

Al-Kharafi Group sponsors 'Paris in The Heart of Kuwait' conference



Benzema double helps Madrid rally from fiasco to thrash Getafe



Supplement Inside

Kuwait Times

Canada / Kuwait

50 YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

50th Anniversary Logo

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OBAMA INSISTS AMERICA 'WILL NOT BE TERRORIZED'

IS HAILS CALIFORNIA ATTACKERS AS FOLLOWERS



Min 6°
Max 13°
High Tide 06:44 & 19:35
Low Tide 01:03 & 12:22

ISLAMIC TEACHERS TO BE TRAINED TO FIGHT EXTREMISM

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs said yesterday it is organizing a number of training courses for Islamic religion teachers to strengthen their role in countering extremism. Assistant Undersecretary for Financial and Administrative Affairs Farid Emadi stated that the ministry would hold 24 training courses for 600 teachers nationwide as a part of an ambitious plan to harness the skills of religion teachers.

Emadi, also secretary general of the higher committee for moderation, lauded the cooperation between the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and the Ministry of Education to improve the qualification and the skills of the teachers. He pointed out that building the capacity of religion teachers is essential to foster the values of tolerance, co-existence and moderation among students and to stand up against destructive ideologies, hatemongering and extremism. — KUNA



SILVER SPRING, Maryland: People participate in a candlelight vigil held by the Council on American-Islamic Relations for the victims of recent mass shootings at the Muslim Community Center on Friday. (Inset) This updated combination of photos provided by the FBI and the California Department of Motor Vehicles shows Tashfeen Malik and Syed Farook. — AFP/AP



SAN BERNARDINO, California: US President Barack Obama insisted yesterday that America "will not be terrorized" as the Islamic State group praised the perpetrators of the California mass shooting as "soldiers" of its caliphate. The president's pledge and extremists' praise followed an announcement by the FBI that it was treating the investigation into the San Bernardino rampage as an act of terrorism. "It is entirely possible that these two attackers were radicalized to commit this act of terror," Obama said of Syed Farook, 28, and his 29-year-old Pakistani wife Tashfeen Malik, who slaughtered 14 people and wounded 21 others at a year-end office party on Wednesday.

In its English-language radio broadcast yesterday, IS stopped short of explicitly claiming the attack but referred to the assailants as soldiers of the khilafah (caliphate) who were "killed in the path of Allah". In the group's Arabic-language radio broadcast earlier in the day, however, they referred to the attackers simply as "supporters of the Islamic State".

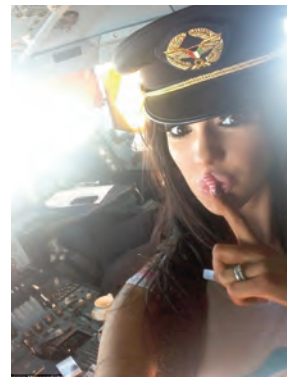
Obama said in his weekly address that the Islamic State and other terrorist groups "are actively encouraging people - around the world and in our country - to commit terrible acts of violence, often times as lone wolf actors." "We are Americans," he added. "We will uphold our values - a free and open society. We are strong. And we are resilient. And we will not be terrorized."

The carnage marked the deadliest mass shooting in the United States since the Newtown school massacre in 2012, when 26 people, mostly children, were shot dead. The New York Times yesterday published an editorial on its front page for the first time since 1920, using the rare,

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KAC PILOT LOSES LICENSE IN COCKPIT PORN STAR SCANDAL

KUWAIT: The license of a Kuwait Airways pilot who had invited a porn star and her friend into the cockpit in 2013 has been revoked, according to a report by Al-Jarida daily yesterday. The decision, announced by Communications Minister Essa Al-Kandari in a report to the National Assembly, was taken following an investigation he ordered in July when news about the security breach broke out.



The report, a copy of which was obtained by Al-Jarida, said that the copilot was demoted over his role in the case. The plane crew was not aware of what was happening inside the cockpit and no disciplinary action was taken against any member, Al-Jarida said. Kandari stressed the compliance of Kuwait Airways with the strict regulations adopted following Sept 11.

The investigation team in its report spelled out several recommendations that included tougher measures related to the cockpit, including the revocation of the license of any pilot who smokes inside it. Kandari had ordered the "immediate recall" of the Kuwaiti pilot allegedly involved in the case from the Thai capital Bangkok where he was when the case was published in the British media. — Agencies

AA+ FITCH RATING FOR KUWAIT

KUWAIT: Fitch's new sovereign credit rating for Kuwait in 2015 stands at "AA+" level with a "stable outlook" for the country. Fitch Ratings, in a fresh report, affirmed Kuwait's long-term foreign and local currency Issuer Default Ratings (IDR) at 'AA'. The outlooks are stable, and the country ceiling has been affirmed at 'AA+' and the Short-Term foreign currency IDR at 'F1+'.

Kuwait's key credit is exceptionally strong, and fiscal and external metrics, at around \$48/barrel, are one of the lowest fiscal break-even Brent oil prices among Fitch-rated oil exporters. Fiscal and external surpluses will continue to add to the country's existing buffers, if at a lower rate than historically. These strengths are tempered by Kuwait's heavily oil-dependent economy, a degree of geopolitical risk, and weak scores on measures of governance and ease of doing business.

Kuwait has ample assets to cover medium-term spending needs. "We expect total assets managed by the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) to reach \$472

billion (377 percent of GDP) in FY2015/16 (FY15) and continue to rise beyond that due to investment returns and on-going transfers of revenue," Fitch said.

Based on unofficial, publicly available sources, "we estimate KIA assets were \$456 billion (298 percent of GDP) at the end of FY14, up from \$424 billion at the end of FY13. KIA assets could be used to cover more than six years' worth of government spending, and we expect this coverage ratio to be maintained," it added.

At an expected 8.3 percent of GDP in 2015, debt will be one of the lowest for Fitch-rated sovereigns. Even as total KIA assets rise, "we expect that its General Reserve Fund (GRF), the purpose of which is to cover immediate government spending needs, will slowly shrink from the estimated USD85bn in FY14," the agency noted. The GRF, which is mostly invested domestically, receives the balance of revenue

and expenditure excluding investment income and after the transfer of at least 10 percent of total revenue to the Reserve Fund for Future Generations (RFFG), which is entirely invested abroad.

"The transfer to the RFFG has been 25 percent of revenue in each of the past three years, but we assume that from FY15 it will revert to the 10 percent specified by law. GRF should still continue to be able to cover at least one year of government spending. We expect external assets managed by the KIA to rise to \$405 billion (324 percent of GDP) in FY15. We expect the general government to maintain a surplus of KD 1.8 billion (4.9 percent of GDP) in FY15, down from KD 8 billion in FY14, including investment income but before transfers to the RFFG.

This is driven almost entirely by a fall in oil-related receipts," Fitch said. "Similarly, we forecast that the current account bal-

ance will fall to \$5 billion (4.1 percent of GDP) in 2015, interrupting a history of double-digit surpluses since 1999.

Under our baseline oil price assumptions, fiscal and external balances will recover in 2016-2017, although they will be held back by a pick-up in capital spending and the domestic economy. In response to the deterioration in revenues, the government is implementing cuts to current expenditure as per its FY15 budget passed in July this year (three months into the fiscal year, which starts in April).

"Goods and services expenditure was down 50 percent yoy in the first six months of the FY and subsidy payments have fallen, both as a result of the lower oil prices; the wage bill has remained roughly constant. Our assumptions for the full FY are aligned with these outcomes. Capital spending has grown in the first six months, and we expect it to edge up to KD 2.2 billion from KD 1.8 billion for the full year.

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PARIS: French President Francois Hollande (left) listens to Al Gore, former US Vice President and Climate Reality Project Chairman, as they attend the World Climate Change Conference 2015 (COP21) in Le Bourget yesterday. — AFP

CAUTIOUS HOPES AS UN ADOPTS CLIMATE PLAN

LE BOURGET, France: Negotiators from 195 nations delivered a blueprint yesterday for a pact to save mankind from disastrous global warming, raising hopes that decades of arguments will finally end with a historic agreement in Paris. The planned deal would aim to break the world's dependence on fossil fuels for energy, slashing the greenhouse gas emissions from burning oil, coal and gas that are causing temperatures to rise dangerously. Tortuous UN negotiations

dating back to the early 1990s have failed to forge unity between rich and poor nations, and the Paris talks are being described as the "last, best chance" to save mankind.

They began on Monday with a record-breaking gathering of 150 world leaders who sought to energize the process, and the next crucial phase ended yesterday with the adoption of a draft text of an agreement.

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TRIPLE SUICIDE ATTACK KILLS 30 ON CHAD ISLAND

N'DJAMENA: A triple suicide bombing on an island in Lake Chad yesterday killed at least 30 people and left more than 80 wounded, a Chadian security source said, in another apparent strike by Boko Haram Islamists despite a regional offensive to stop the insurgency. "Three suicide bombers blew themselves up in three different places at the weekly market on Loulou Fou, an island in Lake Chad," the source in the capital N'Djamena told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity. He said the explosions had killed 30 people including the three attackers, and injured more than 80 others.

N'Djamena on November 9 declared a state of emergency in the flashpoint Lake Chad region, which also straddles Nigeria, Cameroon and Niger and is frequently targeted by Nigeria's Boko Haram Islamists who this year declared allegiance to the Islamic State. The decree granted the governor of the remote region the authority to ban the circulation of people and vehicles, to search homes and to seize arms.

In recent months, Boko Haram fighters have stepped up attacks and suicide bombings on Chadian villages in the lake region that lie close to the frontier with Nigeria. The deadliest attack on Chad's side of the lake took place on Oct 10, another triple suicide, which killed 41 people at Baga Sola, according to N'Djamena. Since the start of the year, the Chadian army has been on the frontline of

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KARDASHIAN, WEST WELCOME BABY BOY

LOS ANGELES: Reality TV star Kim Kardashian and her rapper husband Kanye West announced yesterday the birth of their second child, a baby boy. "He's here!" Kardashian wrote in a Titter post, which linked to a page exclaiming "Kanye and I welcome our new baby boy!" The latest addition to the West family was born in the morning and "mother and son are doing well" according to the page, which showed a picture of the celebrity parents' hands intertwined.

Kardashian broke the news that she was pregnant in late May during a preview for the next season of her show "Keeping up With The Kardashians." She and West are already the parents of a girl named North, who was born on June 15, 2013. The couple, who were married in May 2014, has struggled to overcome fertility problems - a battle that Kardashian openly discussed on the reality show. In April, Time magazine named Kardashian, 35, and West, 38, to its list of the world's 100 most influential people.

Kardashian has tracked her pregnancy online for her 37 million Twitter followers, posting an image late Friday of her bare belly with the caption, "Ready whenever you are lol." Kardashian and West were married last year in Florence, Italy, in a gala ceremony filmed for her show. West proposed to his bride in Oct



NEW YORK: In this June 1, 2015 file photo, Kim Kardashian and Kanye West arrive at the 2015 CFDA Fashion Awards at Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center. — AP

West was in New York earlier this week for the Footwear News Achievement Awards, where he gave a rambling 20-minute acceptance speech after his Adidas Yeezy Boost sneaker was named shoe of the year. — Agencies



KUWAIT: (From left) Shamlan Al-Bahar, The Protégés Program General Manager; Wadha Al-Dabous, Generation five project PR and Marketing Coordinator; and Abeer Al-Omar, Manager - Corporate Social Responsibility at KIPCO are pictured at the press conference. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



The attendees take a group photo at the event.

KIPCO SHEDS LIGHT ON GENERATION FIVE EXPERIENCE OF THE PROTÉGÈS PROGRAM 2015

KUWAIT: KIPCO - the Kuwait Projects Company (Holding) - and The Protégés mentorship program held a joint press conference to shed light on the experience of Generation 5 of The Protégés and details of the completed project, named "RAQSH: Donate to Educate". Speaking at the press conference was Shamlan Al-Bahar, The Protégés Program General Manager; Wadha Al-Dabous, Generation five project PR and Marketing Coordinator; and Abeer Al-Omar, Manager - Corporate Social Responsibility at KIPCO.

Shamlan Al-Bahar said: "The program offers creative training sessions to this group, led mentors to help these young people discover their true passions. The mentors provided the group with the necessary skills to overcome various business challenges through self-development workshops, critical and creative thinking, communication skills, team management,

and project startups and execution." He added: "Generation 5 of The Protégés was successful in launching 'RAQSH: Donate to Educate' (@RAQSHKW), a social responsibility project. The participants presented full details of this project to a judging panel, which commended on the project's creative elements and core key messages."

Bahar expressed his deep gratitude to KIPCO and its Group companies for their strategic support to the program and their belief in its purpose and goals. Abeer Al-Omar added: "Such programs are important to KIPCO's core corporate citizenship framework which promotes the continuous development of Kuwait's future through its younger generations."

She said: "At KIPCO, we are proud of being associated with The Protégés Program that helps achieve the full potential of our youth, preparing them to take

active roles and responsibilities in Kuwait's drive to develop. The younger generations are the main force behind progress and advancement of our society. KIPCO and its operating companies continue to invest in local talents, and nurture their professional values and skills."

Wadha Al-Dabous also said: "If I could describe The Protégés Program in one word it would be, a cycle, a cycle of support, knowledge, and sharing. And, with the conclusion of the first phase of our training, it was now our duty to keep the cycle turning by passing on the knowledge and skills whether previously acquired or during the program into something that would create a positive impact on the local, regional and international communities."

Thus, RAQSH was born. "Dabous gave details of the project. She said: "With the inception of RAQSH, we aimed at collect-

ing book donations and providing them to those who have the passion for reading and education but not the capability to attain them. In order to make that vision a reality we divided our team into the Operations, PR and marketing, and finance teams to execute a three step process, of book donation collection, filtration and verification, and final delivery. Because we ascertain that a book can be the first step to education and breaking the cycle of poverty and helplessness in developing communities, RAQSH stands for this cause to give these people a chance at a better future." She added: "I would like to thank all senior mentors and everyone who contributed to this program and dedicated their times and effort to making a major positive change in the youth community. We also express our appreciation to KIPCO for its continued sponsorship and support."

Local spot-

ISLAMOPHOBIA



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Why is the West afraid of Islam? Will this fear continue for long? Islamophobia is rising in Western societies, with prejudice and hatred shown towards Muslims, or the fear of them, despite some criticism. Islamophobia is associated with aggressive acts related to racism and discrimination. This phenomenon of Islamophobia spread among the public after the Sept 11 attacks in the US in 2001, followed by several terrorist crimes including the recent Paris attacks and the mass killings in San Bernardino carried out by a Muslim man along with his wife. Some Americans have expressed concern about Muslims, and some demanded the deportation of Muslims from the United States, particularly from California. The massacre was a sad and scary incident, and I don't blame those who now feel afraid more than ever of Muslims.

This controversial term of Islamophobia has gained acceptance even from some Arabs, especially liberal intellectuals. I don't blame the West using this term - I myself fear extremists and terrorists, whether they are Muslims or not. So far, all murders and slaughters are now linked to Muslims or Islamist militants regardless if they are members of Al-Qaeda or IS or are mentally ill - these acts spread a negative stereotype of all Muslims on a large scale in the Western media and thus tarnish the image of Muslims in the whole world. It must be difficult to find a group that clearly stands out. Muslims in the US, for example, certainly know what to expect and should realize the importance of mobilizing in a constructive way to face the dangers of Islamophobia.

The most important factor that promotes this abhorrent phenomenon is the confused mixing up between the Islamic religion and the reality of Muslims of today. It is well known that the Islamic world has been suffering on various political, economic, social and cultural levels. This is reflected by ranking last in terms of contribution to civilization, technical issues, advanced technology and humanitarian efforts. Islamic countries don't seem to be doing much to stop those conflicts in their own homelands or have ever won over or settled a crisis, and the most prominent example of this nowadays is the Syrian crisis that has been extended for years, although the conflict lies in the hands of various Islamist parties.

Some statistics indicate that more than half a billion Muslims are living under the poverty line, and if we keep in mind the declining status of women and the marginalization of youth, then it seems this part of the world is being cut off almost completely from the knowledge and information revolutions and scientific inventions both at the level of creativity or development, only to become consumers who spent most of their time expressing support for rebel movements and killings by terrorist groups associated only with Islam as a religion by name with no valid connection.

Another key point is the ignorance about Islam. So it can easily be perceived as a threat that requires one to be on guard and avoid it. Not all sources of information about Islam are objective or truthful. I see some opinions and fatwas being spread online with a tremendous amount of misinformation and disinformation about Islam, like ones that support killing non-Muslims and spreading the culture of bloodshed, degrading women's dignity and promoting child slavery, all in the name of Islam. It is very sad.

This fear of Islam will continue unless we try not to blame the West, which only knows a distorted image of Islam, and sees it as the reason for the failure of large parts of the world. Islamophobia is a complicated phenomenon that requires all possible efforts by Islamic world leaders in order to form a comprehensive strategy. It is a major obstacle for countries and its peoples to establish positive relationships in the long term and the short term as well.

This cannot be possible because the Muslim world is still experiencing the same conditions and does not seem able to cope with this phenomenon, or knows how to face the dangers of militant groups like Islamic State. Therefore, the best way to confront the phenomenon of Islamophobia is to fight all countries and agencies that support terrorist and extremist organizations, whether they are members or even leaders. Right now, it is essential for Muslims in the West to hold brainstorming sessions as part of their daily programs to discuss how to resolve this problem.

It is a community problem indeed, as Islamophobia is like a disease that harms the society as a whole by targeting a particular community and a certain religion. It divides citizens rather than uniting them by generating misunderstandings, which result in violence and discrimination that affect everyone's lives in the entire world.

QUALIFICATION ROUNDS FOR KUWAIT GRAND QURAN CONTEST CONCLUDES

KUWAIT: The final qualification rounds for the 19th Kuwait Grand Quran contest concluded at the Grand Mosque, the Public Authority for Awqaf said yesterday. The contest, held under the auspices of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, will hold a press conference soon to announce the final results of the contest, said member of the Quran contest committee Mohammad Al-Jalahma. This year's contest saw many gifted reciters and memorizers of the Holy Quran, said Al-Jalahma, adding that the winning contestants will be interviewed by local media and radio stations to reflect on their experience during the course of the contest. — KUNA



KUWAIT: A young contestant recites verses from the Holy Quran during a qualifying round for the 19th Kuwait Grand Quran contest. — KUNA



ZAIN CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced that it organized a special event to highlight its participation in the International Day of People with Special Needs on December 3rd at the Social Care Centers of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

Zain keenly participates in this United Nations sanctioned day every year to highlight its support to people with special needs, which comes in line with the company's Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability strategies towards this much cherished community.

During the event, Zain distributed gifts as part of the annual celebration to people with special needs and shared the joys of this day with them and their families. The compa-

ny also invited its customers and the public to join the celebrations of this special occasion.

Zain dedicates a big part of its Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability strategies towards people with special needs. The company recently sponsored "The Human Marathon"; a unique sporting and social event that was held at Mall 360 and aimed at promoting a healthier lifestyle amongst people with special needs.

Zain's solid corporate social responsibility and sustainability strategies primarily focus on the wellbeing of the entire nation. For this reason, the company has maintained its support of numerous initiatives that spread awareness and help make a difference to people's everyday circumstances.

KUWAIT'S CO-CHAIRING OF DONORS' CONFERENCE 'REFLECTS WORLD TRUST'

KUWAIT/GENEVA/IRBIL: The Kuwaiti co-chairmanship of the upcoming fourth donors' conference for Syria is reflective of the world's trust in Kuwait within the humanitarian domain, Assistant Foreign Minister for European Affairs Ambassador Waleed Al-Khubaizi affirmed yesterday.

Speaking to KUNA, Ambassador Khubaizi said Kuwait had succeeded in hosting three donors' conferences to help the Syrian refugees, noting that the upcoming convention at this level, due in London in February, will be co-chaired by the UK, Kuwait, Germany and Norway. It will be another serious action to find a solution to this dilemma.

The donors' conference showcases the international community's commitment to help over 13 million displaced people in Syria and over four million refugees scattered abroad. The previous three donors' conferences held in Kuwait had managed to gather around \$3.8 billion for the Syrian refugees.

the UN and International Organizations Ambassador Jamal Al-Ghnaim lauded efforts exerted by Kuwait Red Crescent Society for aiding people in need for help round the globe.

Kuwait's humanitarian efforts have always been bolstered by initiatives by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, said Ghnaim in remarks to KUNA as he emerged from a meeting with a KRCS's delegation, headed by the honorary treasurer and board member Saad Al-Nahed.

The KRCS has always been in leadership among relief societies that offer humanitarian aid even in the hottest spots, he said. He also lauded cooperation between the society and the foreign ministry for facilitating the relief missions. The Kuwaiti mission in Geneva has given facilities to the delegation in its preparations to take part in the international red cross and red crescent conference, due here on December 4-10.

ing role in relieving Syrian refugees, said Kuwait General Consul in Irbil Dr Omar Al-Kanderi. Kanderi said he heard the words of praise for Kuwait during a meeting with Peter Hans, the director of UNICEF office here, the local office head for the UN Human Settlements Programs Yuo Estilo and the director of World Health Organization bureau. The meeting was held at the UN compound, late on Friday.

The UN officials affirmed during the meeting that the UN designation of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as 'Humanitarian Leader', came as a result of his multiple initiatives for helping stricken peoples worldwide. They also expressed readiness to coordinate with the diplomatic mission to distribute Kuwaiti aid to those in need. The talks dealt with means of securing vaccinations for children, particularly now with onset of winter, providing psychological help to locals, who have been traumatized by the war and the mass exodus of Syrians to Europe. Kuwait has hosted three international conferences for raising donations for the Syrians. Billions of dollars had been pledged and Kuwait had already contributed with \$200 million. According to UN figures, more than 10 million people in Iraq need aid. Up to 3.2 million Iraqis have fled their country since January 2014.

Pakistan's quake

Separately, the Kuwait relief society announced that it had sent emergency aid material to some 12,000 victims of the recent earthquake which hit Pakistan. Head of relief work at the society Mohammad Al-Azmi told KUNA that the materials consisted of foodstuff, medicine, and other necessities. He noted that the teams from the society were helping in the rescue process, adding that donors could log into the society's social media accounts to follow up on the society's rescue missions. — KUNA

Humanitarian role

Meanwhile, Kuwait Permanent Delegate at



KUWAIT: Trucks carrying aid material donated by the Kuwaiti relief society to the victims of the recent earthquake in Pakistan. — KUNA

'Noticeable aid'

In other news, a number of UN officials serving in Iraq's Kurdistan have lauded Kuwait's lead-



DIVERS REMOVE ABANDONED VESSELS FROM SHAMLAN HARBOR

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Dive Team of the Environmental Voluntary Foundation (EVF), has lifted four abandoned vessels and various waste items littering Al-Shamlan harbor, one of the old docks dotting the national shores. The divers floated two

sunken boats and two iron floating vessels, team leader Walid A-Fadhel said, adding that due to the abandoned items' heavy weight, a crane and a truck were brought in. He urged fishermen to abstain from dumping waste into the docking site. — KUNA



AL-KHARAFI GROUP SPONSORS, PARTICIPATES IN COMMUNAL SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE 'PARIS IN THE HEART OF KUWAIT'

KUWAIT: As the Communal Solidarity Conference, 'Paris in The Heart of Kuwait' approaches to take place in the French capital of Paris tomorrow; Al-Kharafi Group has announced its sponsorship and participation in this conference which will be held in the French Senate Hall in Luxembourg famous historical Palace, an event organized by Turnberry Kuwait Foundation for Conventions and Exhibitions.

Important event

Loay Jassim Al-Kharafi, CEO of Mohammed Abdulmohsen Al-Kharafi company stated: "Believing in our part in supporting the peace process around the world largely and with the countries with which we have friendly relations expressly, came our sponsorship of this important public event in confirmation of our condemnation of terrorism acts that have occurred recently in France and which murdered numerous spirits of innocent civilians." "We support peace and reject all forms of

terrorism and call always for security and stability in all countries of the world which have been affected by terror and treachery, not only in France, especially since our beloved country Kuwait, also has encountered recently such terrorism acts in which Kuwait tragically lost many of her children, therefore we have already dramatically been there," Kharafi explained.

"The belief of Islam has been built on brotherhood, love, solidarity and goodness in all its forms, so we stress that today's treachery and violence acts are not representing in any way the good concepts of Islam.

Through this conference we communicate our sincere gratitude and a message of recognition and thankfulness to France's stand - people and Government- towards Kuwait crises during the brutal invasion in the year 1990, appreciating the great role played by the French government calling for the liberation of Kuwait for the cause of peace and justice," Kharafi proceeded.

Strong friendship

"We are proud of our strong friendship relationships with France; which were built on humanity and brotherhood basis in the first place, the thing that brought on our successful business relations of a huge investment nature. Kuwaiti investments are interestingly highly ranked in France whether through our business relationships with them as a group or through other Kuwaiti corporates' and economic entities as well. Such strong relationships have guided our interests towards some significant investments with France through some remarkable projects such as HEISCO's projects there - one of our Group's subsidiaries," Kharafi went on.

"Over times; Kuwait has announced its rejection of terrorism and its condemnation of all its aspects, its channels and tools, so through our participation in this conference we announce our sympathy with the French people and we affirm our backing up to them and to all countries that seek to live in peace," Kharafi concluded.

Multi-Kuwaiti activities

Kharafi Group is the largest multi-Kuwaiti activities group, considered as one of the largest companies in the Arab world in addition to being one of the most prominent shareholders of several companies in the Kuwait Stock Exchange, also the group's companies manage a minimum 10 percent of the total value of stocks listed in the Kuwait Stock Exchange Market.

Mohammed Abdulmohsen Al-Kharafi Company was established in 1956 by the late Mohammed Abdulmohsen Al-Kharafi, started as a contracting company; it quickly diversified its activities to include general trading, steel industry, food industry, agriculture, restaurants, real estate, entertainment and tourism.

The company holds stocks' shares in listed companies and runs investments businesses in sister companies and colleague companies. The Group activities have expanded to include several countries such as Egypt,



Loay Jassim Al-Kharafi

Lebanon, Syria, France and Albania as it spread its business in the countries of the Middle East, Africa and Europe, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Indonesia and other countries around the world.

DEVELOPING NATIONAL BANKING WORKFORCE IN GCC IMPORTANT: CBK GOVERNOR

KUWAIT: Governor of the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) and chairman of the board for the Institute of Banking Studies Dr Mohammad Al-Hashel said yesterday that developing the national banking workforce in the GCC countries was important for the development of the sector in the region.

Hashel told the press that a program, organized by the institute in cooperation with Harvard University, will be held between January 30th and February fourth of 2016 to address challenges faced by the banking sector in the GCC and Middle East and find means to develop skills of executives and leaderships. The program was held for the first time in 2010, said Hashel who added that the CBK and representatives of banks in Kuwait were the only ones participating.

Since then the program had been receiving representatives from GCC regional banks, said the Director. He noted that the involvement of Harvard University introduced a new dimension into the program, indicating that the university and the institute were aiming at making the pro-



Dr Mohammad Al-Hashel

gram more Middle East oriented. Hashel said that the upcoming edition of the program will be held in Doha, Qatar, adding that it will include high-standard materials that will elevate the skills of banking executives in the region. — KUNA



KUWAIT: A scene from the workshop. — KUNA

CAPITAL MARKET CONTINUES 'NEW EXECUTIVE BYLAWS' CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: The Capital Market Authority will continue to publicize its executive bylaws, enactment of which constitutes a major event at the local finance market. CMA said in a statement the campaign included a workshop that tackled clients' funds and assets, matching records with accounts, defining measures in defaulting cases, with emphasis that only permitted persons are allowed to manage investment portfolios.

The awareness workshop also addressed terms of contracts and accords between the client and the licensed individual, type and objective of the portfolio and limits of jurisdictions granted to the permitted agent. Other issues that were examined were fees and commissions, work ethics, types of clients-regular or professional-measures to trim conflicts of interest, recording phone contacts, deals, electronic messages, among the employees, agents and clients. The workshop also dealt with provisions governing compulsory acquisitions, duration for assembling stocks and rules for voluntary acqui-

sitions. The CMA campaign will proceed till December 22nd. The next phase of the awareness campaign is due between tomorrow Sunday and Thursday.

The first stage aimed at shedding light on amendment of executive bylaws and new rules. The executive bylaws aimed at overhauling the financial securities market, to be in tandem with the (State) development approach.

The campaign for promoting the new modified laws is carried out through SMSs and other communication means. It promotes legal and regulatory rules for supervision, reporting and investigating irregularities, adjudication, complaints' examination, forms of protests and investigation mechanisms.

The regulations, as promoted in the campaign, deal with licensing, assets' evaluation and capital requirements in some activities. They also cover subjects such as definition of the 'market maker,' and role of the authority and the market in this regard. — KUNA

MOROJ JOINS HORECA AS GOLDEN SPONSOR

KUWAIT: Preparations for the Horeca Kuwait 2016 exhibition are steadily progressing and attracting more companies to take part since it provides a golden opportunity to exchange expertise in order to meet the local market's needs and future expansion plans. The exhibition is due to be organized by Leaders Group in collaboration with Hospitality Services Company at Badriya Ballroom, Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa in the period of January 18-20, 2016. Leaders group announced that the exhibition is due to be held under the auspices of Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, and has so far attracted over 60 companies.



Wael Al-Farhan

play and market the company's products in the presence of the best Kuwaiti and international experts in hospitality and food industries.

Farhan added that Al-Moroj Hotels and Restaurants Company was founded in 1998 as a subsidiary of Al-Moroj General Trading Company, which was founded in 1982. He added that Al-Moroj specializes in supplying quality international kitchen brands ranging from small kitchenware to heavy duty kitchen equipment, service tables, uniforms and

some food products and special beverages. Furthermore, Farhan noted that, thanks to its customer-delight and quality services, Morojo's activities cover Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and some Arab countries in addition to the Kuwaiti market. He added that Morojo has always given top priority to achieving the full satisfaction of its customers, whose trust is also its greatest bond achieved after years of hard work and excellent services for both local and international customers.

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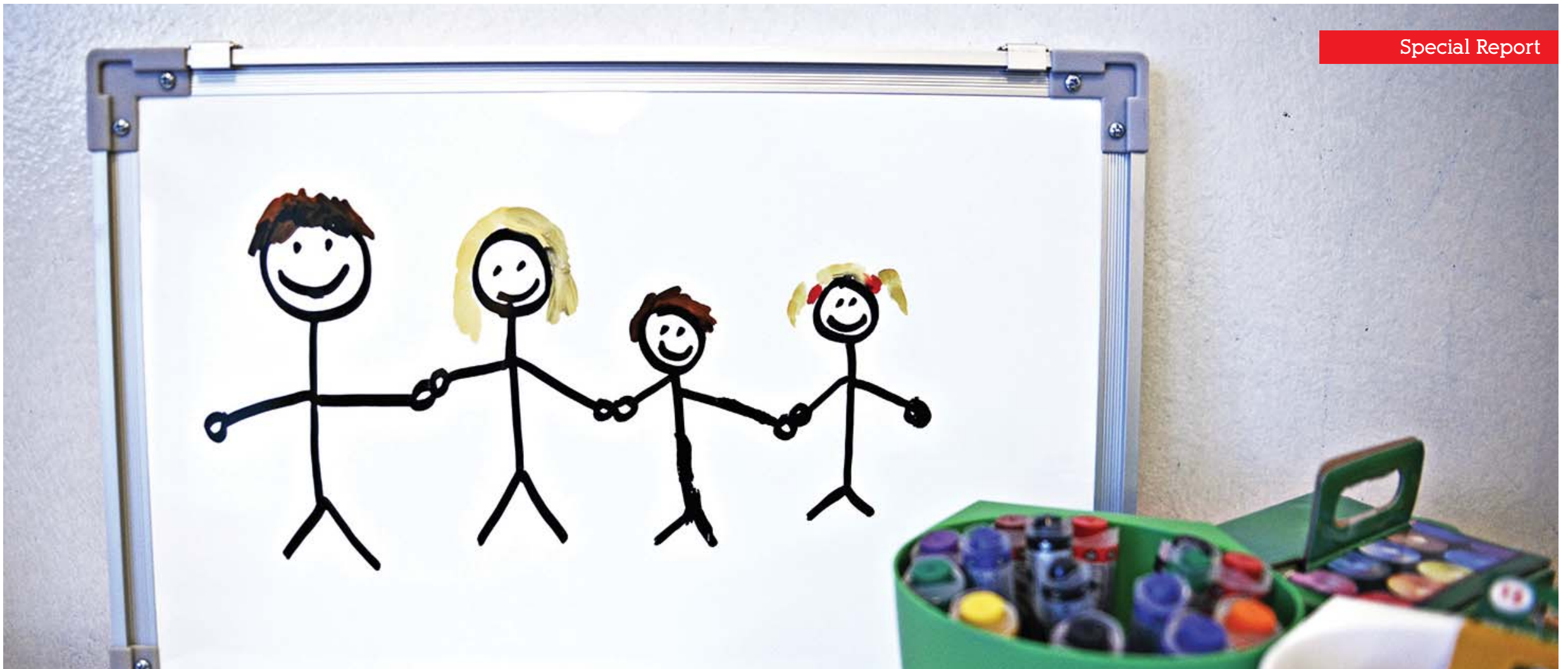
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Special Report



REACH Education helps parents, teachers improve kids' social, academic skills

By Athoob Al-Shuaibi



Dr Abdulaziz Abal

REACH Education is an educational and achievement center catering to children with learning, behavioral and academic difficulties, along with providing advice on parenting and teaching skills. "When I decided to open a center for learning difficulties, parenting and teaching, and started working on it, I came up with everything, the name, colors, etc. I can close my eyes and be in my office right now," said Dr Abdulaziz Abal, founder of REACH Education, adding he did not expect to see a large number of cases.

"Parenting is not standardized in Kuwait," Dr Abal said. He bemoaned the strange ideas and wrong beliefs some parents and the community have, such as beating children for eating with their left hands or punishing them by burning them with cigarette butts. On the other hand, "Some couples come to me due to their deep sense of keenness, asking about the decisions and choices they can make for their unborn child," Abal said.

Contradictions

He believes that children are very confused by the contradictions they see at home, school and their environment. For example, pouncing on the child screaming and reprimanding him when he confesses that he's done something wrong, after assuring him that anything can be told to parents freely and openly. Another example is lying. "Don't lie to your mom and dad - but you can lie to other people. Or, you will be sent to hell if you

lie - however, just in case someone asks, don't tell them we're going to Dubai, say that you are ill!" lamented Dr Abal.

School, too, is a pivotal influence that refines a child's behaviors and constitutes his personality. "Not all teachers have reached the stage to become tutors," Dr Abal remarked. "A good teacher strives in learning the latest education and illustration methods by attending courses to keep abreast of developments in this area. Beside, human beings are unique; they have different ways of learning, different circumstances, different characters and different personalities. A successful teacher is one who can adapt and know all these things and channel the information towards this unique person," he added.

All-round support

"When you think of your child's wellbeing academically or socially, REACH is a place where both parents and teachers can get help. We provide educational and nutritional consultations. My wife works here too and my father provides psychological consultations. In addition, we have occupational therapy as we deal with ADHD, autism and learning disabilities and difficulties. Our team works very closely with the family and becomes part of it. Also, we provide support for the child by sending someone with him to school and sit in the classroom to take notes and work with the teacher if his case is unique and needs to be dealt with in a certain way," Dr Abal explained. "Private schools are cooperative in this regard. However, we do not know about public schools as we have never dealt with any," he added.



Dr Abdulaziz Abal is pictured with a child.

It is crucial to create an environment that encourages the child to learn at home and at school. Children learn by mistakes and imitation. More important is to give them space and time to notice and comprehend. "We have to let them get bored, encourage them to be curious and ask questions. What you want for your children is to go through life in the best way possible - to become

not just successful, but happy and healthy too. These are the two things you want your kids to be most," stressed Abal. Dr Abal obtained his PhD in curriculum and instruction in 2012. He also works as an educational consultant and assistant professor of education at the American University of Kuwait.



Sheikha Entisar Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah



Sheikh Nasser Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah

LULUA PRODUCTIONS LAUNCHES 'PROFESSIONAL FILM 101' COURSE

KUWAIT: Sheikha Entisar Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Chairperson of the Lulua Productions Company announced launching the first 'Professional Film 101' course to develop young people's skills in photography, lighting, scenario writing, decoration, directing, music, etc. The goal is to realize the dream shared by the creators of the 'Lover of the Land' movie to transform Kuwait into a capital of movies in the Arabian Gulf, Sheikha Intisar said in a press statement.

The course takes place next Sunday, December 12, 2015 at Ibis Hotel at Salem Al-Mubarak Street. It concludes on Monday, December 30, 2015 with a ceremony to award the trainees with certificates, held under the patronage of Cinescape. The course will also be patronized by Cinemagic Kuwait, Chairman Sheikh Nasser Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah said. Meanwhile, Movie screenwriter and director Ramadan Khasrow will serve as supervisor for the course.



