social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. The awareness channels focus on the key instructions on financing, credit cards, terms and conditions. These instructions enlighten the customer on the importance of thoroughly reviewing financing contracts, carefully reading the terms and conditions and the financial implications resulting

therefrom and ensuring to have a copy of the contract when concluding a transaction, substantiating the purpose of finance thus protecting both contracting parties. The Bank also advises customers on the reflection period giving them the choice to take their decisions, determine the finance amount in line with their salaries, the number and amount of installments. The customer can rearrange contract conditions if he desires to reschedule installments or obtain a new finance provided, however, that 30 % of the fixed financing installments is paid at maturity as per the instructions set by CBK.

FINNISH PM SEES NO RETURN TO LABOR REFORM TALKS

HELSINKI: Finland's prime minister yesterday ruled out restarting talks with trade unions on revamping working conditions, setting up a confrontation with labour leaders over measures to boost the recession-hit economy.

Talks over a "social contract" to cut unit costs and boost export competitiveness ended without agreement earlier this week, meaning the government was set to go forward with its plan to reduce holidays, holiday bonuses and sickness benefits despite opposition from the unions.

Prime Minister Juha Sipilä, a former telecoms executive, met again yesterday with trade union and employers' representatives again, who have traded blame over the failure to reach an agreement. He concluded the talks were over for now.

"It is clear that there are no preconditions to continue negotiations over a social contract," he told reporters. The government was still ready to listen to credible alternative propositions to the cuts if the unions and employers could come up with any, he added.

The cuts, due to come to the parliament in February, would be carried out via mandatory legislation, which has angered the unions that have traditionally had a strong say on Finnish labour legislation.

"We are opposed to every single proposal and will consider ways to use political pressure," said Matti Huutola, vice chairman at Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions SAK.

The failure to reach a common deal also means there will not be a

renewed central wage agreement next year, which could have secured moderate, if any, pay increases ahead.

"Next year, the wage agreement round will be carried out by individual unions ... that will not be easy, and at worst, there will be restlessness," Huutola said. The statistics office reported earlier yesterday that revised data showed the Finnish economy fell 0.5 percent in the third quarter from the second and is close to its fourth consecutive year of contraction. — Reuters



TOKYO: A man looks at an electronic stock board of a securities firm in Tokyo yesterday. — AP

GLOBAL STOCKS FALL AS ECB UNDERWHELMS INVESTORS

YELLEN REMARK STRENGTHENS EURO

LONDON: World stock markets churned lower yesterday on lingering disappointment over "underwhelming" eurozone stimulus measures and ahead of key US jobs data.

Equities had plunged Thursday as the European Central Bank's latest stimulus plan disappointed investors, sparking a global sell off that spilled over into Wall Street and Asia.

In late Friday morning deals, London lost another 0.2 percent, Frankfurt fell 0.6 percent and Paris also slid 0.6 percent, one day after the key indices shed between two and four percent in value.

Speculation had swirled for weeks that the ECB would ramp up its bond-buying program and loosen monetary policy to bolster growth and counter weak inflation. Hopes were stoked Wednesday by news that eurozone inflation languished at 0.1 percent in November—far lower than the ECB's official 2.0-percent target. The bank on Thursday cut deposit rates further into negative territory—meaning lenders must pay to park cash with it and so look to loan more—and extended the length of its bond purchases.

Huge let-down

However, the long-awaited announcement was seen as a huge let-down as it crucially failed to increase the size of the stimulus while the rate cut was less than hoped for.

"Equity markets took a notable shake out yesterday in response to the underwhelming actions of the ECB," said TrustNet Direct analyst Tony Cross.

"The central bank's stimulus measures fell some way short of expectations, initiating degree of panic across the board. "This rattled US markets after the European close last night and is once again taking a toll in early trade as the week's final session gets underway." The news sent the euro surging on Thursday to a one-month peak at \$1.0981, having earlier hit a 7.5-month low of \$1.0524 in highly volatile deals.

"Draghi failed to deliver on investors' expectations," said ETX Capital analyst Daniel Sugarman. "In November the ECB governor had stated that the ECB would 'do what we must to raise inflation as quickly as possible'—which investors took to mean the unveiling

of a significant surge in monetary stimulus in December."

The single currency had come under fierce selling pressure leading up to the announcement as dealers positioned themselves for more far-reaching measures.

Fed caution

The euro's gains were also given support after Federal Reserve boss Janet Yellen said the bank remained wary of a US interest rate rise because of concerns about a strong dollar and other central banks' loose monetary policies. While the Fed is still widely expected to lift rates this month—for the first time in nine years—Yellen's comments caused traders to baulk after a recent run-up in the dollar.

Dealers are now awaiting the release of key US jobs data later in the day, although analysts say the report would need to be monstrosly bad to prevent a Fed rate rise in December. Asian stocks finished in the red, with Tokyo down 2.2 percent, Shanghai shedding 1.7 percent and Sydney 1.5 percent lower. — AFP

US HAILS GREEK ECONOMIC EFFORTS

ATHENS: US Secretary of State John Kerry hailed troubled Greece's economic recovery efforts in the midst of a huge migration challenge as he paid a brief visit to Athens yesterday.

"I appreciate the way you are approaching economic reforms efforts (...) it is not easy," Kerry told Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras. The leftist government of Alexis Tsipras is trying to apply an unpopular third EU economic bailout enacted in July in return for safeguarding the country's place in the eurozone.

Kerry later said that "more effort will be needed in the months ahead, but I am confident that Greece's leaders will continue to implement the reforms necessary to restore competitiveness.

However measures facilitating foreclosures against people who cannot pay their mortgages and plans to slash the minimum monthly pension have caused two general strikes in a month, indicating Tsipras faces a rough ride despite winning reelection on the bailout program.

Kerry also acknowledged the efforts to help refugees made by Greece, which has found itself on the front lines of the greatest migration influx facing Europe since the Second World War, and visited an Athens centre helping migrant women. The challenges Greece faces are compounded by security fears that jihadists are entering the continent posing as refugees from war-torn Syria. Kerry announced the United States will provide another \$24 million (19.2 million euros) in assistance for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, on top of the more than \$4.5 billion in humanitarian assistance Washington has provided since the start of the Syrian civil war.

More than 650,000 migrants and refugees have reached the Greek islands this year the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said last month. However "the real solution to the refugee crisis in Europe is to bring the earliest possible end to the conflict in Syria," said Kerry. His visit of several hours to Athens was the closing leg of a regional tour that also saw stops in Cyprus, Serbia and Kosovo. — AFP

CANADA JOBLESS RATE RISES TO 7.1%

OTTAWA: Canada shed 36,000 jobs in November, pushing up the unemployment rate a tick to 7.1 percent, the government statistical agency announced yesterday. Analysts had forecast fewer than 1,000 job losses in the month, following a jobs jump in October.

According to Statistics Canada, most of the lost jobs were part-time and linked to October legislative elections that swept Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to power, such as interviewers and statistical clerks. The agency said the number of employees in the private and public sectors fell in November, while self-employment increased.

Employment declined among youths aged 15 to 24, in Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island provinces, it said. Fewer people were employed in public administration, wholesale and retail trade, information, culture and recreation, as well as finance, insurance, real estate and leasing.

At the same time, there were more people in professional, scientific and technical services, manufacturing, construction, and agriculture jobs. — AFP

KENYAN FM DENIES PART OF EUROBOND CASH GONE ASTRAY

NAIROBI: Kenya's finance minister yesterday rejected claims that 140 billion shillings (\$1.4 billion) of the country's debut \$2 billion Eurobond had gone unaccounted for and detailed how the money had been channelled to other ministries.

The East African nation tapped international markets for the first time in June last year, with investors snapping up its debut five- and 10-year debt.

But opposition leader Raila Odinga said on Tuesday the government could not account for 140 billion shillings of the cash from the Eurobond. Cabinet Secretary for the National Treasury Henry Rotich denied any wrongdoing at his ministry, which also published an 18-page report detailing how the money was spent, in answer to Odinga's accusations. "There is no money missing,"

Rotich said, dismissing Odinga's claims. "This one was clearly misinterpretation of our fiscal accounts."

Public frustration has mounted in recent months over the failure to prosecute top officials accused of corruption. That has put pressure on President Uhuru Kenyatta, whose popularity has been weakened by the furore. In a lengthy question and answer session with journalists, Rotich

detailed how cash from the Eurobond and an additional \$750 million raised by reopening the bond had been sent to Kenya from US banks JP Morgan Chase and Citibank.

Kenya's public prosecutor earlier this week asked the country's anti-graft body and police to file a report into possible irregularities in spending of the Eurobond money. — Reuters



FRANKFURT: President of European Central Bank Mario Draghi speaks during the ECB Forum on banking supervision in Frankfurt. — AP

ECB COMES UNDER FIRE OVER 'TIMIDITY' OF POLICY MOVES

STOCKS DROP OVER UNDERWHELMING STIMULUS MEASURES

FRANKFURT: The ECB was under fire yesterday for failing to act as decisively as expected to rekindle inflation, with some market players suspecting divisions among the bank's top brass stopping it from doing more.

European Central Bank watchers accused bank chief Mario Draghi of undermining the bank's credibility and even jeopardizing the ability of the eurozone economy to get back on its feet as the policy measures announced at a meeting on Thursday fell short of the high expectations the ECB officials had themselves helped fuel in recent weeks.

After already falling sharply on Thursday, Europe's main stock markets sank further yesterday as disappointment lingered over the "underwhelming" stimulus measures, dealers said. "Markets are facing a new reality with ECB president Draghi disappointing expectations," said Christoph Rieger, head of rates and credit research at Commerzbank.

"The timid deposit rate cut and QE extension amid unchanged monthly purchase volumes have sent shockwaves through fixed income markets and beyond. Besides the tangible measures, the implicit acknowledgement that Draghi has lost the political backing in the governing council for his aggressive and activist stance seems most relevant," Rieger said.

Injecting life into economy

Speculation had swirled for weeks that the ECB would aggressively ramp up its bond-buying program and further loosen

monetary policy to inject some vim into a eurozone beset by years of torpid growth and stagnant inflation. Repeated comments by top ECB officials, including president Draghi, had fanned such expectations.

Instead, the ECB cut its key "deposit" rate by a modest 0.10 percent to minus 0.30 percent and extended the length of its bond purchases by just six months to March 2017. Even though Draghi vowed that the ECB was ready to do more if the situation warranted, the moves were seen as a huge let-down as the ECB crucially failed to increase the size of the stimulus and the rate cut was smaller than hoped for.

Some analysts believed that key members of the governing council, such as Bundesbank chief Jens Weidmann, had voted against the measures. "The main disappointment was the size of QE and the lack of step up in the monthly pace of asset purchases. It looks as if Draghi had to compromise more than expected with the most hawkish faction of the GC, but also wanted to keep some powder dry," said UniCredit analyst Marco Valli.

Under the QE or quantitative easing program, the ECB plans to buy 60 billion euros worth of assets each month in a bid to stoke inflation. While the amount of monthly purchases is not being increased, the program is being extended until March 2017, effectively boosting the overall total to 1.5 trillion euros.

Dissent on governing council?

At his traditional post-meeting news con-

ference, Draghi conceded that the decisions had not been unanimous, but insisted they were carried by a "large majority." Andrew Cates at RBS described the measures as "a damp squib". "The combined package of easing measures was far less aggressive than markets had expected. This ... will do little, in our view, to improve the ECB's credibility. Indeed we think it is, and will remain, quite damaging," Cates said. Financial markets would now "re-assess the ECB's willingness and ability to get ahead of the curve," Cates said.

"The failure to meet the expectations for further policy loosening fuelled by its own dovish signals has dented both (the ECB's) reputation for communication and, more importantly, the outlook for the eurozone economy," said Jonathan Loynes at Capital Economics. Market psychology plays a major role in the success of monetary policy and investors must feel confident in the ECB's ability to steer area-wide inflation to its target of "close to but just under 2.0 percent." But Thibault Mercier at BNP Paribas suggested the market had overreacted and that Draghi's underlying assessment that recovery was underway in the 19 countries that share the euro was correct. Fruthermore, Draghi explicitly left the door open to further easing, Mercier argued.

"The ECB delivered what economists broadly expected, but less than the market expected. When will markets learn that central banks are run by economists," said Paul Donovan at UBS. — AFP

GOLD INCHES LOWER AS DOLLAR REBOUNDS AHEAD OF US DATA

LONDON: Gold edged lower yesterday as the dollar rebounded ahead of an eagerly awaited US non-farm payrolls report, but looked set to snap a six-week losing streak.

On Thursday it rallied nearly 1 percent after monetary easing measures from the European Central Bank fell short of expectations, boosting the euro and sending the dollar to its lowest in a month.

Spot gold was down 0.1 percent at \$1,062.00 an ounce by 1104 GMT and was set for a 0.3 percent gain for the week. "The ECB announcement disappointed expectations and the immediate reaction of the euro reflected that, aiding gold in dollar terms," Mitsubishi Corp strategist Jonathan Butler said.

"But if the US economic recovery is indeed continuing and we see a fairly healthy jobs number, the story remains intact for a December rate rise, which should mean some further strengthening of the dollar and some more downside for gold."

Investors were focusing on the US jobs report, due at 1330 GMT, to gauge the strength of the economy and how it would impact the Federal Reserve's monetary policy. While November payrolls might not be as impressive as the 271,000 new jobs created in October, economists still expect a solid addition of 200,000 jobs for last month. A strong report could cement the case for a rate hike in December, boosting the dollar and hurting gold.

"Further dollar short-term weakness will support the precious complex. Support levels for gold are in the mid 1,040's and immediate resistance in the high 1,060's," said MKS Group trader James Gardiner. Gold early on Thursday fell to a near-six-year low of \$1,045.85 in reaction to a 12-1/2 year high in the dollar and prospects of a US rate hike this month.

Fed Chair Janet Yellen, speaking before Congress' Joint Economic Committee on Thursday, said the United States may be "close to the point at which we should be raising" rates. — Reuters

LUXEMBOURG TO APPEAL EU TAX DODGING FINE ON FIAT

LUXEMBOURG: Luxembourg said yesterday it will appeal an EU ruling that Italian auto giant Fiat must pay around 30 million euros (\$34 million) in back taxes after benefiting from an illegal tax break from the small Duchy. "The Luxembourg government today has decided to appeal the European Commission's decision in the Fiat case, in order to seek legal clarity and predictability on the practice of tax rulings," the finance ministry said in a statement. The European Union in October ordered Fiat as well as coffee maker Starbucks in the Netherlands to each repay up to 30 million euros in back taxes in a landmark tax avoidance case pursued in the wake of the LuxLeaks scandal.

The investigations, which also include Amazon and Apple in Ireland, widened further on Thursday with the EU's decision to probe the tax deals between Luxembourg and the US fast food giant McDonald's. Luxembourg said that it was unfairly targeted by the European Commission in the Fiat case for a practice that was common in "vast majority" of EU members states.

It also said that the commission, the EU's competition regulator, failed to prove that Fiat had benefited from illegal state aid through the tax break as defined by European law.

Tax deals between EU member states and companies-known as tax rulings-are not in themselves illegal and the firms involved insist they fully comply with tax laws.

But the Commission argues they run afoul of strict rules on state aid, which are designed to ensure fair competition for all across the EU. All these cases came in the wake of the LuxLeaks affair, which revealed that top global companies had negotiated lower tax rates, in some cases as low as one percent, in secret pacts with Luxembourg. — AFP

NORFOLK SOUTHERN REJECTS CANADIAN PACIFIC'S MERGER PROPOSAL

NORFOLK, Va: Norfolk Southern has rejected Canadian Pacific's cash-and-stock proposal to combine the two railroads. Last month Canadian Pacific offered \$46.72 in cash and 0.348 shares in the combined company.

Norfolk Southern Corp said Friday that its board determined the proposal was "grossly inadequate, creates substantial regulatory risks and uncertainties that are highly unlikely to be overcome and is not in the best interest of the company and its shareholders."

In a letter sent to Canadian Pacific CEO E. Hunter Harrison and Chairman Andrew Reardon, Norfolk Southern said that it felt the regulatory review process for the proposed deal would take two years or more, with a

very low likelihood of approval. Even if it were approved, Norfolk Southern said it would be "in limbo" for that time period, "causing loss of momentum and disruption to our business and operations."

Norfolk Southern said that it believes the ongoing execution of its strategic plan is superior to Canadian Pacific's proposal.

A representative for Canadian Pacific could not be immediately reached for comment. Federal regulators haven't approved any major railroad mergers in more than 15 years. One of the only major deals in recent years is when Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway conglomerate bought BNSF railroad in 2010. — AP



CHICAGO: A Norfolk Southern locomotive on Chicago's south side. Norfolk Southern has rejected Canadian Pacific's proposal to combine the two railroads. Norfolk Southern Corp said yesterday that its board determined the proposal was "grossly inadequate, creates substantial regulatory risks and uncertainties that are highly unlikely to be overcome and is not in the best interest of the company and its shareholders." —AP



BEIJING: Chinese investors nap while monitoring stock prices at a brokerage house in Beijing yesterday. Asian stocks sank yesterday extending a sell-off in world markets after Europe's central bank unveiled plans to stimulate the continent's ailing economy that fell short of investor expectations. —AP

CHINA OUTLINES MEASURE TO LIMIT STOCK MARKET SWINGS MOVE TO ENFORCE STABILITY IN VOLATILE MARKETS

BEIJING: Chinese regulators announced a mechanism yesterday to temporarily suspend stock trading in the event of wide price swings in the latest attempt to enforce stability in volatile markets.

Trading will be halted for 15 minutes if a broad market index, the CSI 300, rises or falls by 5 percent, the China Securities Regulatory Commission announced. The measure takes effect Jan. 1. Authorities are trying to restore confidence in Chinese stocks after a plunge in prices in June prompted a panicked, multibillion-dollar government intervention.

Beijing is gradually unwinding emergency controls that included a freeze on new stock offerings to stop the market plunge. The mechanism for temporary trading suspensions is intended to "safeguard market order, protect investor rights and promote orderly and healthy market development," said a statement on the websites

of the stock exchanges in Shanghai and the southern city of Shenzhen.

Such "circuit breakers" are relatively common in Asian stock markets. In Thailand, trading is suspended for 30 minutes if the main market index falls 10 percent from the previous day's close.

The Chinese measure also calls for trading to be suspended until the following day if, even after temporary halts, the total daily change in the CSI 300 exceeds 7 percent.

The CSI 300 is made up of the 300 largest-capitalization stocks on China's exchanges in Shanghai and the southern city of Shenzhen. It has risen or fallen by at least 5 percent on six trading days this year, most recently on Aug. 24, when it fell 7.8 percent.

Before the June slump, the benchmark Shanghai Composite Index soared more than 150 percent starting late last year after

state media said shares were inexpensive. That led investors to believe Beijing would prop up prices if needed.

The bubble burst after an unrelated change in banking rules in early June made investors think Beijing's support might be weakening.

The Shanghai index fell 30 percent in a few weeks but rebounded following Beijing's intervention. It has risen 20 percent from its low in early August.

A group of state entities bought shares to prop up prices. Goldman Sachs estimated in a report in August the group spent 860 billion-900 billion yuan (\$135 billion-\$140 billion) in June and July. The July moratorium on new stock sales led to cancellation of 28 planned initial public offerings. Regulators announced Nov. 6 those would resume and said additional sales would be allowed later. — AP

US CONGRESS REVIVES EXPORT IMPORT BANK

WASHINGTON: Congress has revived the federal Export-Import Bank five months after allowing it to expire, handing a victory to business groups and a defeat to tea party conservatives and the billionaire Republican donor Koch Brothers.

A measure extending the bank through 2019 was included in a massive transportation bill that cleared the House and Senate on Thursday and is expected to be signed by President Barack Obama. The small federal agency makes and guarantees loans to help foreign customers buy US exports. Business groups like the US Chamber of Commerce say it's necessary for US competitiveness, since most overseas competitors rely on similar government help.

"We applaud the determined work of those congressional leaders who have acted to protect the competitiveness of American companies," said US Chamber President Thomas J. Donohue. The bank says that last year it authorized \$20 billion worth of transactions which supported \$27.5 billion of US exports and 164,000 US jobs.

But conservatives decry the bank as corporate welfare and government interference in the free market. Pushed by the Koch Brothers, leading Republican presidential candidates arrayed against it and congressional Republicans who once supported the bank announced they were opposed. Amid that pressure and with tea party lawmakers on the ascent on Capitol Hill, Congress failed to act when the bank's charter was up for renewal June 30, allowing it to expire for the first time in its 81-year history.

All along, though, a majority of lawmakers in the House and Senate, including Republicans and Democrats with major manufacturers such as General Electric, Caterpillar or Boeing in their districts, supported the bank. An unusual series of maneuvers and alliances followed, including a rarely used procedure in the House to force a floor vote on the bank over the objections of top Republican leaders.

The end result was that the measure ended up on the highway bill and five months after expiring, the Ex-Im Bank is about to come back to life. However, conservatives and the Koch Brothers say they're not done yet. In an interview, Marc Short, president of the Koch-backed Freedom Partners, said that in four years' time when the bank is up for renewal again, opponents will prevail, thanks to efforts over the past several years to raise the issue's profile. — AP



The steel skeleton for the eastern end of the new Innerbelt Bridge in Cleveland sits next to the existing span. The House on Thursday voted overwhelmingly in favor of final passage of a 5-year, \$305 billion bill that boosts highway and transit spending and provides states with assurance that federal help will be available for major projects. Senate action is expected to follow shortly. —AP

US CONGRESS APPROVES BILL TO BOOST NATION'S INFRASTRUCTURE

\$305BN BILL TO BOOST NATION'S AGING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

WASHINGTON: Congress has approved a 5-year, \$305 billion bill to address the nation's aging and congested transportation systems, loading down the measure with industry favors, parochial projects, safety improvements and union demands, to win overwhelming bipartisan support.

The bill was approved 359-65 in the House, and 83-16 in the Senate. The bill that was passed on Thursday now goes to the White House for President Barack Obama's signature.

The bill boosts highway and transit spending and assures states that federal help will be available for major projects. It doesn't include as much money or last quite as long as many lawmakers and the Obama administration would have liked. Nor does it resolve how to pay for transportation programs in the long term. Despite that, the 1,300-page bill was hailed by industry and public officials as a major accomplishment that will halt the cycle of last-minute short-term fixes that have kept the federal Highway Trust Fund teetering on the edge of insolvency for much of the past eight years.

Republicans leaders can point to the bill's passage as evidence of their ability to govern, and Obama can claim progress on addressing the nation's aging and congested infrastructure, a major goal since the early days of his administration. Lawmakers in both parties praised the bill as a model of bipartisan cooperation and an important step forward.

"In the end, there wasn't really a philosophical problem here," said Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky. "The question was, how could we pull together these disparate pieces into one mosaic that actually had a chance to get somewhere?"

But Sen. Tom Carper, D-Delaware, a prominent supporter of increasing transportation

spending, said the deals cut to win the bill's passage caused him to reluctantly vote against it. "While this bill includes some good transportation policies, the way we pay for these policies is unsustainable and irresponsible, offering little more than a grab bag of budget gimmicks that will actually increase our deficit in the long run," he said.