Ramadan Khasrow



KUWAIT: Despite the chilling cold, the third national marathon for cancer awareness got underway yesterday. The marathon, themed 'our steps are our protection' was launched in front of the Scientific Center and ended outside the Green Island. — KUNA

MP DASHTI PRAISES INTERIOR MINISTER FOR RECEIVING RETURNEES FROM KARBALA

FOUR BURNT TO DEATH IN ACCIDENT

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: MP Abdulhameed Dashti strongly hailed the visit made by Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammed Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and top ministry officials to the Abdali border exit north of the country yesterday morning. "Despite it being a weekend and despite the extreme low temperatures in the north, the minister went on a sudden visit to check the procedures followed on receiving visitors returning from Iraq," he underlined. The minister personally oversaw the return of those who came back from Iraq after observing the Arba'een in the city of Karbala.



MP Abdulhameed Dashti

Public funds' violators

MP Madhi Al-Hajri urged Communications Minister Essa Al-Kandari to pursue all public funds' violators and those who cost the Kuwait Ports Authority considerable losses and hold them legally and administratively accountable for such violations. Hajri also expressed amazement at what he described as the Cabinet's and the communication ministry's silence towards a logistic services company operating at one of the local ports and accused it of taking control of state property with the help of previous officials at the Ports Authority. "This company has unlawfully taken control of 250,000 square meters at Mina Abdullah and 270,000 square meters at Doha port without paying the due rent value," he explained.

Fatal crash
Two male citizens and two Asian women burnt to death when their vehicle caught fire in a collision with a truck along King Fahd Highway yesterday morning, said security sources.

KPC CEO
Well-informed sources said that the government intends to keep Kuwait Petroleum

Corporation (KPC) CEO Nizar Al-Adsani in office after dissolving the current board of directors. The sources added that the Supreme Petroleum Council also agrees to the measure as well as to keep some current officials in office due to their knowledge of many details about major oil projects and to avoid appointing new people who would need time to know such details.

Cairo Road

Within its plans to develop road grids around the country, the Ministry of Public Works announced reoffering the Cairo Road tender for bidding after only one company applied for the tender.

Mosque's repair

The State Audit Bureau approved a tender to repair the Imam Al-Sadeq Mosque that was damaged in a terrorist explosion in June, said informed sources, noting that repairs would be completed by next June.

KAC sells old planes

The Kuwait Airways Company (KAC) recently announced its intention to sell some of its old planes and spare parts, after it received a number of new planes. KAC announced selling five A300-600R planes, three Airbus A310-300s, a fourth degree A300-A310 simulator, three type c2-CF680 General Electric engines and spare parts.

JUVENILES, CHILDREN'S LAWS SHOULDN'T BE CONFUSED: MINISTER

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Planning Hind Al-Subaih stressed that the juveniles' law does not contradict with the children's law, adding that both laws should not be confused. She added that the children's law fully complies with the International Child Treaty that guarantees children rights from birth up to the age of 18, while the new juveniles' law, which demands reducing a juvenile's age from 18 to 16, aims at setting an effective deterrent mechanism. "Some countries have reduced the juvenile age to 15 or 16, like in the US and Bahrain," she added. Meanwhile, the Manpower Public Authority stopped accepting official powers of attorney unless addressed to the manpower authority as a separate body independent from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.



Hind Al-Subaih

WORLD MARKS INT'L VOLUNTEER DAY

KUWAIT: On 5 December every year, the world marks the International Volunteer Day (IVD). The IVD was established by the UN General Assembly through Resolution 40/212 made on 17 December 1985. Since then, governments, the UN system and civil society organizations have successfully joined volunteers around the world to celebrate the Day on December 5th.

The occasion is a chance for volunteer-involving organizations and individual volunteers to promote their contributions to development at local, national and international levels. By merging UN support with a grassroots mandate, IVD is a unique opportunity for volunteer-involving organizations to work with government agencies, non-profit organizations, community groups and the private sector.

Member of the Kuwait Environment Protection Society

(KEPS) Murad Ghalib said in a press statement today that 22 million people in the UK offer voluntary work on the day annually, besides 10 million weekly. Together, they complete 90 million hours of voluntary work. Ghalib stressed the importance of voluntary work for the environment, referring to the direct and indirect impact on people and the society.

The culture of volunteerism helps unleash an individual's abilities and skills, enhances human values and reinforces concepts of belonging, which is necessary for a new generation more capable of employing their energy for building the aspired community, he noted. Kuwait responded to resolutions taken by the first UN Conference on Human Environment in 1972, and established KEPS in March 1974 for the preservation of the environment and combating pollution, Ghalib said. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Kuwait Fire Service Directorate (KFSD) said six fire brigades joined forces to control a huge fire that broke out at a foodstuffs warehouse in Al-Shuwaikh industrial area on Friday. No injuries were reported. Upon receiving notification, the firefighters rushed to the doomed warehouse which totals in area 3,000 square meters, Director of the KFSD Public Relations and Information Department Colonel Khalil Al-Amir said. — KUNA

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التنبؤ

Al-Anbaa

EGYPT'S ETERNAL GLAMOUR

By Dr Nermin Al-Houti

Regardless of the corrupt media that reflects negative images about Egypt, in terms of politics or tourism, the ever-guarded (Egypt) will always maintain its own glamour and ability to attract more tourists. Yes, indeed. With its warmth and charms, Egypt will always be able to entertain and contain all its visitors.

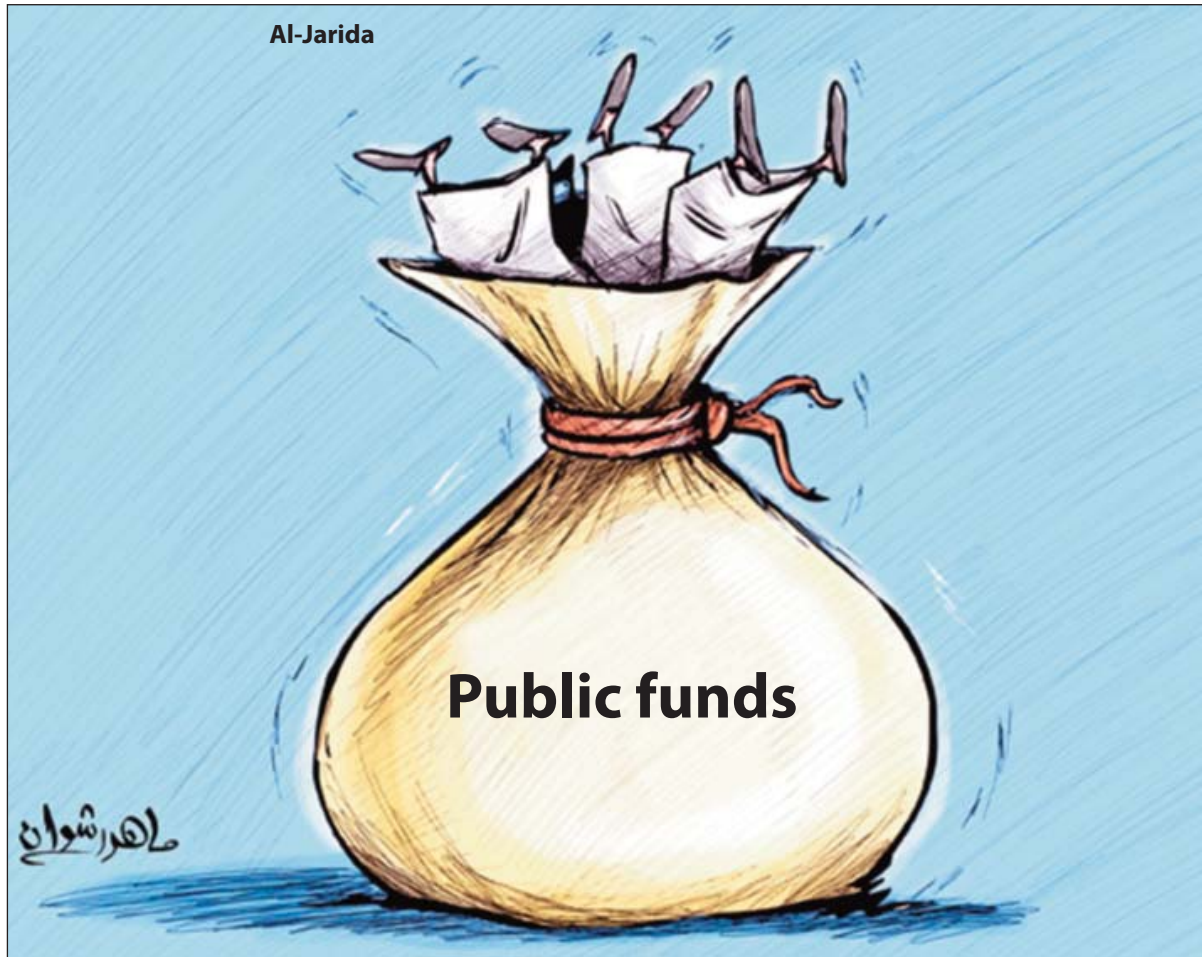
Last weekend, I made a quick visit to Cairo to attend a concert by the creative Egyptian composer and pianist Omar Khairat at the Cairo Opera House. My visit coincided with the parliamentary elections going on there. As soon as I set foot in Egypt, I found out that real life was the exact opposite of stories carried by some media to disfigure and defame Egyptian tourism. Starting with landing at Cairo international airport, all tourists were received equally and warmly regardless of their nationalities. Security was great and security checkpoints were everywhere around Egyptian streets, which was very reassuring.

Despite the current deterioration in tourist numbers, officials at all hotels and touristic sites spared no effort to ensure visiting tourists' comfort. I need not go into details about Egyptians' hospitality and warm welcome, because I would need to write huge books about it.

On Tuesday evening, the day when the concert was held, I got ready to head to the opera house, where on entering the place, I was speechless except for whispering a single sentence to my companion. "Egypt will always remain glamorous!" I said, as I was overwhelmed with the warm welcome, magnificent organization and eyes full of hope in achieving a better future. Oh, yes. This is the ever-guarded Egypt (Al-Mahrousa), that always fights for survival no matter how hard the challenges are. It will always remain the core of the Arab world.

The concert started by some warm words of welcome from Khairat addressed to each and everyone in the audience, be them Egyptians or Egypt lovers. Soon, his heavenly tunes carried us to visualize Egypt's charm and warmth. They carried us to the Pharaonic civilization, then to the heart of the Fatimid State, to Egyptian churches and all the way to Nubian Egypt. We really enjoyed the creativity of a musician who really adores Egypt - Khairat.

Finally, there is nothing better to say about Egypt than the words Almighty Allah said in verse 99 of Surah Yusuf in the Holy Quran: "Come into Egypt safe, if Allah will!" —Translated by Kuwait Times



التنبؤ

Al-Anbaa

WHY DOWN WITH THE HERO?

By Salah Al-Sayer

Why on earth are we criticizing what IS did in Iraq and Syria? Why not rejoice, cheer and hoist flags of victory for it? IS has managed to build the Islamic caliphate, which is a dream that is not new in Arabic culture. Calling for establishing a religious state or portraying it as a manifestation of the good old golden times is an old repeated one that we have been hearing about in mosques, schools, radio and reading about in all newspapers, magazines and religious parties' statements. It is also found in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

IS did not innovate an idea when its shura council pledged alliance to the man they described as innovative, courageous, pious, just, enlightened warrior and imam Ibrahim bin Awwad bin Ibrahim Al-Badri as the Muslims' caliph who announced cancelling what he described as the 'borders of humiliation' set by coloniza-

tion between Iraq and Syria. He actually activated and revived a dream that had haunted all Arabs, men and women, from the roaring Atlantic Ocean to the Arabian Gulf. Why are we, today, against the 'hero' who brought the aspiration we always dreamt of since childhood to reality?

It is a matter of old slogans being realized today, turning from written ones to real life facts including the violence IS practices nowadays, which had very clear prefaces known to everybody through sermons or through mottos written on flags and party headquarters. Everybody may have heard, memorized and repeated those slogans long before violence turned into real life practices pouring on us through various means of media. Therefore, we must immediately stop playing 'shocked' over what IS is doing!

—Translated by Kuwait Times

القلم

Al-Qabas

STOPPING PUBLIC FUNDS' SQUANDER

By Ahmad Al-Sarraf

A friend told me he received a personal invitation to participate in an orientation about the work and goals of "the supreme consultative committee on the implementation of the provisions of Islamic sharia law," and that was at the beginning of its establishment during the 1990s of the last century. He said that he arrived along with a former governor of the Central Bank, and during a discussion with one of the committee officials about the feasibility of its establishment and the lack of clarity in its goals and its contradiction with the country's constitution and manmade laws, and how things both locally and internationally are going the opposite of the direction the committee wants to take, he said that the discussion turned into argument and took a long time and covered many things. Then the committee official decided that it was better to complete discussions the next day.

My friend said he went along with the former governor the next day to the committee premises, armed with a good quantity of supporting material for his views. They were warmly received and taken on a tour of the building, then were handed two bags with wrapped contents, and were seen off at the gate with the same warmth without getting into any discussion or conversation. He said when he opened his bag, expecting to find printed material about the committee and its projects, he instead found simple gifts in addition to an expensive wrist-watch!

He wondered at the time about such behavior and felt sorry for the money spent on such activities. That was 20 years ago, and the committee's situation today remains the same, and even its website is still waiting for someone to upgrade it. We mention the story of the committee, and there are many more, on the occasion of government statements every now about its intentions to reduce spending and stop fund squandering, as well as increasing prices of many products and services. These things may be good, but what about the unjustified spending on the supreme Islamic council, which did not complete a thing? Is what is being spent on its employees and its building in the form of millions of dinars justified to start with?

Bearing in mind that there are those who are willing to buy its current building located near the fairgrounds for KD 4 million or more, this apart from what could be saved if the committee is closed, as it is not able to do anything. If I were in the shoes of those who are running it, I would take the right from myself and submit my resignation, close its doors and hand the keys to the concerned authorities. —Translated by Kuwait Times

Crime

Report

POLICE FREE THREE HOSTAGES IN FARWANIYA

KUWAIT: Farwaniya detectives managed to free three Filipinas held by an Asian woman in a Farwaniya apartment for four days, said security sources. Case papers indicate that one of the abducted women called the police reporting that a woman they had known online through Facebook was detaining them somewhere they did not know. Calling her back, the woman did not answer the detective, but sent a message noting that she was in danger along with her friends. Communicating via WhatsApp, she sent the police her location through GPS. Policemen managed to locate the apartment and broke into it, freeing the detainees while their captor was away. A case was filed and a search is on for the suspect.

Family misses flight

A Kuwaiti family - a mother, her 21-year-old daughter and her 15-year-old son had a nightmare experience when the daughter went missing after she went out shopping on the day of their flight out of Turkey, said security sources, noting that waiting for the girl to return, the family missed its flight back home. According to officials at the Kuwaiti embassy in Istanbul, the family called reporting the girl missing, and Turkish security authorities were notified to review surveillance cameras on Taksim Street where she went shopping. However, after missing the flight, the mother received a message from her daughter noting that she would be back soon, and she did return late that evening. She said she had left due to arguments with her mother.

Pedestrian killed

An Egyptian man was killed when a speeding vehicle ran him over along Fahaheel Expressway. An investigation was opened in the case.

Failed robbery

A security guard of a local bank branch in Rumaithiya reported that a burglar tried to rob the bank by making a hole in a gypsum board ceiling and climbing down to the vault room. The guard added that the burglar failed to open the safe and that on sensing that his presence was discovered, he escaped through the same hatch. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress to identify the robber.

Ex-wife assaulted

A female citizen filed a complaint against her ex-husband and his sister, accusing them of assaulting her, said security sources. The woman said that the two showed up to her apartment to pick up the kids on a court order, where they argued and they assaulted her. The mother provided a medical report with her injuries.

Drug possession

Two drug abusers were arrested with nine packs of heroin in Sabahiya, said security sources. Case papers indicate that a police patrol suspected a vehicle and on stopping it, the two suspects ran off on foot. They were chased and caught, and on searching them, the drugs were found. A case was filed.

Two hurt in accident

Two GCC nationals were injured when their vehicle collided into another driven by a 67-year-old citizen, who turned out to be heavily drunk, said security sources, noting that the citizen was arrested and the two injured men were rushed to Mubarak Hospital for treatment.

— Al-Rai/Al-Anbaa

GULF BANK COLLABORATES WITH KU'S ACCOUNTING CLUB

BRINGING 'COFFEE BREAKS WITH RED' TO FEMALE STUDENTS

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank concluded its collaboration with Kuwait University's (KU) College of Business Administration's Accounting Club (ACC) to launch 'Coffee Breaks with Red'. The event took place at the university's Red student lounges for female students at Shuwaikh campus on 2 December 2015 from 12:30pm until 2pm.

'Coffee Breaks with Red' was a special recruitment event for KU's female students, while Gulf Bank's Human Resources (HR) team discussed the available opportunities for fresh graduates at the Bank. Gulf Bank boasts 64 percent Kuwaiti workforce and is dedicated to increasing that number by employing the most talented graduates.

In November last year, Gulf Bank had inaugurated the red student lounges at the Business and Administration College, one provided for male students and the other for female students, which serve as study lounges as well as helping them to become familiar with the Bank's red account and other banking products and services.

The Bank remains strongly committed to supporting youth events and initiatives and doing its part to help empower the next generation of Kuwaitis.

Earlier this April, Gulf Bank had launched its new red program tailored for youth customers, including monthly cash draws and quarterly car draws. New red customers who open an account and transfer their allowance will be eligible to enter the monthly cash draw for a chance



Gulf Bank's management team along with Kuwait University students.

to win up to KD 1,500. In addition to the mega draw where a lucky customer will have the chance to win a Cadillac SRX, Gulf Bank has also partnered with ZAIN, where red customers are exclusively offered the latest smartphone bundles or internet plans. The red account is designed for university and college students aged 15 to 25

years old. Amongst other benefits, account holders receive an ATM card and there is no deposit required to open the account or minimum balance charge.

Gulf Bank will continue to reach out to youth through ongoing programs which provide encouragement and support during their education, and by providing prac-

tical, superior services and attractive promotions which are designed specifically for the younger generation.

For further information about Gulf Bank's red account, visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805, or visit the bank's bilingual website at www.e-gulfbank.com.

MINISTRY PROPOSES KD 100 FOR EXPATS' DRIVER'S LICENSES

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Interior's Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Major General Abdullah Al-Muhanna finally put an end to rumors about the ministry's intention to increase fees collected from expatriates, which speculated that the payments would increase by 'astronomical figures'. Instead, he declared that a proposal had been made to increase the fees collected from expats to issue a driver's license to KD 100, as opposed to the rumored KD 500 figure. "The goal behind the increase is to make sure that only those who deserve and can afford (buying a car) gets a driver's license," he explained.

Muhanna also said that the fee increases include increasing the payments collected for renewing vehicle registration from KD 5 to KD 20, in addition to a one-time KD 10 fee on registering the first vehicle, KD 50 on registering a second and KD 100 on registering a third owned by the same expat.

Furthermore, Muhanna said that the proposal includes imposing 'ascending

fees' on expats' vehicles that gradually increase by the double the older a vehicle was. "This measure is meant to reduce the use of worn out vehicles and limiting vehicle ownership to expats' who can afford new ones," he underlined, explaining that according to current fees, some expats could purchase a worn out vehicle for a low as KD 150.

Responding to a question about traffic violation fines, Muhanna said that the proposal suggests doubling the fines collected for major violations such as speeding and driving through red lights from KD 50 to KD 100. "KD 30 fines will be doubled to KD 60 and KD 5 fines will be made KD 15," he added.

Moreover, Muhanna denied that expats are being prejudicially targeted by such proposals. "We currently have over 1.8 million vehicles in Kuwait and most of them are owned by expats, who are a majority of the population, which called for new measures to regulate things," he explained. — Al-Rai

NEW REGULATIONS FOR LOCUM DOCTORS APPROVED

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Health (MOH) recently approved the new regulations chart of hiring non-Kuwaiti doctors and other medical staff by signing them to temporary contracts according to the Locum system.

The new chart includes not allowing any of the hired staff members to leave Kuwait without permission from MOH. The new conditions also include a one-month trial period to examine a candidate's technical skills, after which the contract is terminated if the hired staff member appears to be below bar. The chart also limited the contract period to a non-renewable three months within any given year.

According to the new chart, the

locum system does not apply to hiring doctors or medical staff locally, be them working for the private sector or residing in Kuwait. In addition to verifying applicants' resumes and qualification accreditation, the new system states that locum staff members are not entitled to any vacations except for the official days-off and leaves system followed in facilities they work at.

In addition, locum medical staff will work five days a week, enjoy full health services in case of sickness and will be subjected to filling an evaluation sheet in case the facility manager decides hiring any given locum doctor and explains why the decision was made. — Al-Anbaa



Texas backs down from effort to block Syrian refugees

Page 12

Page 11

18 DIE AFTER POWER CUT IN FLOODED CHENNAI HOSPITAL



REDLANDS, California: The exterior of the home of San Bernardino mass murder suspect Syed Farook is seen on Friday. — AFP

CALIF SHOOTERS' HOME THROWN OPEN TO MEDIA

EXPERTS CONCERNED SITE DISTURBED

REDLANDS, United States: Baby toys, shredded files, a Holy Quran, computer paraphernalia: The home of the California shooters was bizarrely - and controversially - thrown open to the media on Friday, offering a glimpse of the life of the couple behind the carnage. Two days after US citizen Syed Farook and his Pakistani wife Tashfeen Malik burst into an office party in San Bernardino and shot dead 14 people, media crews were given access by the landlord to the two-story townhouse where they lived with their six-month-old daughter.

In a surreal scrum, dozens of journalists flooded into the home in Redlands, jostling for space as they rifled through children's toys and family photos for clues to what drove the couple to commit mass murder. The FBI - which is investigating the shooting as an "act of terrorism" - said it had turned the property back over to its owner and no longer controlled access, as experts voiced consternation that media were allowed to disturb the site.

AFP's photographer Robyn Beck, among those permitted to enter, said it was mayhem inside. "People were touching everything, some reporters were removing pictures out of photo albums and photographing them," she said. Television crews displayed drivers' licenses and social security cards on screen, and what some speculated may be the

first known photographs of the 27-year-old Malik. There was a prayer rug, a Holy Quran, and a children's guide to Islamic manners.

In the kitchen, dirty dishes littered the sink area. A waste-paper basket was filled with shredded documents, apparently discarded by investigators. Journalists filed live broadcasts standing next to the baby's crib, which brimmed with stuffed animals and colorful quilts - drawing scathing commentary from some fellow media. "Nothing says we're journalists bravely uncovering the truth like pawing around a child's bed," tweeted Mary Beth Williams, a writer for Salon.com.

'Contaminated Crime Scene'

Some outlets, including CNN, said they decided not to broadcast close-up footage of objects that could be considered sensitive or identifiable, such as identity cards. MSNBC acknowledged regretting some of its live shots from inside the home. "We regret that we briefly showed images of photographs and identification cards that should not have been aired without review," the network said. CNN's law enforcement analyst Paul Callan was appalled by the media crush. "I've never seen anything like this," he said. "I think it indicates a shocking degree of negligence and really recklessness by law enforcement authorities here. "You have a contaminated crime scene

now." "This is the biggest visible screw-up in history," agreed fellow CNN analyst Jonathan Gilliam. "A terrorist incident just happened and the reporters are going through and looking at IDs and pictures... It is all evidentiary."

Among the items visible at the home were pages listing items seized by the FBI: Notebooks, computer equipment, prepaid phone cards, audio cassettes - and ammunition. Pressed to explain why media were given unfettered access, the FBI said it no longer had control over the premises. "We executed a search warrant on that apartment. And last night we turned that over back to the residents," David Bowdich, the assistant FBI director in charge of the Los Angeles office, told reporters. "Once we turn that location back over to the occupants... or once we board it up, anyone who goes in at that point, that's got nothing to do with us."

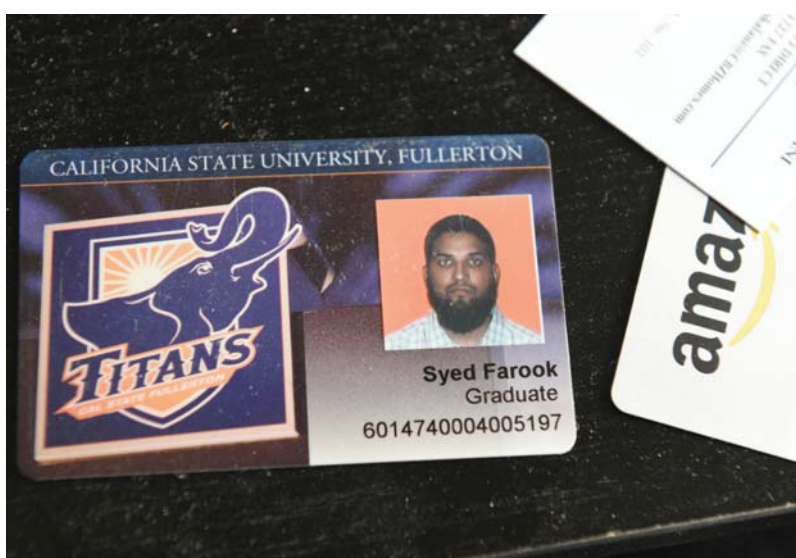
'Chaos in There'

MSNBC said a reporter from another news organization had paid the landlord \$1,000 for access to the premises, where investigators earlier found thousands of rounds of ammunition, a bomb-making laboratory and 12 pipe bombs. The owner pried open the door at around 9:15 am and the rest of the media - followed by members of the public - dashed in behind, including one neighbor with her dog.

The elderly landlord, Doyle Miller, who ordered everyone out about 90 minutes later, admitted he was overwhelmed by the scrum. He told AFP the couple were "good tenants" who paid their rent every month. "I opened the door and I saw the damage," he said. "It's chaos in there. I guess I don't understand that type of person, it's troubling," he said. "They don't have flags or pins on them, how can you tell?"

Both husband and wife were killed Wednesday in a wild firefight with police hours after the carnage at an office party attended by Farook's co-workers in nearby San Bernardino.

Relatives have been unable to explain how the young couple with an infant girl could have staged the country's deadliest mass shooting since the Newtown school massacre in 2012. — AFP



The California State University Fullerton student identification of Farook sits on a desk inside the home.

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MASSACRE CLAIM CAPS YEAR OF IS DANGER SIGNS

WASHINGTON: The Islamic State group's claim to have inspired this week's San Bernardino massacre raises the question of what kind of threat it poses after a year which has seen record numbers of alleged jihadists arrested in the United States. Much is unclear about the motivation of the young Muslim couple who allegedly attacked the husband's co-workers at a workplace holiday party in San Bernardino, California on Wednesday, killing 14.

But the FBI is investigating the attack as an act of terrorism after finding evidence that the pair were inspired by extremist ideology and may have made an online pledge of allegiance to the Islamic State group. This came as a surprise to many as the nondescript target was not a symbolic site and the couple - recent parents Syed Farook, 28, and Tashfeen Malik, 29 - are not thought to have been on any watch list.

But perhaps the attack, which otherwise bore the usual hallmarks of the mass shootings that have become so common in the United States, should not have surprised? Alexander Meleagrou-Hitchens, head of research at the international Centre for the Study of

Radicalization and Political Violence, told AFP trouble has been long brewing. "Since at least 2010 jihadist strategists and ideologues have called on and inspired Muslims in the West to do one of two things: Either join a jihadist group fighting abroad or, if they are going to stay in the countries which are waging a supposed war on Islam, they should carry out attacks using any means at their disposal," he said.

High-Powered Firearms

Despite its leading role in overseas military actions against Islamist networks like Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group, the United States does not face a domestic jihadist threat on the scale of its European allies. "However, in Europe so-called 'lone wolf' attackers cannot easily get their hands on high-powered firearms," Meleagrou-Hitchens told AFP. "The problem for the United States is that these type of jihadists can arm themselves, legally, and then become almost as deadly as highly trained jihadists with formal connections to groups abroad. "For me, it has always been a matter of time before a group of homegrown jihadists in

America got their hands on firearms and carried out an attack like this, it is such an obvious and easy thing to do."

This year has seen record numbers of arrests of suspected extremists, many of them victims of FBI sting operations but others with ties to foreign groups deemed "terrorist organizations" under US law. According to a major study of US jihadists released this week by George Washington University, 250 Americans have traveled or attempted to travel to Syria or Iraq to fight for the IS group's so-called "caliphate." There are 900 active investigations against alleged IS sympathizers spread across all 50 US states and 71 have been charged with "IS-related" activities since March. Fifty-six of these suspects were arrested this year. In the case of Wednesday's attack, however, the FBI has found no evidence that the couple was acting directly on behalf of an IS leader. It was not until yesterday that IS called the perpetrators "soldiers" of its caliphate in an English-language radio broadcast and "supporters" in Arabic.

Experts following the threat said the core group seemed as surprised as anyone by the

attacks. Rita Katz, director of private terror watchdog the SITE Intelligence Group, told AFP that during last month's IS attacks in Paris the group had flooded the Internet with celebratory propaganda, some of it apparently pre-prepared. But this week, the usual jihadist online forums were silent until news emerged from the US investigation that the couple were Muslims who had met in Saudi Arabia and had apparently found their own way to radicalization.

'Flooding Twitter'

"They didn't celebrate it. It was nothing compared to what we usually see. It took them two days to come out with anything," Katz told AFP. "Now if you go on Twitter, it's a totally different story. They're flooding Twitter now." Katz said police photographs of pipe bombs the couple had prepared resembled the detailed diagrams provided for so-called "lone wolf" attackers in Al-Qaeda's online English language magazine "Inspire".

And the suspects' decision to mount their own raid rather than joining an organized cell reflected instructions posted in the Islamic

State's publication "Dabiq" - named after the Syrian village where the group expects to make its last stand against infidel forces at the world's end. The second edition of Dabiq published in July last year told supporters who were unable to make a pilgrimage to fight for the caliphate; to pledge allegiance, or "bayat" in Arabic, to the IS leader; and to launch domestic attacks. "Try to record these bayat and then distribute them through all forms of media including the Internet," it said.

This, FBI agents now believe, is what Malik did - and the couple, while apparently having carried out the deadliest jihadist attack on US soil since Sept 11, are not an anomaly. In May of this year, two gunmen attacked a conference in Garland, Texas, which was hosting cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) designed to be offensive to some Muslims. Police suspect the attackers were self-radicalized jihadists. And Wednesday's attackers were not even the first young US couple tempted by the movement. Earlier this year, 22-year-old Mohammad Oda Dakhalla and 19-year-old Jaelyn Delshaun Young were arrested as they prepared to head to Syria. — AFP



ANKARA: Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu waves while holding carnations during a meeting of the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) yesterday. — AFP

IRAQ CALLS ON TURKEY TO WITHDRAW TROOPS

BAGHDAD SUMMONS TURKISH AMBASSADOR

BAGHDAD: Baghdad demanded yesterday the immediate withdrawal of forces it said Turkey illegally sent into Iraq, which is struggling to assert its sovereignty while receiving foreign assistance against the Islamic State group. Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu played down the military activity as "routine rotation activity" and "reinforcement against security risks", while also labelling any misinterpretation as a "provocation". The Kurdish regional government - which has forces in the area where the Turkish troops deployed and close ties with Ankara - indicated that Turkey aimed to expand a camp near the main IS hub of Mosul.

The troops, which Baghdad said had tanks and artillery, were sent to the camp in Nineveh province, some 80 km from the Turkish border, where Ankara's forces have been training Sunni fighters hoping to retake Mosul from the jihadists. Turkey has other camps in Iraq, but they are inside the official borders of the autonomous Kurdish region, while the site near Mosul is in an area claimed by both Kurdistan and Baghdad.

Facing political pressure as a result of statements by US officials, Prime Minister Haider Al-Abadi has taken an increasingly hard public line on foreign forces in Iraq, terming the deployment of ground combat forces a "hostile act". "The Iraqi authorities call on Turkey to... immediately withdraw from Iraqi territory," a statement from Abadi's office said.

Base Expansion

"We have confirmation that Turkish forces, numbering about one armoured regiment with a number of tanks and artillery, entered Iraqi territory... allegedly to train Iraqi groups, without a request or authorisation from Iraqi federal authorities," it said. The deployment "is considered a serious violation of Iraqi sovereignty," it added. A local Kurdish commander described the deployment as a routine rotation by Turkish trainers, but a subsequent statement by the Kurdish regional government pointed to increased Turkish activity. "The Turkish government has over the past few days sent necessary experts and equipment with the aim of expanding this camp," the statement said.

Mosul, which is predominantly Sunni Arab, is a key centre of IS' self-proclaimed "caliphate", but an operation to retake the city remains a distant prospect. Turkish newspaper Hurriyet said that Ankara was "establishing a base in the Bashiga region of Mosul with 600 soldiers". Davutoglu denied that, saying: "This is not a new camp." Rather, it is a pre-existing "training facility established to support local volunteer forces' fight against terrorism", set up in coordination with the Iraqi defence ministry, he said.

But the foreign ministry said Turkish forces entered the country "without the knowledge of the central government in Baghdad" and that it had summoned Ankara's ambassador to protest, while President Fuad Masum termed the deployment a "violation of international law."

Other Agendas

Ankara's critics have repeatedly questioned Turkey's commitment to the war against IS, accusing it of being more interested in attacking the rebel Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which it has repeatedly bombed in Iraq. Iraqi Kurdish regional president Massud Barzani sees the PKK, which is also a key player in the anti-jihadist effort, as a rival in the Kurdish world. The Kurdish region is politically divided and competing factions have often used the war on IS to advance party agendas.

Baghdad's relations with Turkey have improved recently but remained strained by Ankara's relationship with Barzani and differences over the Syrian civil war. Abadi has repeatedly said Iraq needs all the help it can get to fight IS, but he is also walking a fine line between receiving that support and projecting sovereignty. The Turkish deployment is just the latest in a series of challenges over the past week that have pushed him to take a hard line on foreign forces helping Iraq against IS, which overran large parts of the country last year.

Calls from two American senators for the number of US troops in Iraq to be tripled, combined with Secretary of Defence Ashton Carter's announcement that Washington would send a special forces contingent to fight IS in Iraq and Syria, put Abadi under heavy pressure. Shiite paramilitary forces dominated by Iran-backed militias came out strongly against the US, and Abadi issued his own series of increasingly strident statements about foreign forces. — AFP

UN ENVOY IN ADEN TO ADVANCE PEACE TALKS

ADEN, Yemen: The United Nations envoy to Yemen met President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi yesterday to discuss prospects for peace talks between his embattled Aden-based government and Houthi forces, a source close to Yemen's president said. Forces loyal to Hadi backed by mainly Gulf Arab states have been locked in eight months of civil war with the Iran-allied Houthis who rule the capital Sanaa. Previous UN-led efforts to end the conflict through dialogue have failed as battles rage across the country and Saudi-led warplanes bomb positions of Yemen's ascendant Houthi group and its Yemeni army allies.

The source said UN envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed's talks with Hadi aimed to lay the groundwork for a second round of talks in the Swiss city of Geneva. It is the first time the envoy has paid an official visit to Aden, which Hadi declared the temporary capital after Arab coalition forces seized it from the Houthis in July. But the government and its Gulf allies have struggled to impose their authority in the city, which teems with shadowy gunmen who carried out two shootings on Saturday.

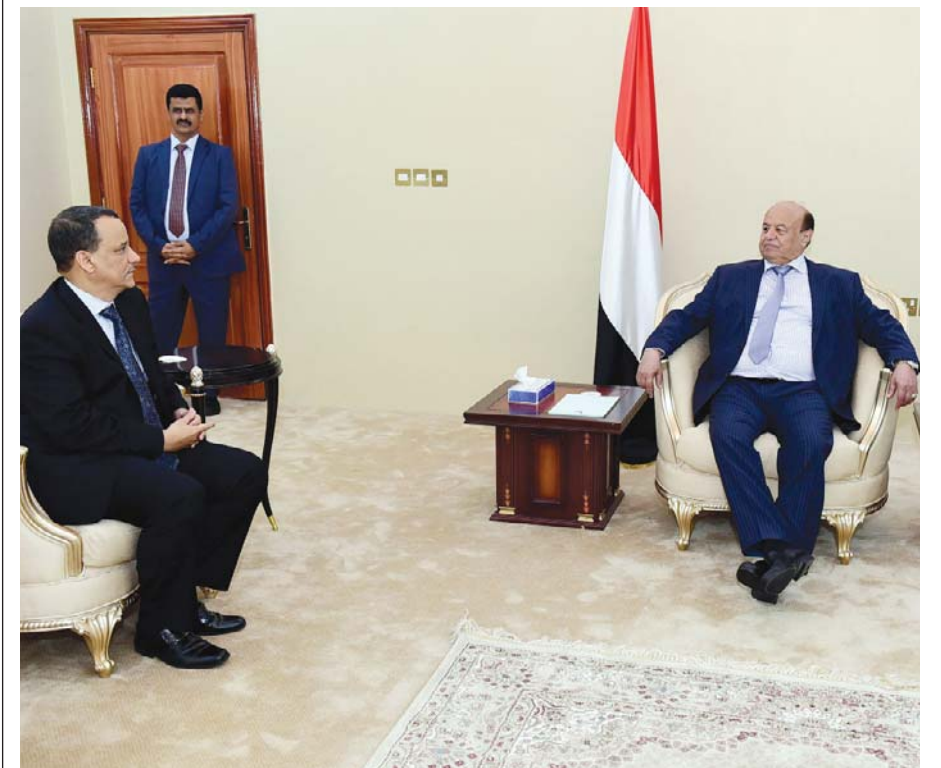
Eyewitnesses said attackers on motor bikes shot dead Muhsin Alwan, a prominent judge in an anti-terrorism court, and his two sons inside a supermarket in the Aden district of Mansura. Gunmen killed a military police colonel

in Mualla neighbourhood earlier in the day. Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and more recently Yemen's branch of Islamic State have claimed credit for attacks in Aden.