New programs

One hallmark of the bill is the creation of new programs to focus federal aid on eliminating bottlenecks and increasing the capacity of highways designated as major freight corridors. The Transportation Department estimates the volume of freight traffic will increase 45 percent over the next 30 years.

A big shortcoming in the bill, though, is how it's all financed. The main source of revenue for transportation is the trust fund, which comes mostly from the 18.4-cents-a-gallon gasoline tax. That tax hasn't been raised since 1993 even though transportation spending has increased. But raising the gas tax is viewed by many lawmakers as too politically risky.

To make up the shortfall, the bill uses about \$70 billion in mostly budget ploys, including one that would move \$53 billion from the Federal Reserve Bank's capital account to the general treasury. It's counted as new money on paper, but is actually just a transfer of funds from one government account to another, federal budget experts said. Other items in the bill also don't include the means to pay for them, including more than \$10 billion over five years for Amtrak and other rail programs, \$12 billion for mass transit and \$1 billion for vehicle safety programs. The money for those programs remains subject to annual spending decisions by Congress.

Among the bill's losers are large banks,

which would receive lower dividends from the Federal Reserve, with the savings used for transportation programs. Banking officials complained that banks shouldn't be asked to foot the bill for highways and bridges.

The airline and cruise ship industries complained that their passengers are also being asked to pay for improvements unrelated to their travel. The bill ties customs fees to inflation and uses the increased revenue to offset the bill's cost. It also directs the sale of 66 millions of barrels of oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve in order to raise \$6.5 billion. The catch is the sales don't start until 2023 - three years after the transportation bill it helps pay for has expired.

The trucking industry was able to persuade lawmakers to order the government to remove trucking company safety scores from a public website despite opposition from safety advocates. Industry officials say the government's methodology is unfair. But safety advocates won inclusion of a long-sought provision requiring rental car agencies to repair recalled cars and trucks before renting them.

The bill also addresses several concerns raised by a deadly Amtrak derailment in Philadelphia in May. It provides \$200 million to help passenger railroads install positive train control technology that accident investigators say could have prevented the derailment had it been in operation. It also raises the liability cap on total damages that can be awarded in such crashes from \$200 million to \$295 million. The derailment killed eight people and injured nearly 200 others. The Amalgamated Transit Union, which represents city bus drivers, won a provision requiring the government to direct transit agencies to take steps to protect bus drivers from assault, a growing problem. — AP

BTG PACTUAL GETS BOOST WITH LOAN FROM BRAZIL FUND

SAO PAULO: Brazil's deposit guarantee fund on Friday provided Grupo BTG Pactual SA with a credit facility worth 6 billion reais (\$1.6 billion), boosting the finances of Latin America's biggest independent investment bank after the arrest of its founder sparked an outflow of funds.

In a securities filing, BTG Pactual said it would use a pool of outstanding loans to back the facility from FGC, as the privately-owned deposit guarantee fund is known in Brazil. The facility can be tapped immediately, the filing added. The announcement is a boost to BTG Pactual after clients withdrew money and financing conditions deteriorated following the Nov. 25 detention of former controlling shareholder André Esteves. Two credit rating agencies last week downgraded the bank's debt to junk status in the wake of Esteves' arrest.

The decision from the FGC, whose funding comes from a percentage of deposits held by Brazil's banking system, gives BTG Pactual some breathing space to meet 15 billion reais in borrowing due by year-end while proceeds from asset sales enter the bank's coffers. BTG Pactual had 40 billion reais in cash as of the end of September. BTG Pactual's top seven partners, who replaced Esteves at the helm of the São Paulo-based bank this week, are rushing to sell pools of loans and stakes in non-financial companies to raise cash. With long-term debt and equity covering only 23 percent of BTG Pactual's funding needs, the FGC facility automatically gives the bank access to longer-termed funds.

The announcement comes after BTG Pactual began talks with three unspecified international banks over the sale of Swiss private bank BSI Group, two sources said on Friday. One of the banks, which the sources declined to name, is Italian and another is Swiss. The decision to dispose of BSI, which BTG Pactual integrated only three months ago following Swiss regulatory approval, is part of the partners' strategy to downsize the bank, said the source, who requested anonymity because the process remains private.

According to two sources with direct knowledge of the negotiations that led to the credit facility, BTG Pactual placed assets worth 8 billion reais as collateral, with a guarantee by the bank's top seven partners. FGC is controlled by Brazil's top-three private sector lenders - Ita Unibanco Holding SA, Banco Bradesco SA and Banco Santander Brasil SA. A third source said BTG Pactual reached out for FGC on Tuesday evening, with terms of the credit facility being negotiated in over 48 hours. While the sources said that BTG Pactual's intention is to repay the facility as fast as possible, the parties agreed to keep it available until April.

The partners, led by Chairman Persio Arida and co-chief executive officers Roberto Sallouti and Marcelo Kalim, negotiated the credit facility from the FGC, the filing added.

BSI UP FOR SALE

A source familiar with the bank's strategy told Reuters that, so far, the strategy to rapidly get rid of non-essential assets other than banking is helping BTG Pactual replenish cash, while slowing the pace of withdrawals. Clients pulled out about a net 7 billion reais of their money at the bank's asset management unit the week after Esteves was jailed for allegedly seeking to obstruct a sweeping corruption probe in Brazil.

About 250 million reais left BTG Pactual's main Brazil-registered, fixed-income funds on Tuesday, or a tenth of the amount pulled the day Esteves was arrested, industry and Thomson Reuters data showed. Two unidentified Chinese lenders also expressed interest in Lugano, Switzerland-based BSI, although Swiss regulatory authorities would not feel comfortable with them, the sources added. A BSI spokesman had no comment.

BTG Pactual declined to comment. The Swiss financial industry watchdog could not be immediately reached for comment. The sources did not give details on the size of a potential transaction, but said that BTG Pactual may be able to sell the unit for an amount equivalent between 1.6 times and 1.8 times BSI's equity. BTG Pactual paid about \$1.3 billion to Italy's Assicurazioni Generali SpA for BSI.

Ray Soudah, chairman of Swiss-based advisory firm Millenium Associates, said BSI's lack of integration to the rest of the group because of its recent acquisition would make it easier to sell.

With investors uncertain about the success of the strategy, prices of BTG Pactual's \$1 billion worth of 4 percent bonds maturing in January 2020, the bank's most widely traded dollar note, slipped 0.75 cent on the dollar to 52.25 cents on Friday. The price of BTG Pactual's 8.75 percent perpetual junior bond rose 0.25 cent on the dollar to 41.75 cents, yielding almost 40 percent. The day before Esteves' detention, the yield was 11.5 percent. — Reuters



Kuwait Times

Weiland

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2015

Scott Weiland dies at 48, says Guitarist

www.kuwaittimes.net

SEE PAGE 22

In this Aug 1, 2008, file photo, singer Scott Weiland, right, and his son Noah Weiland pose on the press line at the T-Mobile Sidekick LX Tony Hawk Edition Party in Los Angeles. — AP



US band Velvet Revolver, L to R, Dave Kushner, Scott Weiland, Slash and Duff McKagan, pose with the best hard rock award at the Grammy Awards ceremony in Los Angeles in this February 13, 2005, file photo. — AP/AFP photos



In this Dec 1, 2004, file photo, Velvet Revolver lead singer Scott Weiland, left, and Slash perform "Fall to Pieces" perform at the VH1 Big in '04 awards, in Los Angeles.

Scott Weiland dies at 48, says Guitarist

Rocker Scott Weiland, ex-frontman of the Stone Temple Pilots and Velvet Revolver who battled substance abuse over the years, was found dead on Thursday. He was 48. Jane's Addiction guitarist Dave Navarro tweeted the news. "Just learned our friend Scott Weiland has died. So gutted, I am thinking of his family tonight," Navarro wrote. Weiland was found unresponsive on his tour bus in Minnesota, where he and his current band The Wildabouts were scheduled to perform at the Medina Ballroom, but the show was cancelled, according to TMZ.

Zach Myers, lead singer and guitarist for The



This March 10, 2015 file photo shows Scott Weiland and The Wildabouts performing at Gramercy Theatre in New York.

Fairwell, corroborated the news on Twitter. "Sadly our production manager who worked for STP for a long time just confirmed So sad," he said. It's unknown what caused the singer's death. Weiland, who battled heroin and cocaine addiction over the years, was known for his flamboyant and unpredictable persona onstage.

Wielding a megaphone alongside his bandmates for sound effect, the fiery-haired frontman led the Southern California-based Stone Temple Pilots for two decades. Also referred to as "STP" by their fans, the quartet stormed the grunge scene in 1992 with hit single "Creep" before going on to become one of the most popular rock bands of the



In this May 17, 2008, file photo, Scott Weiland, singer for the rock band Stone Temple Pilots, right, and bass player Robert DeLeo perform during their concert as part of Rock on the Range in Columbus, Ohio.



This March 10, 2015 file photo shows Scott Weiland and The Wildabouts performing at Gramercy Theatre in New York.

1990s and 2000s with power ballads like "Plush," "Big Empty" and "Interstate Love Song." Their music still plays in heavy rotation on alternative rock stations alongside '90s acts like Nirvana, Soundgarden and Pearl Jam.

But it was Weiland's rock star ways that often got him in trouble offstage. After spending five months in prison for possession of heroin in 1998, he was later charged with domestic abuse for assaulting his

wife. In 2008, he checked into rehab after being arrested for a DUI and is believed to have struggled with sobriety for the past 25 years. "People have this misconception about me," he said in an interview with USA Today in 2011. "OK, I struggled with heroin and cocaine and I was a big rock star. But music is not what defines me. I'm a brother, a father, a son."

Weiland later split from Stone Temple Pilots and formed supergroup Velvet Revolver with ex-Guns N' Roses rockers Slash and Duff McKagan, and Matt Sorum. The band eventually split up, again because of Weiland's substance abuse. "I'm still on the verge all the time," he said of his fight to remain sober. "My brother passed away [from a drug overdose in 2007], and that's something that will always stay with me." In 2008, Weiland reunited with STP for the last time before leaving the band again and embarking on a solo career. But not, of course, without Weiland storming off in dramatic fashion.

After ex-members of Stone Temple Pilots sued the two-time Grammy-winner in 2013 for playing their material during his solo shows (STP was later fronted by Linkin Park singer Chester Bennington), Weiland countersued, calling his ex-bandmates' claims "ridiculous." The group eventually reached a settlement out of court. "I apologize to those fans out there who are, feel like they're caught in the middle of it," he said at the time. "Cause I sure feel like I'm caught in the middle of it emotionally, and all I want to do is play music." Known for his baritone vocal style, Weiland has also performed with the remaining members of The Doors for a VH1 "Storytellers" special. He is survived by his two children, Noah and Lucy. — Reuters



In this Nov 24, 2008, file photo, singer Scott Weiland performs at the Hollywood & Highland complex in Los Angeles to promote his new album, "Happy in Galoshes."



This photo provided by courtesy of the Petersen Automotive Museum shows the Pixar Cars exhibit at the newly renovated Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles. —AP photos

Pixar goes under Lightning McQueen's hood in new exhibit

Pixar is unlocking exactly how Lightning McQueen runs in a new museum exhibit. The animation studio is showing off what's underneath the "Cars" character's metal body at the newly overhauled Petersen Automotive Museum. The exhibit features a life-size version of Lightning McQueen, original art by "Cars" production designer Bob Pauley and several displays with real-world renditions of the character's engine, suspension and other running parts. Pixar teamed with the Petersen to create its first museum exhibit to teach families about the interworking of automobiles.

How will children feel about seeing a dissected rendition of the beloved animated race car voiced by Owen Wilson? "It was tricky," said Jay Ward, creative director of the "Cars" fran-

chise. "We were very careful about not showing a cut-away of McQueen. For all the parts, we're only showing vignettes. We didn't want the character's head open or anything like that. It is a living character who happens to be a car, but when you watch the films and these characters fly through the air, all that stuff is under there."

Ward said the creators at Pixar wanted to plot an exhibit that was both educational and fun but didn't feel like a rehash of the "Cars"-themed land at Disney's California Adventure theme park in Anaheim, California. "I didn't want this space to feel like a preschool," said Ward during a Thursday preview.

"I didn't want it to feel like a place where you would just drop your kids off. I wanted it to be place where the whole family can engage. We came

up with something where you can hopefully walk away from it and feel like you learned how your car runs."

The exhibit also includes an augmented reality experience voiced by "Cars" actors that drives visitors through the second floor of the museum, which features exhibits on motorcycles, hot rods and alternative power.

Besides the "Cars" injection, the Petersen underwent a \$90 million makeover that added a new floor of exhibition space, steel ribbon exterior and an upscale restaurant, as well as several "Forza MotorSport 6" driving simulator stations and vehicles featured in films and TV shows, such as rides from "Batman," "Spectre" and "Magnum P.I." The updated Petersen Automotive Museum reopens to the public Dec 7. — AP

Check out these Star Wars fan films to feel the Force



If the teasers, trailers and hints haven't sated your appetite for all things Star Wars in advance of the latest entry in the franchise, then it's time to tap into the force of fan films. These sometimes hilarious, sometimes awe-inspiring and always off-canon creations are showcases for the creativity of Star Wars fanatics. You've got to give them credit for piecing together trailer hints into logical themes, pulling off low-budget special effects, and acting in generally cheesy fashion. And fear not - the Disney empire won't be striking back. The company encourages these mash-ups, having revived the annual Star Wars Fan Film Awards in 2014 two years after buying Lucasfilm.

Here's a mini-marathon playlist to get you primed for the premiere of "Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens":

1. A musical tribute to Star Wars fans set to Elton John's "Rocket Man."
2. A low-budget remake of "The Force Awakens" trailer.
3. A special-effects laden duel, complete with Kylo Ren's wicked lightsaber crossguard.
4. The crew of the US aircraft carrier Dwight D Eisenhower remade the teaser trailer, complete with real-life fighter pilots.
5. A clever stitching together of various teasers and trailers to date, including bits from international trailers and voice-overs from previous films.
6. A lightsaber fight that gets extra points for the choreography (note the behind the back parry) and alternate endings.
7. Lightsaber boomerangs make this fan film scream "From Down Unda."
8. An officially sanctioned fan film that riffs on characters from the prequel trilogy and "The Clone Wars" animated series.
9. A Boba Fett spin-off teaser premised on his escape from the sarlacc that swallowed him in "Return of the Jedi."
10. Yet another lightsaber battle - this time taken to deliberately ridiculous extremes. Watch for the Minecraft reference. — AP

A look at the hot toys for holiday 2015

Which toys will warm the hearts of parents and kids for the holiday 2015 shopping season? Holiday toys hit the shelves in recent weeks. And so far, just as in the past few years, there's no single hot toy emerging. But anything "Star Wars," life-like robotic pets and remote controlled toys should drive sales. As the holiday shopping season kickoff starts over Thanksgiving weekend, toy sales will heat up. The Associated Press has compiled a list of some of this year's expected hot toys and trends for 2015:

'Star Wars'

* **The Black Series Kylo Ren Force FX Lightsaber by Hasbro:** toy weapon makes light and sound effects. \$199.99.

* **BladeBuilders Jedi Master Lightsaber set from Hasbro:** system allows kids to customize weapons. \$49.99.

* **The Force Awaken's BB-8 Droid by Sphero:** remote-controlled robot that connects to an app. It changes expression and even perks up when given voice commands. \$149.99.

* **Star Wars Millennium Falcon RC Quad by Spin Master:** remote-controlled version of the iconic ship. \$140

Robotic pets

* **Little Live Pets CleverKeet from Moose Toys:** interactive, singing and talking bird. He



The Legendary Yoda toy boasts lifelike movements and voice recognition.

responds to voice. \$59.99.

* **Imaginext Ultra T-Rex from Mattel's Fisher-Price:** robotic dinosaur that has sound effects, walks, stands and fires projectiles. \$99.99.

* **FurReal Friends StarLily My Magical Unicorn from Hasbro:** robotic unicorn with a horn that lights up. Also can spread and flutter her wings. It connects to an app. \$119.99.

* **Smart Toy Bear from Mattel's Fisher-Price:** plush bear that connects to an app and customizes based on the child's preferences. \$99.99.

* **Bright Beats Dance & Move BeatBo:** Press BeatBo's tummy or any of the buttons on his feet to activate fun songs. Parents or the baby can record a phrase that can be remixed into a song for language and communication skills. \$39.99.

Other

* **Kidizoom Smartwatch DX from VTech:** smartwatch for kids that can take pictures and videos. \$64.99

Fast and furious:

* **Nerf Rival from Hasbro:** latest blaster under Nerf that has a trigger lock and high-impact rounds. \$49.99 (1200 blaster) \$24.99 (700 blaster)

* **Marvel Avengers XPV Remote Control Hulk Smash Vehicle from Jakks-Pacific:** remote-controlled Hulk that smashes, flips and does wheelies. \$69.99.

* **Anki Overdrive robotic car set:** radio-controlled car set that works with an android or iPhone device. \$149.99.

* **Paw Patroller from Spin Master:** toy truck inspired from Nickelodeon's animated series "Paw Patrol" features a working elevator, a functional Command Center inside and sound effects. \$59.99.

* **Pie Face from Hasbro:** Kids put whipped cream or a wet sponge on the "hand" of the game and start turning the handle. It could go off any minute - and splat. \$19.99 — AP



The Marvel Avengers Remote Control Hulk Smash XPV from Jakks Pacific is displayed at the TTPM Holiday Showcase in New York. — AP photos



A Bright Beats Dance & Move BeatBo from Fisher-Price is displayed at the TTPM Holiday Showcase in New York.

Designers channel their 'Star Wars' geekdom for charity

Chewbacca never had it so good. The ultra-hairy "Star Wars" character isn't known for his fashion sensibility, but he was the inspiration for not one but two highly furry ensembles displayed Tuesday by designers indulging their inner "Star Wars" geekdom with new looks - to be auctioned off for charity - as fans hotly await the seventh installment later this month, "Star Wars: The Force Awakens."

The dozen or so garments in the "Force 4 Fashion" collection - by the likes of Diane von Furstenberg, Rag & Bone and Opening Ceremony - were based mainly on new characters in the latest film, but also a few veterans. Most recognizable were the stormtrooper ensembles created by Ovadia & Sons, which presented a floor-length boxy white coat with black trim, and by Opening Ceremony, which displayed a more tightly tailored look - well, for a stormtrooper - in white microsuede. As for Chewie, he (or it?) inspired a

There was some definite gender-bending happening, particularly with Halston. The label's designer, Maria Mazelis, decided to give the male Kylo Ren (played by Adam Driver) a female identity, probably because, well, gowns are a lot more glamorous than menswear. "I was really excited by the idea of a villain," Mazelis said, standing alongside her sleek dark gown, with a plunging neckline, sheer back and revealing side slits,



An outfit inspired by the film, 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens,' is displayed.

luscious merino shearling coat by Billy Reid, lined with brown leather and paired with a white turtleneck sweater and gray wool track pants. The creature was also embodied in a furry Todd Snyder ensemble, pairing a brown coat with white top and tan pants.

Some designers went for the glamour. Not surprisingly, Diane von Furstenberg incorporated her signature "wrap" effect into a gold, filmy ensemble for Rey, the new film's female protagonist, played by Daisy Ridley. Parker presented a glittery Captain Phasma (Gwendoline Christie), inspired by ancient tribal warriors; the same character got a dramatic printed gown from Giles Deacon. Marcus Wainwright and David Neville of Rag & Bone, self-professed "Star Wars" fans, also clothed Rey, but in a much sportier style emulating their athletic urban streetwear. (The designers also offered a darker look for villain Kylo Ren.)



An outfit inspired by the film, "Star Wars: The Force Awakens," is displayed at a gallery.



A floor-length boxy white coat with black trim designed by Ovadia & Sons, inspired by the film, "Star Wars: The Force Awakens".



A luscious merino shearling coat designed by Billy Reid, inspired by the film, "Star Wars: The Force Awakens," is displayed at a gallery on Wednesday in New York. — AP photos



An outfit inspired by the film, 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens,' is displayed.



Daisy Ridley, left, and John Boyega attend the Star Wars "Force 4 Fashion" event at Skylight Modern.

topped off with a beaded mask that covers the eyes. "The complexity of this character was intriguing. It's powerful, but emotional too. Strong and yet vulnerable. I wanted to show that duality." And Cynthia Rowley gave a human character to the droid BB-8, putting the character in a white pants, a sweatshirt with a big '8' on it, and a round football-style helmet.

Disney and Bloomingdale's are partnering for the fundraising initiative; proceeds from the auction will go to the Child Mind Institute. (There are, as yet, no plans to recreate the pieces for sale.) A separate auction will feature a custom, bejeweled BB-8 created by Kay Jewelers, weighing more than one and a half pounds and made of gold and diamonds. Proceeds from that auction will go to St Jude's Children's Research Hospital, a representative said, noting that the piece had been appraised at \$135,000. Though a number of the designers are said to be big "Star Wars" fans, Mazelis was thinking of her kids, ages 4 and 6, whom she called "superfans." Will her design earn her some points with them? "One day they will appreciate it," she replied hopefully. — AP



An outfit inspired by the film, "Star Wars: The Force Awakens."



Toys and other memorabilia from the 'Star Wars' movie series are displayed during a press preview at Sotheby's in New York. — AP photos



Toys and other memorabilia from the 'Star Wars' movie series are displayed.

Online auction to offer 'Star Wars' collectibles



Action figures from the 'Star Wars' movie series are displayed.

Hundreds of rare and original collectibles associated with "Star Wars" are headed to auction. Sotheby's is holding the online auction for items associated with the space odyssey series. Estimates run from \$100 to \$35,000. It's the collection of Japanese designer NIGO (NEE'-goh). The items will be offered Dec 11 at: Sothebys.com/star-warsauction and eBay.com/Sothebys. Two "Power of the Force" coin sets that were only available on special request from the manufacturer have a \$25,000 to \$35,000 estimate. A Luke Skywalker figurine with double telescoping lightsaber has a pre-sale estimate of \$12,000 to \$18,000. Highlights will be on view Dec 4 to 11 at The Conde Nast Gallery at One World Trade Center. "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" is being released this month. — AP



A statue of Darth Vader from the 'Star Wars' movie series is displayed.



A plush Chewbacca figure from the 'Star Wars' movie series is displayed during a press preview at Sotheby's in New York.



A rare Luke Skywalker toy from the 'Star Wars' movie series is displayed.



A camera man takes pictures of toys and other memorabilia from the 'Star Wars' movie series on display.



Visitors look a trunk bed (1930) displayed at the Louis Vuitton's exhibition "Fly, Sail, Travel" at the Grand Palais, in Paris. — AFP photos



Trunks, bags and clothes are displayed during the Louis Vuitton's exhibition "Fly, Sail, Travel" at the Grand Palais.

Louis Vuitton exhibit in Paris explores house's history



Bags are displayed on a plane replica at the Louis Vuitton's exhibition.



A visitor looks bags (2001) designed by Marc Jacob as part of the Louis Vuitton's exhibition.

Fashion powerhouse Louis Vuitton is showcasing its 160 years of know-how in Paris with a new exhibit that explores the history of the famed monogram bags. The show, "Volez, Voguez, Voyagez" opens Thursday in Grand Palais - a place steeped in history for the house since Vuitton first presented its trunks here in 1900 during Paris' Universal Exhibition. The exhibit includes 180 pieces spread across nine rooms from the Vuitton archives, including eccentric trunks, age-old beauty cases, leather goods and paintings. And via video installations, it traces Louis Vuitton's great journey from 1854 till today, through depictions of the maison's founding members, colorful clients and those who still shape the brand today. — AP



A 1906 trunk owned by Louis Vuitton is displayed.



An interior view of Will Cotton's home and art collection.

Book looks at how top artists choose, display works at home

Imagine being invited on a house tour of the homes of 25 well-known contemporary artists, strolling around their big, airy downtown lofts and other city abodes as they take you aside and explain how they chose the artworks displayed there. The new book "Artists Living with Art" (Abrams) is that tour. The coffee-table book, photographed by Oberto Gili and written by Stacey Goergen and Amanda Benchley, with a foreword by art historian Robert Storr, includes dozens of photos and interviews with the artists, most of whom live within



This photo provided by Abrams shows the cover of the book, "Artists Living with Art," published by Abrams, in October 2015. — AP photos



Artist Michele Oka Doner in her home with her art collection, included in the book, "Artists Living with Art," published by Abrams.

blocks of each other. Chuck Close, Will Cotton, Rashid Johnson, Marilyn Minter, Cindy Sherman and others discuss how they select and display the artworks decorating their homes, and their thoughts on collecting. The result is an artistic and original approach to interiors. Here, art tends to be moved frequently - often every six months - and paintings can be overlapped, often leaning casually against walls.

Chinese scholars' rocks - stones naturally formed by the weather into interesting forms - and a range of handmade ceramics are featured in almost every home. And each intimate interior reflects friendships and inspirations, and includes an often-unexpected array of collections, many displayed in unusual ways.

"Through looking at the things artists own and listening to their stories of what it means to them, you can learn more about their work, inspirations and relationships," explained Goergen, who previously worked in the curatorial department of the Whitney Museum of Modern Art. "In every home featured, we saw a passion for form," she said, mentioning the artists' shared interest in



This photo provided by Abrams shows NASA drawings in artist Will Cotton's home, included in the book, "Artists Living with Art," published by Abrams.

rock formations.

"Joan Jonas collects interesting stones or rocks herself and sometimes gives them to her friends as gifts," Benchley added. Unlike professional art collectors, who might buy art as an investment or focus on a specific genre, or interior designers, who select works with an eye to decorating a space, these artists require a deeper, more personal connection for a work to gain entrée. The results can be startling, like Close's passion for Old Master canvases and drawings, sometimes alongside more contemporary masters like Roy Lichtenstein and Willem de Kooning. "If an artist's work can hold the wall with that of his heroes, he knows he's on the right track," writes Storr in the book.

The light-filled loft that Will Cotton shares with Rose Dergan, a staffer at Gagolian



Artist Chuck Close in his home with his Old Masters paintings, included in the book, "Artists Living with Art," published by Abrams.



This photo provided by Abrams shows artist Cindy Sherman in her studio among props and costumes from her work, included in the book, "Artists Living with Art," published by Abrams, in October 2015.



This photo provided by Abrams shows an interior view of Chuck Close's home and art collection.

Gallery, features plenty of his own work. An enormous sculpture of stacked, life-size plaster cakes stands near a huge front window, not far from enormous landscape paintings featuring lollipop trees and gingerbread houses. There are portraits of beautiful women clad in marshmallows or cake, or lounging seductively on cotton-candy clouds. The loft also features works by Andy Warhol, Jasper Johns and David Salle. But like many of the artists featured in this book, Cotton says he seldom buys art, and accumulated much of his collection through bartering.

Flat, metal file cabinets store a decade's worth of drawings by fellow artists in a drawing group he has hosted at his home since 2002. "Drawing is so direct. It's the moment of thought," Cotton said in an interview in his airy TriBeCa loft. "It's the structure of painting. I always make a drawing before I make a painting."

Some of his most cherished drawings - and among the few he has purchased - are dozens of 1960s rocket-ship drawings auctioned off by NASA and drawn by engineers, not artists. One of his favorites explores the ways an astronaut could exit a lunar module on the surface of the moon.

"This one looks like a fishing pole that will pick up one of the astronauts and deposit him on the ground," Cotton explained with a grin. "It's so ridiculous, but I love these because they remind me of my approach to working through ideas. When I'm working out what a painting is going to look like, I go through this same process. I love idea-drawings of any kind."

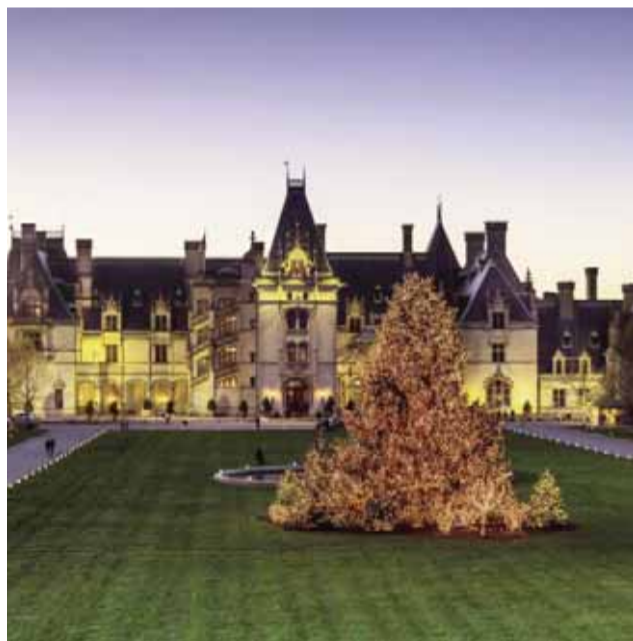
But Cotton's most beloved piece, which hangs in his sparse, brick-walled bedroom, is a 1956 charcoal of a nude, legs crossed to one side, by Gil Elvgren, a mid-century illustrator known for calendar pinup girls. Cotton discovered Elvgren's work while searching for ideas about how to populate his candy landscapes, and the charcoal drawing became an inspiration to him.

"It's a light treatment of sexuality, as opposed to Hustler or Penthouse or something like that, which doesn't interest me at all. It's more playful and sweet," he said. Unlike other collectors, artists "acquire and put up things that mean something very specific to them, things that energize them and help them to make their work better and more distinctive," writes Storr. In this sense, the book is a voyeuristic tour not only of artists' homes, but of their thought processes too. — AP



Christmas trees, gingerbread houses and holiday attractions

Visitors viewing the annual Holiday Train Show at the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx borough of New York. —AP photos



An illuminated Christmas tree at the Biltmore, a historic mansion in Asheville, NC.



People stop to look at Peanuts characters displayed in a holiday window at Macy's in New York.

Gingerbread houses, dazzling light displays and Christmas trees made of macarons and recycled bottles are among this season's holiday attractions. Here are some details.

New York city

The tree at Rockefeller Center is one of New York's most famous Christmas traditions but there are many others: the Rockettes at the Radio City Christmas Spectacular; the Neapolitan Baroque crèche at the Metropolitan Museum of Art; the origami tree at the American Museum of Natural History, and store window displays at Macy's, Bergdorf Goodman, Barneys, Saks Fifth Avenue, Lord & Taylor and other retailers. Macy's theme this year is "A Charlie Brown Christmas."

New this year in Lower Manhattan is Luminaries, a colorful, choreographed light show at the Winter Garden near One World Trade. Head to the city's outer boroughs for the New York Botanical Garden's holiday train show in the Bronx, with model trains chugging past replicas of landmarks; the Christmas Lights Tour of Brooklyn's Dyker Heights neighborhood, offered by A Slice of Brooklyn Bus Tours; and a gingerbread village with 1,050 gingerbread houses at the New York Hall of Science in Queens.

Christmas trees around the country

In Washington, DC, the national Christmas tree stands on the Ellipse at President's Park near the White House. In Los Angeles, check out the tree at the Grove. The city of Chicago's official Christmas tree is at Millennium Park after decades at Daley Plaza. Kansas City, Missouri, hosts one of the nation's tallest trees at nearly 100 feet high in Crown Center. Boston's Faneuil Hall hosts a tree and a light-and-sound show called Blink!.

In Charlotte, North Carolina, the Ritz-Carlton is displaying a 17-foot sustainable tree made from 789 recycled green plastic bottles and three trees made from thousands of colorful macaron cookies. The hotel also has a life-size gingerbread house.

Theme parks

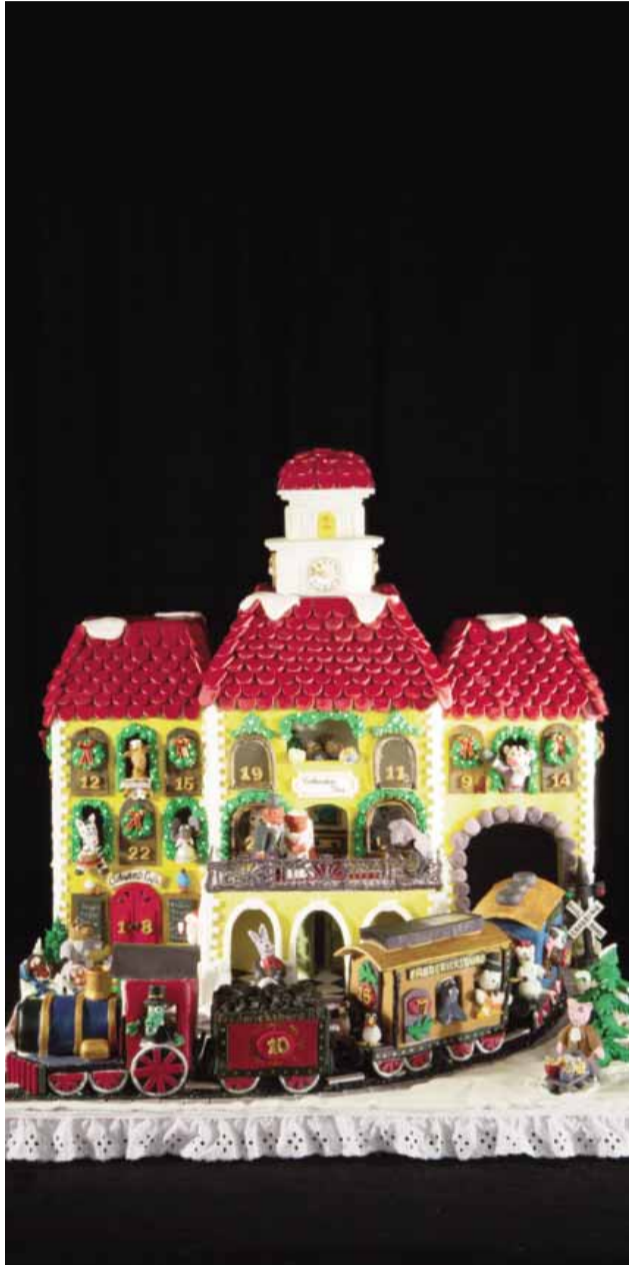
It's your last chance to see the Osborne Family Spectacle of Dancing Lights at Walt Disney World this season. The spectacle started at the Arkansas home of Jennings Osborne and moved to Disney World in 1995 after the Osbornes ran into problems with neighbors. The attraction features millions of lights synchronized to holi-



This November 2015 image shows a 17-foot sustainable tree made from 789 green plastic bottles on display at the Ritz-Carlton in Charlotte, NC.



Visitors are bathed in colored light from overhead lanterns that are part of Luminaries, a new choreographed light show at the Winter Garden in the World Financial Center in Lower Manhattan, New York.



One of the winners in the National Gingerbread House Competition, on display at the Omni Grove Park Inn in Asheville, NC.



Photo provided by Walt Disney World in Lake Buena Vista, Fla, shows the Osborne Family Spectacle of Dancing Lights, which is on view at the theme park this holiday season for the last time.



A fortune teller display appears in a holiday window at Bergdorf Goodman in New York.

day music. The space will be used in the future for new Stars Wars and Toy Story-themed areas.

Universal Studios Hollywood in Los Angeles features the Grinch and live Grinchmas shows, Dec 5-6 and 12-13, then daily Dec. 18-Jan. 3. Other Universal events inspired by the Dr Seuss classic "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" include story time with Cindy-Lou Who, cookie decorating and ornament decorating.

In Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, Dollywood's Smoky Mountain Christmas offers 4 million lights, Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer and shows including "An Appalachian Christmas," "Twas the Night Before Christmas," and "A Christmas Carol" that uses holograms to conjure Dolly Parton onstage as the Ghost of Christmas Past.

Gingerbread, lights and more

In Wheeling, West Virginia, Oglebay Park hosts its annual Winter Festival of Lights. Five displays were shown in the festival's first year in 1985. Now 80 displays light up a 6-mile driving course. In Missouri, Branson's Silver Dollar City features more than 5 million lights and 1,000 decorated trees as part of An Old Time Christmas festival through Dec 30. The Lake of the Ozarks area's largest drive-through holiday light park, the Enchanted Village of Lights, covers 27 acres on the Laurie Fairgrounds.

In Asheville, North Carolina, the historic, 250-room Biltmore House displays a 34-foot tree in the Banquet Hall, with a 55-foot Norway spruce lit up outside by 45,000 tiny white lights. Wreaths, garlands, candles and choirs add to this year's decor theme, "A Gilded Age Christmas."

Activities and events include Candlelight Christmas Evenings, daily seminars on decorating with wreaths and creating holiday "tablescapes," wine tastings and visits with Santa.

Also in Asheville, at the historic Omni Grove Park Inn, winners of the 23rd annual National Gingerbread House Competition are on display through Jan 3. The hotel is offering a gingerbread holiday package for guests, while others may visit the gingerbread display in the Sammons Wing and Vanderbilt Wing Sunday afternoons through Thursdays, excluding the holidays (parking, \$10).

In New Mexico, a gingerbread replica of a historic Santa Fe hotel, La Fonda on the Plaza, will be displayed in the lobby alongside a carved nativity scene. A holiday winter festival called CHILL comes to sunny Southern California thanks to the retired ocean liner Queen Mary, docked in Long Beach. A geodesic dome onsite houses an igloo with ice tubing and ice sculptures depicting scenes from "A Christmas Carol." There's a skating rink, too.—AP



The Banquet Hall at the Biltmore, a historic mansion in Asheville, NC.

PROBE WILL TEST TECHNOLOGY TO DETECT RIPPLES IN SPACE-TIME EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY LAUNCHES ROCKET



DEKALB: Employees work next to the gas lines of the Mississippi Power Co. carbon capture power plant in DeKalb, Miss. The construction costs for the plant have grown to about \$6.4 billion and it has been repeatedly delayed, but Southern Company, owners of Mississippi Power stand by the plant as a model for burning coal while emitting less carbon dioxide and hope to market its key technology. —AP

‘CLEAN COAL’ TECHNOLOGY FAILS TO CAPTURE WORLD’S ATTENTION

DEKALB, Miss: The Kemper County power plant was supposed to be up and running by now, showing the world how to burn coal without spewing climate-warming carbon pollution into the air.

Instead, the coal plant towering over pine trees and pastures in rural Mississippi is looking like another monument to the unfulfilled promise of carbon capture technology. Construction costs have ballooned to \$6.5 billion, at least three times the original estimate, making Kemper one of the most expensive power plants ever built and pushing up electric bills for Mississippi Power's 186,000 customers. After repeated delays, the project now has a completion date of June 30, or two years behind schedule, and there are doubts even that deadline will be met.

Even some of those who supported the plant have turned against it, advising others to think long and hard before trying something similar.

"I can't imagine that a regulator would approve this. I can't imagine that a company would approve this," said Cecil Brown, a Democrat recently elected to the Mississippi Public Service Commission. As a state legislator, he voted in ways that aided construction of the Kemper plant.

Carbon capture entails catching the carbon emissions from a power plant or cement or steel factory and injecting them underground for permanent storage. It's a proven technology that would allow the world to keep burning coal, oil and gas for energy while releasing little of the heat-trapping gas that scientists say is the main cause of global warming.

Despite decades of research and pilot projects, however, carbon capture is still waiting for its breakthrough, illustrating how hard it is for the world to do some-

thing about global warming even when the tools are there. In 2013, Norway pulled the plug on a major carbon capture project it had likened to the moon landing, citing spiraling costs. Another big setback came on Nov. 25, just days ahead of the UN climate talks in Paris, when Britain abruptly canceled 1 billion pounds (\$1.5 billion) in funding for carbon capture technology, raising doubts about the fate of two projects competing for the money. While high costs are the main problem, carbon capture also faces opposition from environmentalists. Groups like Greenpeace and WWF say climate action should be geared toward 100 percent renewable energy such as wind and solar power, not toward throwing a lifeline to fossil fuels.

But authoritative bodies like the International Energy Agency and the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change say that without deploying carbon capture technology on a large scale, the world may not be able to reach the UN goal of keeping man-made warming below 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit), which governments hope will stave off some of the worst floods, droughts and heat waves associated with rising temperatures.

Still, the costly technology is likely to get little attention in the Paris talks. Of the more than 170 countries that submitted action plans ahead of the conference, only eight explicitly mentioned carbon capture as a potential mitigation measure, according to an analysis by the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research in Germany.

Bill Hare, who heads the Climate Analytics institute in Berlin, said carbon capture may have missed its moment

when investments didn't take off despite a lot of "hype" a decade ago. Now, he said, the falling costs of renewable energy mean carbon capture has a lot of catching up to do.

"It's probably harder to get this moving now than 10 years ago," Hare said. There are 13 large-scale carbon capture projects in the world, collecting 26 million tons of carbon dioxide a year, according to the International Energy Agency. But that's less than one one-thousandth of the world's carbon dioxide emissions. "There's activity out there, but it's not what various organizations would have hoped for," said Juho Lipponen, who heads the IEA's carbon capture unit.

Like most carbon capture advocates, he called for stronger incentives, including a carbon price that makes it more expensive to release the pollutant into the atmosphere than to put it back in the ground. The IEA says about \$12 billion has been invested in large-scale carbon capture projects in the past 10 years. About 80 percent of it came from the private sector, mostly oil and gas companies. The coal industry, however, is "still not going beyond the nice words," despite years of praising carbon capture as a promising clean coal technology, Lipponen said.

Struggle ahead

Benjamin Sporton, CEO of the World Coal Association, said the industry is investing in carbon-capture projects, including a power plant under construction in Tianjin, China. But he added that the technology will struggle unless it gets the same support from governments as renewable energy, which "has been driven by policy that provides \$100 billion in subsidies every year." —AP

BERLIN: The European Space Agency on Thursday launched a rocket carrying two cubes of gold and platinum almost a million miles from Earth so that scientists can see how they'll behave in free fall - at a cost of more than \$450 million. What may sound like a frivolous enterprise is actually the prelude to a far more ambitious mission that it's hoped will measure ripples in space-time caused by black holes and other massive objects lurking unseen in dark corners of the galaxy.

Also known as gravitational waves, these ripples were predicted by Albert Einstein a century ago but have never been directly detected. In order for that mission - tentatively scheduled for launch in 2034 - to succeed, the European Space Agency first has to test whether it can shield objects from external influences well enough to measure the minute effects of gravitational waves.

"We want to see whether we can create an environment in orbit that's free of interference, and where we can conduct these high-precision measurements," said Michael Menking, senior vice president for Earth observation, navigation and science at Airbus Defense and Space. The company is the main technology contractor on the LISA Pathfinder mission.

The probe separated from the Vega rocket two hours after its launch from ESA's space port in French Guiana at 0104 local time (0404 GMT) Thursday. "We have a mission," project scientist Paul McNamara said to cheers and hugs at the control rooms in Kourou and Darmstadt, Germany, after receiving the first signal from the spacecraft.

By mid-January the probe will have reached an orbit about 1.5 million kilometers (930,000 miles) from Earth, where the pull from the planet's gravity is balanced by that of the sun. The cubes -

made from gold and platinum to reduce their susceptibility to magnetic fields - are then carefully released inside a box that shields them from cosmic particles and other interference which might affect the measurements performed by a sensitive laser. The laser is capable of detecting movements of less than 10 millionths of a millionth of a meter.

"Our biggest enemy is the light from the sun that hits the satellite and pushes it around," said Oliver Jennrich, a scientist working on the LISA Pathfinder mission.

To counter this, the satellite uses NASA-supplied thrusters capable of making tiny corrections to the probe's position to keep it in the right orbit and prevent the free-falling cubes from crashing into the inside of the box.

This should provide a near-perfect cosmic isolation chamber to measure the effect of gravitational waves, said Jennrich.

The LISA Pathfinder mission itself won't detect any gravitational waves though. Because the two 2-kilogram (4.4-pound) cubes are only 38 centimeters apart any object big enough to affect their relative position would have to be so huge that it would be visible with the naked eye, said Jennrich.



TOKYO: This picture taken on Thursday shows Japanese telecom giant KDDI's washable smartphone "Digno rafre", produced by Kyocera at a presentation in Tokyo. Waterproof smartphones have been on the market for a while. But telecom company KDDI says its new "Digno rafre" phone - to be launched in Japan next week - is the only one that can withstand a soapy bath. — AFP



A pyramid-shaped building formerly owned by Steelcase Inc in Gaines Township near Grand Rapids, Michigan. Switch, a major Internet data center developer, was in the building as the state Senate on Thursday narrowly approved lucrative tax breaks designed to guarantee that Switch chooses Michigan as the site of its first mega-campus in the eastern half of the US. — AP

SELFIES TO UNDERSEA CABLES: BIG DATA DISPLAYED IN LONDON

LONDON: From posting on social networks and online shopping to sending emails and instant messages, we are producing more data than ever, prompting a new exhibition in London to explore the dangers and possibilities of this information explosion. The show helps visitors get to grips with the reality and implications of so-called Big Data, tracing the system from the smartphones in our pockets to undersea cables to whirring data-storage warehouses. "Big data is the defining feature of our times," said Claire Catterall, director of exhibitions at Somerset House where the show is held from Thursday until February 2016. "It affects each and every one of us and will define our future." The exhibition begins with a room in which images of a data centre are projected, showing the bare concrete walls, wires and metalwork that contain "The Cloud" of information normally invisible to most.

Posters underscore the scale of recent change, explaining that 90 percent of data now existing was created in the last two years, most created by people's everyday activities rather than by science, industry and administration as in the past.

In the London Situation Room, real-time social media posts are analysed live, giving an instant measure of the British capital's mood depending on their tone. "Data can seem abstract but we wanted to show that it is us," said Amanda Taylor of data visualisation studio Tekja, which created the display.

"It can tell us something as intimate as our likes and dislikes. It can tell the story of a city." Viewers can find their own social media posts unexpectedly on the walls of the exhibition, which features photographs stolen from hacked computers as well as taken unknowingly from social networks, probing issues of privacy and surveillance.