Mistrust

Diplomats say the talks may take place this month in Switzerland, but some Yemeni officials have expressed scepticism that they will go ahead. The Houthi group swept Hadi from power in February as part of what called a revolution against corruption and accused Hadi of being beholden to Saudi Arabia and the West. Gulf Arab countries led by Saudi Arabia intervened as the civil war worsened in March, fearing the group was acting as a proxy for its regional rival Iran, but making few gains toward retaking the capital in a war that has killed over 5,700 people.

Mistrust runs deep between Yemen's warring parties, with the Houthis believing the government wants to take back power by force and Hadi officials saying that the Houthis are refusing to withdraw from main cities as required by a UN Security Council Resolution passed in March. "The government is ready for talks but the other side isn't, and its actions on the ground contradict their statements that they support a peaceful solution," said Abdel-Malek Al-Mekhlafi, who was named as foreign minister by Hadi last week. — Reuters



ADEN: Yemeni President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi meets United Nations envoy to Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed (left) in this southern Yemeni city yesterday. — AFP

ASSAD EXIT NOT NECESSARY BEFORE TRANSITION: FABIUS

PARIS: The departure of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad is no longer necessary before any political transition in the war-torn country, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said in an interview published yesterday. The comments mark a softening of Paris' position on the Syrian president as attention turns to the fight against the Islamic State group which staged a series of bloody attacks on the French capital last month, killing 130. "The fight against Daesh is crucial, but it will only be totally effective if all the Syrian and regional forces are united," Fabius told the French regional newspaper Le Progres, using an Arabic acronym for IS.

"How is it possible that Bashar al-Assad is president, he who committed so many atrocities, and who has a large part of the population against him?" he said. "A united Syria implies a political transition. That does not mean that Bashar Al-Assad must leave even before



PARIS: Laurent Fabius, former French prime minister and president of the COP21, delivers a speech during the opening of "Action Day" at the COP21 United Nations conference on climate change in Le Bourget yesterday. — AFP

the transition, but there must be assurances for the future". Until now, France, along with Washington and other Western powers fighting IS jihadists have long insisted Assad must step down as part of any political solution to the four-year Syrian conflict.

Paris has been adamant in its opposition to Assad, describing him as a "butcher" of his own people in a civil war that has so far claimed a quarter million lives and created millions of refugees, triggering the biggest humanitarian crisis since World War II. On a trip to Washington last week, French President Francois Hollande reiterated his determination to see Assad step down in order to give Syria a chance for peace, saying "it should be as soon as possible." But there have also been signs Paris might moderate its position as its priority shifted to tackling Islamic State militants which staged a series of deadly attacks on Paris last month. — AFP

THREE KILLED IN LEBANON AS MILITANT BLOWS HIMSELF UP

BEIRUT: A suspected Islamist militant killed himself and two members of his family in northern Lebanon yesterday when he blew himself up during an army raid on his home, security and medical sources said. The army has carried out a series of raids since two suicide bomb blasts claimed by Islamic State killed 44 people in a crowded commercial and residential area of Beirut last month.

Yesterday's operation took place in the town of Deir Ammar, northeast of the city of Tripoli. The explosion killed the wife and mother of the suspect, whose name was Mohammed Hamzeh, a security source said. The source said Hamzeh was part of a group that had pledged allegiance to Islamic State. At least 10 other people were wounded in the blast, including four security personnel. Bullet holes and bloodstains marked the walls and staircase inside the building after the raid.

Security forces carried out further

raids in the same town after the incident, and arrested several Lebanese and Syrian nationals, the security source said. A Lebanese court charged 26 people last week with belonging to Islamic State, 23 of whom were directly linked to the Beirut bombings on Nov. 12 which targeted a Shiite suburb.

The Syrian civil war across the border has routinely spilled over into its smaller neighbor, with Sunni militants bombing Shiite targets, clashes between gunmen who support opposing sides in Syria, as well as between the Lebanese army and Islamists. Al-Qaeda's Syria wing on Tuesday freed 16 Lebanese security personnel it had held since August 2014 in return for the release of jailed Islamists. The army shelled militant positions on the outskirts of the northern border town of Arsal yesterday, a security source said, in ongoing skirmishes in the area. There were no immediate reports of casualties. — Reuters

BELGIUM SEEKS TWO NEW PARIS ATTACK SUSPECTS

MEN SAID TO BE 'ARMED AND DANGEROUS'

BRUSSELS: Belgium on Friday said it was searching for two new "armed and dangerous" men who used false ID papers to help wanted Paris attacks suspect Salah Abdeslam travel to Hungary in September. The fake identity card of one of the suspects was also used to wire money from Brussels to Paris and the cousin of attacks ringleader Abdelhamid Abaaoud four days after the massacre in the French capital, the Belgian prosecutor's office said. Both men are unidentified but carried the identities of Belgian nationals Soufiane Kayal and Samir Bouzid.

investigating judge wish to appeal to the public again to look out for two new suspects the investigators are actively searching for," the prosecutors said in a statement. According to the statement, Abdeslam was stopped by police at the Hungary-Austria border on September 9 accompanied by two men who carried false ID papers identifying themselves as Kayal and Bouzid.

The ID of Samar Bouzid was also used to rent a house in the town of Auvelais in southern Belgium that Belgian media reports say was used a hideout to plan the Paris attacks. Meanwhile, Bouzid's false identity card was used four days after the Paris

attacks to transfer 750 euros (\$800) to Abaaoud's cousin Hasna Aitboulhacen from a Western Union office in Brussels, the statement said. Abaaoud and Aitboulhacen were both killed the next day in a police raid north of Paris, along with a still unidentified third person.

'Armed and Dangerous'

Belgian police issued the ID card photos of the two new suspects along with apparent security camera pictures of them at an unidentified location. "These men are armed and dangerous. Anyone who sees those men, is asked not to undertake any initiative and to contact immediately the police," it said in its wanted notice.

Last month Belgium issued an international arrest warrant for Mohamed Abrini, 30, who was filmed along with Salah Abdeslam at a petrol station in Ressons, France on the motorway to Paris, in a Renault Clio which was later used in the attacks. Since Belgium opened its investigation last month it has charged eight people and been through a major terror alert that put Brussels on lockdown amid fears of a new Paris-style attack.

Two suspects were charged on Thursday in relation to the Paris attacks, including a Frenchman reportedly held at Brussels airport as he tried to board a flight to Morocco. Among the others charged are Mohammed Amri and Hamza Attou who are suspected of having brought Salah Abdeslam back to Brussels. Another of those charged, Ali Oulkadi, allegedly drove the key suspect around the Belgian capital while traces of blood and two handguns were found inside a vehicle of a fourth suspect, Lazez Abraimi.

Belgian media have identified the seventh suspect as Abdeilah Chouaa, whose link with the attacks remains unknown, and the eighth as Mohamed Bakkali, who is believed to be the owner of the home Auvelais that was raided. Also Friday, US media reported that several people suspected of having ties to ringleader Abaaoud were based in Britain. The Wall Street Journal cited unnamed Western officials saying several people with connections to the attacks' suspected planner live in the Birmingham area in England's West Midlands region. At least one person connected to the attacks was thought to have traveled to Britain beforehand, the Journal reported. — AFP



This handout image obtained from Belgian Police yesterday and composed of stills taken from CCTV footage shows two men who used fake identity documents bearing the names Soufiane Kayal and Samir Bouzid, suspected of involvement in the Nov 13, 2015 Paris attacks. — AFP



PORT LOUIS, Seychelles: A voter casts his ballot at a polling station yesterday. — AFP

SEYCHELLES VOTES IN PRESIDENTIAL POLLS

VICTORIA, Seychelles: The main islands of the Seychelles voted yesterday in a presidential election with incumbent James Michel facing his first serious challenge after two terms in office. Although voting on more remote islands began on Thursday, the main vote was taking place yesterday on the islands of Mahe, Praslin and La Digue, home to most of the archipelago's estimated 91,000 citizens. Aside from a late start in several places, voting got under way smoothly in Mahe, the largest island, where long lines of people could be seen waiting to cast their ballots, an AFP correspondent reported.

"I stood in line for nearly an hour before voting but once I got inside, it was very quick," said Jacqueline Hoarau after casting her ballot at Port Glaud on the island's northwestern coast. By early yesterday afternoon, voter turnout was at 47 percent, according to the Electoral Commission. But since it was a particularly hot day, many voters were expected to come out later when it is cooler, which could delay the planned 7:00 pm closing time (1500 GMT).

The tourism-dependent Indian Ocean nation, a former British colony, is made up of 115 islands, some as far as 1,000 km from the capital Victoria. "There are islands where it takes just 45 minutes... there are others where it lasts two hours, but what is important is that everyone can vote," said Charles Morin, the chief electoral officer, describing the marathon efforts to ensure that all get a chance to vote across the vast expanse of the archipelago.

The Electoral Commission, which has said around 4,000 voters were eligible to cast ballots on the first two days of voting, has said they were "generally satisfied" with the voting process, according to the Seychelles News Agency. Michel, of the Parti Lepep - "The People"

in the local Seychellois Creole language - hopes to win a third and final term as permitted by the constitution, but faces five challengers. In power since 2006, Michel is running against a fragmented opposition, but observers say a run-off is possible for the first time since multi-party politics were reintroduced in 1993.

Tax Haven

A second round would take place in one to two weeks. Analysts say Michel faces only two real challengers: Wavel Ramkalawan of the Seychelles National Party, and Patrick Pillay of the Lalyans Seselwa (Seychellois Alliance), a former minister who defected from Michel's party. Michel has pledged to boost the economy and eradicate poverty, while Pillay has vowed to combat corruption in the Seychelles, long seen as a popular tax haven for the world's super rich.

Tourism and fisheries are the main pillars of the economy, with the main export being canned tuna destined mainly for Europe. Observers include teams from the African Union, the Commonwealth and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), as well as domestic monitors.

While the opposition is divided for the first round, they have promised to unite behind a single candidate to challenge Michel if the vote goes to a run-off. "In the past we had only one opposition party... maybe that one party could not do this on its own... but now we have many to do the work," said Alexia Amesbury, a 64-year-old Seychellois lawyer and the country's first-ever woman candidate. Michel said he welcomed the challenge. "The candidates are my political opponents and not enemies," he said. Initial results were expected late yesterday. — AFP

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WHAT'S IN A NAME? HILLARY KNOWS MORE THAN MOST

WASHINGTON: As a young girl growing up in suburban Chicago, Hillary Rodham decided she'd never change her last name - no matter who she ended up marrying. Three decades later, an entire state debated her childhood choice. Arkansans grumbled about invitations to public events from Gov Bill Clinton and Hillary Rodham. Chelsea Clinton's birth announcement, featuring the two names, became a hot topic of conversation around the state. Businessman Frank White, the Republican challenging Clinton's bid for re-election in 1980, made a point of referring to his wife as "Mrs Frank White."

Bill Clinton lost that race. But it was his wife who ended up making the most lasting recalibration. "I'll be Mrs Bill Clinton," she told reporters in Feb 1982, on the day her husband announced his intention to run again for the office he'd lost. "I suspect people will be getting tired of hearing from Mrs Bill Clinton." Today, they hear from Hillary Clinton. That's the name aides to the frontrunner for the Democratic presidential nomination say she now prefers. You might not know that from looking at her campaign website, on which she's simply referred to as Hillary.

That's a change, too. She was Hillary Rodham Clinton throughout her time as first lady and secretary of state. That was also the name she used as an author of two best-selling memoirs and how she signed legal documents - "H R Clinton" - as recently as this past summer. Citing Clinton's preference, AP said this past week it would change its style and refer to her as Hillary Clinton. Several other news organizations have done the same.

The shifting monikers fit into an attack line Republicans have pushed for years - that Clinton is an unprincipled creature of Washington whose positions move with the political winds. Longtime Clinton observers have a slightly different take. They say the changes reflect necessary political calculations in a country that remains conservative about family names, even as family structures have become less traditional. "Given the pattern that evolved, she clearly had strong feelings about her name," said Max Brantley, an editor at the Arkansas Times who has known the Clintons since 1974. "She kept trying in various ways to hang on to it."

Last Names
Roughly 8 percent of married women in



SIoux CITY, Iowa: Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton speaks during a campaign stop on Friday. — AP

the US use their maiden names, while 17 percent use their maiden names in connection with their husband's last name, said

Pennsylvania State University sociologist Laurie Scheuble, who's studied the choice of last names by married women and based her

research on census data. Of the 20 women currently serving in the Senate, half use their maiden names and just one - GOP Sen. Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia - uses both names.

"When Clinton drops her first surname, she's just following the norms in society," Scheuble said. "She wants to be president and middle America doesn't want her to be Rodham. It's a good political position to take." That was certainly the opinion of Arkansas voters all those decades ago. Clinton arrived in the state fresh off her work as a lawyer for the Watergate committee. When she told her soon-to-be mother-in-law that she planned to keep her name after marriage, Virginia Clinton burst into tears.

The choice was in part a practical one, given that she'd already published and tried cases under her maiden name. But it was also "a personal decision, a small (I thought) gesture to acknowledge that while I was committed to our union, I was still me," she wrote in her book "Living History." Statewide polls later found that her use of her maiden name had cost Bill Clinton as much as six percentage points in that race for governor, which he lost. — AP



BRASILIA: Members of the Central Union of Workers demonstrate in support of Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff at the bus station in the capital on Friday. — AFP

ROUSSEFF FACES SETBACKS IN IMPEACHMENT BATTLE

PRESIDENT'S FATE DEPENDS ON COALITION

BRASILIA: Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff suffered two setbacks on Friday in her fight against impeachment, as a minister from her main coalition ally resigned and the Supreme Court quashed appeals from supporters seeking to stop the impeachment process. The reversals do not rule out Rousseff's chances of stopping impeachment proceedings, but they show the Supreme Court and even coalition partners are willing to let the process play out and even strategize for what may follow.

Aviation Minister Eliseu Padilha, an ally of Vice President Michel Temer and part of the fractious party that is Rousseff's main coalition partner, submitted his resignation on Friday, according to two people familiar with the decision from within the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party, or PMDB. Six PMDB ministers remain in Rousseff's cabinet, including Health Minister Marcelo Castro, who said his center-right party would back the president on the lower house committee that will rule whether there are grounds to proceed with her impeachment. That could change if Padilha's departure sets off a PMDB exodus from the Rousseff administration.

Meanwhile, Brazil's Supreme Court turned back appeals from Rousseff's allies to block the impeachment proceedings, including one filed by congressmen from her Workers' Party. The impeachment process was launched this week against Rousseff by opposition politicians for accounting moves that a congressional

auditor said broke public finance laws. Political wrangling over impeachment is likely to drag on for at least six months at a time when the government faces legislative gridlock, the deepest recession in three decades and an historic corruption scandal.

Rousseff has denied any wrongdoing. In a speech on Friday in Brasilia, the capital, she said that the impeachment effort "has no basis" and that she would use all legal means available to combat it. The aviation ministry declined comment on Padilha's exit and Rousseff's office had no immediate reaction to the resignation. But politicians and analysts saw a deliberate desire by the PMDB, a restive ally even at the best of times, to put further distance between itself and the leftist president, and prepare the ground for the vice president to lead the nation if Rousseff is forced to leave office.

Even before the impeachment proceedings began, many within the party argued that the PMDB should be positioning itself to assume the government, with Temer at the helm. Padilha's departure "is a clear indication that Rousseff will fight this battle alone," said Gabriel Petrus, a political analyst at Barral M Jorge, a consultancy in Brasilia. "It is also a good indication of the real interest that Temer has in this process: standing as Rousseff's successor." Temer, for his part, has been lying low since the proceedings began. In a brief comment published in the Folha de S Paulo newspaper on Friday, he said he hoped the proceedings would "pacify"

Brazil's bitter political landscape. Though the impeachment drive may not succeed, it adds another obstacle for the government as it tries to win congressional support for policies to rebalance public finances and restore economic growth. This week, data showed Brazil's economy contracted in the third quarter by 4.5 percent from a year earlier. The country's economic and political woes have been exacerbated by a kickback scandal at state-owned companies that has ensnared dozens of political and corporate leaders.

Rousseff is expected to narrowly survive the impeachment proceedings because her party and allies, for now, appear to control enough seats to defeat those who support the process. The government estimated conservatively that it already had firm support from 140 lawmakers in the lower house - shy of the 172 votes needed to block the process - and was seeking more, an aide to Rousseff said.

Newspaper O Globo, based on estimates from party leaders, said on Friday Rousseff could have up to 258 lawmakers in her favor if the vote were held today. Rousseff wants to speed up a vote on impeachment in the lower house, according to her chief of staff, who favors calling Congress back in the summer recess in January to hold a vote. An early vote - before Brazilians get back from their summer holiday - would favor Rousseff since the pro-impeachment campaign is expected to gather support on the streets only once Carnival is over in February. — Agencies

MEXICO ARRESTS THREE OVER MURDER OF AUSSIE SURFERS

CULIACAN, Mexico: Mexican authorities have arrested three alleged highway robbers in connection with the suspected murder of two Australian surfers who vanished last month, prosecutors said Friday. The tourists' burnt-out van was found with two unidentified bodies on November 21 in the violence-plagued northwestern state of Sinaloa, but authorities have not confirmed that the remains belong to the Australians. The van belonging to Dean Lucas and Adam Coleman was stopped on Nov 21 by a gang driving a car that flashed police-like lights on a road in Sinaloa, said chief state prosecutor Marco Antonio Higuera Gomez.

The suspects shot a long-haired man in the face when he resisted the robbery, Higuera told reporters. The robbers killed the second man, drove the vehicle to another location and "set fire to the van with two bodies inside," Higuera said. "The documented reports leads to believe that the bodies found inside the burned van could be those of the Australian citizens Dean Lucas and Adam Coleman," he said.

The prosecutor stressed that while the case was being investigated as a murder, DNA tests are due to confirm the identities of the bodies. Two other suspects are on the run. Prosecutors did not say when the arrests were made. "These people are part of a criminal group dedicated to vehicle thefts, drug dealing and with a history of committing murders," Higuera said.

Dressed as Cops

Municipal and federal police uniforms were seized from the suspects, who wore them to commit highway robberies, the prosecutor said. One of the gang members worked as a lookout, notifying accomplices when he saw vehicles that could be robbed. Lucas and Coleman, both 33, were last reported to be in the Sinaloa town of Topolobampo on November 20 after arriving on a ferry from the

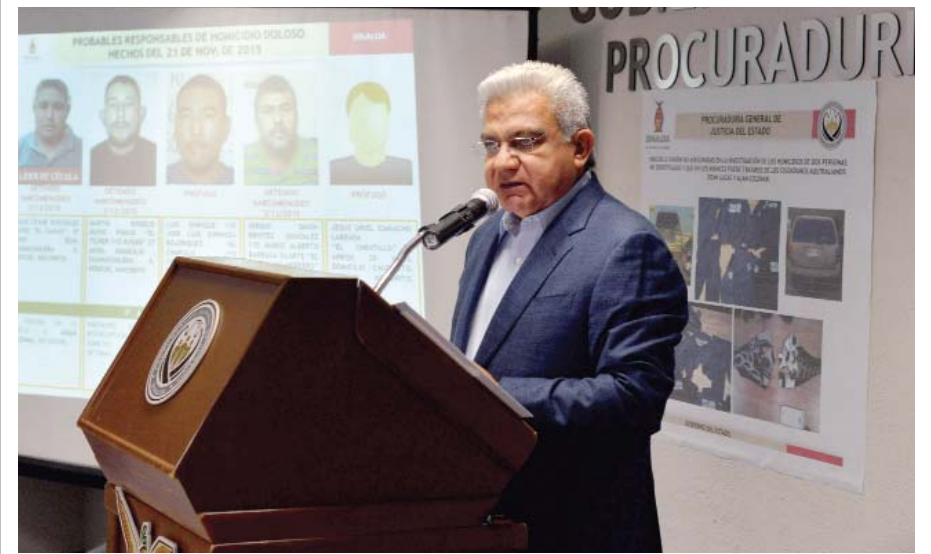
Baja California peninsula. The two men had driven from Edmonton, Canada and across the United States to Mexico to join Coleman's Mexican girlfriend in the western city of Guadalajara.

Their van was discovered on Nov 21 on a rural road of the town of Navolato. Last weekend, authorities confirmed the vehicle belonged to the Australians, raising fears about their fate. Navolato's mayor, Miguel Calderon, described the region as a "Bermuda Triangle" of crimes that include robberies, murders and kidnappings.

Fundraising for Parents

More than \$60,000 has been raised on the crowdfunding website www.gofundme.com to help the two men's parents travel to Mexico and bring their sons home. Australian Foreign Minister Julie Bishop voiced "grave concerns" for the young men on Monday. The Australian foreign affairs department issued a statement on Sunday on behalf of the families saying they were aware of reports that the van had been located and that "a tragic event has occurred." "The families hold deep fears for the safety of their sons but stress that they are still waiting for details to be confirmed," the statement said.

The state is home to the powerful Sinaloa drug cartel led by fugitive drug kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, who broke out of a maximum security prison in July. While tens of thousands of Mexicans have been killed and 26,000 gone missing in nearly a decade of drug violence, violent attacks on foreign tourists are less common. In July 2014, the decomposing body of Franco-American Harry Devert was found with signs of strangulation in the southwestern state of Guerrero, six months after he went missing while crossing the country on a motorcycle. He had traveled from New York, hoping to reach Brazil for the World Cup. — AFP



CULIACAN, Mexico: Sinaloa State Attorney General Marco Antonio Higuera gives a news conference on Friday. — AP

ESTABLISHMENT'S TURN TO RISE ON CAPITOL HILL

WASHINGTON: On Capitol Hill, it's the establishment's turn. After months where tea party lawmakers provoked crisis and unrest in Congress, even driving out a speaker, GOP leaders have turned to the business of governing, pushing forward a series of bills destined to get the president's signature. Major highway legislation and a sweeping federal education rewrite passed the House this past week despite conservatives' objections and are expected to become law. A massive spending bill for every federal agency is in the works, as is legislation to extend dozens of tax breaks worth hundreds of billions of dollars.

Negotiations on the spending bill could melt down before Friday's deadline as conservatives push for language barring Syrian refugees and cutting money for Planned Parenthood. Yet after months of turmoil in the Capitol, where conservatives began the spring by provoking a near-shutdown of the Homeland Security Department and ended September by ousting Speaker John Boehner, lawmakers are marveling

that they suddenly seem to be getting things done. "It has been pleasant to serve here for the last few weeks, which was not always the case earlier in this Congress," said Rep Carlos Curbelo of Florida, an establishment-aligned Republican. "Don't want to get too optimistic yet, but it's certainly been a positive change." The change comes about partly because of timing. The trauma of September and October gave way to the traditional end-of-year legislative rush, when partisan battling turns to compromise as deadlines for must-pass spending bills and other legislation come due.

In the House, Boehner's sudden departure was followed by a month of chaos as lawmakers searched for a successor. New Speaker Paul Ryan was sworn in at the end of October, and has gotten high marks for making good on his promises of opening up decision-making in the House and keeping the conservatives who battled Boehner in the fold. Other Republicans were simply tired of agreeing to the demands of a small group of tea party lawmakers who

derived their power from their ability to sink legislation on the floor.

The best example is the federal Export-Import Bank, which advanced through the House in October despite opposition from GOP leaders pressured by the tea party. Business-friendly Republicans banded together on an obscure parliamentary maneuver that forced a floor vote. Despite personally opposing the measure, Ryan and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, acceded to including it in the final version of the highway bill, which President Barack Obama signed on Friday.

Even as conservatives find themselves on the losing end of legislative fights, their thirst for rebellion seems to have slaked and they do not seem inclined to turn on Ryan, at least not yet. "We all realized from the outset that we weren't going to win every fight, we conservatives, but that we'd get a shot," said Rep Matt Salmon, a leading member of the hard-line Freedom Caucus. Describing Ryan, Salmon added: "True to his word he's been doing exactly what he said he'd do and that's kind of refreshing." — AP

NICARAGUA'S ANTI-US LEADER ORTEGA EYES NEW MANDATE

MANAGUA: He hasn't officially started campaigning, but Daniel Ortega, president of Nicaragua, is widely believed to be aiming to extend his near decade in power by yet another term. If that turns out to be the case in elections to be held in November 2016, the former Marxist rebel would be on track to tighten his grip on the Central American country, which is aligned with Cuba, Venezuela and Iran against US "imperialism".

A high popularity rating, currently at 54 percent, and a fractured opposition would pave the way for Ortega's re-election. Nicaragua is also fairly peaceful, especially when compared to neighboring Honduras, which has one of the highest murder rates in the world. Ortega's wife Rosario Murillo, who is also the government's official spokeswoman and a cabinet minister, is seen as either a partner in power or the eminence grise.

The president's Sandinista Front party has not yet designated its candidate, but analysts have little doubt that Ortega will be seeking a new five-year mandate. "It's obvious he will run again. It's a sickness - he believes himself indispensable," a Nicaraguan sociologist, Cirilo Otero, told AFP. "He believes that. And we are facilitating him with our silence, fear or praise."

Former Rebel

Ortega, today aged 70, rose to power in 1979 when his Sandinista rebels overthrew the US-supported dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza in a revolution. Ortega was soundly elected president in 1984 despite an unsuccessful CIA-backed effort to topple his leftist government, but he lost office in the next election in 1990, and failed in the three following polls to win it back. After 16 years in opposition, during which his hardline stance mellowed, Ortega managed to regain the presidency in 2006. He was re-elected in 2011 with 62 percent of the vote after a ban on successive terms was lifted. "I have not a doubt that while he's alive he will be the (party's) candidate, even if he's 90," said Dora Maria Tellez, a Sandinista dissident. "Because part of his power source is his grip on the candidacy," Nicaragua is currently living through what looks curiously like an Ortega re-election push, even though its Supreme Electoral Council - stacked with the president's allies - has not called on candidates to be declared.

Ortega has been highlighting what he says are his government's successes, which include a reduction in poverty over the past five years and an improved economy that he boasts has been endorsed by international financial bodies. But a political analyst, Oscar

Rene Vargas, said the issues that Ortega highlights "don't reflect the daily reality" in the country. A CID-Gallup poll has found that poverty, lack of jobs and the high cost of living are the most pressing topics for the public. "I don't want to say" that discontent "will result in a loss of votes, because it's still way too early to make forecasts," Vargas said. "But these social conditions could create a negative environment."

Call for Fair Elections

For the country's opposition, the problem is not whether Ortega runs again, but whether the elections will be free and transparent. "If the elections are transparent and honest, if they are not stolen, then they (Ortega and the Sandinista Front) will lose," said Tellez, an ex-guerrilla commander who backed Ortega during his first stint in power. A lawmaker from the opposition Liberal Independent Party, Eliseo Nunez, agreed. "He has already lost four times. Really, if the elections are free ones, he will lose again." With just less than a year before the vote, the opposition is keeping up pressure on the government. Each week, small protests are held in the capital Managua and in other cities demanding electoral transparency. — AFP

KILLING SPURS CONCERNS ABOUT FIANCE VISA PROGRAM

WASHINGTON: The woman who carried out the San Bernardino massacre with her husband came to the US last year on a special visa for fiances of US citizens, raising questions about whether the process can adequately vet people who may sympathize with terrorist groups. Authorities said Friday that Pakistani citizen Tashfeen Malik, 27, pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group and its leader under an alias account on Facebook just moments before she and her husband, Syed Farook, opened fire on a holiday banquet for his co-workers Wednesday, killing 14. They later died in a gun battle with police.

Malik, who had been living Pakistan and visiting family in Saudi Arabia, passed several government background checks and entered the US in July 2014 on a K-1 visa, which allowed her to travel to the US and get married within 90 days of arrival. Malik was subjected to a vetting process

the US government describes as vigorous, including in-person interviews, fingerprints, checks against US terrorist watch lists and reviews of her family members, travel history and places where she lived and worked. The process began when she applied for a visa to move to the United States and marry Farook, a 28-year-old Pakistani-American restaurant health inspector who was raised in California.

Foreigners applying from countries recognized as home to Islamic extremists, such as Pakistan, undergo additional scrutiny before the State Department and Homeland Security Department approve permission for a K-1 visa. "This is not a visa that someone would use because it is easy to get into the US, because there are more background checks on this type of visa than just about anything else," said Palma Yanni, a Washington-based attorney who has processed dozens of K-1 visas. "But fin-

gerprints and biometrics and names aren't going to tell you what is in somebody's head unless they somewhere have taken some action."

Implications

The government's apparent failure to detect Malik's alleged sympathies before the shootings will likely have implications on the debate over the Obama administration's plans to accept Syrian refugees. Attorneys representing Farook's family deny that he or his wife had extremist views. On Friday, ABC News reported that the address in her Pakistani hometown that Malik listed on her visa application does not exist. In response to a question about the ABC report, State Department spokesman Mark Toner said: "We are actively reviewing all of the information provided in the visa application and sharing it with our interagency partners as it relates to the investigation."

The vetting process for refugees is similar, though not identical, to the one for fiance-visa applicants. Refugees submit to in-person interviews overseas, where they provide biographical details about themselves, including their families, friendships, social or political activities, employment, phone numbers and email accounts. They provide biometric information, including fingerprints. Syrians are subject to additional classified controls. Those who come to the US on a fiance visa must marry a US citizen within 90 days or leave the country. Following the marriage, the immigrant becomes a conditional resident for two years and must ask the US government to remove those conditions at the end of that waiting period and undergo another background check. If the request is approved, the immigrant receives a green card. Immigrants can apply to become US citizens five years after win-

ning a green card. "Can we improve the system as technology grows? There is always room for improvement, but to indict the entire fiance visa system because of this is not the right path," said David Leopold, a past president of the American Immigration Lawyers Association. Those who intersected with Malik in California could not offer much insight, as she was rarely seen in the Muslim community.

The couple was married Aug 16, 2014, and held their wedding reception at the Islamic Center of Riverside, said Dr. Mustafa Kuko, the center's director. Kuko said he never met Malik because the party was divided into separate spaces for women and men. "She never came to our mosque except once when they had their reception, and that night there were so many people around, my wife doesn't recall exactly how she looks or who she is," Kuko said. "We never saw her again." — AP

NEW YORK CITY BOOSTS OUTREACH TO MUSLIMS

NEW YORK: New York City officials have bolstered security and quietly stepped up outreach to Muslim residents in the aftermath of last month's Paris attacks, trying to calm fears of hate-filled retaliation and mend a relationship that has been fraught with mutual suspicion. The city has increased its presence in Muslim neighborhoods, sending staffers to visit mosques and meet with imams and worshippers. Police officials have briefed community leaders on new counterterrorism procedures. Other city officials have urged Muslims to report any hate crimes, the number of which is sharply lower in New York in 2015 than at this time a year ago.

In a speech Friday evening at an Islamic community center, Mayor Bill de Blasio said the city would deepen its relationship with the 800,000 Muslim New Yorkers and vowed dogged investigations into any hate crimes. "We are a stronger city because of the contributions of the Muslim community," he said. De Blasio's speech at the Jamaica Muslim Center, or Masjid Al-Mamoor, is the most high-profile move the administration has made to calm jittery Muslims since the Nov. 13 attacks that killed at least 129 people in Paris and this week's slaying of 14 people in San Bernardino, California.

Six days after the Paris attacks, the mayor's office organized a meeting among 40 community leaders - the vast majority Muslims - and police with aims of building the trust necessary for Muslims to turn to law enforcement to report crimes. The

police department has also increased security at mosques, as well as synagogues.

Hanane Dannech, a 50-year-old Muslim who immigrated from France, said earlier Friday she has noticed more officers watching her mosque in Brooklyn recently. "We, really, we feel protected," she said, adding that what she likes about the US is, "it's the first country on Earth that takes care of other religions". Dannech said some public officials could do a better job of pointing out that violent extremists are the minority among Muslims rather than the norm. She said there is always a chance of harassment after "big things happen" and that "each time something happens, it gets worse."

New York Police Department officials said there has not been an uptick in bias crimes against Muslims since the Paris attacks, though they acknowledge that some hate crimes go unreported. The NYPD, which has 900 Muslim officers, uses its community affairs bureau to foster better relationships by staffing street festivals, providing services to accident victims and trying "to make people who don't normally talk to cops feel comfortable coming to us," said the head of the unit, Chief Joanne Jaffe. "Outreach by the city to the Muslim community is critically important, especially now," said Donna Lieberman, executive director of the New York Civil Liberties Union. "But there must be clear distinctions between the outreach and anti-terrorism efforts. Otherwise, it will discourage Muslims from going to law enforcement and just breed further distrust." — AP



SAN BERNARDINO, California: A woman prays at a makeshift memorial on Friday. — AP

SMALL CITIES FEARFUL AFTER SAN BERNARDINO ATTACK

MANY PUBLIC PLACES HAVE LAX SECURITY

HOOVER, Alabama: Anita Jefferson didn't know much about San Bernardino, California, before the apparent terror attack there. The West Coast town is nearly the exact same size as her hometown of Birmingham and hardly a high-profile target like New York or Paris. Now, she finds herself worried about the possibility of an attack at a location like the suburban shopping mall where Jefferson works at a food kiosk for the Christmas shopping season. A place that's public but, unlike stadiums and other venues, has relatively lax security. "You'd think they'd go to a larger place, but a smaller place may be easier," said Jefferson, 62.

The FBI announced Friday that it was investigating the mass shooting that left 14 people dead at a Christmas party as an act of terrorism. The couple who carried out the shooting, Syed Farook and his wife, Tashfeen Malik, died in a gun battle with police. If there could be a terror attack at a social services center in San Bernardino, why not suburban Alabama, or downtown Louisville, Kentucky? The bloody attack made it all too obvious for some Americans that big cities with marquee names aren't the only potential targets. "I can honestly say I don't feel as safe," said Tim Harrington, 50, of Jacksonville, Florida, while touring a museum in Louisville.

There is plenty of security at the suburban Birmingham mall - "and they're awesome," said Lindsay Alexander, 18, who also works there and feels safe. But her comfort level isn't what it was a few days ago. "It could happen here," said Alexander. "They could just pick something random." Psychology professor Marjorie Sanfilippo doesn't believe people will change their behavior because of the San Bernardino shootings. "People are very resilient tend to get back to their regular lives," said Sanfilippo, who teaches at Eckerd College in St Petersburg, Florida. But, she cautioned, that could change if there were more "random attacks" in public places, such as coffee shops. "That's when I think we would see fear," said Sanfilippo.

Security

Residents in Lincoln, Nebraska - which didn't experience its first homicide of 2015 until last month - said the attacks hadn't affected their sense of security. "If they're looking for a mass killing, they're going to go to places with more people," said Nate Jurgensmeier, a 19-year-old sophomore at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. "They're not going to kill nearly as many people if they crash into a dorm building or a building in downtown Lincoln." Matt Eckhardt, 30, of Lincoln also considers his city safe. "If you were living in New York, I think your perspective would be a lot different than ours," Eckhardt said.

Yet in Louisville, Nautica Delacruz of Los Angeles said the attacks in her home state had shaken her sense of security. "You kind of just want to go to work and home, or pick up your kid and go straight home," she said. "You really don't want to go anywhere. You kind of feel like you're violated in a sense of your freedom, in a way. You don't feel safe going anywhere any-

more." At the Louisville museum, Harrington said the threat of terror already is making him re-evaluate his safety. He has cut back on international travel for business, and he said he doesn't feel as safe as he once did in office buildings. Harrington said he isn't changing domestic travel plans, and he feels secure going to NFL games in his hometown of Jacksonville, Florida. "But

definitely, I think if I'm in a crowd of people outside where I don't see policemen, I'd kind of be a little bit more fearful," he said.