Another unsettling aspect is demon-

strated in "Stranger Visions" by Heather Dewey-Hagborg, a series of realistic faces based on genetic information from DNA samples taken from discarded chewing gum and cigarette butts.

One artist Nicholas Felton has created glossy corporate-style "Annual Reports" of his own life, with details such as his meals, emails sent and names of who he communicated with shown in precise graphs.

Instantaneous horror

While the exhibition sets out the dark side of Big Data and the revelations of mass surveillance by former US National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden, it also explores the long history of how information has been used for the greater good. Featured in the exhibition is the 1785 diagram "Description of a Slave Ship", a poster showing the small spaces slaves were packed into as they were taken across the sea—perhaps one of the first data

visualisations created for a political cause. The print "seemed to make an instantaneous impression of horror upon all who saw it" according to a 1808 account by abolitionist Thomas Clarkson, and was credited with helping change opinion against slavery.

Other pioneers are featured such as John Snow, who plotted cholera outbreaks in London identifying how it was transmitted, and Florence Nightingale who used statistics to reduce soldiers' deaths, working out that many were dying because of poor sanitation.

Visitors can sit on beanbags and gaze up into a planetarium of stars—in fact a visual representation of live stock market prices in which every traded company is a star. Jonathan Reekie, the director of Somerset House, said: "It's rare that you can visit an exhibition and say that this is a topic that touches the lives of everybody who visits it". —AFP



STOCKHOLM: Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani (R) visits a laboratory at the Swedish Royal Institute of Technology KTH in Stockholm, yesterday. — AFP

GOOGLE UPS ANTE, DOUBLES BET ON RENEWABLE ENERGY

SAN FRANCISCO: Google is nearly doubling the amount of renewable energy feeding its massive data centers that enable more than 1 billion people to search for information, watch video clips and communicate virtually anytime they want.

The long-term commitments announced Thursday cover up to 842 megawatts of power that will flow from six different wind and solar power projects scheduled to be finished within the next two years in the US, Chile and Sweden. Google isn't disclosing how much it expects to pay for the power.

Some of the deals were signed several weeks ago, but Google timed its announcement to coincide with the UN conference in Paris that is exploring ways to reduce the volume of carbon emissions widely believed to be changing the Earth's climate.

"It's an opportune time to make a strong statement," said Gary Demasi, Google's director of data center energy. Google has now signed contracts covering 2 gigawatts of renewable energy, putting the company closer to its goal of having 3.6 gigawatts lined up by 2025. The 2 gigawatts currently under contract is enough to supply 2 million European homes annually, based on Google's estimate that the renewable energy projects will generate an average of about 7.4 billion kilowatt hours of power.

The Mountain View, California, company has pledged to have all of its 14 data centers worldwide running on renewable energy as part of its quest to minimize the pollution caused by the rising demand for its Internet search engine, YouTube video service, Gmail, digital maps and other services.

Google, part of a recently formed company called Alphabet Inc., still has a long way to reach that goal. By its latest estimates, renewable energy accounts for 37 percent of the power needed to run its data centers. Apple, Facebook and other technology companies also have been investing heavily in renewable energy in an effort to reduce the pollution caused by the popularity of their products. All of Apple's data centers, offices and stores in the US already run on renewable energy, but the company is still trying to obtain cleaner power for the overseas factories that make its iPhones, iPads and other devices.

Besides signing long-term contracts with renewable energy providers, Google also has invested about \$2.5 billion in companies and projects trying to produce more wind, solar and geothermal power. —AP

JAPAN SHOWS OFF DISASTER-RESPONSE OBOTS AT ANDROID FAIR

TOKYO: Japan displayed a pair of two-legged humanoid robots that can operate in harsh conditions as the country prone to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions prepares for the next catastrophe. Simulating work in a tunnel after a quake, two slender robots with tiny heads attached with sensors walked through fake debris to extinguish a fire during a demonstration at the International Robot Exhibition in Tokyo. The four-day event which kicked off Wednesday, is held once every two years in Japan's capital.


This year it is drawing nearly 450 participating organisations—the biggest since it started about four decades ago. Some 57 of the groups come from countries including France, Britain, Russia and South Korea.

This year's show is focused on robotic equipment for disaster relief, assisting the elderly as well as their caregivers, and for farming. Disasters are a fact of life for Japan, an archipelago nation facing the "Ring of Fire"—the rim of the Pacific Ocean that includes other earthquake and volcanic zones from Chile all the way around to New Zealand.

The two disaster-relief droids were developed in a project under the New Energy and Industrial Development (NEDO) — a national research organisation—that started after a devastating earthquake and tsunami hit northern Japan in 2011.

But unlike in Hollywood movies where bots can run, jump and fly at high-speeds, these droids are the slow and steady type.


HRP-2 Kai and red-and-yellow coloured JAXON—named after the late singer Michael Jackson—were on Wednesday focused on more serious tasks. —AFP

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- 00:20 Ultimate Cops
 - 01:10 Misfit Garage
 - 02:00 Wheeler Dealers
 - 02:50 Cuban Chrome
 - 03:40 How It's Made
 - 04:05 How It's Made
 - 04:30 How It's Made
 - 05:00 How It's Made
 - 05:30 How It's Made
 - 06:00 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
 - 06:50 Dual Survival
 - 07:40 Deadliest Catch
 - 08:30 Outback Truckers
 - 09:20 Manhunt With Joel Lambert
 - 10:10 Misfit Garage
 - 11:00 Wheeler Dealers
 - 11:50 Cuban Chrome
 - 12:40 Garage Gold
 - 13:05 Garage Gold
 - 13:30 Property Wars
 - 13:55 Property Wars
 - 14:20 Property Wars
 - 14:45 Storage Hunters UK
 - 15:10 Storage Hunters UK
 - 15:35 Storage Hunters UK
 - 16:00 Storage Hunters UK
 - 16:25 Storage Hunters UK
 - 16:50 Yukon Men
 - 17:40 Alaska: The Last Frontier
 - 18:30 Mythbusters
 - 19:20 The Carbonaro Effect
 - 19:45 The Carbonaro Effect
 - 20:10 You Have Been Warned
 - 21:00 Yukon Men
 - 21:50 Alaska: The Last Frontier
 - 22:40 Flying Wild Alaska
 - 23:30 Shocking Survival Videos
 - 23:55 Shocking Survival Videos


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- 00:35 Mythbusters
 - 01:20 How It's Made
 - 01:44 How It's Made
 - 02:08 Mighty Ships
 - 02:55 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
 - 03:42 How The Universe Works
 - 04:29 Mythbusters
 - 05:16 Mighty Ships
 - 06:03 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
 - 06:50 Building The Biggest
 - 07:37 How It's Made
 - 08:00 Deadliest Space Weather
 - 08:23 How It's Made
 - 08:45 How It's Made
 - 09:08 How It's Made
 - 09:30 How It's Made
 - 09:53 How It's Made
 - 10:15 How It's Made
 - 10:38 How It's Made
 - 11:00 How It's Made
 - 11:23 How It's Made
 - 11:45 How It's Made
 - 12:08 Strangest Weather On Earth
 - 12:30 Strangest Weather On Earth
 - 12:53 Building The Biggest
 - 13:38 Building The Biggest
 - 14:23 Building The Biggest
 - 15:10 Building The Biggest
 - 15:57 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
 - 16:44 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
 - 17:31 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
 - 18:18 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
 - 19:05 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
 - 19:50 Home Factory
 - 20:15 Home Factory
 - 20:40 Mighty Ships
 - 21:25 Food Factory
 - 21:50 Food Factory
 - 22:15 The Supernaturalist
 - 23:00 How The Universe Works
 - 23:45 Cosmic Collisions

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- 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 Wizards Of Waverly Place
- 08:05 Wizards Of Waverly Place
- 08:30 Wizards Of Waverly Place
- 08:55 Wizards Of Waverly Place
- 09:20 Wizards Of Waverly Place
- 09:45 I Love Violetta
- 10:00 Best Friends Whenever
- 10:25 The Princess Diaries
- 12:20 Jessie
- 12:45 Miraculous: Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
- 13:10 Mako Mermaids
- 13:35 Dog With A Blog
- 14:00 Gravity Falls
- 14:30 I Love Violetta
- 14:40 Frozen Fever
- 14:55 Lolirock
- 15:20 Hannah Montana
- 15:45 Sonny With A Chance
- 16:10 Best Friends Whenever
- 16:35 Austin & Ally
- 17:00 Frozen Fever
- 17:10 Violetta Recipes
- 17:25 Girl Meets World
- 17:50 I Love Violetta
- 18:00 Princess Protection Programme
- 19:30 I Didn't Do It
- 19:55 Dog With A Blog
- 20:20 Jessie
- 20:45 Good Luck Charlie
- 21:10 Good Luck Charlie
- 21:35 Wizards Of Waverly Place
- 22:00 Binny And The Ghost

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- 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
- 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
- 08:25 Limon And Oli
- 08:35 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
- 09:05 Sofia The First
- 09:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 10:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 10:30 Doc McStuffins
- 11:00 Sofia The First
- 11:30 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
- 18:05 Chip n Dale Rescue Rangers
- 18:35 Captain Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 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

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- 00:00 House Of DVF
 - 00:55 The Grace Helbig Show
 - 01:25 Hollywood Cycle
 - 02:20 E! News
 - 03:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 - 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 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
 - 10:15 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
 - 11:10 New Money
 - 11:35 New Money
 - 12:05 E! News
 - 13:05 Stewarts And Hamiltons
 - 14:05 Hollywood Cycle
 - 15:00 Hollywood Cycle
 - 16:00 WAGs
 - 17:00 WAGs
 - 18:00 E! News
 - 19:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 - 20:00 Dash Dolls
 - 21:00 Christina Milian Turned Up
 - 22:00 E! News
 - 23:00 The Soup
 - 23:30 Sex With Brody

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- 00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
 - 00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
 - 01:00 Jenny Morris Cooks The Riviera
 - 01:30 Jenny Morris Cooks The Riviera
 - 02:00 Bite This With Nadia G
 - 02:30 Bite This With Nadia G
 - 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 Amazing Wedding Cakes
 - 10:00 The Kitchen
 - 11:00 The Kitchen
 - 12:00 Chopped

- 13:00 Guy's Big Bite
- 13:30 Guy's Big Bite
- 14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 17:00 Chopped
- 18:00 Siba's Table
- 18:30 Siba's Table
- 19:00 Amazing Wedding Cakes
- 20:00 Chopped
- 21:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 21:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 22:00 Man Finds Food
- 22:30 Man Finds Food
- 23:00 Food Court Wars

- 
- 01:05 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
 - 02:00 Emmerdale
 - 04:50 Coronation Street
 - 07:55 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
 - 10:25 Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover
 - 11:20 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
 - 12:15 The Jonathan Ross Show
 - 13:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
 - 14:05 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
 - 15:00 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
 - 16:20 Seven Days With...Ariana
 - 17:15 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
 - 18:10 Come Date With Me Australia
 - 18:35 Come Date With Me Australia
 - 19:00 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
 - 20:20 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
 - 20:50 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
 - 21:15 Seven Days With...Ariana
 - 22:05 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
 - 23:00 Coronation Street
 - 23:25 Coronation Street
 - 23:50 Coronation Street

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- 00:10 Locked Up Abroad
 - 01:00 Ancient X-Files
 - 02:00 Is It Real?
 - 02:55 China's Grand Canal:photographer's Journey
 - 03:50 Spirit Talk
 - 04:45 Yukon River Run
 - 05:40 Air Crash Investigation
 - 06:35 Explorer

- 07:30 Man V. Viral
- 08:25 Dog Whisperer
- 09:20 Dog Whisperer
- 10:15 Yukon Gold
- 11:10 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South
- 12:05 Monster Fish
- 13:00 China's Grand Canal:photographer's Journey
- 14:00 Ultimate Airport Dubai
- 15:00 Car SOS
- 16:00 Man V. Viral
- 17:00 Breakthrough
- 18:00 The Border
- 19:00 Ultimate Airport Dubai
- 20:00 Man V. Viral
- 20:50 Breakthrough
- 21:40 The Border
- 22:30 Ultimate Airport Dubai
- 23:20 Car SOS

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- 00:10 The Food Files
 - 00:35 Ariana's Persian Kitchen
 - 01:00 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
 - 01:25 Eat: The Story Of Food
 - 02:15 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
 - 02:40 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
 - 03:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
 - 03:30 Dog Whisperer
 - 04:20 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
 - 05:10 Hook It, Cook It
 - 05:35 Hook It, Cook It
 - 06:00 East Bites West With Chef Wan
 - 06:25 The Best Job In The World
 - 06:50 Access 360 World Heritage
 - 07:40 Get Stuffed
 - 08:05 Chefs Run Wild
 - 08:30 David Rocco's Dolce India
 - 08:55 David Rocco's Dolce India
 - 09:20 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
 - 09:45 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
 - 10:10 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
 - 11:00 A Marriage Of Flavours
 - 11:25 Tales From The Bush Larder
 - 11:50 Maverick Chef
 - 12:15 Maverick Chef
 - 12:40 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
 - 13:05 Cruise Ship Diaries
 - 13:35 Cruise Ship Diaries
 - 14:00 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia



ESCAPE PLAN ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2015

14:30 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
 14:55 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
 15:25 Dog Whisperer
 16:20 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
 17:15 Tales From The Bush Larder
 17:40 Hook It, Cook It
 18:10 East Bites West With Chef Wan
 18:35 East Bites West With Chef Wan
 19:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
 19:30 Dog Whisperer
 20:25 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
 21:15 Tales From The Bush Larder
 21:40 Hook It, Cook It
 22:05 East Bites West With Chef Wan
 22:30 East Bites West With Chef Wan
 22:55 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
 23:20 Cruise Ship Diaries
 23:45 Cruise Ship Diaries



00:20 Game Of Lions
 01:10 Built For The Kill
 02:00 The Monster Project
 02:50 Leopard Queen
 03:45 Wild Thailand (2015)
 04:40 World's Weirdest Brains And Babies
 05:35 Shane Untamed
 06:30 Shark Men
 07:25 Fish Warrior
 08:20 Yukon Vet
 09:15 Live Like An Animal
 10:10 Philly Undercover
 11:05 The Incredible Dr. Pol
 12:00 Shark Island
 12:55 The Dark Side Of Hippos
 13:50 Built For The Kill
 14:45 Wild Cambodia
 15:40 Expedition Wild
 16:35 Tigers Of The Snow
 17:30 Hunter Hunted
 18:25 Built For The Kill
 19:20 Wild Cambodia
 20:10 Expedition Wild
 21:00 Tigers Of The Snow
 21:50 Hunter Hunted
 22:40 Built For The Kill
 23:30 Shark Island



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 Fresh Off The Boat
 03:30 Black-ish
 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 Fresh Off The Boat
 09:30 About A Boy
 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
 14:30 About A Boy
 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 Marry Me
 18:30 2 Broke Girls
 19:00 Mr. Robinson
 20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
 21:00 Hot In Cleveland
 21:30 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
 22:00 Saturday Night Live
 23:00 You're The Worst
 23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers



00:00 Legends
 01:00 Grey's Anatomy



GONE IN SIXTY SECONDS ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

02:00 Survivor: Cambodia
 03:00 Top Gear (UK)
 04:00 Survivor: Cambodia
 05:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 06:00 Backstrom
 07:00 Suits
 08:00 Graceland
 09:00 Top Gear (UK)
 10:00 Backstrom
 11:00 Suits
 12:00 C.S.I. Cyber
 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 14:00 Graceland
 15:00 Unforgettable
 16:00 C.S.I. Cyber
 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 18:00 Graceland
 19:00 Grey's Anatomy
 20:00 The Whispers
 21:00 Heroes Reborn
 22:00 The Blacklist
 23:00 Minority Report



00:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 01:00 Good Morning America
 03:00 Tyrant
 04:00 Helix
 05:00 Good Morning America
 07:00 Top Gear (US)
 08:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 09:00 Royal Pains
 10:00 Top Gear (US)
 11:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 12:00 Castle
 13:00 Bones
 14:00 Royal Pains
 15:00 Chicago Fire
 16:00 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



00:00 Freezer
 02:00 Mercy
 04:00 The Outsider
 05:45 Gone In Sixty Seconds
 08:00 The Scorpion King 4: Quest For Power
 10:00 Last Passenger
 12:00 The Italian Job (2003)

14:00 Gone In Sixty Seconds
 16:15 Marvel's Next Avengers: Heroes Of Tomorrow
 18:00 The Legend Of Hercules
 20:00 Left Behind
 22:00 Escape Plan



00:00 Mercy-PG15
 02:00 The Outsider-PG15
 03:45 Gone In Sixty Seconds-PG15
 06:00 The Scorpion King 4: Quest For Power-PG15
 08:00 Last Passenger-PG15
 10:00 The Italian Job (2003)-PG15
 12:00 Gone In Sixty Seconds-PG15
 14:15 Marvel's Next Avengers: Heroes Of Tomorrow-PG
 16:00 The Legend Of Hercules-PG15
 18:00 Left Behind-PG15
 20:00 Escape Plan-PG15
 22:00 Waist Deep-18



00:00 Duets
 02:00 Zolander
 04:00 Planes, Trains And Automobiles
 06:00 The Little Rascals Save The Day
 08:00 The Misadventures Of The Dunderheads
 10:00 Planes, Trains And Automobiles
 12:00 Zolander
 14:00 Problem Child
 16:00 The Misadventures Of The Dunderheads
 18:00 The Ladykillers
 20:00 Fading Gigolo
 22:00 Not Another Teen Movie



01:00 A Promise-PG15
 03:00 A Walk Among The Tombstones-PG15
 05:00 One Chance-PG15
 07:00 Still Mine-PG15
 09:00 Shadow Witness-PG15
 11:00 One Chance-PG15
 13:00 The Truth About Emanuel
 15:00 My Piece Of The Pie-PG15
 17:00 Shadow Witness-PG15
 18:30 Selma-PG15
 21:00 Out Of The Furnace-PG15
 23:00 The Melancholy Fantastic



01:15 The Magic Of Belle Isle
 03:15 The Double
 05:00 1911
 07:00 Tea With Mussolini
 09:00 Sleepless In Seattle
 11:00 1911
 13:00 Seven Days In Utopia
 15:00 October Sky
 17:00 Sleepless In Seattle
 19:00 Hateship Loveship
 21:00 Frankie & Alice
 23:00 Waking The Dead



01:00 Kristy-PG15
 03:00 Tinker Bell And The Legend Of The NeverBeast-FAM
 04:45 Khumba-PG
 06:30 Testament Of Youth-PG15
 09:00 Big Hero 6-PG
 11:00 Lost Christmas-PG15
 13:00 Penguins Of Madagascar-PG
 15:00 At Middleton-PG15
 17:00 Big Hero 6-PG
 19:00 The Grand Budapest Hotel-PG15
 21:00 Whiplash-PG15
 23:00 Men, Women & Children-18



01:00 The Adventures Of Don Quixote
 02:45 Mostly Ghostly: Have You Met My Ghoulfriend
 04:30 Worms
 06:00 Charlie And The Chocolate Factory
 08:00 Hatching
 10:00 Curious George: Back To The Jungle
 11:30 Zarafa
 13:00 Mostly Ghostly: Have You Met My Ghoulfriend
 14:30 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
 16:00 Captain Sabertooth And The Treasure Of Lama Rama
 18:00 Curious George: Back To The Jungle
 20:00 Kikoriki: Team Invincible
 22:00 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
 23:30 Captain Sabertooth And The Treasure Of Lama Rama



00:00 Isa-PG15
 02:00 Forget And Forgive-PG15
 04:00 A Common Man-PG15
 06:00 Rio 2-FAM
 08:00 No Clue-PG15
 10:00 Brave-PG15
 12:00 Robot & Frank-PG15
 14:00 Quartet-PG15
 16:00 No Clue-PG15
 17:45 Saving Mr. Banks-PG15
 20:00 Let's Be Cops-PG15
 22:00 Paranormal Activity: The Marked Ones-18



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 MSNBC Hardball W/ Chris Matthews
 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 Hardball W/ Chris Matthews
 11:00 MSNBC Morning Joe
 14:00 MSNBC The Ed Show
 15:00 Live NBC Saturday Today Show
 17:00 ABC 20/20
 18:57 MSNBC Hardball W/ Chris Matthews
 19:38 MSNBC The Rachel Maddow Show
 23:00 HBO Documentary 2015



01:30 1984
 03:20 The Young Savages
 05:00 Saved!
 06:30 Big Screen

06:45 Alexander The Great
 09:00 The Beautiful Country
 11:00 Robinson Crusoe
 12:30 A Guy Thing
 14:15 Big Screen
 14:30 The Watsons Go To Birmingham
 16:00 The Wilby Conspiracy
 17:45 A Star For Two
 19:20 Separate Tables
 21:00 Into The Badlands
 22:00 Breaking Bad
 23:00 The Young Savages



00:00 Doctors
 00:30 Casualty
 01:20 The Suspicions Of Mr Whicher: Angel Lane
 02:50 Bleak Old Shop Of Stuff
 03:20 Casualty
 04:15 The Weakest Link
 05:00 Teletubbies
 05:25 The Green Balloon Club
 05:45 Gigglebizz
 06:00 Teletubbies
 06:25 The Green Balloon Club
 06:50 Gigglebizz
 07:05 Show Me Show Me
 07:25 Jollywobblers
 07:35 The Weakest Link
 08:20 Doctors
 08:50 Doctors
 09:20 Doctors
 09:50 Doctors
 10:20 Doctors
 10:45 Doctor Who
 11:30 The Cafe
 11:50 Last Man Standing
 12:40 Breaking Pointe
 13:20 Casualty
 14:10 Eastenders
 14:40 Eastenders
 15:10 Eastenders
 15:40 Eastenders
 16:10 The Cafe
 16:30 The Cafe
 17:00 Last Man Standing
 17:50 Breaking Pointe
 18:30 Doctor Who
 19:15 Doctor Who
 20:00 Alan Carr: Chatty Man
 20:45 Live At The Apollo
 21:30 Friday Night Dinner
 22:00 Alan Carr: Chatty Man
 22:45 Live At The Apollo
 23:30 Friday Night Dinner
 23:55 The Cafe



KIG CONDUCTS GRAND INTERFAITH CONFERENCE

Last Friday the packed audience of Marina auditorium at Abbasiya witnessed a refreshing and moral boosting event conducted by Kerala Islamic Group (KIG). The leading organization has established a lively presence in Kuwait's socio-cultural, educational, religious and charity fields for more than 3 decades with

and Janab T. Arif Ali (Assistant Ameer All India Jamat-e-Islami) have unanimously declared that there is no room, what so ever, for terrorism in religion and urged the audience to be vigilant about the exploitation of religion by the politicians for their vested interests. The "divide & rule" principle adopted by the political

stition and hatred the religious leaders should teach the essence of religion from within. Father in his speech reiterated the need of all religious sectors to come closure and put combined efforts to stop the exploitation of religion and its sign by politicians for their vote bank. Father also urged the audience not to limit their religion only in their prayers and formalities but to engage in socio-cultural and humanitarian activities to up build a harmonious society.