Standing in the middle of the Alabama mall crowded with holiday shoppers, a brightly lit carousel twirling in the food court, Jefferson said she is doing her best not to worry, but: "It's in the back of your head." — AP

TEXAS BACKS DOWN FROM EFFORT TO BLOCK SYRIANS

DALLAS: Texas stopped trying Friday to block Syrian refugees from resettling in the state after suing the US government over fears that new arrivals from the war-torn country could pose a security risk. The swift reversal defused a lawsuit the Obama administration criticized as unfounded. Since the Paris attacks, at least 29 US governors have vowed to keep new Syrian refugees outside their state borders. Texas on Wednesday became the first to take the federal government to court, but legal experts called the lawsuit futile, saying states have no authority over resettlements.

"I think that it's the first sign that Texas is beginning to see the light," said Cecilia Wang of the American Civil Liberties Union, which is defending a resettlement group that Texas also sued. One Syrian family, which includes two children ages 3 and 6 and their grandparents, was expected to arrive in Dallas on Monday. Details about the refugees were closely guarded by resettlement organizers over safety concerns. Last month, armed protesters with long guns staged a small demonstration outside a suburban Dallas mosque.

A total of 21 Syrian refugees, most of whom are 13 years old or younger, are scheduled to resettle next week in Dallas and Houston. "All they're asking for is safety," said

Lucy Carrigan, spokeswoman for the nonprofit International Rescue Committee, which is coordinating the Dallas resettlements.

Republican Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton had claimed that the IRC handed over few details about the refugees and no assurances about whether they posed a threat. He accused the IRC of violating federal law by not cooperating with the state after Abbott last month ordered resettlement groups in Texas to stop accepting Syrians.

Paxton wanted a federal judge to immediately halt the resettlements, but dropped that request Friday after the Obama administration and ACLU attacked the state's argument in court papers as frivolous. Federal courts - including the US Supreme Court - have long ruled that immigration is a federal responsibility. The Obama administration has announced plans to accept about 10,000 Syrian refugees nationwide and defends the screening process as rigorous. In Texas, the refugees set to arrive next week include a single woman hoping to reunite with her mother. A dozen of the refugees bound for Texas arrived in New York on Thursday and Friday and were greeted warmly by Democratic New York Mayor Bill de Blasio. "We welcome them with open arms to the city of immigrants," De Blasio said. — AP



WHITEHALL, Pennsylvania: A Syrian refugee, who agreed to be photographed on condition of anonymity because of fear of retaliation against family living in Syria, poses for a portrait with her child on Nov 18, 2015 at the Muslim Association of Lehigh Valley. — AP



NEW YORK: New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio (left) arrives to speak with Muslims at the Jamaica Muslim Center on Friday. — AP

NYT URGES GUN CONTROL IN FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL

WASHINGTON: The New York Times has published an editorial on its front page for the first time since 1920, using the rare, prominent placement to urge gun control following the latest mass shooting in the United States. Entitled "End the Gun Epidemic in America," it lashes out at politicians and calls for certain types of weapons and ammunition to be outlawed for private citizens. "It is a moral outrage and a national disgrace that civilians can legally purchase weapons designed specifically to kill people with brutal speed and efficiency," reads the editorial.

Its publication online late Friday and on page A1 of yesterday's print copy of the prestigious newspaper, comes just days after a couple went on a gun rampage in California, killing 14 people and wounding 21 others. The carnage at a year-end office party represents the deadliest mass shooting in the United States since a 2012 Connecticut school massacre and is being investigated as an "act of terrorism," according to the FBI.

The Times said it was "right and proper" for authorities to probe whether the killers were connected to international terrorism. But, it added, "the attention and anger of Americans should also be directed at the elected leaders whose job is to keep us safe but who place a higher premium on the money and political power of an industry dedicated to profiting from the unfettered spread of ever more powerful firearms."

Guns are a potent political symbol in the United States, where the right to bear arms is enshrined in the constitution. And the powerful National Rifle Association gun

lobby, reputed to have many members of Congress in its pocket, paints gun control propositions as attacks against that right.

'The Scourge of Guns'

The Times goes on to say that the United States, in contrast to other countries affected by gun violence, was not even trying to remedy the situation. "Worse, politicians abet would-be killers by creating gun markets for them, and voters allow those politicians to keep their jobs," it said. "It is past time to stop talking about halting the spread of firearms, and instead to reduce their number drastically - eliminating some large categories of weapons and ammunition."

In particular, it said, certain types of weapons, including the slightly-modified combat rifles used in the California attack, in addition to certain kinds of ammunition, "must be outlawed for civilian ownership." In a statement, the paper's publisher, Arthur Sulzberger, Jr, said the reason for running the editorial on the front page was to "deliver a strong and visible statement of frustration and anguish about our country's inability to come to terms with the scourge of guns."

"Even in this digital age, the front page remains an incredibly strong and powerful way to surface issues that demand attention," Sulzberger said. "And, what issue is more important than our nation's failure to protect its citizens?" The Times said it published its last Page One editorial on June 13, 1920, critical of the nomination of Warren Harding as the Republican presidential candidate. — AFP

POOR URBAN PLANNING FEEDS RAIN MISERY

NEW DELHI: The relentless rains that lashed southern India's Tamil Nadu state for three days eased Friday, 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 Friday, 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 airport would remain closed at least until today.

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



CHENNAI: A residential area is seen surrounded by floodwaters yesterday. — AP

Meteorological Department on Friday 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 discharge 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. On Friday, 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



CHENNAI: A flood-affected man waves to a coastguard chopper yesterday. — AP

18 DIE AFTER POWER CUT IN FLOODED CHENNAI HOSPITAL

INDIA BOLSTERS RELIEF, RESIDENTS SLAM SLOW RESPONSE

NEW DELHI: Severe floods that have hit the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu killed 18 hospital patients this week after rainwaters knocked out generators and switched off ventilators, officials said yesterday. State authorities were investigating complaints of negligence by officials at MIOT International hospital in the state capital of Chennai, which is reeling from massive floods. The 18 patients were in the intensive care unit when a power outage affected ventilators in the hospital, leading to their deaths over the past two to three days, said state Health Secretary J Radhakrishnan. He said that floodwaters entered the room with the

generators, cutting off power to the building and switching off the ventilators.

More than 280 people have died due to the floods in Chennai, a city of 9.6 million, and nearby districts, including several who were killed due to electric shocks from power distribution boxes that had been submerged by floodwaters. Authorities have turned off power supplies in some areas to prevent accidental deaths. Army soldiers using boats have rescued thousands of residents marooned in high-rise buildings and launched massive relief operations to provide food and medicine.

Although floodwaters have begun to recede, vast swaths of Chennai and neighboring districts were still under 2 1/2 to 3 m of water, with tens of thousands of people in state-run relief camps. As officials struggled to supply drinking water and food packets, people were complaining that relief had not yet reached several neighborhoods, four days after they were marooned or stranded on rooftops. With no electricity for more than four days, they had no way to charge their cellphones, they said.

"We feel quite helpless," said Malti Soman, standing in knee-deep water in Mambalam, a residential area in central Chennai. "The landline phones are not working. And my cellphone is dead because there is no electricity to charge it." Radhakrishnan, the health secretary, said yesterday that while the immediate rescue operations were tapering off, the main focus of the administration in the coming days will be to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. In many areas, sewage drains have overflowed due to the rising floodwaters, posing a health hazard for residents who have had to wade through the water, Radhakrishnan said. "This is a concern," he said. "We are working with the local water and sewage agencies to disinfect the worst-hit areas."

Sanitation workers have begun

spraying insecticide in many places to prevent the spread of vector-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue due to the stagnant water collected in large parts of the city. Chennai's airport was closed for a fourth day yesterday, although some flights operated from a nearby air force base. Railway services resumed partially, with a few trains running from Chennai's main train station.

India's main monsoon season runs from June through September, but for Chennai and the rest of the 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 completely unprepared.

No Warning

Residents say the city authorities gave no warning that they were going to open overflowing reservoirs into the Adyar River, which led to sharp rise in water levels. Vikram Kapur, a commissioner of the Chennai Corporation, a government body that administers the city, said that employees had gone to forewarn residents when the reservoir was opened up. "The local corporation official, the water works officer and the police are given instructions to inform the public," Kapur said. — Agencies



CHENNAI: The intensive care unit of a hospital is seen flooded and abandoned on Friday. — AP

SEOUL PROTESTERS CALL FOR PRESIDENT'S RESIGNATION

SEOUL: Tens of thousands of protesters marched in Seoul yesterday, accusing President Park Geun-Hye of sacrificing workers and farmers for large businesses and rewriting history textbooks to glorify her father's authoritarian rule. An estimated crowd of 30,000 people, many of them wearing masks in defiance of Park's call for a ban on masking-wearing during protests, marched through the city centre behind a banner reading "Resign Park Geun-Hye," chanting slogans.

Police had initially banned yesterday's rally but organizers appealed to the Seoul Administrative Court, which overturned the order, paving the way for a second massive protest in the capital in the space of a month. The first rally on Nov 14 drew around 60,000 people and saw numerous clashes between protesters and police using water cannon. On that occasion, Baek Nam-Ki, a 69-year-old farmer, fell into a coma after being knocked to the ground by a water cannon during a clash outside the Jongro District Office.

Organizers vowed to mount a peaceful demonstration this time and 300 religious figures including Buddhists, Catholics and Protestants, each carrying a flower, helped prevent protesters from crossing police lines. While presiding over a government cabinet meeting on November 24, Park described the earlier demonstration as an attempt "to negate the rule of law and incapacitate the government", calling for a crackdown on those who incite "illegal, violent protests".

Resentment

She also called for a ban on the wearing of masks by protesters, saying it was

the sort of practice adopted by the Islamic State group, sparking angry reactions from opponents. Park's administration is facing mounting resentment over a range of issues including her plan to impose new history textbooks on schools, to further open the agricultural market and reform the labour market, making the dismissal of workers easier and cutting wages for older workers.

"President Park, Don't try to turn South Korea's national history into your family's private history," said a banner carried by a female student at a rally which took place outside the City Hall. "We're not IS, we are just poor students," said another sign held by her colleague. Yesterday's rally was jointly organized by groups including the militant Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), the federation of farmers' associations known as Jeonong, the national teachers union and the association of urban poor.

KCTU President Han Sang-Kyun said in a video message at the rally that KCTU would launch a general labour strike on December 16. Han has taken refuge at a Buddhist temple in Seoul to avoid being arrested for leading earlier protests. KCTU boasts 700,000 members employed at more than 2,000 companies including the country's key export industries such as automakers and shipyards. Critics say Park, despite an election promise to reach out to opponents for national unity, is increasingly reliant on strong-arm tactics used by her late father Park Chung-Hee, a general turned authoritarian leader who ruled the country for 18 years until he was assassinated in 1979. — AFP



SEOUL: South Korean protesters attend an anti-government rally in downtown yesterday. — AP

CHINESE FUGITIVE RETURNS FROM US AMID CRACKDOWN

BEIJING: One of China's most wanted fugitives voluntarily returned from the US yesterday in a new victory for the government's campaign to track down corruption suspects who have fled abroad, the ruling Communist Party said. The party's anti-graft body said that Huang Yurong had turned herself at Beijing's Capital Airport. Official photos showed Huang flanked by police officers standing before an official while a document was read and then signing a piece of paper.

Huang is accused of abusing her position as head of the highway administration in the central province of Henan to embezzle funds and take bribes. She fled abroad in Aug 2002, and had resided in the US for the last 13 years. Although Washington has no extradition treaty with China, it has agreed to assist in the repatriation of officials accused of corruption. In return, the US hopes for Beijing's help in taking back the thousands of Chinese residing in the US illegally.

Huang was ranked No. 4 on a list of

China's 100 most wanted suspects issued in April and filed with Interpol. Her husband, former Henan provincial transport department chief Shi Faliang, had already been sentenced to life imprisonment in 2005 on corruption charges. The anti-graft body, known as the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, said it had made Huang a priority and dispatched officials to build a case against her.

The commission made no mention of the amount of money involved or any admission of guilt. It quoted Huang as saying she was happy to return home, had full confidence in the Chinese legal system and would "provide a clear explanation as to her issues". Since taking office in 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping has made a wide-ranging crackdown on corruption in public life a central part of his political agenda. The government is believed to use offers of lighter sentences or better treatment of relatives as inducements for suspects to return from abroad. — AP

THAI KING MARKS 88TH BIRTHDAY

BANGKOK: The people of Thailand yesterday marked the 88th birthday of their king, the world's longest-reigning monarch, but with their once-vigorous leader in a hospital and unseen in public for three months, the celebrations were the most subdued in memory. King Bhumibol Adulyadej looked frail on his last appearance before the general public on Sept 1, when he was taken on a brief tour of the Bangkok hospital where he has spent most of the last six years. His most recent ailment was a lung infection that required him to be fed intravenously and use a machine to aid his breathing.

Many public activities were being held for the royal birthday, but there were no joyous celebrations of the type that used to be held before the decline of the king's health. One major gathering point this year was outside the hospital that has become his de facto palace, where well-wishers came

to offer their prayers. The king's other medical issues in recent years have included excess fluid in the brain and

an operation to remove his gallbladder. A somber reminder of his generation's passing came Saturday morning



BANGKOK: Thai well-wishers hold portraits of King Bhumibol Adulyadej yesterday as they sing songs to celebrate his 88th birthday at the Siriraj Hospital where the king has been staying for months. — AFP

with the death of 96-year-old former Foreign Minister Siddhi Savetsila, a member of the Privy Council, the king's personal advisory board. While he is a constitutional monarch with no formal political role, Bhumibol - King Rama IX - has generally been regarded as Thailand's unifying figure. His intervention during major political crises is generally seen as having been key to restoring the status quo.

Before the decline in his health, Bhumibol's birthday had also been the occasion for a much-anticipated annual speech in which he would speak his mind to exercise his authority as the country's moral leader. Love of the monarchy is almost seen as the definition of Thainess. But it is not so clear whether the people's strong devotion for the king will be transferred to his son and heir apparent, 63-year-old Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn, who does not have his father's record of public service. — AP



The sun rises in the early morning hours at the White House yesterday in Washington. — AP

CAUTIOUS HOPES AS UN ADOPTS CLIMATE PLAN

Continued from Page 1

Negotiators finalized the draft following an often tense week of talks at a conference centre in Le Bourget on the northern outskirts of Paris. And while many extremely contentious points still have to be resolved by ministers during a scheduled five days of talks starting Monday, delegates said they felt the foundations had been laid for success. "We are very happy to have this progress. The political will is there from all parties," China's chief climate envoy, Su Wei, told reporters. After the draft was adopted to loud applause, South African negotiator Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko drew on her nation's revered democracy icon in a bid to inspire others. "In the words of Nelson Mandela, it always seems impossible until it is done," she said.

More than 50 personalities committed to fighting climate change, from US actor Sean Penn to Chinese internet tycoon Jack Ma, also gathered at the conference yesterday

to help build momentum. "Perhaps this is the most exciting time in human history," Penn told a special event at the conference. "Those illusions of having too many difficult choices have always created chaos. Now we live in a time where there are no choices. We have certainty."

Scientists warn our planet will become increasingly hostile for mankind as it warms, with rising sea levels that will consume islands and populated coastal areas, as well as catastrophic storms and severe droughts. Small island nations most vulnerable to rising sea levels and stronger storms, which are often railroaded by the powerful in the UN talks, also expressed cautious optimism about the draft agreement. "We would have wished to be further along than we are at this point, but the text being forwarded so far reflects our key priorities," said Thoriq Ibrahim from the Maldives and chair of the Alliance of Small Island States.

But no one in Le Bourget is under the illusion that a Dec 11 deal is guaranteed. "Let's be frank: all the difficult politi-

cal issues remain unresolved," European Climate and Energy Commissioner Miguel Arias Canete said. "Next week is the week of compromise." Greenpeace climate expert Martin Kaiser said there was cause for some optimism after feuding sides had showed some willingness to compromise. "But that doesn't guarantee a decent deal. Right now the oil-producing nations and the fossil fuel industry will be plotting how to crash these talks," he said.

One of the reasons for optimism in Paris has been the submission by most countries of voluntary plans to curb their emissions from 2020, when the pact would come into force. Scientists say these pledges, if fulfilled, would still fall far short of what is needed to cap warming at 2.0 degrees Celsius below pre-Industrial Revolution levels.

But they have taken the world away from a trajectory of even more dangerous warming. Now, though, there is deep disagreement on how to structure an envisaged review process for these national plans.

The stocktakes would take place every five years but there is division over when they would begin and if they would seek to strengthen countries' commitments, or just review them. Another fundamental issue still up for debate is what temperature limit to aim for. A majority of nations, mostly the smaller ones, want to aim for 1.5 degrees C. But the United States, China, India and some of the other biggest polluting nations want to enshrine 2 degrees C as the goal, which would allow them to emit more gases for longer. Money has long been one of the biggest sticking points in the UN negotiations, and it remains so in Paris.

Poorer countries are demanding finance to pay for the costly shift to renewable technologies, as well as to cope with the impact of climate change. At stake is hundreds of billions of dollars that would need to start flowing from 2020. But developing nations are complaining that rich countries are refusing to honor previous commitments to mobilize the cash. — AFP

TRIPLE SUICIDE ATTACK KILLS 30...

Continued from Page 1

a regional military operation against Boko Haram, whose attacks have spread from northeast Nigeria, its traditional stronghold, to the country's three Lake Chad neighbors. The joint operation of the four Lake Chad countries plus Benin has involved 8,700 soldiers, police and civilians. Despite being hit hard by the offensive, losing territory, Boko Haram has responded with a wave of attacks and bombings. Their attacks are often carried out by young women or adolescent boys targeting markets, which are at heart of African daily life. Chadian President Idris Deby Itno recently admitted that the regional force, which is not yet fully operational, "has without a doubt weakened" the Islamists but "it has not defeated" them.

Still, Cameroon, part of the regional offensive, on Wednesday claimed to have dealt a major blow to Boko

Haram, killing around 100 fighters and freeing 900 hostages in a three-day operation last week. The claim comes on the heels of twin attacks by women suicide bombers the previous day in the far north of Cameroon, an area repeatedly targeted by the Islamists in which at least six people died. No independent confirmation of the Cameroonian government's statement was immediately available from the region, which is inaccessible to the media.

Boko Haram fighters, believed to be hiding out in Nigeria's Sambisa forest and the Lake Chad's many islands, are held responsible for 17,000 deaths and for making 2.5 million people homeless in their six-year campaign of violence. Over the past year Boko Haram has stepped up cross-border attacks in Niger, Chad and Cameroon while also continuing to mount shooting and suicide assaults on markets, mosques and other mostly civilian targets within Nigeria itself. — AFP

OBAMA INSISTS AMERICA 'WILL NOT...

Continued from Page 1

prominent placement to urge gun control and lash out at politicians following the attacks. "It is a moral outrage and a national disgrace that civilians can legally purchase weapons designed specifically to kill people with brutal speed and efficiency," it said.

But Republican White House frontrunner Donald Trump dismissed the New York Times' call for action. "People in this country and the world need protection," Trump told reporters in Iowa before a campaign event. "If you look at Paris, they didn't have guns and they were slaughtered. If you look at California, they didn't have guns and they were slaughtered." US Senator Marco Rubio of Florida, a Republican also seeking the presidential nomination, said restrictions on guns would not have stopped the California attack or other mass shootings, including recent attacks on an Oregon college and a Planned Parenthood health clinic in Colorado.

Hours after the attack, US-born Farook and Malik were killed in a firefight with police, leaving investigators to comb through their belongings to try to determine a motive. "We have uncovered evidence that has led us to learn of extensive planning," David Bowdich, the assistant FBI director in charge of the Los Angeles office, told reporters. "There's a number of pieces of evidence that has essentially pushed us off the cliff to say we are now investigating this as an act of terrorism," he said, adding that the couple had attempted to destroy their digital fingerprints. Bowdich said investigators were examining a Facebook posting under an alias in which Malik is believed to have pledged allegiance to IS leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, made around the time of the attack. However, it was uncertain whether the comments were posted by Malik herself or someone with access to her page.

The massacre, if proven to be terror-related, would be the deadliest such assault on American soil since the Sept 11, 2001 attacks. Relatives were unable to explain how the couple, who had an infant daughter and seemed to be living a normal life, could have committed mass murder. "I can never imagine my brother or my sister-in-law doing something like this. Especially because they were happily married, they had a beautiful six-month-old daughter," Farook's sister Saira Khan told CBS News. "It's just mind-boggling why they would do something like this."

The family's attorneys said while the couple were devout Muslims, there was no hint they had become radicalized. Attorney Mohammad Abuershaid said few people came in contact with Malik, who wore the full-face veil and was soft-spoken and shy. "The women (in the family) communicated with her. Farook didn't want anyone else to talk to her," he said, adding that the men in the family had never even seen Malik's face.

Abuershaid said Farook had met Malik in 2013 through an online marriage site and had traveled to marry her in Saudi Arabia, where she lived, last year. One of Farook's colleagues said he was convinced Malik had radicalized her husband. In Pakistan, Khalid Janbaz, former dean of the pharmacy department at Bahauddin Zakariya University, described Malik as a "brilliant student". Former classmate Abdia Rani told AFP that she had "gradually turned religious", and over time became more serious and withdrawn. "But we never thought that she had extremist links or even can be an extremist," Rani said.

Malik spoke broken English and her primary language was Urdu, another Farook family attorney David Chesley said, adding: "She was very conservative." Pakistani intelligence officials have contacted Malik's family in her homeland as part of the investigation, a family member said. A US defense official, meanwhile, confirmed that Farook's brother was a decorated Navy veteran who won medals for his service during America's "war on terror".

Abuershaid and Chesley said Farook had apparently been teased by colleagues at the county health department, where he worked as an inspector, over the beard he grew. One witness at the ill-fated party said Farook had suddenly left and returned a short while later, heavily-armed, dressed in black military-style gear and a mask - and accompanied by his wife. A home-made explosive that failed to detonate was later found at the scene.

The landlord of the couple's rented townhouse opened their home up to reporters and the public who flooded in Friday, taking pictures and videos in a surreal scene. Toys, a crib, a prayer rug and documents were scattered through the home where investigators found thousands of rounds of ammunition, as well as a makeshift bomb-making laboratory and 12 pipe bombs.

Authorities identified the victims as six women and eight men aged 26 to 60. All but two were county employees and colleagues of Farook. — Agencies

AA+ FITCH RATING FOR KUWAIT

Continued from Page 1

"The government is considering fiscal reforms for implementation in the FY16 budget. These include the introduction of VAT and a business profit tax, an expenditure cap below forecast FY15 levels, and a reform that would standardize pay across the public sector and constrain growth of the government wage bill. The authorities also considering a gasoline subsidy reform for implementation in early 2016, following partial elimination of diesel and kerosene subsidies in early 2015. We estimate that real GDP will grow by 0.8 percent in 2015, after a 1.6 percent drop in 2014, accelerating to 3.5 percent-4.0 percent over the following two years.

"The oil sector has held back real total growth over the past two years, and we expect it to fall by 0.5 percent in 2015 and rise by 3 percent a year thereafter, reflecting the Kuwait Oil Company's plans to increase capacity. We expect non-oil growth to be 2 percent in 2015 and accelerate to 4 percent in the years beyond, after an increase of 1.2 percent in 2014. Capital spending will contribute more than half of overall growth. "Consumption will also be a steady contributor, as reflected in the growth of private credit and card transactions. Oil directly accounts for 50 percent of GDP and 60 percent-70 percent of fiscal and external revenues, and govern-

ment contracts support much of the private sector. Kuwait ranks better than only around 50 percent of all countries in terms of the World Bank's governance and ease of doing business measures, compared with 80 percent for the median 'AA' country. The gap between Kuwait and its regional and rating peers has been increasing. "Although the overall economic policy framework is a weakness, prudent and strict regulation by the Central Bank of Kuwait has contributed to a well-capitalized, liquid and profitable banking sector. The main factors that individually or collectively could lead to negative rating action are: - Sustained low oil prices that erode fiscal and external buffers. - Spill over from a regional geopolitical shock that impacts economic, social or political stability. - Adverse domestic political developments that are much more severe than the 2012 protests.

"The main factors that individually or collectively could lead to positive rating action are: - Improvement in structural weaknesses such as reduction in oil dependence, and a strengthening in governance, the business environment and the economic policy framework. We forecast that Brent crude will average \$55/b in 2015-2016, and \$65/b in 2017. We expect Kuwait to maintain stable or gradually rising production volumes, in line with its regional peers and plans to increase oil production capacity," concluded Fitch. — KUNA

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1809 809

Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT
DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF
ESTABLISHED 1961

Founder and Publisher
YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

Editor-in-Chief
ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-ALYAN

EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
ACCOUNTS : 24835619
COMMERCIAL : 24835618

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Focus

POLISH CONSERVATIVES
SOW ALARM WITH BID
TO CONSOLIDATE POWER

By Michel Viatteau

Poland's conservatives have only been back in power for a few weeks but they are already sowing alarm in the EU member state by trying to take control of any organ that could keep them in check. The governing Law and Justice (PiS) party that won the October general election after eight years in opposition wasted no time in replacing the heads of the country's secret services. The eurosceptic party, which is led by former premier Jaroslaw Kaczynski, also has plans to overhaul state media and at the moment has the Constitutional Court in its crosshairs.

PiS-backed President Andrzej Duda, who was elected in May, on Thursday ignored an order by the court to swear in three judges picked by the previous parliament when the liberal Civic Platform (PO) party was in power. He said on public television that he stood by his decision to instead appoint four other judges to the top judicial body whom he hastily swore in during a late-night ceremony on Wednesday.

Experts in constitutional law, including one of his own professors, have accused Duda - a trained lawyer - of violating the constitution. "I've known him for 20 years, he's a good lawyer, but a good lawyer should know what democratic rule of law is," Duda's PhD advisor Jan Zimmermann told public radio. Fellow expert Marek Chmaj, a professor at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities in Warsaw, also voiced concern over Duda's stance: "At the very least it's strange and worrisome."

Spokespeople for the PiS, as well as front-bench PiS lawmaker Ryszard Terlecki, have countered that the court's rulings "only concern the past" and denied there was any conflict between the institution and the presidency.

'Budapest in Warsaw'

Duda may be president and PiS colleague Beata Szydlo prime minister, but the undisputed boss of Poland's populist, Catholic right is Kaczynski. The PiS leader is known for being a fan of the political model of Hungarian headline Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who has cracked down on media freedoms and the justice system in his country. "The day will come when we'll make it, we'll have Budapest in Warsaw," Kaczynski said in 2011 after the general election won by rival party the PO.

More recently, he has repeatedly said that his goal is to "fix" Poland - for which he needs the cooperation of the secret services, the top court and state media. Just days after Szydlo's cabinet obtained parliament's vote of confidence, the government replaced the heads of four of the country's intelligence services. The head of the fifth, the Central Anti-corruption Bureau (CBA) resigned a couple of days later.

Duda also pardoned the controversial former head of the CBA, Mariusz Kaminski, who was found guilty last March of overstepping his jurisdiction as CBA chief and sentenced to three years behind bars. After the pardon, the PiS government named Kaminski intelligence service coordinator. Then came the ongoing constitutional crisis, as the PiS and the PO feud over whose judges should serve in the Constitutional Court.

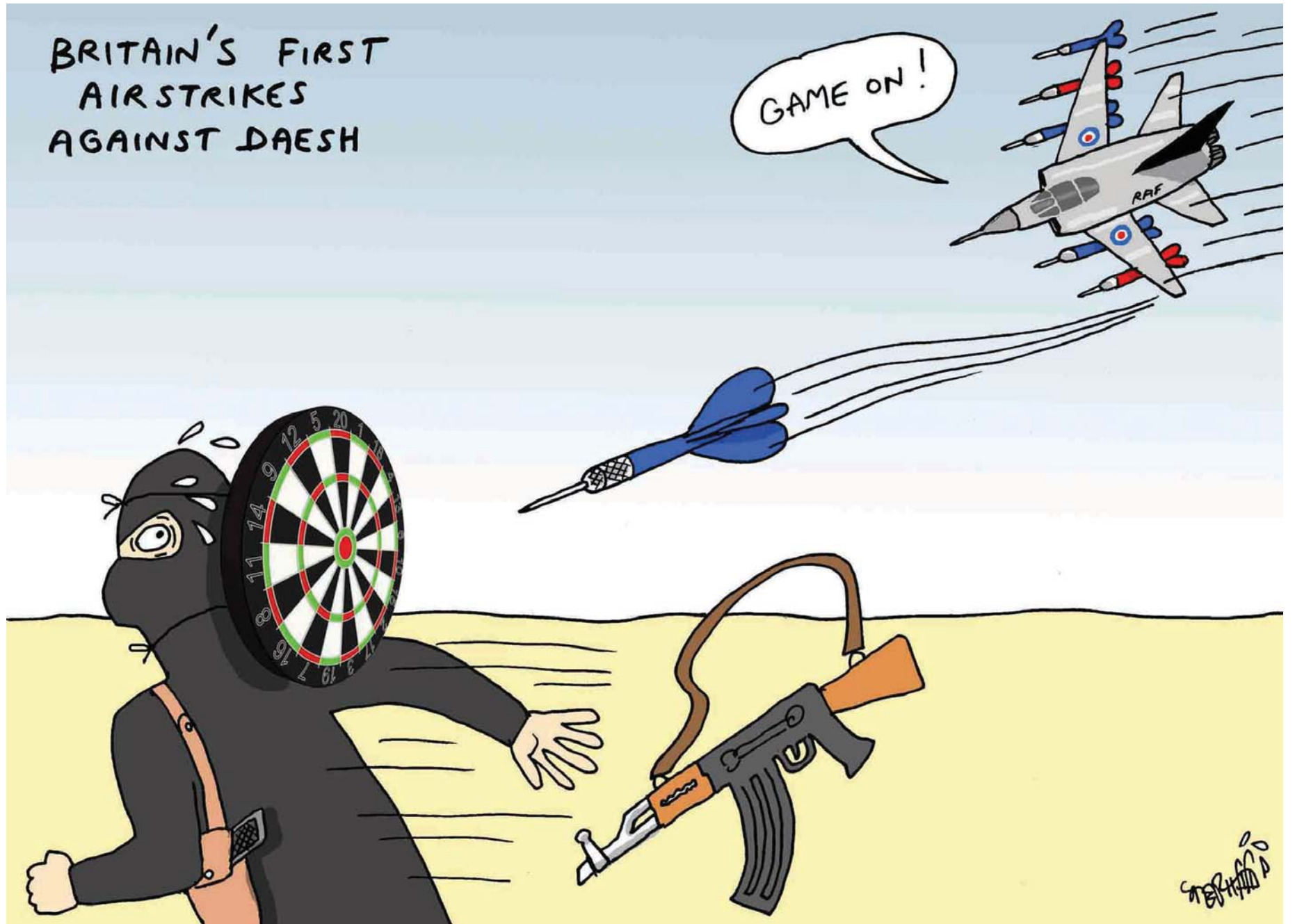
Masking Reality

Duda had refused to swear in the judges elected by the former liberal parliamentary majority by saying it "violated the democratic order" to appoint two new judges before their predecessors' terms were up. The Court agreed that two of the five judges were chosen prematurely but also faulted Duda for refusing to swear in the remaining three. After the ruling, Duda said he would set up a working group to reform the Court, notably how judges are elected.

Next up is an overhaul of state media, which Kaczynski has accused of masking reality "behind a screen on which a film is projected for the little people". The PiS has plans to turn the PAP news agency and public television and radio - all currently state-owned businesses - into national cultural institutions like the opera or the national museum. Kaczynski claims the state media was politicised by the previous government.

Culture Minister Piotr Glinski has said that attempts to buy out foreign shareholding in private media groups would possibly start as early as the end of the year. Foreign stakeholders, especially German, are common in private Polish media. —AFP

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BRITAIN'S FIRST
AIRSTRIKES
AGAINST DAESH

FRANCE PUZZLES OVER ATTACKERS' BODIES

Bury them discreetly? Hand them back to their families, return them to the country of origin? Knowing what to do with the remains of the assailants involved in last month's Paris attacks is proving to be a conundrum for French officials. The law envisages several scenarios, says Francois Michaud-Nerard, head of funeral services for the city of Paris. "Either the families ask for their remains or they don't. If the families ask for their remains, the deceased have the right to a burial in the place where they lived, or where they died, or where the family has a burial plot."

If the families do not wish to hold a funeral, it is up to the local authorities in question to do so. In any case, even "if there is no obligation to have an anonymous grave, that would be in everybody's interest," he said. Officials fear that such a grave could become a site of "pilgrimage" for other extremists. Seven gunmen and suicide bombers were killed on November 13 but so far, only four of them have been formally identified. Of the three who blew themselves up outside the Stade de France national stadium in Saint-Denis, one has been identified as French-born Bilal Hadfi, 20, who lived in Belgium. The other two remain unidentified, despite carrying Syrian passports registered as entering Greece in October in the names of Ahmad Al-Mohammad and Mohammad Al-Mahmod.

Another three were killed after attacking the Bataclan concert hall: Two have been identified: Samy Amimour, 28, and Omar Ismail Mostefai, 29, both French nationals.

The third attacker remains unidentified. And Brahim Abdeslam, 31, another French national living in Belgium, blew himself up outside a bar on Boulevard Voltaire. Three other people were killed in a massive police assault on a flat in the northern Paris suburb of Saint-Denis. One was Belgian jihadist Abdelhamid Abaaoud, 28, the suspected ringleader of the attacks, while another was a French-born woman of Moroccan descent identified as his cousin, 26-year-old Hasna Aitboulahcen. A third man who blew himself up during the raid has not yet been identified.

Questioned by AFP, the mayors of the Paris suburbs of Drancy, where Amimour lived, and Courcouronnes, where Mostefai was born, and Saint-Denis where three suicide bombers blew themselves up, said they had not been informed of any plans to bury them. Alexandre Luc-Walton, lawyer for the Amimour family, said his clients "were waiting for news from the forensic institute. They still do not have permission to bury him."

'No Terrorist Burial Requests'

With the exception of Abaaoud, a Belgian national who was the suspected ringleader, and those who have not yet been identified, the attackers were all French nationals, although Brahim Abdeslam and Bilal Hadfi had been living in Belgium. They could be buried in one of the Parisian cemeteries with a Muslim section, such as the one in the southern suburb of Thiais where Amedy

Coulibaly, who attacked a Jewish supermarket in January, was buried. But the cemetery said it had "not received any request to bury terrorists".

Riva Kastoryano, author of the book "What to do with jihadists bodies?", said that those behind earlier attacks "were buried in France, where they held citizenship, and where their parents lived." Where another country is involved, "everything depends on the relationship between the two states", each of which accuses the other of "responsibility for the radicalisation", says Kastoryano, who heads research at the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS).

Bury Them Quickly

In the case of Mohammed Merah, who in 2012 shot dead three Jewish schoolchildren, a teacher and three soldiers, neither the city of Toulouse where he lived, nor Algeria where he came from wanted to take responsibility for the body. "The mayor wanted to put off the burial but the very fact of leaving the body in the morgue gave it importance and meant people continued to talk about him," recalls Abdallah Zekri, a senior figure with the Grand Mosque of Paris, who was asked by Merah's mother to organize his funeral. "I wanted him to be buried quickly so everyone would stop talking about him." Fears that his grave would become a draw for other extremists have proved to be unfounded, he said. "No one goes to his grave," he said. —AFP

FLOATING HOMES, STILTS IN UK TO FACE FLOODS

By Edouard Guihaire

Unlike many of their neighbors living near the banks of the River Thames in central England, Martin and Joanna worry little about their charming country home being engulfed by floods. Wary of the dangers posed by climate change and a history of disastrous flooding in this pretty part of Oxfordshire, an hour's drive from London, the couple have opted for a home built half a metre off the ground on 27 steel pillars. "It's always been a dream to build this house," said Joanna O'Callaghan. "It was clear that we had to build up above the flood plain."

Their home contrasts with the mostly red-brick, wooden-beamed houses that dot the area of picturesque villages, castles and hills, which attracts city dwellers on weekends, like Prime Minister David Cameron, who owns a home nearby. The O'Callaghans' home is spacious with a footprint of 130 sq m. Natural light bathes the airy, white, interlocking living areas.

Outside, the home is clad in timber panels for aesthetic effect and to improve insulation. The interiors are a sleek marriage of form and function, giving the dwelling a Scandinavian feel. But the key feature of the house, built in 2014, is a design that should spare the couple from floods that have affected homes in the area in recent years.

Extreme Rain

"All our neighbors can remember the big floods of summer 2007 when this whole garden was flooded," said Joanna, who is in her late fifties. "I think we are sufficiently raised up here to prevent any floodings." The recent history of the island nation, where nearly one in five houses is threatened by floods according to real estate experts, is marked by tragedies caused by deluges. In 1953, floods in eastern England and around the Thames Estuary left more than 300 dead, and in the winter of 2013-14, thousands of homes were flooded as a result of flooding caused by historic rainfall.

Friederike Otto, scientific coordinator at climateprediction.net, says human-induced climate change has raised the possibility of extreme downpours by 30 percent. "This

means that an event that would have happened on average every 100 years in a world without human-induced greenhouse gas is now approximately expected to happen every 70 years," she said. Hosted by the University of Oxford, Otto's organization uses the personal computers of thousands of volunteers to simulate a supercomputer capable of generating complex climate models.