The believers should show their broad mindedness, solidarity and should try their level best to inculcate moral and ethical values in political system in pursuit of attaining a sustainable and fruitful democracy in India said Janab Arif Ali in his versatile style. The conference was started with




a prayer song by a team of KIG Malavadi girls singing the Malayalam poetic rendering of Quran written by K. G. Raghavan Nair. Engineer Abdul Aziz Al-Duajj (Director Asian Cultural Forum, Kuwait) formally inaugurated the function. The conference was blessed with the graceful presence of Salah Qadheer Sulthan (Int'l Islamic Charitable Society) Saed Muhammed Al Othaibi, Khaled Abdullah Al Sabae (both from Najath Charitable Society) Abdullah Kolloroth (Indian Embassy) and leaders of various organizations. Mementos to the visiting dignitaries were presented respectively by Faisal Manjery to Father Vincent, Sakeer Hussain to Swamy Sandeep Ananda and Zubair K. A to Arif Ali. During the conference a flash drive containing 90 episodes of "Muhammed the great Prophet(PBUH)" prepared and compiled by Faisal Manjery was released by giving the flash drive to Chesil Ramapuram by Joy Mundakkadan. The campaign convener Sakeer Hussain welcomed the audience, KIG President K.A. Zubair presided over the function and KIG GS Azad proposed the vote of thanks.

nourishing experiences of flourishing activities appealing to the rank and file of the society. The conference was conducted by KIG to mark the closing ceremony of the month long campaign with a slogan "Religion is peace not terrorism" aimed to stress the unity of God and humanity and to foster and promote interfaith dialogue.

powers of the world should be annihilated from the root itself for creating a peaceful, prosperous and harmonious pluralistic society. The unity of all religious sectors especially in India is the need of the hour to fight fascism and to establish communal harmony.

In the conference 3 eminent scholars from Kerala Swamy Sandeep Ananda Giri (director school of Baghavath Geetha) Reverent father Vincent Kundukulam (professor Mangalapuzha seminary, Aluva)

Addressing the audience Swamy Sandeep Ananda said that those who are ignorant or incomplete in following their religious teachings are responsible for religious intolerance and terrorism. He stressed that to stop the fanaticism, super-



PRESS RELEASE

The Ministry of Interior of Kuwait has decided to implement the new guidelines **with effect from 01 January 2016** applicable to expatriates residing in the country with regard to the linking of validity of Residence Permit with the validity of the Passport. The new guidelines are as under:-

- (i) The duration of the Residence Permit cannot be for a longer period than the duration of validity of the passport.
- (ii) Residence Permit shall expire on the same date of the expiry of passport.
- (iii) The decision to link the validity of residence with the validity of the passport is applicable with effect from 01 January 2016.
- (iiii) Please avail the remaining period till 1st January 2016 to renew the passport to avoid violation of Residence Permit Law for foreigners.
- (v) Approach Department of Residence Affairs (as per address given in the Civil ID) to register and transfer the data from the old to the new passport.

2. All Indian nationals in Kuwait are advised to ensure that their passports are renewed so as to avoid any violation of the Residence Permit Law in Kuwait for Foreigners.

30 November 2015

Albanian Embassy announcement

Albanian embassy in the State of Kuwait would like to inform on the change of its premises. The new address of the embassy is: Salam area. Block 7. Street 717, Villa 293, Kuwait. For postal services in addition to the address: P.O. Box 3090, Safat 13031 State of Kuwait. Also, the landline phone number of the embassy is the same one: 25240627 and fax: 25240628. The e-mail address: embassy.kuwait@mfa.gov.al. The working hours from Sunday to Thursday, 08:30- 14:00.

Korean Movie Night

The Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Kuwait will organize the "Korean Movie Night" on Wednesday, 9 December 2014, at Cinescape Laila Gallery, at 5pm. The event is part of the Embassy's efforts to further enhance cultural ties between Korea and Kuwait and promote greater understanding of Korea and its people among the Kuwaiti society.



KNES STUDENTS AT BSME DEBATING CHAMPIONSHIP IN BAHRAIN

The core of competitive high school debate is to examine every side of important issues in an atmosphere of reasoned argument and discourse. Competitive debating is today widely recognized as an important educational tool. Participation in these events not only encourages students to explore their skills in communication, but also develops their personality and confidence. Students greatly benefit from this intellectually exciting activity and it is a unique opportunity for them to harness their potential and

talents. With over 50 debating teams, the British Schools in the Middle East (BSME) Debate Competition is one of the biggest and more prestigious inter-school debating competitions in the Middle East. Following the World Schools Debating Competition format, the event is fiercely competitive. Kuwait National English School made their presence felt in this event this year and it turned out to be a spectacular one as our students made up of four teams performed well to make the quarters in the senior division. Our Junior

Team A competing in their first ever debate did extremely well through the first seven rounds and reach the knock-out stage.

Our star debaters held their own and quietly proceeded through the early stages thereby proving that our students have the caliber to debate with the best. Kuwait National English School is pursuing every possible avenue to enhance participation in such events and to gain top position in debating in the near future. This is a small and modest beginning for our young debaters and we hope to take

part in many more international debates in future. Well done team KNES!

Following in line with our Mission Statement, Kuwait National English School tries its best to provide students with opportunities for growth and development. Madame Chantal Al Gharabally, The School Director, has financially supported this important event as it will be very useful to build on competences for the future of our students. We look forward to have more such international events in the near future.



WORKSHOP ON SHARE MARKET AT IISM

The commerce students of IISM were enlightened by the presence of P. K. Venkatesh, Manager Trans W General Trading and Contracting Company Kuwait, a highly professional trainer par excellence, who gave a talk on share market on 16th November 2015. The principal extended a warm welcome to the resource person. Venkatesh explained the complicated concepts of 'Share Market' through an example he created from among the students.

The workshop was marked by the simplicity of its presentation where the topic was modulated to the level of the students. The common myths related to the share market were clarified by the end of the workshop. The children found it more informative as it was an interactive session. He appreciated the students for their whole hearted and active participation. He profusely thanked the school management, the principal and commerce HOD, Mrs. Nalini for having taken initiative in organizing such workshop. The School Director Malayil Moosa Koya presented a memento to express the love and appreciation for the quality time he spent in the school.



SENEGALESE VILLAGES SWALLOWED BY THE SEA

SAINT LOUIS: Behind the remains of washed-away fences, crumbling houses dot an expanse of the northern Senegalese coastline where a swollen river and an advancing sea are swallowing villages whole. The fishing community of Goxu Mbath is one of many districts in the city of Saint Louis, the former colonial capital of French west Africa that, little by little, is disappearing under water. "The waves surprised us at night. It was October 20. The water hit hard and knocked down walls," says Awa Sarr Fall, 68, outside her badly damaged oceanfront house. "We are calling for the help of the state and we're willing to move elsewhere." The village is on the Languede Barbarie, a densely populated spit of land that is home to nearly 120,000 people.

Colorful dugout canoes are berthed on the sandy former peninsula, which protects the heart of the old colonial city from the Atlantic's fearsome breakers. An archipelago in the mouth of the Senegal River often referred to as the "Venice of Africa", St Louis is anchored precariously between the fast-flowing currents of the swollen waterway and the ocean. A 2008 UN-HABITAT report listed the city of 250,000, which is plagued by flooding during the rainy season when the river overflows, as the most vulnerable in Africa to rising sea levels. The upheavals "are in part linked to climate change", but also "people have poorly designed their habitat space", says Pape Gombo Lo, a professor at Cheikh Anta Diop University in Dakar.

Named after Louis XIV, the UNESCO World Heritage site on the Mauritanian border was founded in 1659, becoming the first French settlement of l'Afrique Occidentale, trading in slaves. Scientists say climate change is exacerbating the problem with increasingly heavy rain and a rise in the sea level. On a visit to Senegal in 2014, the UN special representative on disaster risk, Margareta Wahlstrom, expressed concern for the fate of coastal and riverside towns, with some mayors telling her their villages spent 10 months out of 12 underwater. "We want to move but we don't have the means. No authority has come to see us since the damage," says Abibatou Fall, another Goxu Mbath resident.

Pessimism

In 2003, heavy rain in the drainage basin of the Senegal River alarmed the authorities who, fearing flooding, dug a new channel for the river water across the Languede Barbarie. As the sea flooded into the river mouth the canal widened, from four metres at the outset to a gaping breach that is five kilometers wide today. "The forecasts are pessimistic for the Languede Barbarie," says Balla Gueye, the city official in charge of the environment. "The whole coast of St Louis is threatened," he said, adding that the city council had called on the state for help. By way of response, the government recently announced a breakwater construction project that will cost one billion CFA francs (\$1.6 million, 1.5 million euros). The island community of Doune Baba Dieye, situated about ten minutes by motorized canoe from the mouth of the river, was the first casualty in St Louis. "The water has engulfed the island and the people are gone," said the former village chief, Ameth Sene Diagne.

Shipwrecked

Diagne and his 800 neighbors had made their living from the precious mullet, sardines, bonga and tilapia that once thrived in the mangroves but disappeared after the salt water of the Atlantic began encroaching into the river. Diagne, a father of 16 children from two wives, was the last to flee when the sea claimed his village in 2012. "All this is due to the breach," says Diagne, one of the lucky ones who had enough money to build a new house further inland. "We do not want it but in this country when you do not have a university degree, no one listens to you."

The nearby village of Keur Bernard was also deserted and others including Pilote Barre are threatened with extinction, according to experts. The breach has also cost lives. Fishermen who use the canal to go to sea are sometimes shipwrecked on sandbanks, says El Hadji Boubacar Dia, a local environmental official, estimating at nearly 200 the number of people killed since 2003. Sea turtles and migratory birds are also at grave risk from the loss of habitat. The results of a government study are expected by the end of the year "to see what to do with the breach, to close it or stabilise it," says Moussa Fall, head of the Languede Barbarie national park. —AFP



SAINT-LOUIS DU SENEGAL: Near Saint-Louis du Senegal shows the remains of a house of the Doune Baba Dieye village which was abandoned because of the approaching sea. — AFP

REFUGEE INFLUX COMPLICATES GERMAN CO2 EMISSION GOALS

UP TO A MILLION REFUGEES EXPECTED TO ARRIVE THIS YEAR

BERLIN: An influx of up to one million refugees to Germany this year may make it harder for the government to achieve its CO2 reduction targets in 2020, an adviser to the government on energy policy has warned. Germany sees itself as a green leader in the fight against climate change and has set itself an ambitious goal to reduce CO2 emissions by 40 percent by 2020 compared to 1990 levels. But experts say this goal is already at serious risk, partly due to its reliance on coal-fired power plants and slow progress on implementing a climate action plan agreed last year.

Further complicating this picture is higher-than-expected immigration, said Andreas Loeschel, professor of energy and resource economics at the University of Muenster. Population forecasts are one of the components used to determine estimates for future emissions. "The German government's official projections are built on assumptions for population growth which are outdated," said Loeschel, who also heads an independent committee monitoring the

progress of Germany's shift away from fossil fuels and nuclear power known as the 'Energiewende.'

Up to one million refugees are expected to arrive in Germany this year. But the government's current climate projections are based on net annual immigration of around 200,000 people. Updated population forecasts from the Federal Statistics Office in April assume net annual immigration exceeding 200,000 until at least 2018, and for 500,000 this year. But Loeschel says these forecasts could also be deemed too conservative since they were published before the sharp increase in refugees this summer. Taking this into account, Germany's population in 2020 could be 2-2.5 million higher than projected.

According to the Environment Ministry, a one million increase in the population raises CO2 emissions by 6.4 million tons of CO2 per year. This is equivalent to around half the CO2 the government plans to save by mothballing 2.7 gigawatts of power generation from brown coal, a decision that was agreed this summer after months

of wrangling with trade unions. A Economy Ministry spokeswoman said it did not have any figures on how the refugee influx might impact energy consumption and CO2 emissions, but added there were a variety of measures to increase energy efficiency and lower consumption.

Loeschel stresses his analysis is based on rough calculations and doesn't consider refugees' living standards. Those on lower incomes are likely to consume and travel less, for example. But they also tend to live in poorly insulated buildings, a major culprit for emissions. It is also unclear how many will stay long-term. Because of this, Claudia Kemfert, energy economist at the DIW in Berlin, says the biggest risk to Germany's climate goals remains the high share of coal in the energy mix. "It is unknown how many citizens Germany will have in 2020, where and how they live," she said. "The average person in Germany produces 10 tons of CO2 per year. If the living standard is much lower, the CO2 footprint will be much lower." — Reuters

STUDY: BARIATRIC SURGERY WORKS FOR OBESE PATIENTS WITH A RARE GENETIC DEFICIENCY

ABU DHABI: Researchers at Children's National Medical Center, based in Washington DC and home to the Sheikh Zayed Institute for Pediatric Surgical Innovation, and Abu Dhabi's Imperial College of London Diabetes Centre found that bariatric surgery can be successful in children who have a rare genetic deficiency called homozygous MC4R deficiency, that makes them prone to obesity. Prior to this point, many healthcare professionals believed obese children with this deficiency would not benefit from surgery.

Evan P Nadler, MD, Co-Director of the Obesity Institute and Director of the Bariatric Surgery Program at Children's National, and Principal Investigator at the Sheikh Zayed Institute for Pediatric Surgical Innovation and Nader Lessan, MD, of the Imperial College of London Diabetes Centre (ICLDC) the region's leading specialist centre for the treatment, management, research, and education of diabetes and endocrinology based in Abu Dhabi, and other colleagues write that the small study of four children (three from the United Arab Emirates and one from Kuwait) showed that patients with this genetic condition experienced significant weight loss and overall health improvement following bariatric surgery. Their study was published in the International Journal of Obesity.

Two of the patients, ages four and eight, had their surgery at Children's National, while the others had surgery in the UAE, and were subsequently cared for at Imperial College London Diabetes Centre. The surgery, known as vertical sleeve gastrectomy (VSG) permanently reduces the size of the stomach by 80 percent or more. The 4-year-old is believed to



Evan P Nadler

be the youngest person in the United States to undergo bariatric surgery.

The surgery also demonstrated a successful multidisciplinary team effort in the coordination and examination of the issue, in a partnership with Children's National and the Imperial College of London Diabetes Centre, whose physicians plan on jointly caring for the 4-year-old. "I think this provides a glimmer of hope for patients who not only have this particular genetic defect, but other diseases," says Dr Nadler. "It opens the door for treatment options that we can explore, and something we can do for these kids. In general, as with any chronic disease, the earlier you treat it, the better the patient's long-term outcome." A portion of the study focused on the patients' loss of the MC4R function, which has been implicated in at least 5 percent of adolescents with obesity. Although

many experts believe bariatric weight loss surgery doesn't work with this condition, Dr Nadler's study found it was successful at least in the short term. While the research sample of 4 patients appears relatively small, it has a wider impact because of the rareness of the disorder and number of cases, according to Drs Nadler and Lessan. This study marked the first time for this particular surgical treatment of patients with this type of mutation. "This research is important because it will help patients of all ages make a more informed choice about having bariatric surgery, which is a major undertaking—both physically and financially," adds Dr Lessan.

Three of the four children, who, prior to surgery, were profoundly obese with a series of ailments related to the disease, have made significant weight loss and overall health improvements.

KEY STICKING POINTS IN UN CLIMATE TALKS

PARIS: Some 180 countries have already presented plans to cut or rein in their climate warming greenhouse gas emissions. That's a huge step forward for the UN climate talks but a host of difficult issues remain to be resolved before a new climate agreement can be adopted in Paris. Here are some of the most important ones:

The firewall

The previous climate treaty, the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, divided the world into developed and developing countries and only required the former to cut their greenhouse gas emissions. The US, the European Union and other developed countries say this time all countries must chip in and that the rich-poor firewall is outdated anyway since it classifies countries like Qatar, the wealthiest country on Earth per capita, as developing. Even though almost all countries are in practice moving into a new era by presenting their own emissions pledges, India and many others want the Paris agreement to state clearly that the developed countries have a bigger responsibility to fight global warming. Expect the biggest fights in Paris to be around this issue, which may very well be the last one to get resolved.

Finance and technology

Even if the agreement required all countries to cut their emissions, many countries wouldn't be able to do so without help. Developing countries need money and technology to make the switch to clean energy sources like solar and wind power. They are also asking for money to adapt to climate change, which would continue for decades even if emissions were to stop today. The developed countries are willing to help but reluctant to make firm commitments. They also want to expand the pool of donors to include the most advanced developing countries like China - again challenging the firewall.—AP

CLINIC
PAGE







Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم

Consultant Pediatrician استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM





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
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Required for a Private American School

Teacher Assistants

Fluent in English
(Written and Spoken)
Preferable Nationalities:
Filipino, Indian, Pakistani

Interested applicants
please send cover letter and resume
To: recruitment@abs.edu.kw

SITUATION VACANT

A lady maid is needed to work from 1 pm to 7 pm. She must know cooking and cleaning. Salary is 125 KD/month. The flat is located in Salmiya. Tel 67643439. (C 5093)
5-12-2015

Contact: 97972324. (C 5090)
2-12-2015

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

FOR SALE

Porsche Panamera 3.0 (turbo diesel) model 2013. Special order from Behbahani, under warranty until 9/2016, maroon color, beige leather inside, full options, low mileage: 23,000 km (like new) price KD 17,750. Call: 94444434. (C 5092)
3-12-2015

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

ACCOMMODATION

One spacious room available for family or working woman in 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom & maid room, clean flat. Closer to Avenues, old Riggae behind Cakes & Bakes.

Prayer timings

Fajr: 05:03
Shorook: 06:27
Duh: 11:38
Asr: 14:31
Maghrib: 16:49
Isha: 18:11





Flight Schedule

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers use seats

Arrival Flights on Saturday 5/12/2015

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	415	Sohag	00:05
KLM	413	Amsterdam/Dammam	00:20
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55
RJA	642	Amman	01:05
THY	772	Istanbul	01:05
MSR	614	Cairo	01:20
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30
DLH	635	Doha	01:35
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15
KKK	6507	Istanbul	03:20
THY	1464	Istanbul	03:25
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:25
JZR	503	Luxor	04:25
AGY	680	Alexandria	04:30
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:40
THY	764	Istanbul	05:55
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:30
BAW	157	London	06:40
JZR	529	Asyut	06:50
KAC	416	Jakarta/Kuala Lumpur	07:15
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	07:20
QTR	1086	Doha	07:40
KAC	204	Lahore	07:40
FDB	053	Dubai	07:45
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50
KAC	382	Delhi	08:00
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20
KAC	206	Islamabad	08:25
KAC	344	Chennai	08:30
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:10
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:20
JZR	327	Al Najaf	09:20
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
OMA	641	Muscat	10:05
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
UAE	873	Dubai	11:05
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:15
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30
AGY	684	Sohag	11:35
IAW	157	Al Najaf	11:50
NIA	151	Cairo	11:55
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50
JZR	241	Amman	12:50
OMA	645	Muscat	13:00
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
IRC	6511	ABD	13:05
JZR	779	Jeddah	13:35
SVA	2660	Jeddah	13:45
KNE	460	Riyadh	13:50
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	13:55
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10
FDB	057	Dubai	14:10
KNE	472	Jeddah	14:35
KAC	788	Jeddah	14:50
KAC	512	Mashhad	14:50
KNE	462	Madinah	14:55
IZG	4167	Mashhad	14:55
GFA	221	Bahrain	15:00
IRM	1186	Tehran	15:00
NIA	251	Alexandria	15:30
KAC	562	Amman	15:40
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:45
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
JZR	535	Cairo	16:10
QTR	1072	Doha	16:10
JZR	357	Mashhad	16:30
FDB	051	Dubai	16:30
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	16:40
KAC	542	Cairo	16:55
RJA	640	Amman	16:55
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
KNE	474	Jeddah	17:25
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
JZR	325	Al Najaf	17:50
JZR	777	Jeddah	17:55
KAC	118	New York	17:55
SVA	500	Jeddah	18:00
UAE	875	Dubai	18:00
KAC	502	Beirut	18:00
FDB	063	Dubai	18:05

UAL	982	IAD	18:15
JZR	177	Dubai	18:20
IRM	1180	Mashhad	18:45
ABY	123	Sharjah	18:45
QTR	1080	Doha	18:55
IRA	669	Mashhad	18:55
KAC	742	Dammam	19:05
KAC	614	Bahrain	19:10
IRM	1188	Mashhad	19:15
KAC	774	Riyadh	19:25
GFA	217	Bahrain	19:30
KAC	618	Doha	19:35
CLX	856	Luxembourg	19:35
KAC	104	London	19:40
KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
KAC	176	Geneva/Frankfurt	19:55
MSR	618	Alexandria	20:05
KNE	480	Taif	20:10
JZR	189	Dubai	20:15
FDB	061	Dubai	20:20
OMA	647	Muscat	20:20
KAC	786	Jeddah	20:30
ABY	121	Sharjah	20:35
FDB	5053	Dubai	20:50
DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:55
JAI	572	Mumbai	20:55
ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:20
MEA	402	Beirut	21:20
ALK	229	Colombo	21:25
UAE	859	Dubai	21:40
GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45
KAC	676	Dubai	21:45
QTR	1082	Doha	22:00
KLM	415	Amsterdam	22:05
KNE	470	Jeddah	22:15
KAC	564	Amman	22:25
AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25
ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:25
FDB	059	Dubai	22:30
JZR	185	Dubai	23:15
UAL	981	Bahrain	23:25
JAD	301	Amman	23:30
FDB	071	Dubai	23:45
JZR	125	Bahrain	23:55
MSC	403	Asyut	23:55
JAI	574	Mumbai	23:55

Departure Flights on Saturday 5/12/2015

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
JZR	528	Asyut	00:05
BBC	044	Dhaka	00:10
PIA	240	Sialkot	00:40
FDB	072	Dubai	00:40
MSC	502	Alexandria	00:55
JAI	573	Mumbai	00:55
MSC	416	Sohag	01:00
KLM	413	Amsterdam	01:35
MSR	615	Cairo	02:20
THY	773	Istanbul	02:30
SAI	442	Lahore	02:30
DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:35
ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45
UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
PGT	859	Istanbul	03:55
OMA	644	Muscat	03:55
FDB	068	Dubai	04:00
MSR	613	Cairo	04:10
ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:15
KKK	6508	Istanbul	04:20
QTR	1077	Doha	05:00
THY	765	Istanbul	05:15
AGY	685	Sohag	05:30
JZR	326	Al Najaf	05:55
FDB	070	Dubai	06:30
THY	1465	Istanbul	06:55
JZR	164	Dubai	06:55
RJA	643	Amman	07:05
THY	771	Istanbul	07:05
FDB	5062	Dubai	07:10
GFA	212	Bahrain	07:15
JZR	240	Amman	07:15
JZR	778	Jeddah	07:55
FDB	054	Dubai	08:30
KAC	511	Mashhad	08:30
QTR	1087	Doha	08:40
BAW	156	London	08:45
KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
JZR	534	Cairo	09:15
KAC	787	Jeddah	09:25
ABY	126	Sharjah	09:40
KAC	541	Cairo	09:55
UAE	856	Dubai	09:55
KAC	101	London/New York	09:55
KAC	561	Amman	10:00
ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:25
KAC	501	Beirut	10:30
JZR	356	Mashhad	10:30