'Biblical' Flood-Proof

Faced with the risk of flooding, Martin and Joanna have chosen a home designed to dodge the deluge. But Baca, the compa-

ny that designed their house, has another trick up its sleeve - an amphibious home that floats with the floodwaters. Located on the banks of the Thames in the town of Marlow, eastern England, the house is based on the simple principle of buoyancy: a body immersed in a fluid experiences a force vertically directed from below.

Specifically, the house, the first of its kind in the UK, is made from a mobile unit installed in a wet dock and can slide vertically on four pillars. The structure remains connected to utilities through flexible cables for water, electricity and the Internet. "The ground water within the base

is linked to the height of the river. So as the river rises, the ground water inside the wet dock rises," said Richard Coutts, an architect at Baca. "In the event of a flood this building is designed to travel over two meters," he said, adding jokingly: "It can withstand a biblical flood event."

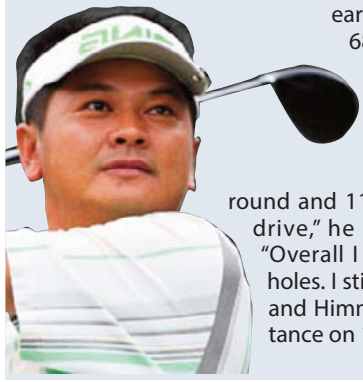
These flood-resilient buildings are still a rarity in Britain, but there is momentum to meet the challenges posed by climate change by "making space" for water, Coutts said. "British policy was to build flood defences, barriers," he said. "If we keep building barriers, at some point mother nature will win." —AFP



A home built on steel pillars is seen in Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire, on Nov 29, 2015. —AFP

LIN IN CHARGE IN VIETNAM

HANOI: Lin Wen-tang took a two-shot lead from a chasing pack headed by Sergio Garcia after the third round at Vietnam's Ho Tram Open, recovering from a horrible start to finish 13-under for the tournament. The Taiwanese 41-year-old dropped a shot on the second then stumbled to a double bogey on the fourth hole, but he steadied his game to grab six birdies and finish the round in 68. It puts him two shots ahead of Spain's Garcia, the top ranked player in the \$1.5 million event, and Shaun Norris of South Africa, who will pair up with Lin on the final day. World number 12 Garcia started out early to finish his weather delayed second round in 68. He endured a wobbly start to the third round with a double bogey on the par five sixth, but got himself back into contention with some clean putting, notching up five birdies. Only a bogey on the 18th kept the gap to Lin at two shots as he finished on 68 for the round and 11-under overall. "The one on 18 wasn't a good drive," he said according to an Asian Tour statement. "Overall I felt I played quite well other than those two holes. I still have a chance." Thailand's Thaworn Wiratchant and Himmat Rai of India are also well within striking distance on 10-under for the tournament.



AFC BANS 5 NEPALIS, ONE TAJIK FOR LIFE

KUALA LUMPUR: The Asian Football Confederation has imposed lifetime bans for match-fixing on four players and an official in Nepal and a Tajik referee. "These cases show that the AFC's strategy against match-fixing is delivering concrete results," the regional body said in a statement late Friday, adding that it has "a zero tolerance to match-manipulation". Nepali official Anjan K.C. and the four players-Bikash Singh Chhetri, Sandip Rai, Ritesh Thapa and Sagar Thapa-were found guilty of offences relating to various friendly internationals during the period 2008-2012. Tajik referee Murtaozov Parviz was found guilty of conspiring to influence the result of an October 6, 2015 match between the Maldives and Tajikistan in the AFC U-19 Championship. Parviz, who was the game's appointed referee liaison officer, attempted to corrupt the match referee who reported the offence. All six had been provisionally banned by the regional governing body's disciplinary committee in October. — AFP

GREINKE SET TO JOIN DIAMONDBACKS

LOS ANGELES: The Arizona Diamondbacks have landed one of the most coveted free agents on the market by agreeing to a contract with star pitcher Zack Greinke, US media reported Friday. The blockbuster deal is reported to be for six years and worth \$206.5 million, according to ESPN.com and others. If the deal becomes official it would be a considerable raise for Greinke, who had opted out of a six-year, \$147 million contract with the Los Angeles Dodgers after his third season in the City of Angels. Greinke's contract would average \$34.4 million per year, surpassing the seven-year, \$217 million deal (\$31 million average per year) that David Price signed this week with the Boston Red Sox. The 32-year-old Greinke led Major League Baseball with a 1.66 ERA this past season as he posted a 19-3 record, and, along with left-hander Clayton Kershaw, helped the Dodgers to their third straight National League West championship. —AFP



LIANG DOWNS FU IN Q-FINAL THRILLER

LONDON: China's Liang Wenbo held his nerve to reach the quarter-finals of the UK Championship with a thrilling 6-5 win over Hong Kong's Marco Fu on Friday. Liang made a blistering start with three successive century breaks in the first three frames.

The 28-year-old's second 100 score was secured even though he was distracted by a butterfly fluttering around the table at York's Barbican Centre.

Liang, the world number 29, reached 49 in the fourth frame before finally allowing Fu a chance which he took with 64. They shared the first two frames after the interval but Liang made 67 to move within one frame of victory and was on a run of 45 in the next before he wobbled the pink.

World number 14 Fu punished him with a 79 and took the next with a 45 after Liang missed another opportunity. A 49 helped Fu level but Liang clawed himself over the line, as he had against Tom Ford 24 hours earlier.

"I started unbelievably," Liang said. "Three centuries, first three frames, I don't know how! Fourth frame, I missed an easy pink and my friend Marco cleared up. At 5-2 up I

missed the same, an easy pink, and he cleared up. All the match he gave me a lot of pressure." Asked if he can go on and win the tournament, Liang said: "Of course. Everybody has got a chance, you need to be ready. I have confidence in myself, I don't want to talk (about it) to you!"

Meanwhile, Australia's Neil Robertson saw off John Higgins 6-5 to stay on course for a blockbuster semi-final against Mark Selby.

Robertson squandered a 4-1 lead, but the 33-year-old former world champion recovered to secure a win he described as "an emotional roller coaster". Higgins opened up with the 600th century of his career, 119, but Robertson responded in style.

"The way I started the match was absolutely brilliant, to go 4-1 up, but John being the champion he is shut me out the next couple of frames," Robertson said.

"It was one of those deciders, I went into the pack but didn't land on a ball very well, I missed a couple, he missed a couple, he knocked in a brilliant long red and lucky for me he's missed a semi-tricky green in the middle.—AFP

VARNER SHARES AUSTRALIAN PGA LEAD WITH S AFRICAN PAIR

GOLD COAST: American Harold Varner III and South African duo Dylan Frittelli and Zander Lombard jostled in a three-way tie for the third round lead in the European Tour co-sanctioned Australian PGA Championship yesterday.

Varner produced the day's best round, a bogey-free six-under-par 66, to rocket into tournament contention at Royal Pines. But to have any chance of securing his first tournament win as a professional, the 25-year-old from Akron, Ohio, will need to see off around five others still in with a winning chance.

At the top of that list are Frittelli and Lombard, two rising stars of South African golf, who both shot third rounds of one-under 71. "We're very good friends but we haven't had an opportunity to play together a lot," said Lombard, whose third-round highlight was a chip in for a birdie on the tough par-three 16th.

Lombard, 20, led the field after the opening round on five-under and said he was surprised his current score was good

enough to put him in front. "Nobody expects to move backwards and stay in the lead, but the course is really playing hard," he said.

Varner has earned a spot on the PGA Tour for the new season, becoming the first African-American player to do so from the Web.com Tour platform. Motivated to come to Australia to help round off his game, Varner had his share of luck—he hit the spectators' stand with his approach on the final hole, but managed to recover for par.

Along with fourth-placed Australian Nathan Holman, who is two shots adrift, they are the only players left below par, testament to the difficult windy conditions and the uncompromising nature of the Royal Pines course. Overnight leader David Lingmerth had a day to forget.

The Swede started his third round with a one-shot buffer, but double-bogeyed par fours 10 and 13 to slip back to even par for the tournament and three shots off the pace.—AFP



WORLD SOCCER LEGENDS TO PLAY WITH KUWAIT'S ALL-STAR TEAM

KUWAIT: Eleven world soccer legends confirmed their presence at the opening of Jaber stadium Dec 18, as Italian defender Alessandro Nesta, Ukraine's attacker Andre Shevchenko and Portugal's Deco joined the group.

Nesta, Shevchenko and Deco joined eight others who confirmed their participation earlier, they are Carles Puyol, Michel Salgado from

Spain, Alessandro Del Piero, Gianluca Zambrotta from Italy, Ronaldinho de Assis Moreira from Brazil, Luis Figo from Portugal, Paul Scholes from England and Robert Pires from France.

The list of 16 players will be completed today by announcing the five remaining names, besides Italian coach Carlo Ancelotti.

Voting on choosing Kuwaiti stars will con-

clude tomorrow (Monday), which started with 39 players. Fans will choose two goalkeepers, four defenders, four midfielders and two strikers, besides a number of reserves.

Owner and President of Nottingham Forest team asked sports fans to attend the opening activity of Jaber Stadium on Dec 18, on his twitter account.

SPIETH IN THREE-WAY FOR THE LEAD IN BAHAMAS

NASSAU: Jordan Spieth feels like he's on vacation in the Bahamas. On the golf course, he's all business.

Spieth rallied from a rugged start Friday with three straight birdies, and then a surge on the back nine carried him to a 6-under 66 and a share of the lead with Jimmy Walker and Bill Haas going into the weekend at the

Hero World Challenge. "The grind is still there," Spieth said.

He had to work hard just to keep pace on a calm, muggy afternoon in the islands, where the wind wasn't strong enough to blow out a match and it showed in the scoring. Rarely has this holiday event with an 18-man field featured so many players near the

lead.

For one brief moment on the back nine, there was a seven-way tie for the lead.

Walker, who began working on a new move in his swing just over a week ago, drove the ball as well as he has all year on his way to a 67. Haas, who received one of the two sponsor exemptions to the tournament host-

ed by Tiger Woods, had a 66.

They were at 11-under 133. Patrick Reed (65), Chris Kirk (65) and Bubba Watson (67) were one shot behind.

Spieth is wrapping up a big year, and he seems intent on going out in style. He traveled from Sydney to the Bahamas (with a brief stop at home in Dallas to do laundry) and began his push up the leaderboard with an eagle on the par-5 11th hole from about 30 feet. He followed with two more birdies to get a share of the lead.

Good scores

"It's still all about rest," Spieth said. "Coming off how much golf we've been playing, I'm still going to be about making sure I'm resting. ... But on the golf course, I'm still getting as intense and upset and highs and lows that I experience at a normal PGA Tour event." Spieth also was at 11-under 133 a year ago in the Hero World Challenge at Isleworth in Florida. That was good for a two-shot lead, and a 63-66 weekend allowed him to win by 10 shots. This is far different. Half of the field was separated by only three shots.

"The scores are just really good, which makes for an exciting weekend, and I'm just happy to hold my own weight for two days," Haas said. "I think if I shoot 11 under on the weekend, then I'll have a really good shot. Simple as that sounds, that's the way you've got to keep it. If I play well, I think I'll have a chance. But if I don't, there are so many players that are playing well, the best players in the world, I'll fall back pretty quickly if I don't."

Walker went to see Butch Harmon at the start of last week in Las Vegas to start working on a move where his head moves at impact, which keeps him from having to rely so much on timing. It's coming together nicely - and quickly.

"Driving the golf ball today, I haven't had that much fun in a long time, to be honest," Walker said.

Satisfied

No one has been playing more than Reed, or more places. And he's been playing well. He has recorded top 10 finishes in five tournaments since the Tour Championship in Hong Kong, Malaysia, twice in Shanghai and Dubai. He's happy with his performance, though far from satisfied.

"I know to get to all my goals I need to get Ws," he said. "Top 10s, top 5s aren't going to cut it where I need to get to. Those are good fill-in weeks, but we need to get in contention a little more. We need to close some tournaments off." Not everyone took advantage. Billy Horschel had eight birdies and no bogeys on his card, which ordinary would please him greatly - except that he took a double bogey on the par-3 second hole, and a quadruple-bogey 9 on the par-5 11th hole without hitting into the water. He had a plugged lie under the lip of a bunker that he shanked into a bush, and his troubles ended with what he called a "good putt for a 9." "This round today is very much how my year went," Horschel said with a grin.

Anirban Lahiri of India, who also received a sponsor exemption, was a little more exasperated. Lahiri felt as though he hit the ball well enough to be double digits under par. Instead, a double bogey on the 18th hole gave him a 70 and he was six shots behind. It felt worse. "If my mom had putted, she would have shot 65," Lahiri said.

Justin Rose couldn't get home fast enough after his round of 72, which didn't take long because Albany is now his primary residence. That made it even more frustrating. "You'd think I had never seen these greens before," Rose said. —AP



NASSAU: Jordan Spieth of the United States hits his tee shot on the fourth hole during the third round of the Hero World Challenge at Albany, The Bahamas yesterday. — AFP

FURY BLASTED FOR WOMEN 'BELONG IN KITCHEN, BEDROOM' SLUR

LONDON: New world heavyweight champion Tyson Fury has sparked fresh controversy with derogatory remarks about women, including Olympic and world heptathlete champion Jessica Ennis-Hill.

"I believe a woman's best place is in the kitchen and on her back, that's my personal belief. Making me a good cup of tea, that's what I believe," the 27-year-old Fury is heard saying in a video interview. Asked his opinion on women in boxing, Fury talked about the ring girls

rather than athletes. "I think they are very nice when they're walking around that ring holding them cards," he said. Asked about British heptathlete Ennis-Hill in the interview, he said: "I think she's good, she's won quite a few medals for Britain, she slaps up good as well, when she's got a dress on she looks quite fit."

The YouTube footage was uploaded on November 25. Fury responded to the storm by sending a message to Ennis-Hill's official Twitter account that claimed he didn't see what all the fuss was about.

"If I'm going to get in trouble for giving a woman a compliment what has the world come to, I said u look fit in a dress?" he tweeted. In an interview in the Mail on Sunday last month, Fury drew widespread criticism for condemning the legalisation of homosexuality and abortion.

"My faith and my culture is based on the Bible," he said. The BBC has now come under immediate pressure to remove Fury from the list of nominations for its prestigious end-of-year Sports

Personality of the Year award.

But a BBC spokesman defended its decision to shortlist the boxer saying this was "not an endorsement of an individual's personal beliefs". "The Sports Personality shortlist is compiled by a panel of industry experts and is based on an individual's sporting achievement," the spokesman said.

A petition asking the BBC to remove Fury from the shortlist had attracted more than 45,000 signatures on Friday. "The BBC clearly do not understand that

by nominating Fury... they are putting him up as a role model to young people all over the UK and the world," the petition's founder, Scott Cuthbertson, said earlier. Fury's controversial comments came to light just days after the Englishman's stunning victory over Wladimir Klitschko in Duesseldorf, which gave him the WBA, IBF and WBO titles and ended the Ukrainian's nine-year reign as world champion. Klitschko has already taken up his option for a rematch in the new year. — AFP



Max Verstappen

VERSTAPPEN SWEEPS HAT-TRICK OF AWARDS

LONDON: Dutch rookie Max Verstappen, signed controversially as a 16-year-old by Toro Rosso, has swept a hat-trick of awards after confounding his critics in an impressive debut Formula One season.

Now 18, the son of former racer Jos won votes for personality of the year, rookie of the year and action of the year at the International Automobile Federation (FIA)'s end-of-year prize-giving in Paris.

The FIA said it was the first time any driver had taken more than one of the special, non-championship related awards in the same season.

The personality award is voted by the world's media from across the FIA championships, including rallying and endurance. The rookie award is decided by the FIA's driver commission, headed by Brazilian two times Formula One champion Emerson Fittipaldi.

The action category is the result of a global vote by motorsport fans, with Verstappen winning for his overtake on Brazilian Felipe Nasr at Blanchimont during the Belgian Grand Prix, the closest thing to a home race for the teenager.

Verstappen won the same award last year while in Formula Three. "It's nice to win the Action of the Year for the second time, because I really enjoy overtaking on track,"

said Verstappen. "It's a great honour to win the Rookie of the Year award, as it's voted for by the Drivers' Commission and I have to say, getting two fourth place finishes in my first F1 season is more than I expected."

"Personality of the Year? I'm not sure why I won that, but it's nice to know the media like me," added the teenager, whose arrival in Formula One was so precocious that the FIA changed the licence rules and introduced a minimum age of 18. Verstappen was the highest-scoring Formula One rookie of the season, finishing 12th overall with 49 points after finishing fourth in Hungary and the United States. Sauber's Nasr was 13th with 27.

Mexico, returning to the calendar for the first time in 23 years and drawing 135,000 fans on race day at the Hermanos Rodriguez circuit, received the race promoters' trophy from F1 supreme Bernie Ecclestone.

"Mexican fans are unique. This award is for Mexico," said promoter Alejandro Soberon. Britain's Lewis Hamilton also collected his third Formula One trophy at the ceremony after another dominant season with Mercedes.

"It's pretty much impossible to put into words what it means to be a three-time world champion," he said. —Reuters

PHELPS RALLIES TO WIN ANOTHER TITLE

FEDERAL WAY: Michael Phelps didn't know if he had enough room left to win another swimming championship Friday night. Turns out he did have enough - but barely. Phelps surged ahead in the final 10 meters and out-touched Tom Shields by three-hundredths of a second to win the 100-meter butterfly at the US Winter National Championships. The 30-year-old Phelps, an 18-time Olympic gold medalist, finished in 51.38 seconds.

"I saw Tom at the break and I like, 'Uh-oh,'" Phelps said. "But I did watch his stroke this morning, and his stroke changed a lot. It was higher tempo-based than it was in the past. So I thought if I was anywhere close in the last 25, I thought I had a chance. That's usually where I kind of accelerate a little bit."

Phelps won the 200 individual medley Thursday, and is set to compete in the 200 butterfly. Shields was in front and Phelps was in third place, 36 hundredths of a second behind, as they went into the 50-meter turn. Coming down the stretch, Phelps passed Santo Candorelli, but was still trailing Shields. He caught up with about 15 meters left, then nudged in front just in time.

"I was thinking about the race more than I should have been," Shields said. "Maybe I took one too many looks, or I just didn't get my finishing strokes. On my way

out, I swam with five different rhythms, trying to find one that works. But for right now, that's good. This isn't a trials final, it's not the Olympic final. So there's time to work through those things." Phelps' world record 100 fly time, which has stood since 2009, is 49.82. He wasn't close to that on Friday, but still clearly was pleased with what he did.

"I've never been under 52 the season really all of the last two years. Now I did it twice I one day," Phelps said. (He went 51.96 in Friday morning's preliminaries.) "I can't complain too much." Missy Franklin came from fifth place halfway through the 100 backstroke to beat Ali DeLoof by seven-tenths of a second, clocking 1:00.03. Franklin won the 2012 Olympic gold medal in the event. Phelps wasn't the only one to win a second Winter Nationals title Friday.

Maya DiRado, Allison Schmitt and Conor Dwyer also raced to their second victories. DiRado took the women's 400 IM in 4:36.85 after winning the 200 IM on Thursday. Schmitt took the women's 200 free in 1:56.77 after taking the 400 free, and Dwyer won the men's 200 free in 1:46.62 after winning the 400 free.

Chase Kalisz won the men's 400 IM, Dana Vollmer the women's 100 butterfly, Yulia Efimova the women's 100 breaststroke, Sam Tierney the men's 100 breast, and Matt Grevers the men's 100 back. — AP



FEDERAL WAY: Michael Phelps waves to the crowd after winning the 100 Meter Butterfly during the finals of the AT&T Winter National Championships at the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center on Friday. —AFP

PELICANS SURVIVE JAMES' LATE SURGE, BEAT CAVS

NEW ORLEANS: Anthony Davis had 31 points, 12 rebounds and four steals, as New Orleans survived a stunning fourth-quarter surge by LeBron James to beat Cleveland in overtime. Davis scored six points in the extra period on three jumpers from beyond 12 feet. The Pelicans led by 13 with less than seven minutes left in the fourth quarter. The Cavs stormed back to take a late lead, with James scoring 21 of their last 24 points in regulation. Jrue Holiday's 3 pulled New Orleans back into a tie at 105 with 8 seconds left before James, who finished with 37 points, missed a 19-footer that could have won it. James didn't score in overtime, missing two shots.

HOUSTON 100, DALLAS 96

James Harden scored 25 points after another rough shooting start against Dallas as the Houston Rockets beat the Mavericks 100-96 Friday night. Harden, who missed his first 11 shots in a home loss to Dallas last month, was 3 of 12 in the first half before making seven of 11. That included a clinching jumper that hit the rim and backboard before bouncing on the rim a couple more times and going in for a four-point lead with 7 seconds left. The All-Star guard also had nine assists, including one to Terrence Jones for a wide-open dunk that put Houston ahead for good at 98-96 in the final minute. Deron Williams had 22 points and six assists to lead the Mavericks.

KNICKS 108, NETS 91

Carmelo Anthony scored 28 points and Kristaps Porzingis had 19 as New York beat Brooklyn to get back to .500. Arron Afflalo added 18 points for the Knicks (10-10), who dominated lowly Philadelphia and Brooklyn in their last two games after a four-game losing streak. They reclaimed city bragging rights with ease, leading by as much as 31 points. Brook Lopez scored 21 points, and Thaddeus Young had 18 points and 11 rebounds for the Nets. They had won two in a row and have a lot to fix before they host the unbeaten Golden State Warriors on Sunday. Lopez beat twin brother Robin to take the opening tip, and it was soon clear that was all the Nets would be winning. The Knicks blitzed them with a season-best 42 points in the first quarter, led 65-42 at halftime and opened their first lead of 30 or more since the 2013-14 season in the third period.

HAWKS 100, LAKERS 87

Al Horford scored 16 points, and Paul Millsap and Kent Bazemore each added 15 as the Hawks beat Los Angeles to spoil Kobe Bryant's last game in Atlanta. In the third game since announcing his retirement plans earlier this week, Bryant scored 14 points on 4-for-19 shooting. Lou Williams topped the struggling Lakers with 18 points. Bryant showed a few flashes of his once-dominant skills, holding up three fingers on each hand after hitting consecutive 3-pointers to bring the loudest cheers of the night from the capacity Philips Arena crowd midway through the third.

PISTONS 102, BUCKS 95

Andre Drummond had 17 points and 23 rebounds, and Reggie Jackson scored 23 points as Detroit beat Milwaukee. Drummond was 7 for 18 from the field and 3 for 10 at the line. It was his fifth 20-rebound game of the season; the rest of the NBA has combined for only three. Detroit's Greg Monroe had 14 points and 13 rebounds against his former team. Another ex-Piston, Chris Middleton, led the Bucks with 21 points.

WIZARDS 109, SUNS 106

Bradley Beal scored 34 points and Ramon Sessions added 18 as Washington rallied to beat Phoenix in a turnover-filled game. Washington improved to 8-9 after losing five of its previous six games. Eric Bledsoe scored 22 points, and Brandon Knight had 19 for the Suns. They're 1-3 on a six game trip. The teams combined for 46 turnovers. —AP



NEW ORLEANS: Cleveland Cavaliers guard Mo Williams (52) and New Orleans Pelicans forward Anthony Davis chase down a loose ball in the second half of an NBA basketball game in New Orleans, Friday. The Pelicans won 114-108 in overtime. — AP

NBA Results/Standings

NY Knicks 108, Brooklyn 91; Washington 109, Phoenix 106; Detroit 102, Milwaukee 95; Atlanta 100, LA Lakers 87; Houston 100, Dallas 96; New Orleans 114, Cleveland 108 (OT).

Eastern Conference				Western Conference			
Atlantic Division				Northwest Division			
	W	L	PCT				
Toronto	12	8	.600	Oklahoma City	11	8	.579
Boston	11	8	.579	Utah	8	9	.471
NY Knicks	10	10	.500	Minnesota	8	10	.444
Brooklyn	5	14	.263	Portland	8	12	.400
Philadelphia	1	19	.050	Denver	7	13	.350
Central Division				Pacific Division			
Chicago	11	5	.688	Golden State	20	0	1.000
Cleveland	13	6	.684	LA Clippers	10	9	.526
Indiana	12	6	.667	Phoenix	8	12	.400
Detroit	11	9	.550	Sacramento	7	13	.350
Milwaukee	7	13	.350	LA Lakers	3	16	.158
Southeast Division				Southwest Division			
Miami	11	6	.647	San Antonio	16	4	.800
Atlanta	13	9	.591	Memphis	11	9	.550
Orlando	11	8	.579	Dallas	11	9	.550
Charlotte	10	8	.556	Houston	9	11	.450
Washington	8	9	.471	New Orleans	5	15	.250

WINDIES HUMBLLED BY 10 WICKETS IN TEST WARM-UP

BRISBANE: Skipper Jason Holder said he expected the West Indies to be heavily criticised after an alarming 10-wicket loss to the Cricket Australia XI yesterday just days before their opening Test with Australia.

In what will only add to concerns about the Windies' level of competitiveness ahead of the three-Test series, the tourists buckled to an ignominious defeat in their only warm-up game ahead of next week's first Test in Hobart.

The tourists managed to narrowly avoid an innings defeat with Holder scoring 65 off 99 balls to leave the

home side with just 10 runs to win. CA XI openers Tim Paine (6) and Jake Carder (7) needed just 17 balls to rustle up the required runs and inflict an embarrassing defeat on the West Indies.

Holder was trying to put on a brave face after the humiliation against a cobbled-together young side, featuring six players making their first-class debuts.

"Obviously we are going to cop a bit of criticism but we need to improve no doubt about it," Holder told reporters. "We are at a stage now where we need to make strides for-

ward, we have been stagnant the last few months.

"We need to pick ourselves up, look ourselves in the mirror and find something in ourselves," Holder admitted it would be a challenge to inspire his tourists ahead of the Bellerive Oval Test but urged them to bounce back. "The guys just have to take ownership sometimes," he said. "Once we own up to our mistakes we have to be positive and look at ways to improve.

"We are not looking for excuses, just ways to improve—that way we will move forward faster than we are at the moment." The Windies are a pale imita-

tion of their glory days a quarter of a century ago and have been written off by the pundits heading into the Test series. The once-formidable West Indies last won a Test in Australia in 1997 and last won a series here in 1992-93.

The second-ranked Australians are again expected to be too strong for the eighth-rated West Indies in the series, starting in Hobart on December 10. The Caribbean tourists were bowled out for 243 and 210 by a rookie CA XI attack that pales in comparison to the Australian line-up waiting for them in Tasmania, albeit without

left-arm quicks Mitchell Starc (injury) and Mitchell Johnson (retirement).

And their bowling arsenal hardly fired a shot as the CA XI amassed 444 off 104.2 overs in their first innings. Holder was one of the few shining lights for the visitors. Apart from his second innings half-century, Holder thrashed 26 in their first dig and took 4-76 with the ball.

There will be some soul searching ahead for the Windies side as they look for answers to stay in the contest against Steve Smith's Australians, who last week clinched a 2-0 home series win over New Zealand. —AFP

BUTT AND ASIF SET FOR DOMESTIC CRICKET RETURN

KARACHI: Former Pakistan captain Salman Butt and Mohammad Asif will be allowed to return to Pakistan's domestic cricket in January, three months after their spot-fixing bans ended, officials announced yesterday.

The disgraced pair, along with Mohammad Amir, were banned for five years following a spot-fixing scandal tied to Pakistan's tour of England in 2010, where they took money for deliberate no-balls in the Lord's Test. Amir was allowed to feature in domestic matches in April this year after the International Cricket Council (ICC) relaxed certain conditions of his ban through an amendment to its code of conduct.

However, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) directed Butt and Asif to complete a rehabilitation programme, and despite the duo being selected by former domestic champions Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA), they were not allowed to play in any of the ongoing domestic matches. But PCB chairman Shaharyar Khan announced that Butt and Asif will be allowed to feature in the national one-day

cup starting next month. "We have cleared Butt and Asif to play in the one-day tournament after they've completed their rehab programme," Khan told AFP. Amir has already competed in the premier first-class tournament and was also cleared to play in the Bangladesh Premier League. With his superb wicket-taking form, Amir has already been tipped to return to Pakistan's national team soon with Khan and head coach Waqar Younis putting their weight behind the pace-man on Thursday, saying his selection was considered.

Asif said he was relieved to get the chance. "Of course, it was disappointing to be in the dressing room of the WAPDA team but not being able to go on the ground and play, but it will change as soon as next month," Asif told AFP.

"I think my fortunes will change and I will do my best to force my way into the national team," said Asif, who will turn 33 later this month. At the time of his ban, Asif was regarded as the best new ball bowler having taken 106 Tests and 46 one-day wickets in a career beset by failed dope tests and injuries. —AFP

FRANCE CAPTAIN THIERRY RETIRES FROM TEST RUGBY

PARIS: France captain Thierry Dusautoir has announced his retirement from international rugby, bringing to an end a test career which saw him captain his country a record 56 times in 80 appearances and where he distinguished himself as one of the best tacklers in the modern game.

Dusautoir, one of world rugby's best flankers over the past decade, led France against the odds to the 2011 Rugby World Cup final, scoring a try against New Zealand in an 8-7 defeat.

In October, his final appearance ended with an unwanted record, crushed 62-13 by New Zealand in the World Cup quarter-finals: the biggest ever defeat in the knockout stages, and most points any France side has conceded. That loss left him devastated, and he said last month that he was undecided about his international future. After meeting new coach Guy Noves on Friday morning, Dusautoir made his decision to walk away before the start of next year's Six Nations Championship, which begins in February. "We reached the same conclusions. That's why I'm certain my choice is based on reason ... if I'd tried to carry on playing, forced things, it would have been more proof of vanity than anything else," the 34-year-old Dusautoir said in an interview to be published in Saturday's edition

of sports daily L'Equipe. "Actually, I think it's the wisest choice. My character has always been to give my all for France and for my club before thinking about myself," Dusautoir added. "Even if I'm proud and ambitious, I think I'm also someone honest and (to continue) would not have corresponded to the person I am and the way I've conducted my career."

World Cup record

Dusautoir scored the first of his six international tries on his test debut against Romania in 2006, and fast earned a reputation for his incredibly tough, relentless and fearless tackling. In the 2007 World Cup quarterfinal against New Zealand, which France won 20-18 in a stirring second-half comeback, he set a World Cup record with an astonishing 38 tackles in that match - a record which still stands. Four years later, his impressive performances in the 2011 World Cup - when he even out-performed famed All Blacks flanker Richie McCaw in the final - saw him named the best player in the world that year. France's run to the 2011 final was in large part thanks to Dusautoir, who became the team's undisputed talisman amid a massive fallout between senior players and beleaguered coach Marc Lievreumont. — AP

CHAMPS FIJI ROMP TO DUBAI SEVENS TITLE

DUBAI: World champions Fiji won the Dubai Sevens for the second time in three years yesterday with a 28-17 victory over England in the final.

Fiji scored all of their points in the first half after falling behind to an early Tom Bowen try. Savenaca Rawaca, Jasa Veremalua, Jerry Tuwai, who had suffered a bout of food poisoning overnight and had been on a drip before Saturday's action, and Isake Katonibau grabbed Fiji's four tries for a 28-7 lead at the break. England, the 2010 and 2013 champions, rallied with late second half tries through Phil Burgess and a second score for Bowen. The series moves on to Cape Town next week with Fiji remaining the team to beat ahead of the sport's debut at

the Olympics in Rio next year. For Fiji coach Ben Ryan, a former England boss, it was a fourth Dubai triumph in six years as he saw his side sweep through the tournament. They defeated Australia 19-12 in their quarter-finals with tries from Kotanibau, captain Osea Kolinisau and Rawaca. That was followed up by a 19-5 win against New Zealand in the semi-finals thanks to scores from Viliame Mata, Pio Tuwai and Veremalua. "England are a tough side so we are happy to come through as winners," said Kolinisau, playing in his 43rd World Sevens event. "It keeps us on a roll for the next round in South Africa." South Africa won the Plate, France took the Bowl and the Shield went to Canada. — AFP



DUBAI: Fiji's Jerry Tuwai (R) is tackled by England's Richard de Carpentier during their rugby final match of the Dubai leg, the first leg of the IRB's 10-leg World Rugby Sevens Series, yesterday in the Gulf emirate of Dubai. World champions Fiji won the Dubai Sevens with a 28-17 victory over England. — AFP



NEW DELHI: India's captain Virat Kohli, right, bats as South Africa's wicket keeper Dane Vilason watches on the third day of the fourth test cricket match between India and South Africa in New Delhi, India, yesterday. — AP

KOHLI, RAHANE HELP INDIA INFLATE 403 RUNS LEAD

NEW DELHI: An unbroken stand of 133 between captain Virat Kohli and Ajinkya Rahane inflated India's lead to 403 against South Africa on the third day yesterday of the fourth and final test.

Kohli was unbeaten on 83 and Rahane on 52 in moving India's second innings from a relatively troubling 57-4 to 190-4 at stumps.

The first century stand of the low-scoring series has India in prime position to finish the series 3-0 victors and compound South Africa's first away series loss in nine years.

Kohli led the charge with his 12th test half-century playing some fine drives and deft shots down the leg side on a slow pitch with low bounce.

Rahane, who got the first century of the series with a resolute 127 in the first innings, was slower but as solid in the second innings.

South Africa pace bowler Morne Morkel grabbed three wickets but Kohli and Rahane ground down the bowlers with a partnership that was 12 runs more than South Africa's first-innings total.

"Our total in the first innings (334) put us in a good position and our batsmen have now consolidated on that," India spinner Ravindra Jadeja said. "The pitch will only deteriorate further from now on and make batting difficult."

Kohli, who has struck 10 fours off 154 deliveries so far, was adjudged caught behind off Imran Tahir on 5 but batted on after replays showed the delivery was a no-ball.

EIGHTH HALF-CENTURY

Rahane has hit five fours off 152 balls in his eighth half-century.

Morkel relentlessly picked a fine line around off stump to finish the day on 3-29 off 17 overs.

He bowled a productive spell of seven overs with the new ball, making India struggle at the start of its second innings in the morning with a first-innings lead of 213 runs.

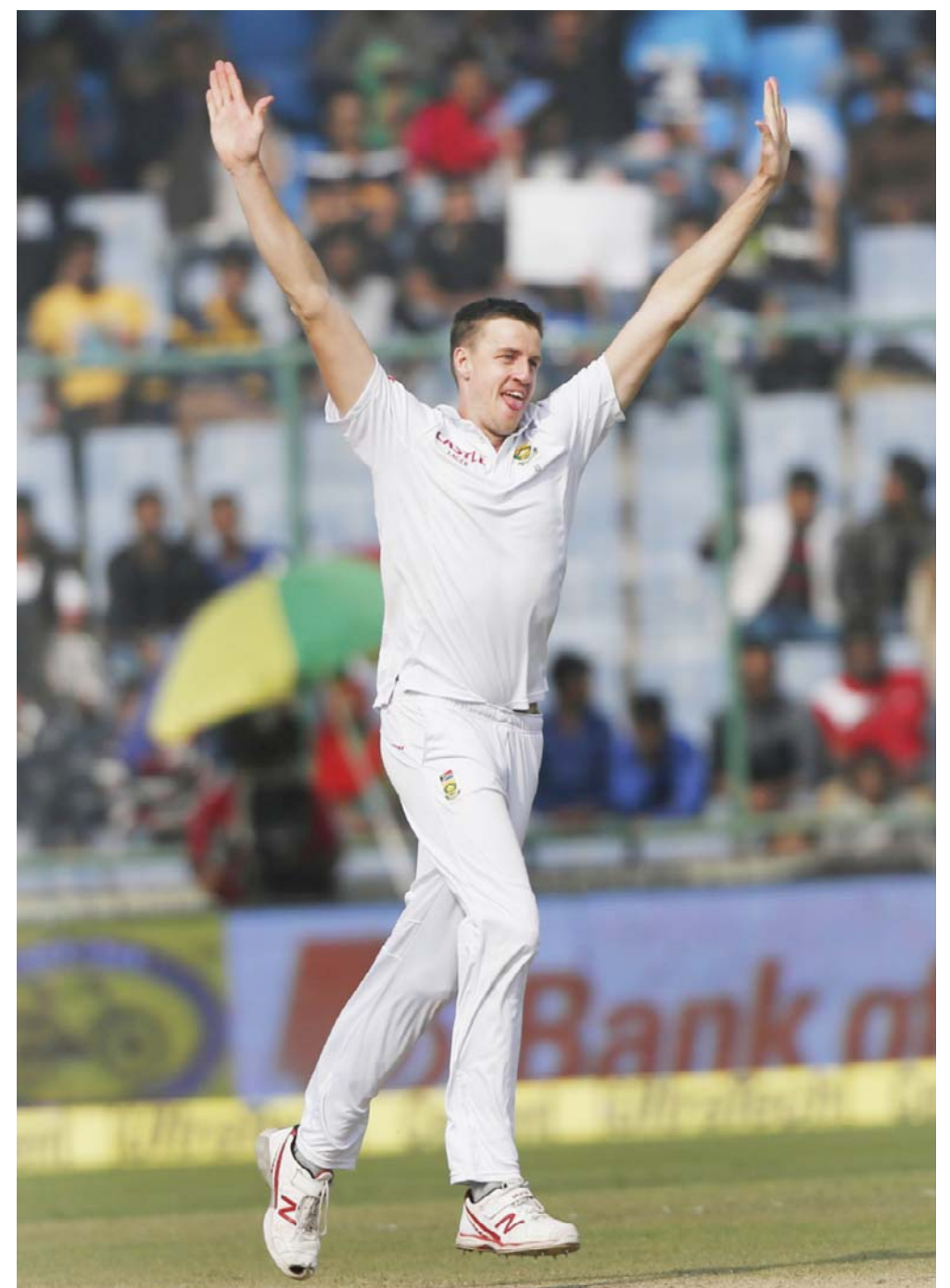
He dismissed opener Murali Vijay for 3 and Rohit Sharma for a duck in quick succession before Cheteshwar Pujara and Shikhar Dhawan forged a 45-run partnership that took India to 51-2 at lunch after a slow first session.

Morkel had Vijay caught behind off a vicious bouncer that was taken one-handed high up by wicketkeeper Dane Vilas. However, replays suggested the ball grazed Vijay's arm-guard and the batsman, too, indicated it hit him there.

Morkel was on a hat trick after dismissing Vijay off the last ball of his third over and bowling Rohit first ball of his fourth. Rohit, promoted up the order to No. 3, missed a good-length delivery that kept low as India fell to 8-2.

Morkel also came back to dismiss left-handed opener Shikhar Dhawan for 21 with a yorker. "That yorker was a bit of an out-of-the-box thing," Morkel's new-ball partner Kyle Abbott said.

"Sometimes you've got to do that in these situations, where pitches are not helping you much." With legspinner Tahir bowling Pujara for 28, the damage was repaired by Kohli and Rahane. — AP



NEW DELHI: South African bowler Morne Morkel unsuccessfully appeals against Indian batsman Ajinkya Rahane on the third day of the fourth test cricket match between India and South Africa in New Delhi. — AP

SCOREBOARD

NEW DELHI: Scores at stumps on the third day of the fourth and final Test between India and South Africa at the Feroz Shah Kotla stadium in New Delhi yesterday:

India 1st innings: 334 (A. Rahane 127, R. Ashwin 56; Abbott 5-40, Piedt 4-117)	C. Pujara b Tahir	28
	V. Kohli not out	83
South Africa 1st innings: 121 (de Villiers 42; R. Jadeja 5-30)	A. Rahane not out	52
	Extras: (lb2, nb1)	3
	Total: (for 4 wks, 81 overs) 190	
India 2nd innings:		
M. Vijay c Vilas b Morkel	3	
S. Dhawan b Morkel	21	
R. Sharma b Morkel	0	
	Fall of wickets: 1-4 (Vijay), 2-8 (Sharma), 3-53 (Dhawan), 4-57 (Pujara)	
	Bowling: Morkel 17-6-29-3, Abbott 17-6-38-0, Piedt 18-1-53-0, Tahir 21-4-49-1 (nb1), Elgar 8-1-19-0.	

PSG CRUSH NICE AS IBRAHIMOVIC MAKES MORE HISTORY

PARIS: Zlatan Ibrahimovic set up one goal and notched two more to break yet another scoring record as Ligue 1 leaders Paris Saint-Germain crushed 10-man Nice 3-0 on Friday. Edinson Cavani got the opener for PSG at the Allianz Riviera before Nice had Niklas Hult sent off for conceding a penalty that Ibrahimovic scored just before half-time.

That was his 86th Ligue 1 goal, allowing him to pass Mustapha Dahleb and go out on his own as PSG's all-time top scorer in the top flight of French football.

For good measure, the Swede scored again in the second half to secure the victory that puts Laurent Blanc's defending champions provisionally 16 points clear of second-placed Caen at the top of the table. "We knew that record was going to fall. It was just a case of when, because he scores an enormous amount of goals and will continue to do so," Paris coach Laurent Blanc told beIN Sports.

PSG are still unbeaten in Ligue 1 this season after 17 games and have not lost domestically since March, with only Barcelona and Real Madrid getting the better of them in the Champions League in that time. The capital side had slipped up in midweek with a goalless draw at Angers and this was tipped to be one of their toughest tests of the campaign against a Nice team who lay fifth and had been scoring freely thanks to the influence of Hatem Ben Arfa.

Reduced to 10 men

The former Newcastle United winger was back in the Nice side after illness and almost put the hosts ahead on the half-hour mark when he turned away from

Benjamin Stambouli before letting fly from 25 yards, only for his shot to flash just over the bar.

Five minutes after that PSG took the lead, Ibrahimovic collecting possession outside the box, playing a one-two with Blaise Matuidi and then squaring for Cavani to roll in. The game was then ended as a contest a minute before the break when Nice were reduced to 10 men, Hult receiving a straight red for bringing down his fellow Swede Ibrahimovic in the area.

Ibrahimovic stepped up to score the resulting penalty and break the record of Dahleb, an Algerian who played for Paris in the 1970s and 1980s. Already the club's all-time leading scorer and top scorer in European competition, it was another record for the 34-year-old, who has helped transform Paris since signing from AC Milan in 2012. Just for good measure, he got his second of the night just after the hour mark with a low finish at the near post from an Angel Di Maria assist. That took him to 12 Ligue 1 goals for the campaign, making him the top scorer in France's top flight this season, one ahead of Lorient's Benjamin Moukandjo.

It also raised the question of whether PSG will be tempted to offer him a new deal when his existing contract expires next summer. "He has been, is and will perhaps continue to be capital in the project of the club. I think Thiago Silva, Thiago Motta and Ibrahimovic are the emblems of this PSG team," said Blanc.

Second-placed Caen host Lille on Saturday after Lyon entertain Angers in what will be their final Ligue 1 game at the Stade de Gerland before they move into a new stadium in January. —AFP



MOENCHENGLADBACH: Bayern Munich's French midfielder Franck Ribery scores against Moenchengladbach's Swiss goalkeeper Yann Sommer during the German first division Bundesliga football match Moenchengladbach vs Bayern Munich in Moenchengladbach yesterday. — AFP

BAYERN SLUMP TO FIRST BUNDESLIGA DEFEAT

BERLIN: Bundesliga leaders Bayern Munich lost their unbeaten record in Germany's top tier this season in emphatic style yesterday, going down 3-1 away to Borussia Moenchengladbach. It is only the second time Pep Guardiola's Bayern have lost this season after they went down 2-0 at Arsenal in the Champions League in October. It was also Bayern's first Bundesliga defeat since losing 2-1 at Freiburg last May as second-half goals by Oscar Wendt, Lars Stindl and Fabian Johnson left the Bavarian giants reeling.

Franck Ribery scored Bayern's late consolation goal on his return after nearly nine months out with injury. "It's a pity, but it's our own fault," admitted Ribery. "We will concentrate on the next game and hope to win," he added as Ingolstadt can expect a Bayern backlash in Munich next Saturday. Bayern's eight-point lead at the top of the table will be cut if second-placed Borussia Dortmund win later at Wolfsburg. Gladbach took a deserved lead when Raffael gave a return pass to Wendt and the Swedish international fired past Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer on 54 minutes.

The hosts doubled their lead when Stindl volleyed home on 66 minutes. There were scenes of pure joy amongst the home fans at Borussia Park when Bayern centre-back Jerome Boateng was caught out of position and Johnson sprinted away to launch a shot past Neuer on 71 minutes. Bayern pulled a goal back nine minutes from time when Ribery marked his 300th game in the famous red shirt by scoring off the bench to celebrate his first game in 269 days following a persistent ankle injury. This is the first time Bayern have conceded three goals

since losing 3-0 at Barcelona in the first leg of last season's Champions League semi-finals. And their defeat leaves French champions Paris Saint-Germain as the only remaining unbeaten club in any of Europe's traditional big five leagues. For Gladbach, the victory continues their fairytale rise from bottom of the table to third as they remain unbeaten after 10 Bundesliga games under new coach Andre Schubert. Ten-man Bayer Leverkusen warmed-up for their home clash with Champions League holders Barcelona on Wednesday by losing 2-1 at Hertha Berlin in the capital as Javier Hernandez netted what proved to be a consolation goal. "Chicharito" scored his seventh goal in 12 league games for Leverkusen to cancel out Vladimir Darida's early opening goal for Hertha at Berlin's Olympic Stadium.

Leverkusen were reduced to 10 men when

centre-back Sebastian Boenisch was shown a straight red card with just 17 minutes gone for a brutal sliding tackle on Hertha's 19-year-old left-back Yann Regaesel. Hertha scored their second through USA international John Anthony Brooks and the win left them fourth as Leverkusen drop to eighth. Mainz are seventh after their 3-1 win at Hamburg while Mark Uth's 96th-minute goal rescued a 1-1 draw for struggling Hoffenheim at Ingolstadt. Augsburg escaped the bottom three with a 1-0 win at Cologne as Paraguay striker Raul Bobadilla fired in a second-half free-kick. On Friday, Schalke broke their five-match winless streak with a 3-1 victory over Hanover 96 which left them sixth in the table.

The Royal Blues won their first league game since downing Hertha in mid-October with goals by Johannes Geis, from a penalty, Klaas-Jan Huntelaar and Franco di Santo. —AFP

German results/standings

Cologne 0, FC Augsburg 1; Borussia Moenchengladbach 3, Bayern Munich 1; FC Ingolstadt 04 1, Hoffenheim 1; Hamburg SV 1, Mainz 3; Hertha Berlin 2, Bayer Leverkusen 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts								
Bayern Munich	15	13	1	1	43	8	40	Cologne	15	5	5	5	15	19	20
Borussia	14	10	2	2	40	19	32	FC Ingolstadt 04	15	5	5	5	11	15	20
Moenchengladbach	15	8	2	5	31	23	26	SV Darmstadt 98	14	3	6	5	14	19	15
Hertha Berlin	15	8	2	5	20	18	26	Eintracht Frankfurt	14	3	5	6	18	22	14
VfL Wolfsburg	14	7	4	3	23	15	25	Hanover 96	15	4	2	9	18	27	14
Schalke 04	15	7	3	5	21	21	24	FC Augsburg	15	3	4	8	18	25	13
Mainz	15	7	2	6	23	21	23	Werder Bremen	14	4	1	9	14	28	13
Bayer Leverkusen	15	6	3	6	19	20	21	Hoffenheim	15	1	7	7	16	24	10
Hamburg SV	15	6	3	6	18	21	21	VfB Stuttgart	14	3	1	10	18	35	10

LYON BEATEN IN FINAL LEAGUE GAME AT GERLAND

PARIS: Lyon lurched further into crisis yesterday as they went down 2-0 to Angers to ruin what was their last ever Ligue 1 match at the Stade de Gerland.

Cheikh N'Doye scored both goals for the visitors from headers either side of half-time as the promoted club built on a goalless draw at home to Paris Saint-Germain in midweek to continue their remarkable season.

But Lyon have now taken just one point from their last four league games and, coupled with their limp exit from the Champions League, that form has left coach Hubert Fournier under huge pressure.

OL president Jean-Michel Aulas has not been shy to express his displeasure with recent performances and this latest display was particularly painful as it came on such a special occasion for the club.

After 65 years at the Stade de Gerland, Lyon will move into a new 59,000-capacity stadium in January and a host of former players were invited to take to the field before kick-off in what was their final Ligue 1 outing at the old ground.

Brazilian duo Sonny Anderson and Juninho Pernambucano were among those present and watched the game alongside the Lyon ultras massed behind the goal. But the match itself was further proof that all is not well at last season's runners-up.

Fournier pushed Mathieu Valbuena right up front alongside Alexandre Lacazette and handed a top-flight debut to teenager Lucas Tousart in midfield, and yet the changes could not prevent another catastrophic result.

Angers took the lead from their first chance just before the midway point in the first half, N'Doye rising high above Bakary Kone to head in a Thomas Mangani free-kick.

N'Doye then flashed another header just wide from a Gilles Sunu set-piece delivery and Anthony Lopes saved from Setu to keep Lyon in the game going into the interval.

There was a response from the hosts after the restart and Valbuena crashed a shot off the bar before substitute Clement Grenier set up Lacazette to put the ball in the net only for the offside flag to cut short the celebrations.

And it was to be N'Doye who had the honour of scoring the last Ligue 1 goal at the old stadium as he made sure of the win for Angers with his and his side's second nine minutes from the end. The 29-year-old Senegalese midfielder, who had never played in the top flight before this season, has been a revelation captaining the unfancied Angers. At 1.92m tall and 90kg, he is a monster of a player, and yet he was left unchallenged to head in a corner from the left as

Angers moved provisionally into second place. Lyon, who will play one last game at Gerland in the League Cup later this month, are fourth but are likely to tumble down the table over the course of the weekend.

PSG are 15 points clear of Angers after continuing their unbeaten start to the domestic season with a 3-0 win at Nice on Friday. Edinson Cavani put the capital club ahead before Zlatan Ibrahimovic netted twice, including one from the penalty spot, to become PSG's all-time leading scorer in the top flight with 87 goals.

Caen can reclaim second place with a win at home to Lille later on Saturday, while Monaco can go fourth with a win at Bastia. —AFP



TURIN: Roma's Lucas Digne vies for the ball with Torino's Bruno Peres, left, during a Serie A soccer match at the Olympic stadium, in Turin, Italy, yesterday. The match ended in a 1-1 draw. — AP



LYON: Lyon's French forward Alexandre Lacazette (L) vies with Angers' Moroccan midfielder Romain Saiss (R) during the French L1 football match Lyon (OL) vs Angers (SCO) yesterday, at the Gerland stadium in Lyon, eastern France. — AFP

EPL results/standings

Arsenal 3 (Campbell 33, Giroud 63, Ramsey 90) Sunderland 1 (Giroud 45-og); Manchester United 0 West Ham 0; Southampton 1 (Romeu 73) Aston Villa 1 (Lescott 44); Stoke 2 (Arnautovic 7, 15) Manchester City 0; Swansea 0 Leicester 3 (Mahrez 5, 22, 67); Watford 2 (Deeney 30-pen, Ighalo 90) Norwich 0; West Brom 1 (McClelland 39) Tottenham 1 (Alli 15).

English Premier League table after yesterday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Leicester	15	9	5	1	32	21	32
Arsenal	15	9	3	3	27	13	30
Man City	15	9	2	4	30	16	29
Man Utd	15	8	5	2	20	10	29
Tottenham	15	6	8	1	25	12	26
West Ham	15	6	5	4	25	21	23
Liverpool	14	6	5	3	18	15	23
Palace	14	7	1	6	19	14	22
Watford	15	6	4	5	17	16	22
Stoke	15	6	4	5	13	14	22
Everton	14	5	6	3	27	19	21
Southampton	15	5	6	4	21	18	21
West Brom	15	5	4	6	14	19	19
Chelsea	14	4	3	7	17	23	15
Swansea	15	3	5	7	14	22	14
Norwich	15	3	4	8	17	27	13
Sunderland	15	3	3	9	17	29	12
Bournemouth	14	2	4	8	17	30	10
Newcastle	14	2	4	8	14	30	10
Aston Villa	15	1	3	11	13	28	6

TERRIBLE TWOSOME DEENEY, IGHALO SINK NORWICH



WATFORD: Troy Deeney and Odion Ighalo continued their fine goal-scoring form as Watford beat Norwich City 2-0 at Vicarage Road yesterday to climb into the Premier League's top half.

In the first top-flight encounter between the teams since February 1988, Watford prevailed through Deeney's 30th-minute penalty and an injury-time goal by his strike partner Ighalo.

Deeney now has five goals for the campaign and Ighalo nine, and their goals have put Watford well on their way to achieving the minimum objective of avoiding relegation. Victory took Quique Sanchez Flores's side up to ninth place in the standings and kept Norwich, who have won only once in 10 league games, three points above the relegation zone in 16th place. Seeking to improve on a return of one win in nine league matches, Norwich manager Alex Neil dropped goalkeeper John Ruddy for Declan Rudd and also brought Alexander Tettey and Nathan

Redmond into his starting XI. Tettey was making his return from a groin injury, but it proved an unhappy comeback for the Norway midfielder as his foul on Ighalo gave Watford an opportunity to take the lead from the spot.

Deeney made no mistake with his penalty, sending Rudd the wrong way to become the first Watford player to score in four successive Premier League games. Ighalo thought he had doubled Watford's lead when he neatly converted a headed pass from Allan Nyom, but he was denied by an incorrectly raised offside flag.

The Nigerian soon resumed his torment of the Norwich back four and had an effort parried by Rudd shortly before half-time after a slick nutmeg on Ryan Bennett. Neil made a bold change at the interval, sending on striker Dieumerci Mbokani for winger Redmond, and saw his side squander a presentable chance early in the second half when Robbie Brady blazed wide.

Mbokani narrowly failed to make contact with a cross from Brady, but Ighalo continued to prove a pest at the other end, twice being thwarted by Rudd and twice shooting wide.

The Nigeria international's perseverance eventually paid off in the first minute of stoppage time when he held off Sebastian Bassong and placed a low shot past Rudd before tearing off his shirt in celebration. —AFP

ARNAUTOVIC BLOWS MAN CITY AWAY AS STOKE SIZZLE



STOKE-ON-TRENT: Two goals from Marko Arnautovic condemned Manchester City to a 2-0 defeat yesterday as their Premier League title hopes suffered a serious blow at Stoke City. The Austrian forward netted twice in the first half and missed several chances for a hat-trick as a dominant Stoke side claimed a well deserved win at a windswept Britannia Stadium. Xherdan Shaqiri, their £12 million (\$18.1 million, 16.7 million euros) record signing, was at the heart of the success with assists for both goals and a wonderful all-round display.

Despite leading the table at the start of the day, Manchester City now have just one win from their last four league games and are experiencing their toughest spell of the season. Manuel Pellegrini's side improved slightly after half-time, but rarely threatened a fightback after a dreadful defensive display in the first period. Stoke made a dream start as Arnautovic gave them a seventh-minute lead following fine work from Shaqiri on the right.

The Switzerland international showed fine balance to get the better of Fernando on the touchline before crossing for Arnautovic, who darted between two defenders to finish.

Kevin De Bruyne had a chance to level for the visitors after skipping from midfield to the edge of the area, but his tame shot on 14 minutes was well saved by goalkeeper Jack Butland. A minute later Stoke doubled their

lead as Shaqiri and Arnautovic combined again.

Fernando limps off

There was more brilliance from Shaqiri, whose superb turn outfoxed Fernando before his fabulous pass gave Arnautovic the chance to produce a cool, low finish for 2-0.

After a quiet spell, Bojan threatened to score a bizarre third goal for Stoke when he made the most of several ricochets to ride three challenges before eventually being crowded out 10 yards from goal.

Then Stoke had a glorious chance to add to their tally when a back-heel from Ibrahim Afellay released Glenn Whelan on the left and the midfielder's cross was headed wide at the near post by Arnautovic. Arnautovic missed an even better chance to put the game beyond City just before the interval when he was released by another fine Shaqiri pass, only to see his shot bounce back off the right-hand post. City goalkeeper Joe Hart had to make a smart save early in the second half to block a shot from Bojan after another weaving run from the Barcelona striker. The rebound fell to Arnautovic, who fired just wide. Then the Austrian went close again when he collected a wonderful flick from Bojan and closed in on goal before sending a firm cross-shot just wide of the far post. Bojan was the next to go close for the hosts when he collected a clever pass by Shaqiri and beat Hart to the ball before having his run checked by the visiting goalkeeper. The afternoon got worse for Pellegrini when Fernando was forced to limp off on 73 minutes, reducing his side to 10 men, with three substitutes already used. City applied some pressure in the second half, but Butland, Hart's deputy with England, was rarely called into action as Mark Hughes's men dug in for a resonant victory. —AFP

DELE ALLI TAKES SPURS UNBEATEN RUN TO 14 GAMES



LONDON: Tottenham equalled a 30-year-old 14-match unbeaten run with a 1-1 draw at West Brom yesterday thanks to an opening goal from teenage England international Dele Alli. The result leaves Spurs fifth in the Premier League with 26 points from 15 games. The last time Tottenham went 14 games without defeat during a stretch running from November 1984 to March 1985, Argentina's Ossie Ardiles was running Spurs' midfield, Peter Shreeves was in the managerial hot-seat and Band Aid's "Do they know it's Christmas" was in the pop charts.

Spurs, kitted out in a bright purple away shirt at the Hawthorns, can beat the record if they get a result against French outfit

Monaco at White Hart Lane in the Europa League next Thursday. Mauricio Pochettino made two changes to the team that drew with Chelsea last weekend - Alli back from suspension in place of injured Ryan Mason, and Erik Lamela in for Son Heung-Min.

Alli was the man on the mark for Spurs with a slick volley on 15 minutes after he ran onto a deep 50 yard pass from Toby Alderweireld, who had seen the 19-year-old England international running into space.

Alli was at full pace when he slipped between Craig Dawson and Jonas Olsen before deftly guiding the ball past West Brom keeper Boaz Myhill to make it 1-0 for the visitors. But Tony Pulis's side, who beat Arsenal in their last game here, did not take going behind lightly, with Stephane Sessegnon taking the fight to Spurs in surging runs down West Brom's right. One of which led to a free-kick taken by the Benin captain himself and headed off the line by Jan Vertonghen with Hugo Lloris beaten. The home side's industry paid off just before the break however when James McClelland levelled with his first league goal for almost two years. —AFP



LONDON: Sunderland's English striker Duncan Watmore (L) vies against Arsenal's Spanish defender Nacho Monreal during the English Premier League football match between Arsenal and Sunderland at the Emirates Stadium in London yesterday. — AFP

GIROUD ATONES TO MOVE ARSENAL UP TO SECOND



LONDON: Olivier Giroud made amends for a first-half own goal as Arsenal beat struggling Sunderland 3-1 yesterday to move up to second place in the Premier League table.

The London club took advantage of Manchester City's 2-0 defeat at Stoke City and Manchester United's failure to beat West Ham United by registering their first win in four league games.

It was a timely boost ahead of next week's must-win Champions League trip to Olympiakos, where Arsene Wenger's side must prevail by two clear goals to reach the knockout phase.

Joel Campbell put the Gunners ahead in the 33rd minute and Giroud restored their lead midway through the second half after he had gifted the visitors an equaliser on the stroke of half-time, with Aaron Ramsey wrapping up the win in added time.

The victory helped to draw a line under another testing week for Wenger after the loss of Alexis Sanchez and Santi Cazorla to injury following last weekend's 1-1 draw at Norwich City.

Cazorla is expected to be out for at least three months after damaging knee ligaments, while no return date has yet been set for the return of Sanchez, who pulled a hamstring at Carrow Road. Wenger could at least call on fit-again centre-back Laurent Koscielny, while Theo Walcott was back in the squad for the first time since late October after recovering from a calf problem.

Sunderland arrived at the Emirates Stadium on the back of successive victories—they had won just one their opening 12 league games—that had lifted them out of the relegation places.

Their growing confidence was immediately apparent as Fabio Borini was sent clear in the fourth minute and wasted a good opportunity by shooting straight at Arsenal goalkeeper Petr Cech.

Ozil assist

Arsenal's back four looked distinctly shaky during the opening stages, while up front the home side were also lacking in fluency, but when they did click, it culminated in the opening goal.

Ramsey, moved back into his preferred cen-

tral role in place of Cazorla, played the ball into the feet of Giroud, who laid the ball back to Mesut Ozil.

The German playmaker threaded an excellently weighted pass inside right-back DeAndre Yedlin, allowing Campbell to run onto the ball and steer a first-time shot past Costel Pantilimon.

The quality of the move suggested Arsenal had finally found their rhythm, but the defensive frailties returned when Giroud diverted the ball into his own net as he attempted to clear Yann M'Vila's in-swinging free-kick.

Sunderland deserved to be level at the break and could have gone ahead early in the second half when Steven Fletcher tested Cech twice in the space of barely a minute.

The Scotland striker saw a low drive turned around the post and from the resulting corner he raced in at the back post to meet Ola Toivonen's flick-on, only for Cech to brilliantly claw his shot off the line.

But Arsenal responded well, improving as the game progressed and re-establishing their lead in the 63rd minute when Giroud produced an excellent diving header from Ramsey's cross. Ramsey completed the win in injury time when he poked the ball past Pantilimon after good work by Walcott. —AFP

ROMEU RESCUES SAINTS IN 1-1 VILLA DRAW



SOUTHAMPTON: Spanish substitute Oriol Romeu rescued a point for Southampton in a 1-1 draw at home to Premier League tailenders Aston Villa yesterday.

Midfielder Romeu grabbed the equaliser on 73 minutes after Joleon Lescott had opened the

scoring for Aston Villa a minute before the break. Ronald Koeman's side had been looking for a strong response to their crushing 6-1 League Cup defeat to Liverpool at St. Mary's - Southampton's worst at home for 56 years.

Koeman recalled fit-again captain Jose Fonte for Steven Caulker in central defence, with James Ward-Prowse in for Jordy Clasie in midfield. But despite having the best of the first half the hosts had little to show with Duan Tadic, Sadio Mane and Graziano Pelle all missing chances. Villa who got the breakthrough a minute before the break when French midfielder Jordan Veretout set up Lescott to turn in a rare opportunity from a corner.

Italian striker Pelle missed a chance to

equalise in the last action of the first half with his header flying to the left. Remi Garde's Villa were given further chances to pull ahead after the break but two Jordan Ayew efforts went astray.

And it was substitute Romeu who levelled for Southampton ten minutes after coming in for injured Kenyan midfielder Victor Wanyama. Ward-Prowse made the cross off a corner with Romeu stabbed in from close range past Bradley Guzan to end Southampton's run of three straight defeats to sit 12th with 21 points from 15 games.

Villa are now 14 league games without a win - a club record - as they remain stuck to the bottom with six points. — AFP



SOUTHAMPTON: Aston Villa's Jordan Veretout, left, flies past Southampton's Cedric Soares during their English Premier League soccer match at St Mary's Stadium, Southampton, England, yesterday. — AFP

RAMPANT LEICESTER GO TOP THOUGH VARDY STREAK ENDS

LONDON: Jamie Vardy's record scoring streak ended but Leicester City's improbable Premier League title challenge continued with Riyad Mahrez's hat-trick sealing a 3-0 win at Swansea City that put them top yesterday.

Manchester City's dismal 2-0 defeat at Stoke City in the early kickoff opened the door for pre-season relegation tips Leicester to reach the summit after 15 games and they responded in style in south Wales. Mahrez scored twice in the first 22 minutes and struck again after the break as Leicester moved on to 32 points, two clear of Arsenal who moved above Manchester City with a 3-1 home defeat of Sunderland-Olivier Giroud scoring for both sides. Vardy had scored for 11 consecutive Premier League matches but drew a blank at the Liberty Stadium.

Two goals inside the opening 15 minutes from Stoke's Marko Arnautovic, both created by Xherdan Shaqiri, condemned injury-hit City to defeat at a blustery Britannia Stadium.

Manchester United failed to take advantage of City's defeat, drawing 0-0 at home with West Ham United to stay fourth, level on 29 points with their neighbours. Fifth-placed Tottenham Hotspur drew for the eighth time of the campaign, 1-1 at West Bromwich Albion, after Dele Alli had given the visitors an early lead. Bottom club Aston Villa drew 1-1 at Southampton and fellow-strugglers Norwich City lost 2-0 at Watford. Champions Chelsea, wallowing down in 14th place, host Bournemouth in the late game. — Reuters

Sports

Champs Fiji
romp to
Dubai
Sevens title



Giroud atones
to move
Arsenal up
to second



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BAYERN SLUMP TO FIRST BUNDESLIGA DEFEAT

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MANCHESTER: Manchester United's Bastian Schweinsteiger, centre, loses out to West Ham United's Cheikhou Kouyate, right, during the English Premier League soccer match between Manchester United and West Ham United at Old Trafford Stadium, Manchester, England, yesterday. — AP

UNITED DRAW BLANK IN HAMMERS STALEMATE



MANCHESTER: Manchester United failed to score at Old Trafford for the second successive game as a 0-0 draw against West Ham United dropped them to fourth place in the Premier League yesterday.

Louis van Gaal's side have now drawn a blank five times at home in all competitions this season, threatening their chances of regaining the domestic title and progressing in Europe. United,

missing injured captain and top scorer Wayne Rooney with an ankle injury, created several chances, but lacked a cutting edge in a dour encounter that will heap further pressure on van Gaal, who has been widely criticised for his conservative tactics.

A repeat of this spluttering effort at Wolfsburg on Tuesday could prove disastrous in a game they need to win to be sure of progressing in the Champions League. United at least head to Germany with their unbeaten home record in the Premier League intact, although West Ham will also point to missed chances that cost them the chance to win for the first time in five games and add United to their list of scalps away from home this season which includes Arsenal, Manchester City and Liverpool.

The inclusion of Marouane Fellaini in place of

Rooney gave a different dimension to United's attack and the Belgium international was heavily involved as van Gaal's side looked for the early goal which would have eased the pressure.

Fellaini had already dragged a shot wide following a run from half-way when he went close in the eighth minute with a header from Paddy McNair's cross which might have found the top corner but for a deflection off Winston Reid. That intervention was nothing, though, compared with the block Reid made in denying what looked like a certain goal after a quarter of an hour.

Charmed life

Again Fellaini was instrumental with a header from Jesse Lingard's cross which picked out Anthony Martial, who thought he had scored

with a shot on the turn from eight yards out which Reid bravely kept out as he threw himself in front of the ball.

The visitors were lively on the break and should have led through an 11th-minute opportunity for Victor Moses.

Daley Blind's attempted pass found Hammers captain Mark Noble, who released Moses for a clear run of goal. However, the winger was unable to beat David de Gea who saved with his left leg and then moments later saw a Reid header from a corner hit a post as his record of conceding only one Premier League goal at Old Trafford this season was preserved.

United's home defensive record is their best at this stage of a season since 1994-95, but their goal continued to live a charmed life at the start of the second half as West Ham, growing in confi-

dence while United's appeared to wane, again should have gone front.

Mauro Zarate was the culprit this time as Andy Carroll's perfect lay-off left the Argentinian with just the goalkeeper to beat, but from six yards he screwed his effort horribly wide.

United almost made the most of that let-off as Fellaini was denied at the other end by a superb save from Adrian. With 20 minutes to go, Juan Mata shot wide and Bastian Schweinsteiger lashed a first-time effort over the bar as the home side upped the tempo in search of a late winner.

But Martial steering an effort just past the post from substitute Memphis Depay's pull-back was the nearest they came to a winner as another Old Trafford date ended in frustration for the home supporters. — AFP

REAL RALLY FROM CUP FIASCO TO THRASH GETAFE

MADRID: Real Madrid bounced back from their embarrassing elimination from the Copa del Rey for fielding an ineligible player in midweek by cruising to a 4-1 victory over Getafe yesterday. Karim Benzema was restored to the starting line-up and scored his first two goals since being caught up in a blackmail scandal involving French international teammate Mathieu Valbuena inside 16 minutes. Gareth Bale and Cristiano Ronaldo then made it 4-0 before half-time before Alexis pulled a goal back for Getafe 21 minutes from time. Victory moves Madrid up to second and cuts the gap on Barcelona at the top of the table to three points.

However, Barca can restore their six-point advantage when they travel to Valencia and Atletico Madrid can retake second place with victory at Granada later. Benzema, Bale and Ronaldo started a league game for just the fourth time this season and just as in early season thrashings of Real Betis and Espanyol, their presence restored Madrid's fire-power up front. Any sign of the fans' frustration at the club's latest gaffe in being eliminated from the Cup due to an administrative error was eased when Benzema fired home from Pepe's fine cross after just five minutes. Benzema has rarely featured in the last two months due to an ongoing hamstring injury allied to his off-field problems.

However, the Frenchman looked back to his best as he was only denied a second with a bullet header by a brilliant save from Vicente Guaita moments later.

Benzema did double Madrid's advantage



MADRID: Real Madrid's Karim Benzema, left, celebrates with teammates Cristiano Ronaldo, right, and Gareth Bale after scoring their side's third goal against Getafe during the Spanish La Liga soccer match between Real Madrid and Getafe. — AP

on 16 minutes when he slotted into the bottom corner from Bale's headed cut-back after Ronaldo appeared to have been fouled inside the area.

The one way traffic continued as Bale flashed a shot just wide from 25 yards and then forced Guaita into a more comfortable stop from the edge of the area. However, the Welshman wasn't to be denied 10 minutes before half-time when he showed great composure to finish from Ronaldo's knockdown to score for the second consecutive league game

for the first time since January. Ronaldo finally got in on the act three minutes later at the end of a devastating counter-attack as he latched onto Toni Kroos's fine through ball to register his 17th goal of the season.

Understandably, Madrid's intensity dipped after the break, but Benzema did have a chance to seal his first hat-trick in five years when he curled well over from the edge of the area. Instead it was Getafe who rounded off the scoring when Alexis powered home Pedro Leon's corner to reduce the arrears. — AFP

CHELSEA STUNNED BY BOURNEMOUTH



LONDON: Chelsea's season went from bad to worse when the reigning Premier League champions lost 1-0 at home to Bournemouth yesterday to leave them just three points above the bottom three.

Jose Mourinho's side produced another disjointed display and were stunned in the 82nd minute when substitute Glenn Murray, who had only been on the field for two minutes, headed home after a goalmouth scramble.

Chelsea's eighth defeat in 15 Premier League matches since the start of the season left them in 14th place, 14 points behind fourth-placed Manchester United. Bournemouth moved out of the bottom three. "The guys did great before I came on and sort of controlled the game at times," Murray told Sky Sports. "When it's 0-0 after 80 minutes they were more nervous than us because we don't expect anything out of these games really." Chelsea had been unbeaten in their past 43 home league games against newly-promoted teams, winning 37.

But Bournemouth, enjoying their first taste of top-flight football after a rapid rise from obscurity, were always in with a chance as Chelsea pushed hard for a winner.

Mourinho again left Diego Costa on the bench, but even when the Spain striker did come on for the second half, replacing Oscar, the Blues could not find a way through and failed to score at home in the league for the first time since May 2014. — Reuters



LONDON: Chelsea's Willian, left, competes for the ball with Bournemouth's Charlie Daniels during the English Premier League soccer match. — AP

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China announces \$60 billion
'funding support' for Africa

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Yahoo board in final talks
on the future of company

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'THE BANKER' NAMES NBK KUWAIT 'BANK OF THE YEAR'

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HELSINKI: Photo shows an architect's futuristic vision of what one of Helsinki's busiest inner motorways, Hameenlinnavayla, could look like in summertime, with large part of car traffic replaced by public transport and bicycle lanes. — AFP

HELSINKI TO MAKE CARS SUPERFLUOUS BY 2050

HELSINKI AUTHORITIES TRY NEW CONCEPT 'BOULEVARDISATION'

HELSINKI: For years this port city on the edge of the Baltic has been considered one of the greenest in Europe. Now Helsinki wants to go a step further and make cars unnecessary by 2050. Helsinki takes great pride in their relatively small, maritime capital with a population of just over 600,000. But the city is anticipating a dramatic population boom over the next few years and needs to be able to comfortably accommodate its new arrivals. Parks and clean air are a source of civic pride in this city where green areas already make up 47 percent of space, so urban planners are devising a cityscape that also features fewer cars and thus cleaner air through lower carbon emissions.

While cars will not be banned, the city will do what it can to discourage people from using them, introducing better public transport, walkable green neighborhoods brimming with services, and higher costs for parking. City dwellers will be able to ditch their wheels as shops, schools and services will be grouped together within walking distance of their apartments. And those who need to travel further to work will be able to hop on the city's swift network of metros, trains and tramways.

The head of Helsinki's Strategic Urban Planning Division, Rikhard Manninen, and his team are calling their new concept "boulevardisation", under which busy inner-city motorways are transformed into green residential boulevards. "We will keep the green spaces by chan-

neling most new construction projects into areas where highways now stand," Manninen said. Reducing the number of cars, and replacing them with public transport, will go a long way toward improving air quality. The new plan will also help the city cope with an anticipated population boom of 40 percent, or a quarter of a million residents, by 2050.

Helsinki aims to be carbon neutral by 2050, which means the city cannot discharge any more carbon into the atmosphere than its vast surrounding forests are able to absorb. "Helsinki has already managed to cut down its emissions significantly... but in order to become carbon neutral by 2050 we need to gear up," said Alpo Tani, one of Helsinki's urban planners. A key part of the solution is to address traffic, which accounts for around 20 percent of Helsinki's emissions. The city estimates that without its plan, traffic emissions would be up to 30 percent higher by 2050.