FDB	056	Dubai	10:35
KAC	165	Rome/Paris	11:00
QTR	1071	Doha	11:00
OMA	642	Muscat	11:05
GFA	214	Bahrain	11:25
RBG	554	Alexandria	12:00
JZR	776	Jeddah	12:20
UAE	874	Dubai	12:30
AGY	681	Asyut	12:35
NIA	152	Cairo	12:55
IAW	158	Al Najaf	13:05
FDB	076	Dubai	13:10
MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30
JZR	176	Dubai	13:45
IRC	6512	ABD	13:55
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
OMA	646	Muscat	14:00
UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
JZR	324	Al Najaf	14:25
SVA	9560	Jeddah	14:45
KNE	481	Taif	14:50
MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:55
KAC	785	Jeddah	15:00
KAC	673	Dubai	15:00
FDB	058	Dubai	15:10
QTR	1079	Doha	15:10
KNE	473	Jeddah	15:35
JZR	188	Dubai	15:40
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:45
KAC	617	Doha	15:45
KAC	613	Bahrain	15:50
KAC	773	Riyadh	15:50
FBA	832	Al Najaf	15:55
KAC	741	Dammam	15:55
KNE	463	Madinah	16:00
IRM	1187	Tehran	16:15
ABY	128	Sharjah	16:25
NIA	252	Alexandria	16:30
KAC	563	Amman	16:45
KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
JZR	266	Beirut	17:05
ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	17:30
FDB	052	Dubai	17:35
QTR	1073	Doha	17:40
UAE	858	Dubai	17:45
JZR	538	Cairo	17:45
RJA	641	Amman	17:55
SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
KNE	475	Jeddah	18:15
GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	184	Dubai	18:40
JZR	238	Amman	18:50
JZR	554	Alexandria	19:10
FDB	064	Dubai	19:20
ABY	124	Sharjah	19:25
UAE	876	Dubai	19:30
SVA	505	Jeddah	19:30
UAL	982	Bahrain	19:30
IRA	666	Esfahan	19:55
IRM	1181	Mashhad	20:00
GFA	218	Bahrain	20:15
IRM	1189	Mashhad	20:30
KAC	283	Dhaka	20:35
KAC	353	BLR	20:40
KAC	361	Colombo	20:45
QTR	1081	Doha	20:50
KAC	543	Cairo	20:55
KAC	351	Kochi	20:55
CLX	856	Hong Kong	21:05
MSR	607	Luxor	21:05
JZR	124	Bahrain	21:05
KNE	461	Riyadh	21:10
KAC	331	Trivandrum	21:10
ABY	122	Sharjah	21:15
OMA	648	Muscat	21:20
FDB	062	Dubai	21:20
DLH	634	Doha	21:45
FDB	5054	Dubai	21:50
DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
JAI	571	Mumbai	21:55
KAC	381	Delhi	22:00
ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:10
KAC	301	Mumbai	22:10
MEA	403	Beirut	22:20
ALK	230	Colombo	22:25
GFA	220	Bahrain	22:30
UAE	860	Dubai	22:55
KAC	345	Ahmedabad	23:00
QTR	1083	Doha	23:05
KLM	415	Dammam/Amsterdam	23:05
KNE	471	Jeddah	23:05
KAC	205	Islamabad	23:10
ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:15
FDB	060	Dubai	23:35
KAC	411	Bangkok/Manila	23:35

Word Search Puzzles

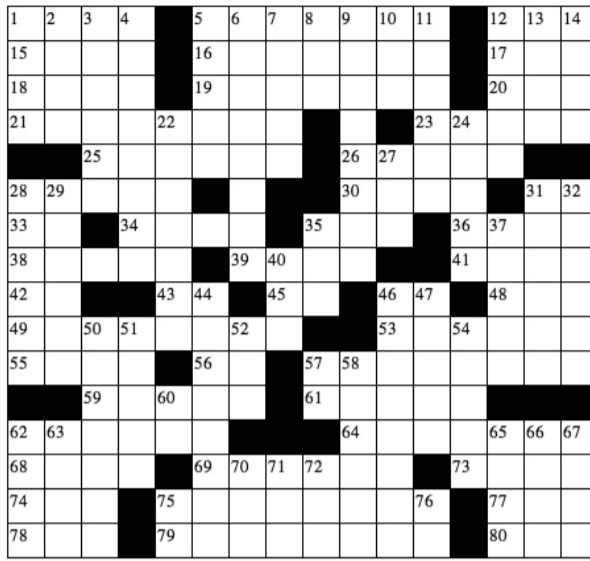
Hanukkah

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 42 letters spell a secret message.

Y A D I L O H P O N T S H K E S T H N
 A M V E L S I K O L I V E O I L H F O
 T A L M U D N C H A R I T Y E A E E V
 U O K T O Y I N A G F U S G N A L L I
 M Z Y G A M E S K J D A H E S H C P V
 A T I E S U M A E T P R R T E J A M E
 C Z R E A L H R W R O O E B I S R E S
 C U S A A R U A A S T V R I Y H I T G
 A R H S D S L Y Y H D E I A D S M Y N
 B Y P S A I E Y A S W O D V O E C L I
 E L Y L A R T L F S I T O L E A L O S
 E I E S S M A I M E H T E F N L H H S
 S M H O T L A O O G S U A D Y A H O E
 T A U N U F T H I N M T L M R R L I L
 H F D G D S I E S I A E I O Y T I A B
 G H I S U A T G B L S A T V S T T A S
 I E T C I G H A R O N E M A K T D D
 L A Y H A I K U N A H C S L E L L A H

- BIMUELOS
- FESTIVAL
- LATKE
- PSALMS
- BLESSINGS
- GAMES
- LEVIVOT
- SEVIVON
- CANDLES
- GELT
- LIGHTS
- SHAMASH
- CHANUKIAH
- GIFTS
- MA'OZ TZUR
- SONGS
- CHARITY
- HALLEL
- MACCABEES
- SUFGANIYOT
- CUSTOMS
- HANEROT HALALU
- MATTISYAHU
- TALMUD
- DAIRY FOODS
- HEBREW
- MENORAH
- TORAH
- DREIDEL
- HOLIDAY
- MIRACLE
- TRADITION
- EIGHT DAYS
- HOLY TEMPLE
- OLIVE OIL
- YEARLY
- FAMILY
- JERUSALEM
- PONTSHKES
- YEHUDIT
- FEAST
- KISLEV
- PRAYERS

CROSSWORD 1100



ACROSS

1. Meat from a domestic hog or pig.
5. Related to or affected by aphasia.
12. Any of various units of capacity.
15. Large elliptical brightly colored deep-sea fish of Atlantic and Pacific and Mediterranean.
16. The type genus of Droseraceae including many low bog-inhabiting insectivorous plants.
17. Fermented alcoholic beverage similar to but heavier than beer.
18. Kamarupan languages spoken in northeastern India and western Burma.
19. Ancient Persian god of light and truth.
20. A decree that prohibits something.
21. With little movement.
23. Jordan's port.
25. A person whose occupation is making and altering garments.
26. A medium to dark brownish yellow color.
28. (formerly) A writing tablet made of slate.
30. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
33. (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.
34. An officer who acts as military assistant to a more senior officer.
36. A dull persistent (usually moderately intense) pain.
38. The principal evil jinni in Islamic mythology.
39. A barrier consisting of a horizontal bar and supports.
41. The Jewish rite of circumcision performed on a male child on the eighth day of his life.
42. Being nine more than forty.
43. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
45. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
48. (informal) Of the highest quality.
49. Philippine timber tree having hard red fragrant wood.
53. A disorderly crowd of people.
55. In bed.
56. A light strong gray lustrous corrosion-resistant metallic element used in strong light-weight alloys (as for airplane parts).
59. A mountain peak in the Andes in Argentina (21,654 feet high).
61. Of or belonging to or suitable for a duke.
62. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.

64. A state in the southeastern United States on the Gulf of Mexico.
68. A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
69. A port city in southwestern Turkey on the Gulf of Antalya.
73. Not only so, but.
74. (prefix) Bad or erroneous or lack of.
77. South American wood sorrel cultivated for its edible tubers.
78. An association of countries in the western hemisphere.
79. Elder brother of Krishna.
80. A long projecting or anterior elongation of an animal's head.

DOWN

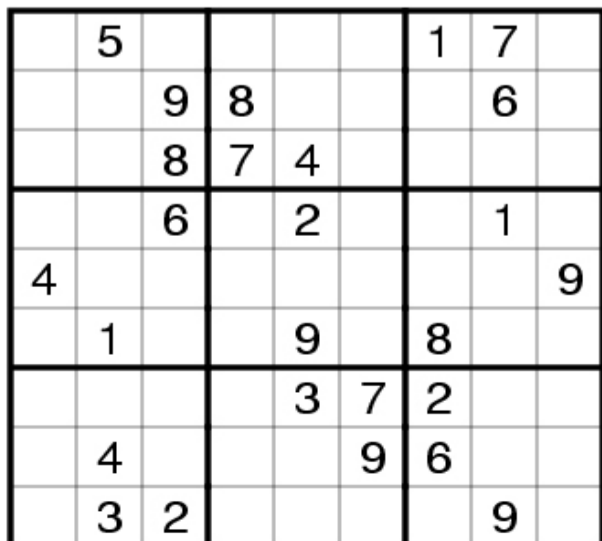
1. A band of nerve fibers linking the medulla oblongata and the cerebellum with the midbrain.
2. A translucent mineral consisting of hydrated silica of variable color.
3. A port city in southwestern Croatia on the Adriatic.
4. A literary language of Chinese Turkestan (named for one of the sons of Genghis Khan).
5. Declare or acknowledge to be true.
6. A person who is confined.
7. A blind god.
8. The residue that remains when something is burned.
9. Antihypertensive consisting of an alkaloid extracted from the plant Rauwolfia serpentina (trade names Raudixin or Rau-Sed or Sandril or Serpasil).
10. A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
11. Melon having yellowish rind and whitish flesh.
12. An imaginary elephant that appears in a series of French books for children.
13. Divulge information or secrets.
14. A Russian river.
22. A granitic rock composed of quartz and mica.
24. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
27. One millionth of a gram.
29. 1 species.
31. Gum-like substance from the sapodilla.
32. Seed again or anew.
35. Top part of an apron.
37. Infestation of the pubic hair by crab lice.
40. An associate degree in applied science.
44. A language spoken by the Atakapa people of the Gulf coast of Louisiana and Texas.
46. Declare formally.
47. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
50. Not having legs.
51. (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.
52. Belonging to or on behalf of a specified person (especially yourself).
54. Bandicoot with leathery ears like a rabbit.
57. A public promotion of some product or service.
58. A great waterfall on the border between Brazil and Paraguay.
60. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
63. An elaborate song for solo voice.
65. (in Gnosticism) A divine power or nature emanating from the Supreme Being and playing various roles in the operation of the universe.
66. (trademark) A liquid that temporarily disables a person.
67. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
70. A metric unit of volume or capacity equal to 10 liters.
71. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
72. (Irish) The sea personified.
75. A metallic element having four allotropic forms.
76. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.

Yesterday's Solution

SOLUTION TO COUNTRY MUSIC STARS PUZZLE

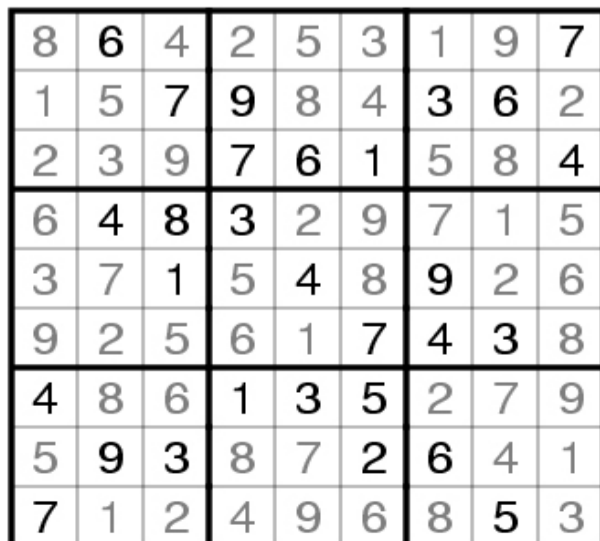


Daily SuDoku



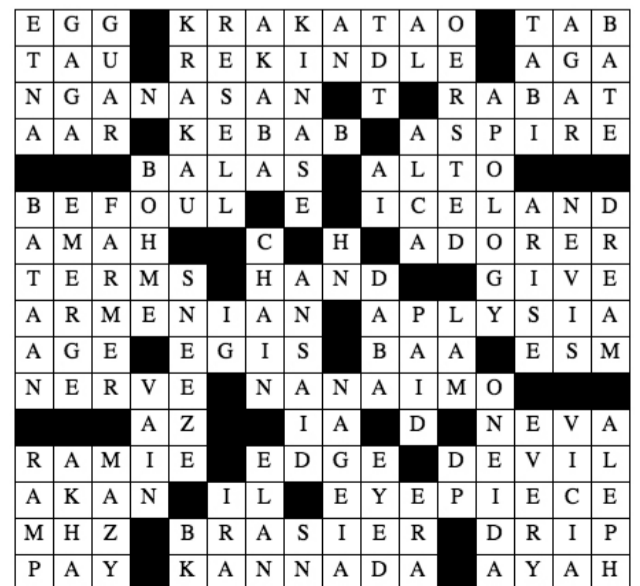
hard

Yesterday's Solution



medium

Yesterday's Solution



LIN BREEZES TO LEAD, BUT GALES TARNISH SECOND ROUND

HANOI: Taipei's Lin Weng-tang battled his way to an overnight lead with 10-under against high winds that marred the second round of the \$1.5 million Ho Tram Open in Vietnam yesterday. He took a four-under 67 back to the clubhouse after scoring a first round 65, despite powerful winds that forced play to be suspended for two hours and left much of the field unable to finish as darkness descended. "I played for five holes and there

was no wind. For that early few holes the course was easy but the wind started to pick up," the overnight leader said according to an Asian Tour statement.

"It was crazy windy but I birdied six and eight to finish my round so that was good." America's David Lipsky sat just behind with eight-under for the tournament. But he only completed 11 holes, two-under for the day, on top of a 65 scored in the first round.

Sergio Garcia, the top ranked player in the field, only got through 12 holes before daylight faded, but held steady against the blustery conditions with a two-under for the day. That put him seven-under overall and well in contention going into the weekend at Vietnam's richest sports event. Himmat Rai of India was one of the few other finishers at the head of the leaderboard, finishing the day with a 69. Paul Peterson sat a shot back on

six-under with 136 for the two rounds so far.

Leading completed round two scores:

- 132 - Lin Wen-tang (TPE) 65-67.
- 135 - Himmat Rai (IND) 66-69.
- 136 - Paul Peterson (USA) 66-70.
- 138 - Sam Cyr (USA) 69-69, Terry Pilkadaris (AUS) 71-67
- 139 - Andrew Raitt (ENG) 73-66, Simon Yates (SCO) 73-66, Geoff Ogilvy (AUS) 69-70. — AFP



PARIS: File photo of Britain's Chris Froome, wearing the overall leader's yellow jersey, as he climbs towards Alpe d'Huez during the twentieth stage of the Tour de France cycling race. Two-time Tour de France champion Chris Froome has released physiological data that he believes 'will stand the test of time' as he attempts to answer detractors who doubt he is a clean rider. — AP

FROOME SAYS TESTS PROVE HE RIDES CLEAN

PARIS: British cyclist Chris Froome said yesterday that tests he took after winning the Tour de France proved that he does not use performance-enhancing drugs, although at least one rival coach said they would not silence the doubters.

The tests were carried out at the GlaxoSmithKline Human Performance Lab in London in August, a few weeks after the Tour, and the results he released suggest that a huge weight loss could help explain his rapid rise from 2007, when at 22 he was a rough diamond at best, to Tour champion in 2013 and 2015. During this year's race, Froome was accused of doping by former riders, reporters and fans of a race that has been beset by doping scandals for almost 20 years. Some fans even threw urine at Froome, who has always vigorously denied doping, as the race's atmosphere turned sour. "The figures make one thing very clear to me, if I ever needed any reminder," Froome said in a statement. "Natural ability is only one piece of the puzzle of what it takes to win an event like the Tour de France. I have always prided myself on my work ethic, dedication and perseverance."

Frederic Grappe, performance director at

the French team FDJ who helped France's Thibaut Pinot finish third in the 2014 Tour, told Reuters that the best way to assess Froome's performance would be to release his power output data over the years.

Fitter athlete

"The tests are a step in the right direction but it's not accurate enough," Grappe said. There was one indicator, however, that suggested Froome is not a donkey turned into a race horse: the "VO2 max", which is the maximum rate of oxygen consumption. The higher the reading, the fitter the athlete. "One thing is sure, his VO2 max suggests he has the engine to achieve what he's achieved," said Grappe. Froome's VO2 max was measured at 84.6 ml/kg/min, equivalent to 88.2 when adjusted to his Tour de France weight. "It is possible that it is even higher because, very often, the numbers we have from outdoor tests are higher than the ones conducted in labs," Grappe explained. But the Frenchman said more could have been done to silence the doubters.

"We don't have a lot of data," he said. "For instance we don't have the gross efficiency, which is key in determining the profile of a rider."

The Journal of Science and Cycling defines gross efficiency as the "ratio of work generated to the total metabolic energy cost".

Another much debated figure during the 2015 Tour was Froome's power - the rate at which he can expend energy - and power-to-weight ratio. All teams use power meters to assess their riders' performance, and some experts say their data can show that a rider is cheating. Froome calls them "clowns", however, and his Sky team's manager Dave Brailsford says it is "pseudo-science".

One of them, Antoine Vayer, a former coach at the Festina team, which was at the heart of the Tour's 1998 doping scandal, believes it is possible to determine the maximum power that can be achieved without doping. Froome's tests show that he can produce 419 Watts for "20-40 minutes", which, for Vayer, puts him in the 'suspicious' zone. "This figure means little because we don't know whether it's the power he produced for 20 or 40 minutes. And you usually lose one Watt per minute after 20 minutes," said Grappe, who believes a power passport for all riders would help detect doping, just like the blood passport already in use. — Reuters

AN GETS EUROPEAN TOUR ROOKIE AWARD

LONDON: Byeong Hun An yesterday became the first Asian player to be named as the winner of the Sir Henry Cotton Rookie of the Year Award by the European Tour.

The 24-year-old South Korean made an immediate impact in his first year at the top level, sealing a first European Tour title at one of its most prestigious events, the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth Club in May.

An carded a closing seven under par 65, to claim a six shot victory and break the record for the lowest winning score with a cumulative total of 21 under par 267.

In the process, the America-based Korean - more commonly known on Tour as Ben An - became only the second rookie in history to win the BMW PGA Championship.

An, who in 2009 became the youngest winner of the US Amateur Championship at the age of 17, went on to produce an impressive finish to the 2015 campaign - claiming top four finishes in three of the four Final Series events.

He took a seventh place finish in The 2015 Race to Dubai, five spots ahead of Englishman Matthew Fitzpatrick, who was also in the running to win the award given to the highest-ranked European Tour debutant. Last year the award went to American Brooks Koepka.

"It's a once-in-a-lifetime achievement," said An. "I worked very hard for this and played great last season. There were a lot of other good rookie players, so to win the award is very special.

"The race went down to the final day of the final event - even the last hole. It was so close and I had no idea who was going to get it. 'I've seen the other names who have won this award over the years and I've joined a list of great players. It's great to be part of that history.

"I'm the first Asian to win it and hopefully it will help bring more Asian players to play on the European Tour." — AFP



BEAVER CREEK: France's Blaise Giezendanner takes a training run for the Men's World Cup downhill skiing event in Beaver Creek, Colo., Thursday. — AP

RED BULL TO RACE WITH RENAULT-TAG HEUER ENGINES

BERLIN: Red Bull will use Renault-Tag Heuer engines to compete in the 2016 Formula One season, the Austrian owned but British-based racing team said yesterday.

The announcement ends months of speculation surrounding their future in Formula One and which engines they would compete with. "TAG Heuer is a Formula One icon and we are very happy to work with them," Red Bull team boss Christian Horner said of the company that helped McLaren pilots

Niki Lauda and Alain Prost in the 1980's. "And we are deeply satisfied with Renault's decision to stick with us and F1," said the boss of the team launched in 2007 and who clinched the world title four times between 2010-2013.

After Sebastian Vettel's four-year domination in the Red Bull, Lewis Hamilton and Mercedes have been a class apart the last two years. Red Bull has had a strained relationship with engine supplier Renault, who them-

selves have announced that they will now return to the sport as a full constructor in 2016 after their takeover at Lotus. Swiss watchmaker TAG Heuer will take the naming rights of the Renault V6 engine within the Red Bull team, and as such, next year's car will be called the Bull Racing-TAG Heuer RB12.

Renault's other team Lotus, whom they bought back recently, will also use the V6 engine, although mechanics at the various racing teams work on

those engines in their own way.

Formula One has been trying to introduce measures to make cars and engines cheaper for 'client teams', ones that don't have their own major motor company and use Renault, Mercedes or Ferrari engines for example. Red Bull's top driver Australia's Daniel Ricciardo came eighth in the final standings in the Formula One 2015 championship while the constructor itself came fourth from nine. — AFP



DUBAI: Nelson Oyoo of Kenya dives over to score as Cameroon Cowell of England tries to defend during the first day of the Sevens World Series rugby tournament in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, yesterday. — AP

TOULON COUNTING ON EXPLOSIVE NONU DEBUT

PARIS: Bernard Laporte warned Toulon were expecting an explosive debut from World Cup-winner Ma'a Nonu in his first match for the Top 14 side against Agen today.

The New Zealand centre lines up just over a week after his arrival at the three-time European champions and expectations are high in southern France. Manager Laporte said he had met Nonu for the first time this week and believed the veteran could act as a motor to power the team further ahead after last weekend's 35-9 thumping of leaders Clermont. "Like (Matt) Giteau here or (Dan) Carter in Paris, we expect players like this (Nonu) to help pull everyone towards the top," said former France coach Laporte.

"I didn't know him, we never met before," said Laporte. "We're just getting to know each other. He's someone with a lot of humility and seems very likeable. You can tell he's a good guy."

South African flanker Duane Vermeulen said he was expecting the 33-year-old All Black to find his feet soon. "He's shy like New Zealanders are sometimes but little by little he's opening up," said Vermeulen.

'Truth on the pitch'

Nonu will link up with France centre Mathieu Bastareaud, also fresh from extending his contract for five years, in an explosive combination sure to intimidate their lowly rivals. Nonu's arrival has shaken up the Toulon personnel with Maxime Mermoz rested for the first time this season. "The truth on the pitch will tell," said Laporte, adding: "What will be the better combination, is it Nonu with Mathieu Bastareaud or Maxime Mermoz? One thing's certain, he can play with the two. There is Basta and Maxime in him, he's a great player."

Clermont, meanwhile, will be looking to get back to winning ways in Sunday's derby against Massif Central rivals Brive. Since 1927, the two cities separated by just 180km in the mountainous region of central France, have played 94 times with Clermont claiming most of those victories.

This time Brive have reason to believe as they ride high just two points behind Clermont, and a win would see them reach the summit at their rival's expense.

Unique match

Clermont captain Damien Chouly warned they would be using the derby to

bounce back after last weekend's reversal.

"We slipped up, we know it. Next up Brive! It's always a unique match for me because I trained and spend my early professional years there," said Chouly. Montpellier, meanwhile, have recruited New Zealander Jamie McKintosh and Georgian Davit Kubriashvili as cover for CJ Van der Linde, Schalk Van der Merwe and Yvan Watremez. Both props could play for Montpellier, who sit sixth in the Top 14, for their trip to Castres, two places below them.

Stade Francais will be looking to build on last week's 21-19 away win over Grenoble to get their floundering season further back on track. Reigning champions Stade are tenth after five losses in nine games and host midtable Bordeaux-Begles.

Captain Sergio Parisse has committed to the club for next season. "I'm staying at home .. at Paris!" the 114 times capped Italian forward wrote on Twitter.

Elsewhere Toulouse, beaten 28-13 by Racing 92 last weekend host struggling Oyonnax, while as in Friday's early match Racing 92 take on Pau. Pau were thrashed 46-10 by Bordeaux last week and are third from bottom in the Top 14, just three points ahead of Agen and Oyonnax. — AFP

DAVIDS TO LEAD TROUBLED KINGS IN SUPER RUGBY

CAPE TOWN: Troubled South African Super Rugby side the Southern Kings have appointed rookie Deon Davids as their coach for the 2016 season and promised to pay their players in the next week.

The Port Elizabeth-based side is being administered by the South African Rugby Union (SARU) who were asked to step in by previous custodians, provincial union Eastern Province Rugby, who have run into financial difficulties.

Davids, 48, a former assistant coach to the South Africa Under-20 side and who most recently led the South Western Districts Academy team, has no previous Super Rugby experience though he did coach minnows Boland in the domestic Currie Cup competition until five years ago.

He is expected to lead an extended 42-player squad, though SARU admit they have yet to tie all the players they have targeted to contracts. "We are unable to go into all the player details right now as we still have to confirm some contracts and tie up loan arrangements but, considering when we started and from what base, I am very pleased with where we have come," SARU CEO Jurie Roux said in a press release yesterday.

"I believe we are putting together a more than competent squad that will not only be representative of the region but coincidentally meets the targets of our Strategic Transformation Plan four years ahead of schedule.

"The squad we have identified will have around 50 percent black players while the management team is more than 50 percent black. Our Rugby Department has picked the best available talent." Roux said the players and management would be paid next week, although the position of players not contracted to the Southern Kings by SARU remains to be resolved by Eastern Province Rugby.

Roux said he hoped to confirm two new sponsorships in the New Year that would assist in funding the new-look Kings. South Africa's six Super Rugby sides are owned by SARU and awarded to host unions at their discretion, placing pressure on Eastern Province Rugby to ease their perilous financial state or risk potentially losing the team for the 2017 season. — Reuters



AUGUSTA: In this April 8, 2015, file photo, Lindsey Vonn sits with Tiger Woods and his children Sam and Charlie during the Par 3 contest at the Masters golf tournament in Augusta, Ga. Woods says he has a "fantastic" relationship with former wife Elin Nordegren and he has begun explaining to his two children what happened to their marriage. In an interview with Time magazine, he says when they come of age he will tell them the "real story." — AP

PAKISTAN SELLS TWENTY20 FRANCHISES FOR \$93M

LAHORE: Pakistan's bid to stage its first-ever Twenty20 league received a shot in the arm with the sale of five franchises for \$93 million for ten years, its cash-strapped cricket board has announced.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) had been trying to launch a Pakistan Super League (PSL), an annual competition based on lucrative leagues in India and Australia, but bids in 2013 and 2014 were stalled due to lack of sponsorship. On Thursday the PCB announced it has sold five teams from Quetta, Peshawar,

Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad for the league to be staged in Dubai and Sharjah from February 4-23 next year. The PCB said top players like West Indian Chris Gayle and former England batsman Kevin Pietersen are among a host of players who have agreed to play in the competition, while it has also attracted leading coaches for the teams. The coach selection process for all five teams will take place in the next 10 days and the player draft event will take place by the end of December. "The PCB is

proud to announce that the PSL's commercial rights for franchises, title sponsorship, and broadcast have been sold," said a PCB release.

PSL chairman Najam Sethi, a former chairman of the PCB, said the deals show progress being made in the PSL bids. "I am delighted with these positive developments and this is a major achievement in our PSL journey," he said.

"The best part is that all team owners are ardent cricket fans and their dedica-

tion will make this league a success." PCB chairman Shaharyar Khan last month warned the inaugural edition of the Twenty20 league will suffer losses, but the PCB will earn profits in the following editions.

The PCB has lost close to \$100 million in revenue since an extremist attack on the visiting Sri Lankan team's bus in Lahore in 2009 suspended international cricket in the country, forcing them to play at neutral venues in the United Arab Emirates. — AFP

JADEJA, RAHANE TURN SCREWS ON S AFRICA

NEW DELHI: Spinner Ravindra Jadeja ripped through South Africa's batting line-up after Ajinkya Rahane hit the first century of the series as India compounded the visitors' misery in the fourth and final Test yesterday.

Jadeja picked up five wickets for 30 runs as India bowled out the tourists for 121 off 49.3 overs in New Delhi. AB de Villiers was the only batsman to offer much resistance, making 42 off 78 balls.

The top-ranked visitors, who have already lost the series, trail by 213 runs in the first innings although their hosts have decided not to enforce the follow-on. "We haven't played good cricket in the last couple of weeks, so no excuses," South Africa coach Russell Domingo in the close of play press conference at the Feroz Shah Kotla stadium.

"There was some very good bowling from the Indian side, especially from the spinners. "They deserve a lot of credit for bowling so well and we have to take responsibility for some soft dismissals." Left-armed Jadeja recorded his fourth five-wicket haul in Tests to tighten the screw on the Proteas.

Paceman Umesh Yadav (2-32) gave India the breakthrough by having opener Dean Elgar caught behind for 17 before uprooting the off-stump of J.P. Duminy for his 50th Test wicket. Jadeja dismissed the other opener Temba Bavuma (22) and also removed skipper Hashim Amla, who nicked behind to the wicketkeeper. Amla scored just three from 34 balls, yet another single figure score on what has been a hugely disappointing tour for him. Jadeja grabbed three more wickets in fading light, much to the delight of a sizeable crowd in the Indian capital.

Ravichandran Ashwin (2-26) and Ishant Sharma (1-28) also joined the party, helping India end the day on a high. The hosts were bowled out for 334 five overs into the post-lunch session with recalled paceman Kyle Abbott taking two wickets in three



NEW DELHI: Indian batsman Ajinkya Rahane raises his bat after scoring a century against South Africa, on the second day of the fourth test match between the two countries, in New Delhi, India, yesterday. — AP

balls to send back Ashwin (56) and Sharma (zero).

'Shot-making not easy'

It was the second career five-wicket haul for

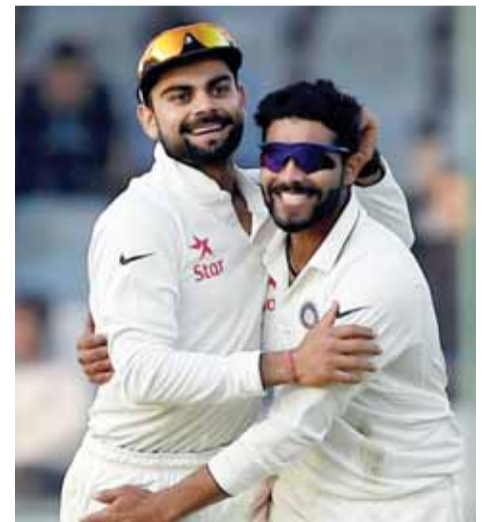
Abbott, who had picked three wickets on the opening day. After resuming at the overnight 231-7, India added 103 runs while losing three wickets, including that of Rahane (127). Rahane, 27, reached his fifth Test century and his first on home soil with a classic straight drive off Abbott.

The stylish right-hander, on 89 overnight, raised his arms in celebration before waving his bat towards cheering fans. "I was very determined. I knew I was batting really well in the series and I just needed to spend some time in the middle," said Rahane.

"Shot-making was not easy but once you were set it was difficult for the bowlers to get the batsman out." No batsman had previously reached three figures in a low-scoring series which India have sealed already after winning the first and third Tests. Rahane thrived on the Kotla track, which seemed to have evened out after offering inconsistent bounce and turn to bowlers on the opening day.

His fine innings came to an end when he handed a straightforward catch to de Villiers in the covers off leg-spinner Imran Tahir. His 127 runs came off 215 balls and was studded with 11 fours and four sixes.

Rahane played aggressively in the first session, lofting off-spinner Dane Piedt for two sixes in three balls, including one that sailed over the long-off fence. He also shared 98 runs with



NEW DELHI: India's captain Virat Kohli (L) celebrates the dismissal of South Africa's Dane Piedt with India's Ravindra Jadeja. — AFP

Ashwin, helping India steady the boat after they were struggling at 139-6 at one stage. Ashwin, the leading wicket-taker of the series with 26 scalps, showed his skill with the bat as well, reaching his sixth Test half-century with a six off Tahir. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

NEW DELHI: Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the fourth and final Test between India and South Africa at the Feroz Shah Kotla stadium yesterday:

India 1st innings (overnight 231-7):

M. Vijay c Amla b Piedt	12
S. Dhawan lbw b Piedt	33
C. Pujara b Abbott	14
V. Kohli c Vilas b Piedt	44
A. Rahane c de Villiers b Tahir	127
R. Sharma c Tahir b Piedt	1
W. Saha b Abbott	1
R. Jadeja c Elgar b Abbott	24
R. Ashwin c de Villiers b Abbott	56
U. Yadav not out	10
I. Sharma lbw b Abbott	0
Extras: (b8, w1, nb3)	12
Total (all out, 117.5 overs)	334
Fall of wickets: 1-30 (Vijay), 2-62 (Dhawan), 3-66 (Pujara), 4-136 (Kohli), 5-138 (Sharma), 6-139 (Saha), 7-198 (Jadeja), 8-296 (Rahane), 9-334 (Ashwin), 10-334 (Sharma)	
Bowling: Morkel 24-5-58-0 (nb1, w1), Abbott 24.5-7-40-5 (nb1), Piedt 38-6-117-4 (nb1), Tahir 16-2-66-1, Elgar 11-0-33-0, Duminy 4-0-12-0	

South Africa 1st innings:

D. Elgar c Saha b Yadav	17
T. Bavuma b Jadeja	22
H. Amla c Saha b Jadeja	3
AB de Villiers c Sharma b Jadeja	42
F. du Plessis c Rahane b Jadeja	0
J.P. Duminy b Yadav	1
D. Vilas b Sharma	11
K. Abbott lbw b Ashwin	4
D. Piedt c Rahane b Jadeja	5
M. Morkel not out	9
I. Tahir c sub (Rahul) b Ashwin	1
Extras: (b5, nb1)	6
Total (all out, 49.3 overs)	121
Fall of wickets: 1-36 (Elgar), 2-40 (Bavuma), 3-56 (Amla), 4-62 (du Plessis), 5-65 (Duminy), 6-79 (Vilas), 7-84 (Abbott), 8-103 (Piedt), 9-118 (de Villiers), 10-121 (Tahir)	
Bowling: Sharma 12-5-28-1 (nb1), Yadav 12-3-32-2, Ashwin 13.3-5-26-2, Jadeja 12-2-30-5.	

THOMAS, CELTICS BEAT KINGS IN MEXICO CITY

MEXICO CITY: Prior to the game, Isaiah Thomas said he was disappointed when he saw Boston's schedule this season showed no visits to Sacramento.

He still got to show off for his former team, though, scoring 21 points as the Celtics defeated the Kings 114-97 Thursday night in the NBA's third regular-season game played in Mexico. Thomas, who played in Sacramento from 2011-14, finished with 21 points and nine assists helping the Celtics win for the fourth time in their last five games.

"I think I'm over it," said Thomas, who was traded to Phoenix last year and then dealt to Boston late in the season. "But obviously you want to play good against your former team. But you also want to get the win, because winning is the most important thing and today we did it."

Kelly Olynyk added 21 points for the Celtics while Avery Bradley and Jae Crowder each had 20. "It make us very hard to guard when everybody's pitching in," Thomas said. "We have to be consistent in the offensive end and tonight everybody's confidence was high." Rudy Gay scored 18 points and DeMarcus Cousins added 16 for the Kings, who lost for the third time in their last four games.

"I'm disappointed. I think we need to be more serious at the beginning of the games. I do not know if tonight it was the altitude or the tempo or Boston playing well but they hit us hard at the start and we never recovered," Sacramento coach George Karl said. Rajon Rondo, playing against his former team for the second time in his career, was sent off in the third quarter after a double technical foul and finished with five points for the Kings.

"It was a blow to our ability to mount a comeback, because he has been our engine this season," Karl said. Rondo also faced the Celtics last season, when he was playing for the Dallas and scored 29 points in a 119-101 win.

NUGGETS 106, RAPTORS 105

Guard Will Barton scored 22 points and forward Danilo Gallinari added 21 as the Denver Nuggets held on to defeat the

Toronto Raptors 106-105 and end an eight-game losing streak. Forward Darrell Arthur added 19 points for the Nuggets, while center Joffrey Lauvergne scored 14 points and grabbed 10 rebounds.

HEAT 97, THUNDER 95

Guard Dwyane Wade scored 28 points, including two game-winning free throws with 1.5 seconds left, to lead the Miami Heat to a 97-95 victory over the Oklahoma City Thunder. Wade scored Miami's final eight points to overshadow Oklahoma duo Russell Westbrook and Kevin Durant, both of whom had 25 points for the Thunder.

MAGIC 103, JAZZ 94

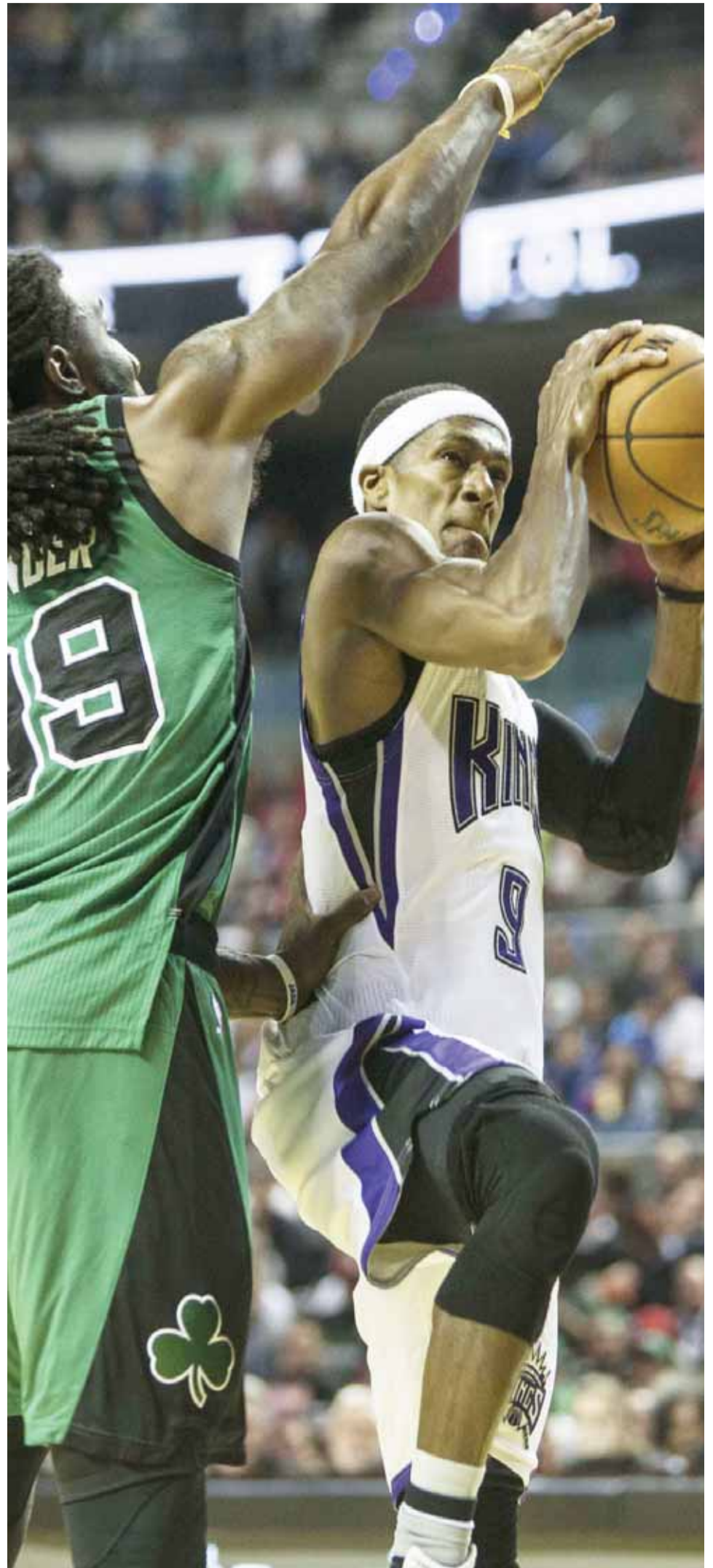
Forward Tobias Harris led six players in double figures and the Orlando Magic took advantage of center Rudy Gobert's absence to beat the Utah Jazz. Harris scored 17 points and Nikola Vucevic added 16 points for Orlando, who won their fifth successive game. Andrew Nicholson, Elfrid Payton, Victor Oladipo and Evan Fournier all contributed 14 points each. Forward Gordon Hayward scored 24 points and guard Alec Burks totalled 21 for the Jazz.

SPURS 103, GRIZZLIES 83

San Antonio forward Kawhi Leonard made a career-best seven three-pointers and scored a game-high 27 points as the Spurs defeated the Memphis Grizzlies 103-83 at FedExForum. Leonard scored 20 of his points and hit six of his three-pointers in the second half. Overall, he shot nine-for-13 from the floor and seven-for-nine from long range. He also grabbed eight rebounds and added three assists, two steals and a block.

TRAIL BLAZERS 123, PACERS 111

Damian Lillard and CJ McCollum combined for 47 points to lead the Portland Trail Blazers to a 123-111 victory over the Indiana Pacers at the Moda Center. Lillard scored 26 points and McCollum added 21 for the Trail Blazers (8-12), who lost three of their previous four games. —Agencies



MEXICO CITY: Sacramento Kings Rajon Rondo, right, goes to the basket under pressure from Boston Celtics' Jae Crowder during a regular-season NBA basketball game in Mexico City, Thursday. — AP

NBA results/standings

Miami 97, Oklahoma City 95; Denver 106, Toronto 105; Orlando 103, Utah 94; San Antonio 103, Memphis 83; Portland 123, Indiana 111; Boston 114, Sacramento 97.

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division

	W	L	PCT	GB
Toronto	12	8	.600	-
Boston	11	8	.579	0.5
NY Knicks	9	10	.474	2.5
Brooklyn	5	13	.278	6
Philadelphia	1	19	.050	11

Central Division

Cleveland	13	5	.722	-
Chicago	11	5	.688	1
Indiana	12	6	.667	1
Detroit	10	9	.526	3.5
Milwaukee	7	12	.368	6.5

Southeast Division

Miami	11	6	.647	-
Orlando	11	8	.579	1
Atlanta	12	9	.571	1
Charlotte	10	8	.556	1.5
Washington	7	9	.438	3.5

Western Conference

Northwest Division

Oklahoma City	11	8	.579	-
Utah	8	9	.471	2
Minnesota	8	10	.444	2.5
Portland	8	12	.400	3.5
Denver	7	13	.350	4.5

Pacific Division

Golden State	20	0	1.000	-
LA Clippers	10	9	.526	9.5
Phoenix	8	11	.421	11.5
Sacramento	7	13	.350	13
LA Lakers	3	15	.167	16

Southwest Division

San Antonio	16	4	.800	-
Dallas	11	8	.579	4.5
Memphis	11	9	.550	5
Houston	8	11	.421	7.5
New Orleans	4	15	.211	11.5

MIAMI INTRODUCES MARK RICHT AS NEW FOOTBALL COACH

CORAL GABLES: After 33 years, Mark Richt is home. Miami announced Richt as its new football coach yesterday, two days after striking a deal in principle with the former Georgia coach to take over the Hurricanes.

"Returning to 'The U' is truly an honor and I am humbled by the responsibility of leading our storied program," said Richt, who played under Howard Schnellenberger at Miami in the early 1980s.

Richt's first official order of business Friday was meeting his team, with players summoned to the football facility for an 8 a.m. introduction. The Hurricanes planned a news conference to announce Richt's hiring later Friday morning, and the hope was that the 24th coach in Miami history could start recruiting later in the day.

Richt went 19-3 against Atlantic Coast Conference opponents when he was at Georgia, and Miami can only hope that trend continues. The Hurricanes moved into the

ACC 12 seasons ago, and still are looking for their first league title.

"His passion for the game of football and for his student-athletes is evident in everything he does," Miami athletic director Blake James said. "And we could not be more excited to welcome Mark and (his wife) Katharyn and their family to Coral Gables."

Miami spent more than five weeks searching for a new permanent coach. When Richt and Georgia parted ways earlier this week, the Hurricanes wasted no time in making him their top choice.

"Coach Richt embodies the competitiveness, the integrity, the passion, the abilities and the experience to lead our young men to ACC and national championships and help them become men of character and success long after," James said.

For Richt, who's .740 career winning percentage is the fifth-best among active FBS coaches, it is a homecoming. He was a team-

mate of fellow quarterbacks Jim Kelly, Vinny Testaverde and Bernie Kosar with the Hurricanes from 1980 through 1982, just before Miami would win the first of what became five national championships in a 19-season span. He's also a native of nearby Boca Raton, and now returns to lead a program desperately seeking a return to national prominence.

Scandal

Miami has gone since 2001 without a national title, since 2003 without a 10-win season and since 2006 without a bowl win. Richt's mandate is simple: Change all that.

"I can't wait to get started," Richt said. Richt replaces Al Golden, who was fired in late October midway through his fifth season. Golden inherited an absolute mess when he was hired, never being told Miami was under an NCAA investigation that was largely centered around the actions of a former booster

and convicted Ponzi scheme architect who said he provided dozens of Hurricane athletes with benefits not permitted under college rules.

The scandal broke not long before Golden's first game, with some effects still lingering today. Miami remains on NCAA probation, and will likely have to limit itself to 81 or 82 scholarships next season instead of the maximum allotment of 85.