Growing pains

Not everyone in Helsinki is thrilled to see car use discouraged. But the city centre sits on a small peninsula jutting out into the Baltic Sea, and while it makes for a pretty backdrop, it also slows traffic and stymies growth. "It's a very bad idea (to cut down driving). I don't have anything against public transport but nothing can beat having my own car," Johan, 50 said sitting in his car, explaining that it takes him only 20 minutes to drive home to Helsinki's adjacent suburb of Espoo where he



HELSINKI: Cyclists and pedestrians seen during morning traffic at the Central Helsinki road 'Baana'. — AFP

moved in search of more space. With all of its existing green areas, seascapes and roads, Helsinki is running out of space, planners argue. But the Helsinki Chamber of Commerce has called the new plan "oversized" and "unrealistic".

"The goal to channel all traffic growth in

means other than cars is unrealistic while the city is expanding," said the chair of the chamber's traffic committee, Heikki Kovanen. While some car owners moan, others welcome better public transport such as the extension of Helsinki's metro westwards to Espoo, due to open in 2016.

"The plan seems good and practical. Public transport can carry more people than individual cars," said Matti, a pensioner from Espoo out walking in Helsinki with his brother Mikko, who advocated even tougher traffic restrictions. "We should adopt road tolls so that everyone doesn't pack into this small peninsula with their cars," he insisted.

First skyscrapers under way

Residents of Helsinki have for many years clung to the idea of keeping the city centre low and green. So it comes as no surprise that many people grow anxious at the mention of new office towers or tall apartment blocks, and plans to reduce green areas. Officials have promised not to take things too far. The city's cherished Central Park—a whopping three times the size of its New York namesake—and other green areas will be reduced only slightly to make space for new housing, leaving 40 percent of the city as green areas.

And, Manninen vowed, "building upward will be permitted in some places, but not in the centre." The foundations for Helsinki's first skyscrapers are currently being laid in a former harbor dubbed Kalasatama (Fish Harbour), which is to house some 20,000 people and create 8,000 jobs by 2030. Kalasatama intends to showcase Helsinki's beautiful seashores with boardwalks and recreational areas. The city council is set to approve the draft plan in 2016. — AFP

EGYPT TO INCREASE EXPORTS TO RUSSIA AS TURKISH ROW RAGES

CAIRO: Egypt is looking to increase exports to Russia by 15 percent in the coming year, eyeing an opportunity to take advantage of Russian restrictions on Turkish imports, an Egyptian ministry of trade official said yesterday. Russia, one of Turkey's primary trading partners, approved economic sanctions against Turkey this week in retaliation for the downing of a Russian fighter plane near the Syrian-Turkish border on Nov 24. The sanctions prohibit Russia from importing a list of agricultural products from Turkey including fruits and vegetables such as tomatoes, onions, cucumbers, grapes, apricots and apples, as well as chicken products and salt.

Egypt needs to bolster its exports as it struggles with a ballooning trade deficit that has tripled in the past decade to almost \$39 billion. Egypt's exports globally fell 17.4 percent in January-October this year to \$15.4 billion, latest official data shows. "We are targeting an increase in our agricultural exports to Russia by 15 percent over the coming year in light of the restrictions Russia has imposed on Turkish imports," an official at the ministry of trade said.

Increased Egyptian exports to Russia would be the latest sign of warmer relations between the two countries following joint naval exercises in June and an agreement last month for Russia to build Egypt's first nuclear power plant.

"There are consultations with the Russian side to figure out what are the most important goods needed over the coming period," Minister of Trade Tarek Kabil said in a statement. The boost to trade could help alleviate Egypt's ongoing shortage of hard currency, which has curbed the country's imports and slowed manufacturing activity. Egyptian agricultural exports to Russia range from 600 to 650 thousand tons annually and are worth approximately \$310 million, a ministry statement said. Data on Egypt's exports to Russia this year compared with last year were not available.

Egypt lifts GDP forecast

In another development, Egypt revised its GDP target for the current fiscal year to 5.5 percent from 5 percent yesterday and said its economy grew at 4.2

percent in the 2014/2015 fiscal year, up from 2.2 percent the previous year. Total GDP for fiscal year 2014/2015, which ended in June, was 2.4 trillion Egyptian pounds (\$307 billion), Planning Minister Ashraf Al-Arabi told a press conference yesterday. "The economy has responded favorably to reform processes put in place by the government and economic stimulus measures that have injected huge additional investments into labor-intensive infrastructure projects," a statement from the ministry said.

Fourth-quarter growth for 2014/2015 rose to 4.5 percent from 3.8 percent a year earlier, the minister said. Total investment was 14.2 percent of GDP for 2014/2015, up from 13.3 percent a year earlier, but the country's trade deficit rose to \$38.8 billion for 2014/2015 from \$34.1 billion the year before. Egypt said yesterday it would increase exports to Russia by 15 percent next year to take advantage of Russian restrictions on Turkish imports and support its own ailing global exports, which dropped 17.4 percent in the first ten months of the year. Egypt's inflation rate for 2014/2015 was 10.9 percent, Arabi said. — Agencies

GM PLANNING TO IMPORT BUICK SUVs FROM CHINA

DETROIT: General Motors plans to start selling a Chinese-manufactured Buick SUV in the US starting next year. The company said Friday the Envision midsize SUV will be built at a factory in Yantai, China, that's part of Shanghai-GM, a Chinese joint venture. GM says the Envision will meet high quality and safety standards set for the Buick brand. Spokesman Patrick Morrissey says it's not economically feasible to build the SUV in another country at current sales projections. GM expects to sell three-quarters of the SUVs in China. Morrissey says the Envision was designed in Michigan, and importing it from China helps GM respond quickly to customer demand.

The Envision will be the third SUV for the struggling Buick brand, and will fall between the subcompact Encore and the full-size Enclave SUVs. Buick's US sales fell 3 percent through November even though overall US auto sales were up 5.4 percent, according to Autodata Corp. Duncan Aldred, vice president of Buick and GMC sales, said the Envision will be an important addition and help Buick in the fast-growing crossover SUV market. SUVs now make up 60 percent of Buick sales in North America, he said in a statement. The Envision is GM's first import from China, but not the first for an automaker. Earlier this year Volvo began importing a stretched version of the S60 sedan. — AP

CURRENT UNREST CASTS SHADOW ON CONDITIONS IN GCC NATIONS

RIYADH: The current wave of violence that is rocking the whole region casts shadow on the security, political and economic conditions in many Arab countries, a matter that affirms urgency to continue the march of promoting economic integration among the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). After more than 34 years since establishment of the GCC as a regional organization aimed at achieving coordination and coherence among its member states in all fields down to their joint determination and unity, an urgent need remains to promote economic integration among them to face consequences of political, economic and security crises in the region as well as challenges posed by global markets and international developments as well as to deal with sharp decline in revenues due to falling oil prices by more than 70 percent.

The GCC states had over the past years made long and great strides in achieving

coordination and integration in all economic fields to serve their common goals and to achieve unity taking into account the economic similarity of resources and production, the environment and geographical proximity, with an average per capita GDP of \$33,500. The first step, taken by the GCC states in this regard, was approval by the Supreme Council at its second session in November 1981 of the Unified Economic Agreement aimed to draw up a plan for joint economic action, stages of integration and economic cooperation between the GCC countries, constituting the nucleus of complementary programs that have been developed in detail over the first 20 years of the Council.

This agreement included in particular four key items including achievement of economic integration between the GCC states according to gradual steps, starting with creation of a free trade zone and cus-

toms union, and then completion of the GCC common market accomplishment of the monetary and economic union and establishment of the necessary common institutions. The 3rd article of this Convention stipulated approximation and unification of regulations, policies and strategies in the economic, financial and trade fields whereas the fourth item tackled linking up infrastructures of the GCC countries, particularly in the areas of transportation, electricity, gas and encourage the establishment of joint ventures.

And in line with developments of joint work during the first two decades of the life of the Council and developments and international challenges in the economic sphere, the Supreme Council approved at its 22nd session in December 2001 the Economic Agreement between the GCC countries. The agreement included clear items concerning the Customs Union of the

GCC countries and international economic relations of the GCC countries and other economic groups and international and regional organizations as well the provision of international and regional aid and the GCC common market and economic and monetary union.

It also touched on improving the investment environment in the GCC states, boosting integration among the GCC countries, including industrial development, oil and gas, natural resources, agricultural development, environmental protection as well as human resources and scientific and technical research, intellectual property protection and integration in infrastructure areas including transportation, communications and e-commerce. The Gulf states have continued their efforts to achieve economic integration over the past years under strict follow-up of the Council's leaders and have been able to achieve a number of key

achievements in this area, including establishment of the Gulf Monetary Council and the Monetary Union Agreement and the Statute of the Council in March 27, 2010.

December 2007 also saw the proclamation of the Gulf Common Market after completion of the main requirements as of the first of January 2008. The council has also managed to promote trade exchange between the member states within two phases; the first was related to the establishment of a free trade zone between the GCC countries as of March 1983 which led to the free movement of national goods among the GCC countries without customs duties, whereas the second phase concerned the establishment of the Customs Union of the GCC countries as of the first of January 2003, which called for unifying tariffs and free movement of goods among the GCC countries without tariff or non-tariff restrictions. —KUNA



NEW YORK: People pass by an American Eagle Outfitters clothing store, in New York. American Eagle Outfitters has reported quarterly earnings. —AP

UNITED AUTO WORKERS WIN VOTE AT VOLKSWAGEN'S LONE US PLANT

CHATTANOOGA: The United Auto Workers union has gained a significant first victory at a foreign-owned automaker in the South, easily winning a vote by skilled-trades workers at Volkswagen's lone US factory to have the UAW negotiate their collective bargaining agreements. The workers who repair and maintain machinery and robots at the German automaker's plant in Chattanooga voted 108-44 for UAW representation over two days ending Friday.

Volkswagen objected to the new vote favoring the UAW to represent just 162 skilled-trades workers, arguing that all of the plant's 1,400 blue-collar workers should have a say over union issues. The German automaker said it plans to appeal the ruling allowing the vote to the full National Labor Relations Board. "We believe that a union of only maintenance employees fractures our workforce and does not take into account the overwhelming community of interest shared between our maintenance and production employees," the company said in a statement.

The vote comes nearly 20 months after the union was narrowly defeated in an election involving all hourly employees at the plant. The UAW has been thwarted for decades in attempts to represent workers outside of General Motors, Ford and Fiat Chrysler. Ray Curry, the director of the UAW's Southern region, said the overwhelming union victory should persuade Volkswagen to drop its legal challenge. "We urge Volkswagen to respect the decision of its employees and recognize the local union as the representative of the skilled trades unit," he said at a news conference Friday punctuated by beeping car and truck horns of union supporters celebrating.

The American Council of Employees, a rival labor group at the Volkswagen plant, in a letter to workers before the vote criticized the move to organize the smaller group of workers. The group said the effort would serve to "subdivide maintenance workers with no concern for how this might negatively impact employees' long-term interests." The group also criticized the union for seeking the

vote amid the automaker's efforts to cope with its diesel emissions cheating scandal that contributed to a 60 percent drop in sales of the Chattanooga made Passat in November. "Volkswagen and our facility are in the midst of a crisis," the letter said. "We need unity now more than ever."

Mike Cantrell, the president of UAW Local 42 in Chattanooga, said the vote was announced weeks before cheating revelations surfaced. "The timing of the skilled trades election is unrelated to the Volkswagen emissions scandal," he said. Volkswagen also argued that the formation of the small bargaining unit goes against its hopes of creating a German-style works council at the plant to represent both hourly and salaried employees. The union disagreed, saying the move by the skilled-trades workers was just a first step. "We have said from the beginning of Local 42 that there are multiple paths to reach collective bargaining," Cantrell said. "And we believe these paths will give all of us a voice at Volkswagen in due time." —AP

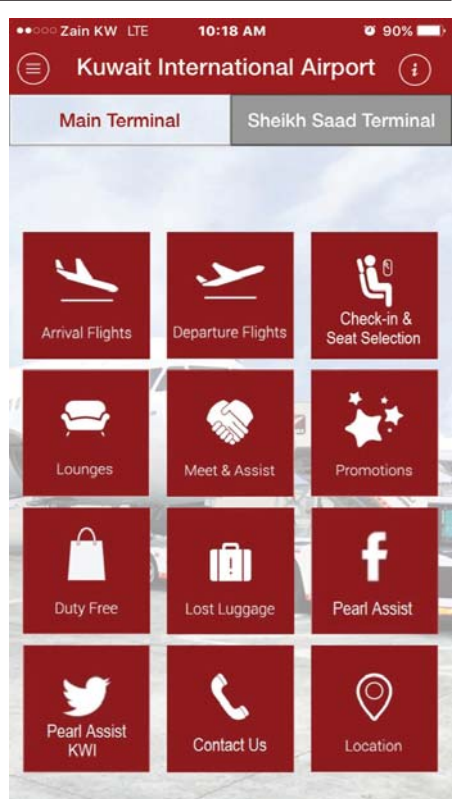
PORTUGAL NEW GOVT MOVES TO HALT PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT

LISBON: Portugal's new left-wing, anti-austerity government announced late Friday it was moving to halt the privatization of transport systems in Lisbon and Porto, a measure introduced by its right-wing predecessor. The government will ask the Court of Auditors to "suspend the authorization approval" which would have greenlit the privatization, it said in a statement carried by the Portuguese news agency Lusa. The previous right-wing government decided in September to hand the management of Lisbon's public transport over to the Spanish group Avanza, while the northern city of Porto would see its system managed by the Spanish Alsa

and French Transdev. But in November a leftist alliance led by the Socialist Party toppled the right-wing coalition and forced Prime Minister Pedro Passos Coelho to resign. The coalition had won the most votes in an October election but lost the absolute majority it had enjoyed since 2011, leading to weeks of political limbo. The Socialist Party and the hard left agree that the privatization of public transport in Portugal's two biggest cities should be blocked, but disagree over how it should be done. A parliamentary vote on the issue has been postponed pending further negotiations between the parties in the leftist bloc. —AFP

NAS AWARDED GOLD FOR 'BEST SMART PHONE APP'

KUWAIT: In one of the most prestigious awards in smart mobile phone applications, The Pan Arab Application Awards Committee in conjunction with the Arab Organization for Social Responsibility and TATWEEJ Academy awarded NAS Kuwait Airport MOBILE APP the one and only GOLDEN Award under Airports Category in the Pan Arab region in its 14th Edition. A special ceremony was held at Morooj Hotel in Dubai and was attended by the elite of smart phone applications' experts. The honoring letter with the Award of excellence Certificate read: "In appreciation for your effectiveness and commitment in using Airport Mobile Applications". Several Arab companies in various economic activities participated in the competition and each group competed according to their line of work.



EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.481
Indian Rupees	4.594
Pakistani Rupees	2.894
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.139
Nepali Rupees	2.873
Singapore Dollar	217.340
Hongkong Dollar	39.387
Bangladesh Taka	3.859
Philippine Peso	6.475
Thai Baht	8.520
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	81.443
Qatari Riyal	83.894
Omani Riyal	793.270
Bahraini Dinar	811.080
UAE Dirham	83.152
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	38.200
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	39.051
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.425
Tunisian Dinar	148.540
Jordanian Dinar	430.020
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.035
Syrian Lira	2.177
Morocco Dirham	30.740
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	305.250
Euro	325.240
Sterling Pound	461.390
Canadian dollar	228.990
Turkish lira	105.620
Swiss Franc	298.830
Australian Dollar	224.360
US Dollar Buying	304.050

	GOLD	
20 Gram	219.000	
10 Gram	112.43	
5 Gram	56.90	

UAE EXCHANGE CENTRE WLL

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

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

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

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

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

COUNTRY	SELL CASH	SELLDRAFT
British Pound	0.452774	0.461774
Czech Korune	0.003958	0.015958
Danish Krone	0.039328	0.044328
Euro	0.318280	0.326280
Norwegian Krone	0.031243	0.036443
Romanian Leu	0.072377	0.072377
Slovakia	0.009139	0.019139
Swedish Krona	0.031002	0.036002
Swiss Franc	0.290543	0.300743
Turkish Lira	0.100686	0.110986

	Australasia	
Australian Dollar	0.214535	0.226035
New Zealand Dollar	0.196861	0.206361

	America	
Canadian Dollar	0.222786	0.231286
US Dollars	0.301150	0.305650
US Dollars Mint	0.301650	0.305650

	Asia	
Bangladesh Taka	0.003520	0.004120
Chinese Yuan	0.046310	0.049810
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037292	0.040042
Indian Rupee	0.004344	0.004734
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002394	0.002574
Kenyan Shilling	0.002983	0.002983
Korean Won	0.000251	0.000266
Malaysian Ringgit	0.068512	0.074512
Nepalese Rupee	0.002925	0.003095
Pakistan Rupee	0.002709	0.002989
Philippine Peso	0.006409	0.006689
Sierra Leone	0.000070	0.000076
Singapore Dollar	0.213254	0.219254
South African Rand	0.015086	0.023586
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001773	0.002353
Taiwan	0.009208	0.009388
Thai Baht	0.008219	0.008769

	Arab	
Bahraini Dinar	0.802790	0.810790
Egyptian Pound	0.037250	0.040376
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000201	0.000261
Jordanian Dinar	0.426547	0.434047
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000152	0.000252
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022219	0.046219
Nigerian Naira	0.001264	0.001899
Omani Riyal	0.786436	0.792116
Qatar Riyal	0.083133	0.084346
Saudi Riyal	0.080763	0.081463
Syrian Pound	0.001294	0.001514
Tunisian Dinar	0.144840	0.152840
Turkish Lira	0.100686	0.110985
UAE Dirhams	0.082127	0.083276
Yemeni Riyal	0.001380	0.001460

OIL SLUMP THREATENS MADURO'S GRIP ON POWER

CARACAS: With global oil prices in a prolonged slump, late Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez's vision of "21st-century socialism" is in trouble both at home and abroad. The movement Chavez founded risks losing control of the National Assembly in legislative elections Sunday, even as Venezuela's sway over its fellow Latin American nations dwindles under the late leftist firebrand's successor, Nicolas Maduro. Chavez, who died of cancer in 2013, ruled Venezuela for 14 years with a mix of authoritarianism and charisma, using the oil giant's booming crude revenues to fund a populist economic model of lavish subsidies and social spending.

The first in a string of leftist leaders to surge to power in Latin America, Chavez also wielded outside influence in the region by granting cut-rate oil exports to friendly governments, rallying them around his fiery diatribes against US "hegemony." But as oil prices have plunged from more than \$100 a barrel to an average of \$46 this year, Venezuela's economy has sunk ever deeper into crisis and its "petro-diplomacy" has lost heft. "The socially and internationally ambitious model that Hugo Chavez put in place in 1999 rests on oil exports," said Jean-Jacques Kourliandsky, a Latin America specialist at French international relations institute IRIS.

"Venezuela had built an active and innovative social policy with oil revenues. Oil also gave it unprecedented capacity for diplomatic influence," he said. "The brutal drop in oil prices has shaken those two pillars of the regime." Venezuela has the world's largest

proven oil reserves, but its citizens have for months faced severe shortages of basic goods, long lines at the supermarket and inflation that the government says is 85 percent-but which independent analysts put in the triple digits.

Venezuelans' buying power has fallen 34 percent, to the lowest level in two decades, according to consulting firm Ecoanalitica. That is fueling widespread frustration with Maduro, whose popularity has sunk to 22 percent, and with the "Chavista" movement, which risks losing the legislature Sunday for the first time since Chavez came to power. Polls show the opposition leading by as much as 35 percentage points. "People are fed up. Inflation, scarcity, insecurity, violent crime. They're sick of it, especially the hard core of the 'Chavista' electorate, because inflation hits the poor worst of all," said Olivier Dabene, director of the Latin America observatory at French institute SciencesPo.

'Brutal adjustment'

Venezuela relies on oil exports for 96 percent of its hard currency-a shrinking money supply that it desperately needs to fund the imports on which its economy has grown dependent. It has sought to plug the gap with a system of exchange rate controls, but that has put downward pressure on the bolivar currency, which is worth 140 times less on the black market than at the official exchange rate. All that has put the country on track for a painful economic adjustment, analysts say.

But in a system where presidential power far outweighs the legislature's, an opposition win will not likely change



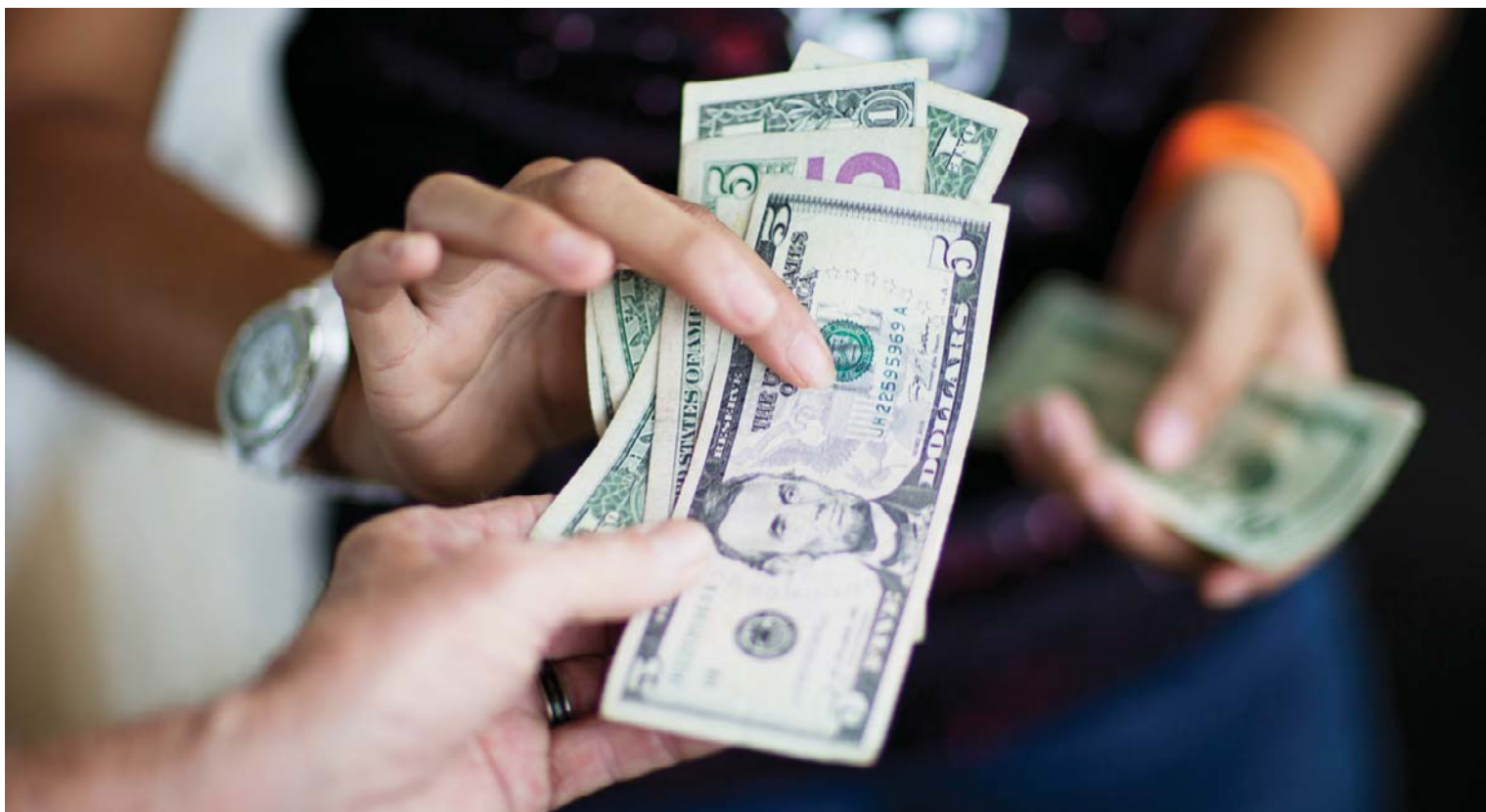
CARACAS: A boy rides his bicycle past a billboard promoting pro-government congressional candidates in Caracas, Venezuela.—AP

Venezuela's economic woes, said Carlos Malamud of the Real Instituto Elcano think tank in Spain. "Resolving the economic situation requires a brutal adjustment plan that will be strongly resisted by the working classes," he said. "It's one thing to have a majority in parliament, but it's another to have a bearing on the economy, especially in such a strong presidential system." Venezuela's influence in the region has meanwhile

declined sharply under Maduro, who lacks not only Chavez's good economic fortune but his charisma.

"Venezuela no longer has Chavez's leadership nor a commodity worth \$100 a barrel. That reduces its power and increases the willingness of regional leaders to speak out against (it)," said David Smilde of the Washington Office on Latin America. The leftward tilt that Chavez spearheaded appears to be flag-

ging in the region-from Argentina, which elected a conservative new president last month, to Brazil, where impeachment proceedings have been opened against leftist President Dilma Rousseff, and Cuba, a close Venezuelan ally that has embarked on a historic rapprochement with the United States. Venezuela "doesn't have the resources to buy influence anymore," said Malamud.—AFP



ATLANTA: A customer (bottom) pays for goods while shopping at the Atlanta Farmers Market in Atlanta. Some signs have suggested that wages are beginning to pick up after barely moving in the more than 6 years since the Great Recession officially ended. On Friday, Dec 4, 2015, the government's jobs report will offer some clues about whether the modest pay gains will continue.—AP

US EMPLOYMENT REPORT A GREEN LIGHT FOR FED INTEREST RATE RISE

NONFARM PAYROLLS INCREASE 211,000

WASHINGTON: US employment increased at a healthy pace in November, in another sign of the economy's resilience, and will most likely be followed by the first Federal Reserve interest rate rise in a decade later this month. Nonfarm payrolls rose 211,000 last month, the US Labor Department said on Friday. September and October data was revised to show 35,000 more jobs than previously reported. The unemployment rate held at a 7-1/2-year low of 5.0 percent, as people returned to the labor force in a sign of confidence in the jobs market. The jobless rate is in a range many Fed officials see as consistent with full employment and has dropped seven-tenths of a percentage point this year.

"The employment report should remove the final doubts about a rate hike at the December meeting. The clear message from the labor market to the Fed is: 'Just do it!'" said Harm Bandholz, chief US economist at UniCredit Research in New York. The closely watched employment report came a day after Fed Chair Janet Yellen struck an upbeat note on the economy when she testified before lawmakers, describing how it had largely met the criteria the US central bank has set for the Fed's first rate hike since June 2006.

Yellen said the economy needs to create just under 100,000 jobs a month to keep up with growth in the working age population. A Reuters survey of banks that deal directly with the Fed showed all but one of the so-called primary dealers expect the Fed will hike rates at the Dec 15-16 meeting. They see only a gradual pace of monetary policy tightening through 2016. The US dollar firmed against the euro after European Central Bank President Mario Draghi said in New York that the ECB could deploy more stimulus if needed. US Treasury debt yields initially rose, but later fell after OPEC failed to agree an oil production ceiling. US stocks ended higher.

Broad gains

The second month of strong job gains should allay fears the economy has hit a soft patch, after reports showing tepid consumer spending in October and a slowdown in services industry growth in November. Manufacturing contracted in November for the first time in three years, according to one business survey. A strong US dollar and spending cuts by energy companies have been headwinds to the economy. A separate report from the US Commerce Department on Friday

showed the international trade deficit widened in October as exports hit a three-year low. Though wage increases slowed last month, economists say that was mostly payback for October's outsized gains, which were driven by a calendar quirk. Anecdotal evidence, as well as data on labor-related costs, suggest that tightening job market conditions are starting to put upward pressure on wages.

"Payroll gains were despite continued weakness in manufacturing and energy sectors, suggesting little spillover into the rest of the economy," said Samuel Coffin, an economist at UBS in Stamford, Connecticut. Average hourly earnings increased 4.0 cents, or 0.2 percent from 0.4 percent in October. That lowered the year-on-year reading to 2.3 percent from 2.5 percent in October. The average workweek, however, dipped to 34.5 hours from 34.6.

Other labor market measures watched by Fed officials were mixed. The labor force participation rate, or the share of working-age Americans who are employed or at least looking for a job, rose to 62.5 percent from a near 38-year low of 62.4 percent. But a broad measure of joblessness that includes people who want to work but have given

up searching and those working part-time because they cannot find full-time employment rose one-tenth of a percentage point to 9.9 percent. That reflected an increase in part-time workers. Employment gains in November were broad-based, though manufacturing shed 1,000 positions. Factory employment has declined in three of the last four months. Manufacturing has been crippled by dollar strength, efforts by businesses to reduce bloated inventory and investment cuts by energy companies scaling back well drilling and exploration in response to the sharply lower oil prices. Mining purged 11,000 jobs, with oil and gas extraction losing 2,400 positions. Mining employment has dropped by 123,000 since reaching a peak in December 2014. Three quarters of the job losses over this period have been in support activities for mining.

Oilfield services provider Schlumberger this week announced another round of job cuts in addition to 20,000 layoffs already reported this year. Construction payrolls increased 46,000 last month, the largest gain since January 2014. Retail jobs rose 30,700 and transportation and warehousing employment rebounded after two straight months of declines.—Reuters

US APEX COURT TO HEAR PUERTO RICO DEBT CASE

WASHINGTON: The US Supreme Court agreed Friday to consider Puerto Rico's appeal of a ruling forbidding its use of a US law that would allow it to declare bankruptcy and restructure its crushing debt. Puerto Rico—a US possession in the Caribbean since 1898—is attempting to restructure much of its \$72 billion of debt. Officials in San Juan have made clear that it might miss debt payments in the next month without some relief from creditors and legislative support. The Supreme Court will likely review the case sometime during the first three months of 2016.

Governor Alejandro Garcia Padilla recently told a Senate panel that Puerto Rico's situation is hampered by creditors that refuse to reschedule its debt, and by US laws that prohibit the territory from entering bankruptcy protection. The 3.5 million island residents are US citizens, but since the

island is not a state, they do not have a voting representative in the US Congress. Puerto Rico's finances were dealt a crippling blow in 2006 with the loss of federal tax breaks for US companies with local operations. It has been in and out of recession in the years since.

As economic activity shrank, the government papered over budget shortfalls with fresh borrowing. Today, its debt stands at around \$72 billion (64 billion euros), and the White House has ruled out a financial bailout for the former Spanish colony. Currently, only US cities can legally go into what is known as Chapter 9 bankruptcy protection. Detroit took this drastic measure during the depths of an economic crisis in 2013. Puerto Rico officials on Tuesday made a \$354 million bond payment after threatening for days to default.—AFP

CHINA ANNOUNCES \$60 BILLION 'FUNDING SUPPORT' FOR AFRICA

JOHANNESBURG: Chinese President Xi Jinping announced \$60 billion of assistance and loans for Africa at a summit in Johannesburg on Friday, signaling 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 Brautigam, 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 industrialization, infrastructure, financial

services, poverty reduction, and peace and security. Zhong Jinhua, 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.—AFP

YAHOO BOARD IN FINAL TALKS ON THE FUTURE OF COMPANY

SAN FRANCISCO: Yahoo Inc's board of directors on Friday is in the third and final day of meetings that could decide the future of one of Silicon Valley's most prominent but troubled companies. One option on the table for the nine board members is whether to sell Yahoo's core business, which includes Mail, its sports sites, and advertising technology. The company is also in the process of deciding whether to continue with the spinoff of its \$30 billion stake in Chinese e-commerce company Alibaba Group Holdings Ltd.

SunTrust analyst Robert Peck said the board might hold off on any decision because of the complexity of some of the options. "While many investors may simply apply a mid single-digit EBITDA multiple to value the core, we believe the value is more intricate," he wrote, referring to earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization. According to tech news site Re/Code, Yahoo's board finished its meetings without a decision on the Alibaba spinoff. The site said a decision, which could include halting, delaying or continuing with the spinoff, was expected by the end of the weekend, citing sources.

Calls to sell the core business increased last month when activist investor Starboard Value

LP requested the move to avoid potential tax penalties associated with a spinoff of Alibaba. In January, Chief Executive Officer Marissa Mayer announced the plan to spin off the Alibaba stake into an independent business. Yahoo said the deal would be tax-free, but the US Internal Revenue Service has declined to verify that. Taxes related to the spinoff could leave Yahoo shareholders on the hook for \$12 billion.

Analysts who follow the company have said that private equity, media and Internet firms are potential buyers for Yahoo's core business. The Alibaba stake dates back to 2005, when Yahoo paid \$1 billion for a 40 percent slice of the company in a deal credited to the US company's co-founder, Jerry Yang. By 2012, the two companies struck a deal to sell more than half the stake back to Alibaba for \$6.3 billion in cash and \$800 million in preferred Alibaba Group shares. The deal brought Yahoo shareholders \$3 billion and the company more than \$1 billion to support its core business. But it also spotlighted the fact that the bulk of the company's value came from Alibaba and a 35.5 percent stake in Yahoo Japan Corp. Yahoo's shares closed up 1.7 percent at \$34.91 Friday.—Reuters



SUNNYVALE: Photo shows a sign in front of Yahoo headquarters in Sunnyvale, Calif.—AP

OIL PRICES DROP AT A QUICKER RATE

KUWAIT: By the end of November 2015, the 8th month of the current fiscal year 2015/2016 ended, oil prices continued their drop at a quicker rate breaking the US\$ 45 per barrel level for the third consecutive month. During November, the lowest average price for Kuwaiti oil was US\$ 35.32 per barrel on November 23rd while the highest was US\$ 42.49 per barrel on November 4th. Average oil price for November was US\$ 38.2 per barrel; US\$ -5 per barrel or -11.6% less than the October average of US\$ 43.2 per barrel.

It is also lower by US\$-6.8 per barrel or -15.1%, than the new hypothetical price per barrel estimated for the current budget at US\$ 45 per barrel. It is, however, lower by US\$ -36.8 than the hypothetical price for the previous fiscal year of US\$ 75 per barrel. The average price for the Kuwaiti oil price in November 2014 was US\$ 73.8 per barrel. The last fiscal year 2014/2015 which ended in last March was US\$ 81.3 per Kuwaiti oil barrel. This means the November 2015 average price, lost around -53% from past fiscal year average price and lost -48.2% of the November 2014 average price.

According to figures published in the State's financial accounts monthly follow up report of October 2015, issued by the Ministry of Finance, Kuwait achieved oil revenues by end of October -7 months- were around KD 8.783 billion, noting that Kuwait is supposed to have achieved around KD 1 billion in oil revenues in November. Therefore, anticipated oil revenues will increase during the 8 months to around KD 9.8 billion, equivalent to 91% of estimated oil revenues for the entire current fiscal year, in the amount of KD 10.7575 billion. Further, Kuwait achieved KD 640.2 million in non-oil revenues during the first seven months of the current fiscal year and will increase to KD 732 million by the 8th month. As such total projected revenues during the period would be around KD 10.5 billion.

Assuming that both production and prices levels are to continue at present levels, then the calculated oil revenues for the entire current fiscal year

Al Shall Weekly Economic Report

	30/09/2015	30/09/2014	Change		
	(Thousand KD)	(Thousand KD)	Value	%	
Total Assets	1,738,966	1,603,555	135,411	8.4%	↑
Total Liabilities	1,496,857	1,371,585	125,272	9.1%	↑
Equity Attributable to the equity holders of the bank	238,960	228,874	10,086	4.4%	↑
Total Operating Revenues	44,655	41,763	2,892	6.9%	↑
Total Operating Expenses	19,025	19,304	(279)	-1.4%	↓
Provision	13,265	12,008	1,257	10.5%	↑
Taxation	540	469	71	15.1%	↑
Net income	11,825	9,982	1,843	18.5%	↑
Ratios					
**Return on Average Assets (ROA)	0.93%	0.86%			↑
**Return on Average Equity Relevant To The Bank Shareholder (ROE)	6.6%	5.9%			↑
**Return on Capital (ROC)	15.2%	12.8%			↑
Earnings per share (EPS) – (Fils)	12.6	10.7	1.9	18.1%	↑
Closing price – (Fils)	228	325	(97)	-29.8%	↓
*Price to Earnings Per Share Multiplies (P/E)	13.6	22.9			
Price to Book Value Multiplies (P/B)	1	1.5			

* Indicators Ended September 30, 2015 on an annual basis
 ** Calculated based on the average rate of the financial data at the end of December 2014 and 30 September 2015

lion), a rise by KD 82.6 million, or by 35.8%, above October's figure (KD 230.4 million). It remained lower by 18.2% than its level in November 2014. The highest trading value in one day during the month was at KD 24.4 million on November 23, 2015 while the lowest value was on November 29, 2015 at KD 8.2 million. The daily average value of traded shares was KD 14.2 million (KD 12.1 million in October 2015, up by 17.3%). The banking sector

the year were only 4 since the end of October. This means that 10 markets, including that of 7 GCC markets, have declined during the elapsed part of the year.