But for the most part, the worst is over on that front for Miami. Richt inherits a team that went 8-4 in this regular season, has an elite quarterback in Brad Kaaya, had 91 percent of its points this season come from players who could be back with the Hurricanes in 2016 if they so choose, and finished with four wins in five games under interim coach Larry Scott.

"We are blessed to have the opportunity to come to a world-class institution and world-renowned city," Richt said. — AP

OSHIE GETS TIEBREAKING GOAL AS CAPITALS BEAT CANADIENS

MONTREAL: Capitals winger T.J. Oshie scored twice to lift Washington to a 3-2 win over the Montreal Canadiens at the Bell Centre. Tom Wilson also scored for Washington (18-5-1) while Lars Eller and Brian Flynn tallied for the Canadiens.

AVALANCHE 2, RANGERS 1

Center Matt Duchene scored his 14th goal of the season while goaltender Semyon Varlamov saved 24 shots as the Colorado Avalanche defeated the New York Rangers. Both teams were playing their third game in four days and it showed in the pace of play as they combined for just 43 shots. The Rangers did not register their first shot until there was 8:24 left in the first period.

DEVILS 5, HURRICANES 1

Left winger Mike Cammalleri scored twice in New Jersey's 5-1 victory over the Carolina Hurricanes. Center Adam Henrique, right winger Stephen Gionta and center Jacob Josefson also scored for the Devils, who matched their season high for goals. Goalie Keith Kincaid, playing in only his fifth game of the season, stopped 30 shots for the victory. Center Brad Malone scored for Carolina.

RED WINGS 5, COYOTES 1

Darren Helm had a goal and an assist in the Detroit Red Wings' 5-1 win over the Arizona Coyotes at Joe Louis Arena. Justin Abdelkader, Niklas Kronwall, Gustav Nyquist and Dan DeKeyser also scored for Detroit, who have points in their past nine games (6-0-3).

SENATORS 4, BLACKHAWKS 3 (OVERTIME)

Mike Hoffman scored his second goal of the night 30 seconds into overtime to give the Ottawa Senators a 4-3 victory over the Chicago Blackhawks at Canadian Tire Centre.

Hoffman was set up alone in front after Senators defenseman Erik Karlsson outraced Blackhawks winger Patrick Kane for a loose puck along the left-wing boards.

PANTHERS 2, PREDATORS 1

Goalie Roberto Luongo made 32 saves as Florida captured their fourth successive victory with a 2-1 decision over the Nashville Predators. Playing in his 885th NHL game, just one behind Tony Esposito for seventh all-time, Luongo made 32 saves as he helped the Panthers protect their lead. It was Luongo's 411th career win, 12 shy of Esposito for seventh all-time.

WILD 1, MAPLE LEAFS 0

Minnesota defenseman Matt Dumba scored the game's lone goal while Devan Dubnyk made 28 saves to win a goaltending battle in the

Wild's 1-0 victory over the Toronto Maple Leafs. An apparent goal by Toronto center Peter Holland was overturned after a challenge by Minnesota coach Mike Yeo and officials ruled Holland was offside entering the Minnesota zone. Toronto goaltender James Reimer, who made 27 saves in his return from a four-game layoff from injury, withstood a barrage of Minnesota scoring chances in the opening period to keep his team in it.

STARS 4, CANUCKS 2

Patrick Sharp scored the tiebreaking goal with 5:59 remaining in the third period and the Dallas Stars continued their dominance over the Vancouver Canucks with a 4-2 victory. Valeri Nichushkin had a goal and an assist for Dallas, who defeated the Canucks for the 10th consecutive time. It also was their fifth straight win in Vancouver. — Reuters



MONTREAL: Washington Capitals goaltender Braden Holtby (70) makes a save against Montreal Canadiens' Alex Galchenyuk during the second period of an NHL hockey game Thursday, in Montreal. — AP

NHL results/standings

Colorado 2, NY Rangers 1; New Jersey 5, Carolina 1; Washington 3, Montreal 2; Ottawa 4, Chicago 3 (OT); Detroit 5, Arizona 1; Florida 2, Nashville 1; Minnesota 1, Toronto 0; Dallas 4, Vancouver 2.

Western Conference

Central Division

	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS
Dallas	20	5	1	92	68	41
St. Louis	15	7	3	66	61	33
Minnesota	13	7	4	66	62	30
Nashville	13	8	4	65	64	30
Chicago	13	9	4	71	68	30
Winnipeg	12	12	2	73	81	26
Colorado	11	14	1	75	77	23

Pacific Division

Los Angeles	15	8	1	60	51	31
San Jose	14	10	0	67	63	28
Arizona	13	11	1	68	75	27
Vancouver	9	10	8	72	75	26
Anaheim	9	12	5	52	67	23
Calgary	9	14	2	60	90	20
Edmonton	9	15	2	65	79	20

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division

Montreal	19	5	3	92	60	41
Detroit	14	8	4	66	65	32
Ottawa	13	7	5	82	75	31
Boston	13	8	2	75	67	28
Florida	12	9	4	65	61	28
Tampa Bay	12	11	3	61	59	27
Buffalo	10	12	3	58	67	23
Toronto	8	13	5	57	73	21

Metropolitan Division

Washington	18	5	1	78	53	37
NY Rangers	17	7	3	76	57	37
NY Islanders	14	8	4	74	63	32
Pittsburgh	14	8	2	57	55	30
New Jersey	13	10	2	62	60	28
Philadelphia	10	10	5	49	67	25
Carolina	8	13	4	51	75	20
Columbus	10	16	0	61	78	20

Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L).

MARTINEZ LOOKING FORWARD TO 'PHENOMENAL' SEMI-FINAL

LONDON: Everton's Roberto Martinez broke with the managerial convention of only taking one game at a time on Friday to look ahead to a "phenomenal" league Cup semi-final against Premier League leaders Manchester City.

Speaking for the first time since the draw was made, the Spaniard told reporters he was already excited by the two-leg tie, which will be played early in January.

"We didn't expect an easy draw," he told reporters yesterday. "We are excited, we feel good and are confident of enjoying it. "We all felt the expectation could work both ways (in the quarter-final against Middlesbrough) — either positive or be

cagey. I thought our team showed a real enjoyment of what we could achieve.

"We haven't won a cup for a long time and we want to achieve as much as we can. "It will be a phenomenal, phenomenal occasion for our club." Everton, who won the FA Cup in 1995 and reached the final in 2009, have never won the League Cup.

Before meeting City, however, they must concentrate on maintaining an impressive recent run of six unbeaten games in all competitions. "December is the most significant month in the Premier League in terms of competing for 15 points," said Martinez, whose team lie ninth in the table, six points behind the

Champions League places.

Belgian striker Romelu Lukaku's goals have been behind the recent success and former Barcelona forward Gerard Deulofeu was outstanding against Middlesbrough.

"The hardest thing to do is scoring goals and this season we have found an interesting run of form of certain players," Martinez said. "As a football club we have done incredibly well to assemble this squad. It has taken a lot of work and a lot of scouting."

Crystal Palace, the visitors to Goodison Park on Monday, were described by Martinez as "a team with a really good mentality, pace and power and difficult to stop-

they are dynamic."

Palace manager Alan Pardew was equally complimentary about Everton, who are point behind his team.

"They are dark horse for Europe, even for the Champions League," he said. "But it's an opportunity to get a result and stay above them." Palace will be without winger Wilfried Zaha, who is suspended after collecting a yellow card for diving against Newcastle.

"Last week was a dive and now he can't play this week. He's had my feelings on it," Pardew said.

"It's just a tiny aspect of his game he needs to correct." — Reuters



ZURICH: Issa Hayatou, acting FIFA President, left, and Markus Kattner, acting FIFA Secretary General, right, speak during a press conference at the FIFA Headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland, Thursday. — AP

FIFA OFFICIALS BANNED FROM SOCCER FOR 90 DAYS

ZURICH: FIFA executive committee members Juan Angel Napout and Alfredo Hawit have been suspended from soccer for 90 days after their arrest in Switzerland, the ethics committee of the soccer's governing body said yesterday.

The pair, who are facing extradition to the United States, were among 16 soccer officials charged by US prosecutors on Thursday with taking part in multimillion-dollar bribery schemes for marketing and broadcast rights.

FIFA's ethics panel routinely bans officials who are under criminal investigation and the suspensions amount to a formality after their arrest, the latest blow to a global soccer body in turmoil since a first round of indictments in May.

Napout is president of the South American Football Confederation (CONMEBOL) and Hawit is head of the CONCACAF confederation that runs the sport in North, Central America and the Caribbean.

Both of them were in Zurich for a FIFA executive committee meeting to discuss reforms aimed at cleaning up the sport and wiping out corruption.

A package of reforms proposed by FIFA to clean up the scandal-plagued governing body of soccer was angrily criticised yesterday by Europe's powerful clubs, who said it would increase frustration among the sport's stakeholders.

The European Club Association (ECA), which represents more than 200 clubs including the major ones such as Real Madrid, Barcelona and Bayern Munich, said its members were "not prepared to be further ignored". FIFA is in the middle of an unprecedented crisis, with criminal investigations into the sport under way in the United States and Switzerland. Its president Sepp Blatter is among officials who have been suspended by its own ethics committee.

FIFA announced a package of planned reforms on Thursday which included term limits for members. A suggestion to increase the four-yearly World Cup to 40 teams from the current 32 was put on hold.

"Given the recommendations that have now been presented, ECA was right to believe that a reform process led from within is unable to deliver a sustainable governance model, which is fit for the 21st century," the club association said in a statement. — Reuters



RENNES: Rennes' French forward Ousmane Dembele (C) kicks the ball during the French L1 football match Rennes against Marseille on Thursday. — AFP

MAN CITY DEAL WITH CHINESE CONSORTIUM WILL IMPROVE IMAGE

LONDON: A major investment from a Chinese consortium gives Manchester City a good chance of gaining ground on English Premier League rivals Manchester United and Arsenal for popularity in the world's most populous nation.

Manchester City announced this week that state-backed China Media Capital and investment company Citic Capital paid around \$400 million for a 13 percent stake in the team's parent company, City Football Group. CFG, owned by Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyana, also owns the New York City and Melbourne City soccer teams and has a 20 percent stake in Yokohama F. Marinos.

City has won two of the last four English titles but lacks the European success and support around the world commanded by some other Premier League sides.

United had the most support of Premier League fans in China at 31.98 percent, followed by Arsenal with 22.65 percent, then Chelsea with a similar share, according to Gu Xin, an analyst at Beijing sports marketing company Yutang Sports. City's share was 5.47 percent.

"If City aims to become the most popular European football team, they will need to contest against not only those English teams but also other European football giants like Barcelona, Real Madrid or even Bayern Munich," Gu said. "Overall, it all depends on what the club does." European clubs' struggle for marketing success in China is down to aggressive sales-driven tactics, according to Simon Chadwick, professor of sports enterprise at England's Salford University. "This type of approach only disaffects and antagonizes some Chinese people," Chadwick said. "Hence, City's approach is rather more considered, and strategic, and could succeed where others have failed. Working in partnership with the Chinese is the way to break into China."

Advantages

City has some advantages in this respect. Former China international Sun Jihai, who played for City from 2002-08, was made a club ambassador in September, and was inducted to the Manchester-based National Football Museum's Hall of Fame in October while Chinese President Xi Jinping was visiting.

"The Chinese president doesn't normally attend such events unless they are of the utmost importance," Chadwick said. "The fact that he visited City tends to suggest just how important this deal is for China and its football ambitions."

"This time last year, China announced a plan to create a domestic sport economy worth \$850 billion by 2025. An important part of this vision is China's desire to bid for, host, and win the World Cup.

Buying City is a way of acquiring competence, intelligence, and insights into football." There has been speculation in China that a Chinese club could be the next addition to the CFG stable, with Beijing Guoan the most likely candidate.

Buying a Chinese club is the next logical step according to Christopher Atkins, a Guangzhou based player representative with RWMG Sports, but just the beginning.

"There is no reason why the Chinese Super League cannot establish itself as the best non-European league," Atkins said. "The addition of the knowledge that a company like CFG can bring would surely only help. I expect CFG to look into the prospect of an academy in China in the fairly short-term future. If they can produce China's first superstar, their status in the market would be elevated yet further." — AP

FANS BOYCOTT LEAVE SYDNEY FC WITH SMALLEST CROWD OF SEASON

SYDNEY: Popular Sydney FC were watched by their smallest crowd of Australia's A-League season as a fan boycott began to bite yesterday.

Just 9,155 fans watched Sydney FC beat Newcastle Jets 1-0 but Sydney's Allianz Stadium was largely deserted as "The Cove" group of supporters stayed away in droves. Football Federation Australia (FFA) is facing a fan revolt amid fury over the publication of a confidential list of supporters banned from stadiums around the country. Anger over a perceived privacy breach flared when Sydney's Sunday Telegraph last week published the names and photos of 198 banned A-League fans, labelling some as "louts" while lashing out at spectator conduct.

The discontent quickly morphed into a backlash against the FFA with supporters condemning its failure to defend fans over what it saw as biased media coverage and for being out of touch with grassroots supporters of the game. Fans at some of the league's best-supported clubs have vowed to boycott weekend games in protest until the FFA presents a transparent ban appeals



SYDNEY: A view of empty seating bays at the start of the round 9 A-League match between Sydney FC and the Newcastle Jets in Sydney yesterday. Australian football chiefs on December 3, 2015 said they would review the A-League's banned fans policy in a desperate bid to make peace and avoid a damaging boycott of games by supporters this weekend. — AFP

process agreed upon by all parties.

While some Sydney FC fans chanted their support in Friday's game, it could not plug the deafening silence emanating from the empty area that usually houses "The Cove". One absent Sydney fan tweeted on social media: "Can safely say pub is a lot more fun and atmospheric." Another tweeted: "My usual non-active season ticket bay was 2/3 empty tonight. A lot of regular fans boycotted, not just the Cove."

Central Coast supporters boycotted their match on Thursday, when they hosted Melbourne City with just 4,514 fans watching City win 5-1. The fans left their seats empty with a banner indicating they had instead "gone to the pub".

The Western Sydney Wanderers' active supporter group the "Red and Black Bloc" said via Facebook they would boycott their club's games indefinitely until the FFA changed their procedures and looked to mend their relationship with scores of unhappy fans. Adelaide United's "Red Army" said they would walk out half an hour into Sunday's home clash with Perth. — AFP



Matches on TV (Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Stoke City v Man City	15:45
beIN SPORTS	
Man United v West Ham	18:00
beIN SPORTS	
Arsenal v Sunderland	18:00
beIN SPORTS	
Watford v Norwich City	18:00
beIN SPORTS	
West Bromwich v Tottenham	18:00
beIN SPORTS	
Swansea City v Leicester	18:00
beIN SPORTS	
Southampton v Aston Villa	18:00
beIN SPORTS	
Chelsea v Bournemouth	20:30
beIN SPORTS	

SPANISH LEAGUE

Real Madrid v Getafe	18:00
beIN SPORTS	
Granada v Atletico	20:15
beIN SPORTS	
Valencia v Barcelona	22:30
beIN SPORTS	
Sunday	
Deportivo v Sevilla	0:00
beIN SPORTS	
Real Betis v Celta	0:05
beIN SPORTS	

ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE

Torino v AS Roma	17:00
beIN SPORTS	
Inter v Genoa	22:45
beIN SPORTS	

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

FC Koln v FC Augsburg	17:30
beIN SPORTS	
Monchengladbach v Bayern Munich	17:30
beIN SPORTS	
Ingolstadt 04 v Hoffenheim	17:30
beIN SPORTS	
Hertha v Bayer 04 Leverkusen	17:30
beIN SPORTS	
Hamburger v FSV Mainz 05	17:30
beIN SPORTS	
Wolfsburg v Dortmund	20:30
beIN SPORTS	

FRENCH LEAGUE

Lyonnais v Angers	19:00
beIN SPORTS	
Bastia v AS Monaco	22:00
beIN SPORTS	
Ajaccio v Nantes	22:00
beIN SPORTS	
Caen v Lille	22:00
beIN SPORTS	
Stade v Troyes	22:00
beIN SPORTS	
Toulouse v Lorient	22:00
beIN SPORTS	

COURTOIS SET TO RETURN AS MOURINHO EYES 'DECEMBER'

LONDON: Jose Mourinho confirmed goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois is back in the squad after three months out injured for today's home match against Bournemouth, as the Chelsea manager hopes the under-pressure champions are finally turning the corner.

The Belgian goalkeeper has not played since the 2-1 defeat to Crystal Palace on August 29 because of a knee injury, but Mourinho hinted he may start today, as he described the 23-year-old as the best goalkeeper in the world.

"Courtois is selected (in the squad)," Mourinho said. "I didn't tell them (if he will start), so they must be the ones to know. But he's selected. "Courtois is Courtois. To miss Courtois for a couple of matches, we knew we had good protection in a good goalkeeper (like Asmir Begovic).

"But to lose your best goalkeeper for three months, and 19 matches in all competitions ... 19 matches without the best goalkeeper in the world. It was hard for us. Now we are again in a super situation by having the best and a very good one. I don't know (if

he starts). "I have to speak with him and make a decision. But, sooner or later, he will be my number one. If not tomorrow, then against Porto (on Wednesday)."

"Courtois was our goalkeeper all last season, and we know how fundamental he was for us. So it's very important that we have him back." Mourinho also confirmed John Terry, Ramires and Radamel Falcao are all still out, but that Nemanja Matic is available despite having to wear a face mask because of a double fracture to his nose and cheek suffered in Sunday's 0-0 draw at Tottenham Hotspur.

No Costa doubts

Diego Costa furiously threw a bib to the ground during that game once it became apparent that he would not be coming on as a sub, but the Chelsea manager played down the ongoing controversy, insisting there are no doubts over the striker's future.

"For me, no question marks. Always played. Was on the bench one match, which is more than natural. No problems. No prob-

lems at all." Mourinho also laughed off the pictures of Costa emerging from the team's Christmas party at 3.15am on Thursday morning, pointing out how it was odd that he was one of only three players to be photographed despite 25 attending.

"I think the paparazzi had a problem with their memory cards (at the Christmas party). There were 25 players inside and they only got three."

Mourinho added that the Christmas party had allowed the players to unwind. "They consulted me about the moment to do it (party), and I told them a bit far from Christmas because Christmas will be really busy. So they chose this week. I agreed with them. And the next morning in training everyone was really good. They did well. They needed that. But the paparazzi was not the best." Mourinho meanwhile feels that last week's results - in which Chelsea kept three consecutive clean sheets for the first time this season - can set up a strong December, and signal the team turning the corner. —AFP



MEXICO CITY: America and Pumas players surround referee Fernando Guerrero to argue, after defender Miguel Samudio was given a red card for tripping Pumas forward Victor Sosa during a Mexican soccer league semi-final first leg match in Mexico City, Thursday. Pumas won the match 3-0. — AP

Sports



FIFA officials banned from soccer for 90 days

46



DETROIT: Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers (12) is sacked by Detroit Lions middle linebacker Stephen Tulloch (55) and cornerback Quandre Diggs (28) during the first half of an NFL football game, Thursday, in Detroit. — AP

RODGERS HAIL MARY LIFTS PACK OVER LIONS

DETROIT: Aaron Rodgers could not remember ever completing a Hail Mary pass during a game but he will never forget the one he threw on Thursday, a play that might have saved the Green Bay Packers' season. Rodgers gunned a 61-yard pass to tight end Richard Rodgers on the final play to give the Packers a stunning 27-23 win over the Detroit Lions at Ford Field.

"It's the greatest feeling," said the quarterback, whose team had lost four of their previous five games. "We're blessed to be able to play this game, and it reminds you at times how special this game is. 'I love what I do. I'm very fortunate to be a Green Bay Packer, and you live for days like this, to have a chance at the end and to have something miraculous happen."

Rodgers scrambled to his right and fired a bomb into the end zone, where his tight end made a two-handed grab. With the Lions rushing only three linemen, he bought time for his receivers to get downfield. He stepped up toward the line of scrimmage and let it fly.

"I was looking at (wide receiver) Davante (Adams), and it was pretty exciting to see Richard jump up there and catch it," he said. The tight end, who is 6-foot-4, played basketball at the University of California. "Richard is the perfect guy for that type of situation with his big body and ability to go up," Packers coach Mike

McCarthy said. The Packers needed a big break just to have a final chance. After a couple of laterals on the previous play, the ball wound up in the quarterback's hands again with no one behind him but as he tried to run forward, defensive end Devin Taylor grabbed his face mask, and flags flew. That gave the Packers another play with time expired.

KARMA

Green Bay (8-4) were upset a couple of plays earlier when they felt Detroit safety Isa Abdul-Quddus should have been whistled for pass interference on a downfield throw. "I think a little karma was saved up after the no P.I.," said Rodgers, who passed for 273 yards and two touchdowns and also scored on a 17-yard scramble as Green Bay rallied from a 20-point deficit. He was intercepted once. Richard Rodgers caught eight passes for 146 yards. "All I saw was the dude catching the ball," Lions cornerback Darius Slay said of the final play. "Limited words, I don't know what to say. I'm just in shock mode."

Quarterback Matthew Stafford threw two early touchdown passes for the Lions (4-8), who nearly swept the Packers for the first time in 24 years.

"When they were awarded the extra play, it kind of hit me," Lions running back Ameer

Abdullah said. "I was like, 'Really?' I know how the Hail Mary stuff goes. Nowadays, it's more probable that they catch it than it gets batted down."

Lions wide receiver Calvin Johnson caught his 15th career touchdown pass against Green Bay, a record for a Packers opponent, while Detroit kicker Matt Prater added three field goals.

Prater's 34-yarder with 8:54 left in the third quarter gave Detroit a 20-0 lead. The Packers needed good fortune to finally break through during their ensuing possession. Running back James Starks fumbled at the Lions' five-yard line, but the ball bounced forward, and wide receiver Randall Cobb pounced on it in the end zone. — Reuters

REAL OUT OF COPA DEL REY

MADRID: Real Madrid have been thrown out of the King's Cup after they used an ineligible player in Wednesday's last 32, first leg match at third-tier Cadiz, Spanish radio station Cadena Ser reported yesterday.

Real included Denis Cheryshev in their starting lineup for the match and the Russia forward opened the scoring in his side's 3-1 victory, even though he should have been serving a one-match suspension.

Cadena Ser, which did not identify the source of its information, said the Spanish soccer federation (RFEF) had told Cadiz of the decision to expel Real, who had said they would appeal if they were thrown out of the competition.

The RFEF is expected to announce its

decision later yesterday. Cheryshev earned a third yellow card, which carries an automatic one-game ban, playing on loan at Villarreal in last season's Cup. Real took him off at halftime when they apparently realised their error but Cadiz filed an official complaint. Real president Florentino Perez said on Thursday he believed the club had not broken the rules as neither Cheryshev nor the club were notified he was banned. It is the latest embarrassment for the world's richest club by income, whose attempt to sign Spain goalkeeper David De Gea from Manchester United on the final day of the transfer window in August ended in farce when the paperwork did not arrive on time to complete the deal. — Reuters