The biggest winners in November were the German market which gains of around 4.9% during the month. The second-biggest was the Japanese market with 3.5%. The third was the Chinese market with 1.9%. The last is the most

second biggest loser was Dubai capital market which lost around -8.5% in one month thus become the second loser at the bottom with around -15.1% losses since the beginning of the year. The third biggest loser in November was Muscat stock market which lost in November around -6.4%. However, with its losses of around -12.5% since the beginning of the year it came in a better position in the negative zone than the Bahraini market which lost around -13.6% since the beginning of the year and the Saudi market which lost around -13.1%.

Generally, the seven Gulf markets lay at the bottom of the negative zone by their performance during the first 11 months of the year, the least loss went for Abu Dhabi which lost approximately -6.5%, followed by the weighted index of the Kuwait market which lost some -10.5%. Both the Saudi and Kuwaiti markets were the only ones which achieved gains in November. The continued performance in favor of the mature and emerging markets is due to continued drop in oil prices which lost around -10% -Brent- in November in addition to lack of any breakthrough in the geopolitical situation.

As December is the last month of the year, it is likely that most traders in most world markets are too keen to have positive performance for the sake of year end closure. Therefore, it is assumed that most markets will achieve gains during the December 2015. Yet, this year is exceptional as the oil market continues weak; the violence which covered the region began spreading outside by the exodus of refugees to Europe and beyond; violent explosions occurred in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Lebanon, Turkey and France; and also lifting American interest rates is to come soon. Therefore, risk impacts might beat traders' appetite.

KIB Financial Results

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced results of its operations for the first nine months of

the current year ending 30 September 2015, which indicate the bank achieved net profits after deducting taxes in the amount of KD 11.8 million, up by KD 1.8 million, or by 18.5%, vis-a-vis KD 10 million in the same period 2014. This increase in net profits is due to the increase in total operational incomes by 6.9% against a drop in total operational expenses by 1.4%.

In details, total operations incomes increased by KD 2.9 million, or by 6.9%, to KD 44.7 million (KD 41.8 million in the same period 2014) due to increase in the item of net investment incomes by KD 1.6 million to KD 4.4 million (KD 2.8 million in the same period 2014). Item of net fees and commissions incomes rose by KD 551 thousand to KD 6.5 million (KD 6 million). But the item of net gain from foreign exchange dropped by KD 120 thousand to KD 674 thousand (KD 794 thousand).

On the other hand, total operations expenditures decreased by KD 279 thousand, or by 1.4%, to KD 19 million (KD 19.3 million in the same period 2014). Item of staff costs and general & administrative expense increased by KD 863 thousand to KD 17.5 million (KD 16.6 million in the same period last year). Depreciation item dropped by KD 1.1 million to KD 1.5 million (KD 2.7 million). Percentage of total operational expenditures to total operational incomes scored 42.6% (46.2% in the first nine months of 2014). While total provisions rose by KD 1.3 million, or by 10.5%, to KD 13.3 million (KD 12 million). This explains the rise in the net profit margin to 26.5% (23.9% in the same period 2014).

The bank's financial statements indicate that the bank's total assets increased by KD 76.4 million or by 4.6%, to KD 1.739 billion (KD 1.663 billion in the end of 2014). Total assets increased by KD 135.4 million, or by 8.4%, (KD 1.604 billion in the same period 2014). Item of financing receivables increased by KD 63.8 million, or by 6%, to KD 1.127 billion (64.8% of total assets) versus KD 1.063 billion (63.9% of total assets) in the end of 2014. It increased by 8.1%, KD 84.1 million, compared to KD 1.043 billion (65% of total assets) in the same period 2014.

Item of dues from banks and other financial institutions increased by KD 20.3 million, or by 4.7%, to KD 453 million (26% of total assets) versus KD 432.7 million (26% of total assets in the end of 2014). But it rose by 13%, KD 52 million compared with KD 401 million (25% of total assets). Figures indicate that the bank's liabilities (excluding total equities) increased by KD 75.1 million, or by 5.3%, to KD 1.497 billion versus KD 1.422 billion in the end of 2014. They increased by KD 125.3 million, a growth rate by 9.1%, if compared with the total in the end of the same period of 2014. Percentage of financing receivable to deposits formed 77.3% (78.1% in the same period 2014).

Analysis of the financial statements calculated on annual basis indicates that all bank financial indexes increased compared with the same period 2014. Return on average equities relevant to the bank shareholder (ROE) increased to 6.6% (5.9%). Likewise, the return on average capital (ROC) also increased to 15.2% (12.8%). Return on average assets (ROA) also increased slightly to 0.93% (0.86%). EPS scored 12.6 fils (10.7 fils). (P/E) scored 13.6 times -improved- versus 22.9 times. This was achieved as a result of increased EPS by 18.1% above its level in the end of September 2014. The market price of the share dropped by 29.8% compared to its price on 30 September 2014. (P/B) scored around 1 time (1.5 times in the same period last year).

The following tables summarize last week's performance of KSE

Description	Week 48	Week 47	I
	03/12/2015	26/11/2015	
Working days	5	5	
AlShall index (38 Companies)	381.9	383.6	-0
KSE index	5,788.7	5,794.6	-0
Value Trade (KD)	48,610,920	78,455,391	
Daily average (KD)	9,722,184	15,691,078	-38
Volume Trade (Shares)	543,908,079	656,174,763	
Daily average (Shares)	108,781,616	131,234,953	-17
Transactions	14,166	17,351	
Daily average (Transactions)	2,833	3,470	-18

would be around KD 14.6 billion, which is around KD 3.8 billion higher than budgeted oil revenues. But the rise in oil revenues for the entire current fiscal year is conditional that it exceeds the first 8 months average price at US\$ 49.9 per barrel. With the addition of KD 1.4 billion in non-oil revenues, which exceeded the KD 2 billion mark for the past two fiscal years, the total budgeted revenues for the current fiscal year would be KD 16 billion.

Comparing this figure with the expenditures allocations of around KD 19.2 billion, the calculated fiscal year 2015/2016 deficit would be around KD 3.2 billion without deducting allotment to Future Generations Fund reserve. However, this deficit figure depends mainly on the average oil price and its production in the 4 remaining months of the year. Oil prices are continuing their decline, which will raise the value of the deficit, yet any saving within expenditures would reduce the deficit level.

KSE performance

KSE performance during November 2015 was more active vis-a-vis the performance in October. All indexes including traded value, traded volume, number of transaction and value of the general index (AlShall) went up. AlShall index reading at the end of Monday, 30 November 2015 was around 378.9 points, slightly up by 0.1 point, or by 0.02%, compared with its closure in the end of October 2015 when it closed at 378.8 points. It however dropped by around 83.3 points, or by 18%, compared with November 2014. The highest reading during the month was at 392.5 points on November 12, 2015 while the lowest was at 377.2 points on November 04, 2015.

Despite the drop in the Kuwaiti oil price, the three main indexes of the stock exchange rose, perhaps due to the positive results of some companies and the acquisition proposal offered by the 'Saudi Telecommunications Co' of 'VIVA' shares. The price index of the stock exchange rose to around 5,802.4 points (5,775.4 points in October 2015), 0.5% rise. Likewise, the weighted index rose to 393 points (388.4 points) gaining 1.2% due to the concentration of most trading on the shares of banks and big corporations. Kuwait 15 index rose to 929.6 points (924.3 points in the end of October 2015), a rise by 0.6%. When we compare performance of the main indexes (price, weighted, and Kuwait 15) to their performance levels in the end of 2014, we note their continued loss by around (-11.2%, -10.5% and -12.3%) respectively.

Total market value for traded shares (22 working days) be around KD 313 million (USD 1.026 bil-

lion), a rise by KD 82.6 million, or by 35.8%, above October's figure (KD 230.4 million). It remained lower by 18.2% than its level in November 2014. The highest trading value in one day during the month was at KD 24.4 million on November 23, 2015 while the lowest value was on November 29, 2015 at KD 8.2 million. The daily average value of traded shares was KD 14.2 million (KD 12.1 million in October 2015, up by 17.3%). The banking sector

important market as it suffered a massive release encountered by actions that do not normally succeed, yet its performance indicates recovery. The French market shared the gains of 1.2% despite the ugly violent events during the month. Only these four markets achieved positive performance for the elapsed part of 2015. The other three markets which are closer to the positive zone are all mature and emerging markets.

The biggest loser in November was the Qatari market which lost around -13%, a major setback to the bottom of the negative zone with some -17.9% losses since the beginning of the year. The

important market as it suffered a massive release encountered by actions that do not normally succeed, yet its performance indicates recovery. The French market shared the gains of 1.2% despite the ugly violent events during the month. Only these four markets achieved positive performance for the elapsed part of 2015. The other three markets which are closer to the positive zone are all mature and emerging markets.

Comparative performance

Performance of capital markets in November was mixed. Winning markets declined from 10 to 7 markets in November, and so did losing markets. Gains declined substantially in November compared to October levels. Strong performance was in favor of mature and emerging markets compared with the GCC markets. 5 out of 7 mature markets were gained while the opposite happened to the seven GCC markets of which 5 out of 7 declined. Positive performance since the start of

Most Active Sectors & Companies		
Description	Value Traded	% of Total
Sectors	KD	Market
KUWAIT FINANCE HOUSE	3,874,857	8.0%
NATIONAL BANK OF KUWAIT	3,801,163	7.8%
MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY K.S.C (ZAIN)	3,584,433	7.4%
KUWAIT TELECOMMUNICATIONS CO. (VIVA)	2,898,460	6.0%
GULF FINANCE HOUSE E.C.	2,529,458	5.2%
Total	16,688,370	34.3%
Description	Value Traded	% of Total
Sectors	KD	Market
BANKS SECTOR	12,539,345	25.8%
FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR	10,292,262	21.2%
REAL ESTATE SECTOR	6,873,060	14.1%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR	6,788,035	14.0%
INDUSTRIALS SECTOR	4,722,664	9.7%

ALSHALL INDEX		
	Week 48	Week 47
	03/12/2015	26/11/2015
Increased Value (# of Companies)	4	9
Decreased Value (# of Companies)	16	13
Unchanged Value (# of Companies)	18	16
Total Companies	38	38

	Company Name	THU	THU	DIFF	CLOSE	DIFF
		03/12/2015	26/11/2015	%	2015	%
1	The National Bank Of Kuwait	416.8	416.8	0.0	435.9	(4.4)
2	The Gulf Bank	223.5	223.5	0.0	224.4	(0.4)
3	Commercial Bank Of Kuwait	402.3	402.3	0.0	506.9	(20.6)
4	Al-Ahli Bank Of Kuwait	242.2	242.2	0.0	268.4	(9.8)
5	Kuwait International Bank	237.6	239.7	(0.9)	258.4	(8.0)
6	Ahli United Bank	432.2	432.2	0.0	465.7	(7.2)
7	Burgan Bank	359.6	364.4	(1.3)	428.3	(16.0)
8	Kuwait Finance House	1141.0	1141.0	0.0	1,306.8	(12.7)
	Banking Sector	425.5	426.0	(0.1)	464.5	(8.4)
9	Commercial Facilities Co	129.9	131.4	(1.1)	198.5	(34.6)
10	International Financial Advisors	251.3	267.5	(6.1)	332.3	(24.4)
11	National Investments	128.4	130.9	(1.9)	191.3	(32.9)
12	Kuwait Investment Projects	1292.5	1314.8	(1.7)	1,559.9	(17.1)
13	Coast Investment & Development	45.1	45.8	(1.5)	79.3	(43.1)
	Investment Sector	353.6	360.4	(1.9)	455.4	(22.4)
14	Kuwait Insurance Company	68.4	68.4	0.0	64.0	6.9
15	Gulf Insurance Company	427.7	427.7	0.0	342.2	25.0
16	Al-Ahleia Insurance Company	150.2	150.2	0.0	185.9	(19.2)
17	Warba Insurance Company	86.9	88.5	(1.8)	95.0	(8.5)
	Insurance Sector	151.5	151.6	(0.1)	143.8	5.4
18	Kuwait Real Estate Company	100.1	98.5	1.6	116.5	(14.1)
19	United Realty Company	193.7	201.9	(4.1)	203.9	(5.0)
20	National Real Estate Company	203.1	211.8	(4.1)	274.6	(26.0)
21	Salhiah Real Estate Company	1393.1	1372.9	1.5	1,514.2	(8.0)
	Real Estate Sector	185.7	188.0	(1.2)	216.7	(14.3)
22	The National Industries	123.3	123.3	0.0	169.8	(27.4)
23	Kuwait Cement Co	595.5	595.5	0.0	603.0	(1.2)
24	Refrigeration Industries Co	103.2	103.2	0.0	109.8	(6.0)
25	Gulf Cable & Electrical Industries	151.9	151.9	0.0	275.8	(44.9)
26	Contracting & Marine Services Co	69.7	69.7	0.0	72.1	(3.3)
	Industrial Sector	177.5	177.5	0.0	219.7	(19.2)
27	Kuwait National Cinemas	608.9	615.2	(1.0)	615.2	(1.0)
28	Kuwait Hotels Company	107.8	107.8	0.0	97.9	10.1
29	The Public Warehousing Co	2018.1	2095.7	(3.7)	2,735.1	(26.2)
30	Mobile Telecommunications Co - ZAIN	416.3	416.3	0.0	915.7	(54.5)
31	Safat Energy Co	13.6	13.1	3.8	22.8	(40.4)
	Services Sector	664.0	678.1	(2.1)	1,074.4	(38.2)
32	Livestock Transport & Trading Co	113.3	116.7	(2.9)	121.7	(6.9)
33	Danah Aalsafat Foodstuff Company	94.1	96.1	(2.1)	76.7	22.7
34	Kuwait United Poultry Co	60.0	58.7	2.2	60.0	0.0
35	Kuwait Food Co	2226.9	2246.6	(0.9)	2,759.0	(19.3)
	Food Sector	764.0	770.9	(0.9)	932.7	(18.1)
36	Sharjah Cement Co	358.3	362.5	(1.2)	371.7	(3.6)
37	Gulf Cement Co	330.6	330.6	0.0	387.1	(14.6)
38	Umm Al-Qaiwain Cement Industries	588.6	588.6	0.0	750.5	(21.6)
	Non Kuwaiti Companies	229.4	230.0	(0.3)	249.2	(7.9)
	General Index	381.9	383.6	(0.4)	444.0	(14.0)

GENERAL STRIKE PARALYZES ACTIVITIES IN GREECE

ATHENS: Greek unions have paralyzed public services and transport with a general strike over a planned social security overhaul—the second walkout in less than a month. The action hit trains, shipping and ferry services to Greek islands while hospitals were operating with emergency staff only. The strike piled more pressure on the left-wing government of Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, already weakened by his decision in July to accept a third EU bailout with strict austerity conditions to avoid a Greek exit from the euro.

Red flags fluttered in central Athens, signaling the first protest rally, organised

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

Dogs howl

Lawyers and teachers are also participating in the walkout. Journalists went

on a solidarity strike on Wednesday. A similar general strike was held on November 12 against the EU bailout and accompanying tax hikes. Over 20,000 people demonstrated in Athens at the time, and sporadic violence broke out between police and hooded youths who vandalised public property. Tsipras finds himself in a precarious political position after his leftist-nationalist coalition in November saw its parliamentary majority whittled to 153 deputies in the 300-seat parliament after a divisive vote on home foreclosures—another measure demanded by international creditors.

Despite his narrow parliamentary majority, Tsipras on Tuesday dismissed suggestions that his government is on its last legs. "Dogs howl but the caravan goes on," Tsipras told his lawmakers. "We will endure and achieve our targets. The people will judge us at the end of our term...in the autumn of 2019," the 41-year-old PM said. He stressed that Syriza has won three successive ballots since 2014, not counting a referendum against austerity in July.

Officially, Tsipras' Syriza party applauds strike action against the EU bailout, which the PM has called a "tactical

retreat." Nikolaos Adamopoulos, head of the leading civil servants' union Adedy, says opposition to the bailouts has already brought down three governments, suggesting a similar fate for Tsipras. "There will be a rearrangement in the political scene. There may be a majority in parliament in favor of the bailout but this is not reflected in society," Adamopoulos said. "The people do not trust parties, they showed it in the last election," Adamopoulos said. In the September election, nearly one in two eligible Greeks - 44 percent did not turn up to vote. — AFP

COAL COMMUNITY TAKES LITTLE SOLACE IN EX-CEO'S CONVICTION

DYING COAL INDUSTRY MAKES JOBS SCARCE, POVERTY ENDEMIC

WHITESVILLE: A 48-foot black granite monument with life-size silhouettes of 29 fallen miners defines this small Appalachian town, just downhill from the site of one of the deadliest US mine disasters. Survivors and friends of those who couldn't escape the underground inferno were deeply frustrated Friday by the misdemeanor conviction of coal executive and political powerbroker Don Blankenship, who ran the Upper Big Branch Mine as Massey Energy's chief executive. He was found guilty Thursday of conspiring to violate mine safety rules, punishable by less than a year in prison, but was acquitted on felonies that might have put him behind bars for 30 years.

In this community of about 500 people in southern West Virginia, where the dying coal industry has made jobs scarce and poverty endemic, the result seemed like another lump on a heap of despair. "It's a shame that all they found him guilty of was a misdemeanor. It was for naught," retired carpenter Glenn Thompson said as he paused at the memorial after buying a loaf of bread. "I guess the only thing we can do is to put our trust in God and go on. He's going to have to stand before God one day and give an account for his actions."

Judy Jones Petersen, whose brother Dean Jones was among those killed, said she felt vindicated even as she directed her ire at Blankenship: "Although you may not be judged responsible by the courts of this land, you are guilty. The blood of these 29 people is on your hands." Blankenship's indictment in November 2014 raised some hopes in town, but Jamie Amick said most of the customers at her gas station and convenience store in Whitesville were convinced he would escape justice.

After all, this was the coal baron who defeated unions, donated millions to unseat Democrats and routinely thwarted regulators over hundreds of safety and environmental rules his mines broke while growing Massey Energy's revenues to \$2.3 billion. His notoriety grew when he spent \$3.5 million to

overturn a \$50 million judgment against Massey by funding a campaign to replace a state Supreme Court justice. "They said that he has too much money and he's going to get off - and that's what happened," Amick said. "Everybody around here was wanting him to be put underneath the jail and the key thrown away." Blankenship's defense team didn't bother trying to make him seem like a nice guy. In closing arguments, his lead attorney, William Taylor, called him insulting, rude and a tough boss.

Prosecutors played phone calls Blankenship had secretly recorded in his office, in which he said preventing black lung wasn't worth the effort regulators put into it, complained that board members wanted to pay him only \$12 million one year, and said a scathing internal safety review should remain confidential because it would be terrible if lawyers were to discover it in the event of a death in the mine. Four lower-ranking Massey employees were convicted of felonies. Not so Blankenship, who persuaded a judge that Alpha Natural Resources, which bought Massey after the disaster, should have to pay his legal fees. US Attorney Booth Goodwin said Blankenship's conviction "sends a powerful message to executives who would ignore the safety of their workers."

Powerful message

But some who monitor coal for a living say the industry is already too far gone for the verdict to have much impact. "If a verdict of this nature was going to send a message, it would've been a lot more powerful message had it happened 20 or 25 years ago, when coal was booming," said Tony Oppgaard, a mine safety advocate and attorney in Lexington, Kentucky, representing miners. Fewer than 80,000 coal miners still work in the US, a tenth of the 1920s workforce. They produce nearly twice as much coal, but their future is grim: coal employment in West Virginia peaked at 130,000 miners in 1940 and was down to about 18,200 last year.

The Upper Big Branch Mine stretched across two counties in the heart of West Virginia's coal country, crisscrossed with railroad tracks to haul people and equipment through 19 openings. About 200 miners worked the seam on different shifts, until broken and clogged water sprayers allowed what should have been a minor flare-up to become an inferno on April 5, 2010. Stanley "Goose" Stewart was able to run out one of the shafts. He was 300 feet into the mine in a rail car at the start of his shift when a blast of air hit him. "I said, 'whoa, this ain't good,'" Stewart said. He attended more funerals than he cared to count, and hasn't been inside a mine since. Now retired, he focuses on his garden, raises chickens, hunts and fishes - anything to keep his mind off the mine.

"The best thing is, at least it's done. It's finished. He did get a conviction," said Stewart, who cried on the stand as he testified for the prosecution. "At least he does have a smear against him that he'll have to take to his grave." Manuel Arvon remembers the ambulances, the sirens, the police cars flying by his floral shop, the governor and federal mine safety officials coming to town. The explosion was devastating, and "will have an everlasting effect upon the community, for those who lived through it, at least," he said. "Of course, for the new generation, it will be but a memory."

The area's hopes now center on the steady hum of passing trucks carrying coal from mines that remain open. Signs around Whitesville proclaim "Let's turn this town around in 2015." But that seems unlikely. Many of the shops are boarded up in the town, which is squeezed between hills, rails, the Coal River and Coal River Road. There's a pizza shop and a pharmacy, but many homes are up for sale, and there are plenty of vacancies at the Mountain View Apartments. "It doesn't look good," Arvon said. "We don't even have a food store. It's a depressing area. Most of the young people who have any options are usually leaving." — AP



'RACE TO VICTORY' NISSAN SALES SKILLS CONTEST 2015

KUWAIT: "Race to Victory" was the slogan raised at Nissan Showroom on the 10th October 2015 at the annual Nissan Sales skills contest. Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babtain Co (AABC), the exclusive agent of Nissan in the State of Kuwait, selected their best Nissan salesman to represent Nissan Kuwait at the regional contests in Dubai. This annual event is held as a motivational scheme to improve the skills and knowledge required to aimed to deliver "Customer Experience Excellence" and retain highly skilled NSC's Sales staff with customer centric mindset.

Following extensive screening processes amongst the dealership's sales executives over two months, the top ten sales executives were chosen to compete amongst each other to decide the champion for the regional contests in Dubai in February 2016. Giving him a chance to win up to AED 10,000 and receiving a medal from Nissan Middle East. With the presence of the top figures of the company; Group Chief Operating Officer at Al-Babtain - Mohammed Shalaby, Al-Babtain HR General Manager - Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz, Sales General Manager for Nissan, Renault & Citroen-Issam Salama and Mahendhran-Group L & D Manager the event was introduced.

Distinguished guests from Nissan Gulf FZE also flew in from Dubai to attend this unique event and was represented by Director of Sales & Marketing Cameron Gowing, and two members of his Top managers as well

as other members of the organization showing support from Al-Babtain Group. Mohammed Shalaby, COO - Al-Babtain Group opened the event with his inspirational speech including "We (AABC) are extremely proud of the winners' efforts, dedication and skills during this competition."

Adding, "The contest is not just to choose a champion only, it is a way to show the advancement of the skills of all the participants and an acknowledgment of their hard work. Keeping knowledge and skills up to date enables our staff to deliver high quality service that meets the expectations of customers and safeguards the reputation of our organization. Nissan Al Babtain owes its success on quality customer service and a dedicated workforce."

The top ten sales executives were testing against the NISSAN's global selling standards evaluated through role plays conducted by managers across the group who acted as customers and for the day. The winners were presented with, medals, certificates and a customized Nissan Gulf FZE trophy that were offered from NGF Team. The winner of the gold medal was Mohamed Sayed Fahy in first place, Mohamed Samir Daiyani who came in second and Mohamed Ali Sabbah in third place. Mohamed Sayed Fahy will compete in the regional contests against the best Sales Executives from different countries. Al Babtain has great faith in him and that he will be coming back with a medal.



Etihad Airways President and Chief Executive Officer James Hogan is joined in a ribbon-cutting ceremony inaugurating the airline's new premium First and Business Class Lounge at New York's John F Kennedy International Airport by Hareb Almuhairey, Senior Vice President, Corporate and International Affairs (L), Martin Drew, Senior Vice President, The Americas and Etihad Airways' cabin crew.

ETIHAD AIRWAYS LAUNCHES ITS NEW LOUNGE AT NEW YORK JFK AIRPORT

NEW YORK: James Hogan, President and Chief Executive Officer of Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), yesterday officially opened the airline's First and Business Class Lounge at JFK International Airport. The new lounge is the second in the United States to join the airline's collection of premium lounges offered worldwide for its guests.

Conveniently located close to the gate area after the security checkpoint in JFK's International Terminal 4, the new lounge offers guests a unique travel environment reflecting twenty-first century Abu Dhabi modernism and embodies the highest levels of luxury and comfort for discerning travelers accustomed to world-class air travel experiences. Hogan said, "The opening of Etihad Airways' new First and Business Class Lounge at New York's JFK International Airport reinforces our commitment to investing in the travel experience and providing our guests with the highest levels of comfort, luxury and world-class hospitality at every point in their travel journey - on the ground and in the air."

The airline's new JFK lounge - which enhances its global lounge facilities in Abu Dhabi, Frankfurt, London Heathrow, Manchester, Dublin, Paris, Sydney and Washington, DC - is designed with the "Facets of Abu Dhabi" brand theme and



exclusively offers guests of Etihad Airways a series of signature moments of discovery and relaxation throughout the space. The lounge is adorned with the brand's geometric design concept and uses a color palette that reflects the varying hues of the landscape of the UAE, from the darker sands of Liwa to the lighter colors seen in the Northern

Emirates, designed by Chicago-based architect firm Gensler and global brand consultants Landor Associates. The new JFK lounge opening expands upon the airline's strategic lounge development plans.

Amenities in the JFK lounge include a sculptural showcase bar and lounge with an extensive and bespoke cocktail and mocktail offering developed in partnership with a leading London-based beverage consultancy, Fluid Movement - underpinning Etihad's commitment to culinary innovation and world class food and beverage.

In the lounge's dining area, guests can select from a choice of a la carte and international buffet options. The lounge is appointed in custom furnishings by Boss, offering a range of distinct seating styles throughout the extensive seating

areas available within the lounge. Further features include luxurious restrooms with showers and changing rooms, dedicated male and female ablution and prayer rooms, a library and luggage storage.

Etihad Airways guests travelling in The Residence by Etihad, First Apartments or Business Studios have access to the lounge pre-flight. A private lounge is accessible exclusively to guests travelling The Residence by Etihad, complementing the private luxury offered with this service in-flight. Etihad Airways' A380 featuring The Residence by Etihad, First Apartments, Business Studios and Economy Smart Seats commenced service between Abu Dhabi and New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport on November 23, 2015.

The daily A380 service replaces a Boeing 777 and complements a second B777 daily flight between the two cities (operated by Etihad Airways on a Jet Airways-branded aircraft). Etihad Airways commenced services to New York's JFK Airport on October 26, 2006 and today offers twice daily non-stop flights to Abu Dhabi. Additionally in the United States, Etihad offers daily service between Abu Dhabi and Washington, D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco, as well as service three times a week to Dallas/Fort Worth.

FIRST EVER SCCI TRADE EXHIBITION IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: The first ever trade exhibition organized by Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) - one of the premier business chambers of Pakistan, was held in Kuwait at the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce Exhibition hall. The Two-Day Trade Exhibition (1st & 2nd December, 2015) was officially inaugurated by Pakistan Ambassador to Kuwait HE Muhammad Aslam Khan. The exhibition witnessed a variety of products manufactured in Pakistan including Sports Items, Soccer Balls, Surgical & Dental products, cutlery & kitchen ware, auto parts, Safety Gloves, Factory Garments, Military Badges, Textile and Leather goods.

Amongst various clusters of trade & industry in Pakistan, Sialkot Industry stands tall amongst all which produces world-renowned items. Almost 99% of

their produced items are exported all around the world. It has been observed that various Sialkot-made products like factory uniforms, sports and surgical items are re-exported to Kuwait under a third country brand. This visit of exhibitors from Sialkot Chamber provided with the chance for local importers to strike direct business deals with them to save their added cost on purchase of same item with minor value addition from another country.

The event was very first of its kind because none of the 35 business chambers of Pakistan have ever attempted to showcase their potential in Kuwait so far and that too under the close co operation and co ordination from Kuwait Chamber of Commerce & Industry. The exhibition lasted for two days from 10:00 am till 4:00 pm.

'ARABIA MALL' WELCOMES GUESTS, PRUDENT INVESTORS

SPECIAL LOCATION AND UNIQUE BRANDS

KUWAIT: Dar Sama Real Estate Co, a subsidiary of Sama Holding Group, distinguished in real estate marketing, has announced the launching operations of the Arab Mall complex. This sophisticated mall, abounding in all the modern amenities and new gen. attractions, will be opened shortly to the honorable public. Beautifully set in Al Oqaila with easy access from the twin main roads on either side, this shopper-friendly complex has already attracted numerous local and global distinctive retailers.

The honorable CEO & Dy Chairman said that this news release is in pursuance of his earlier announcement of the Arab Mall opening in which a range of its distinguished features have been highlighted. "The Sama Group Holding", said Al Osaimi, "considered the mall as their dream project that should serve a 'mind-blowing experience' to the public superseding all their imaginable expectations both in form and content that the people should love to shop and roam for long".

Al Osaimi also highlighted the major features of this exquisite complex: - A strategic location in a densely populated area of nearly 220,000 people. Easy access from the two main streets on either side. This lets the retail shops enjoy extra major fronts giving an added value to their investment. - Five entrances perfectly distributed to ensure a smooth vehicle-flow in and out of the complex premises. - Flexible spaces where shop sizes start from 20 sqm up



to any giant space of your choice. - Integrated Services to include parking guard, security and cleaning services. - This architectural masterpiece surrounded by an exquisite, neatly engineered landscape permeates a cool ambience that none can resist. - Natural and relaxing lighting arrangements suitable to each floor.

Investment opportunities

Al Osaimi pointed out saying: "In light of these distinguished characteristics, the Arab Mall is no doubt, a safe haven for investment that will fetch assured returns at a higher percentage in comparison with other sectors of the economy, a fact reinforced by the company's present trend in which the investors

who have hitherto been directing their investments to medium sized commercial complexes have volunteered to invest with us". "Such features", he added, "were instrumental to filling up the mall's available space in record time, attracting local and international leading retailers. This in turn contributed to strengthening the elite status of the complex and enhancing its reputation as a remarkable commercial and shopping destination for all".

Excellence in design

The Arab Mall could be rated as the finest mall in terms of both design and implementation, where the most accurate global standards have been kept in creating this brilliant architectural mas-



terpiece. In addition to its eye-catching external demeanor similar to the letter 'L' in Latin, the interior space is designed in an immensely rich style and manner with respect to an endearing distribution of its various activities; this in turn has facilitated a smooth and comfortable movement among its different sections and the distribution of the rented companies according to the nature of their activities and the extent of interdependence among themselves.

Regarding the technical aspects the mall's interior has been provided with advanced infrastructure, as it includes 9 lifts, 18 electric stairs and a 2 Tire lift from the prestigious Mitsubishi. The complex has also provided an intelligent control system BMS in all the electrical

appliances and lighting as well as the cooling system. The complex assures the highest safety standards and runs on a continuous monitoring system.

Natural elements

The Landscape experts specially designed this for a very relaxing and homely shopping experience. The visitors and the shoppers can enjoy the natural coolness and serenity both before and after an exhaustive shopping, an irresistible feel that can be identified from the moment of the visitor's arrival in the outer area rich in green herbal floors and trees. So are the interior sections where its exquisite design lets the daylight penetrate evenly to the various floors as it were by Nature too!



Fawzi Dajani, NBK London GM receives the award.

'THE BANKER' NAMES NBK KUWAIT 'BANK OF THE YEAR'

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) has been named "The Bank of the Year" in Kuwait 2015 by the leading and internationally renowned Financial Times magazine "The Banker". The prestigious Banker award was presented to Fawzi Al Dajani, NBK London General Manager, on behalf of NBK, at a glittering awarding ceremony specially held in London for the occasion and attended by a host of international and regional senior bankers and executives. "NBK's market-leading position in corporate banking in Kuwait was of particular note in 2014, with the lender acting as mandated lead arranger for a number of mega-deals," said The Banker.

The Banker noted that the strength of NBK's corporate banking offering means it has an estimated market share of 75% of foreign corporates operating in the country. Similarly, its dominance in trade finance has seen the bank secure about an 80% share of export letters of credit. It is also the

only Kuwaiti lender to have 100% of the business of the Kuwait National Petroleum Company, underscoring its expertise in the oil and gas industry.

NBK continues to enjoy collectively the highest ratings among all banks in the Middle East from the three international rating agencies Moody's, Fitch Ratings and Standard and Poor's. The Bank's ratings are supported by its high capitalization, prudent lending policies, and its disciplined approach to risk management, in addition to its highly recognized and very stable management team. NBK was also named among Global Finance's list of the 50 safest banks in the world for the tenth consecutive time. NBK enjoys the widest banking presence with a local and international network reaching 4 continents. NBK's international presence spans many of the world's leading financial centers including New York, Europe, GCC, Middle East, Singapore as well as China (Shanghai).

GULF BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF THE AL DANAH DAILY DRAWS

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al Danah daily draws on 29 November 2015 announcing the names of its winners for the week of 22 November - 26 November 2015. The Al Danah daily draws include draws each and every working day for two prizes of KD1,000 per winner. The winners were: (Sunday 22/11): Mariam Abulwahab Ahmad Abu Farseen, Ahmed Jaseem Mohammed Abdulaziz Al-Munai; (Monday 23/11): Amirah Ahmad Mamon, Bassam Abduljaber Towfeq Abdaljaber Al-Shamlawi; (Tuesday 24/11): Abdullah Abdulaziz Abdullah Al-Arabi, Ali Fayed Gharib; (Wednesday 25/11): Mahmoud Salah Elidin Abdel Motagalli Eliwa, Fatemah Abdulateef Al-Khatrash; (Thursday 26/11): Fares Sary Mohammad Ibrahim, Gadeer Mahmoud Hassan Al-Lanqawi.

Gulf Bank's Al Danah 2015 draw line-up includes daily draws (2 winners per working day each receive KD1,000). The final Al Danah draw for One Million Dinars will be held on 7 January 2016. The Al Danah Millionaire will be announced alongside winners of KD250,000 and KD50,000 cash prizes. Five reasons why the Al Danah account is the Best: (1) Kuwait's single biggest year-

ly cash prize of KD 1 Million. (2) Kuwait's biggest quarterly cash prizes, up to KD500,000. (3) Two winners of KD1,000 every working day. (4) The most opportunities to win (64 draws a year, and up to 532 winners). (5) Only Bank that transfers your chances to win from year to year.

Open an account and Deposit now to Win Big, Live Big, with Al Danah 2015. Al Danah also offers a number of unique services including: the Al Danah Deposit Only ATM card which helps account holders deposit their money at their convenience; as well as the Al Danah calculator to help customers calculate their chances of becoming an Al Danah winner. Gulf Bank's Al Danah account is open to Kuwaitis and all residents of Kuwait. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will enter the draw within two days. To take part in the Al Danah 2015 upcoming yearly draw, customers must have an Al Danah account containing at least KD 200. To be part of the Al Danah draws, customers can visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, transfer on line, or call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805 for assistance and guidance.

VOLATILE WEEK MAY SET US STOCKS FOR YEAR-END RALLY

WALL ST WEEK AHEAD

NEW YORK: This week's back-to-back equities selloff might have been a chance to ride a US stocks rally towards the end of the year, amid the goldilocks economy scenario of a strong jobs market and falling oil prices. The S&P 500 rallied 2 percent Friday to eke a slight gain for the week, the ninth up week out of the last 10, after the US economy added more jobs than expected in November in a show of the economy's resilience.

The data likely paved the way for the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates this month for the first time in nearly a decade, while still keeping the US central bank committed to a shallow and slow pace of increases. "The story today in the US is growth with modest inflation, which is great for equities," said Paul Zensky, chief investment officer, multi-asset strategies and solutions at Voya Investment Management in New York. "I see nothing on the calendar outside a geopolitical event that is going to make them (the Fed) change course at this point," he said. Markets have for weeks expected the Fed to raise rates after its Dec. 15-16 meeting.

Earlier in the week, stocks sold off after the

unwinding of short bets on the euro seeped into most asset classes. The euro posted its largest daily gain against the U.S. dollar in more than six years on Thursday after ECB President Mario Draghi's statement fell short of expectation for further easing. Some of the selling was related to leveraged funds that were likely forced to close positions as volatility jumped. According to Bank of America research, these funds, which were heavily involved in the dramatic stocks selloff in late August, had returned to the level of leverage they had prior to that downturn.

Draghi on Friday said the ECB could deploy more stimulus if needed, leading traders to reestablish short positions in the bloc's single currency. "In many ways he was trying to undo some of the damage from the perception that he didn't do enough," said Quincy Krosby, market strategist at Prudential Financial in Newark, New Jersey. In contrast to Draghi, she said, Fed Chair Janet Yellen is not expected to surprise markets. "As long as she sticks to the script that she wrote the market shouldn't be shocked. The market is again factoring in the rate hike, today's good (payrolls) news should

be good news that ultimately is a positive."

Oil, seasonality support bulls

Adding to the strong jobs data as a bullish stocks catalyst, crude prices resumed their fall after news that the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries was planning to maintain its production near record highs despite already depressed prices. "The headwind of falling oil in 2015 in terms of earnings will become a tailwind in 2016," said Steve Chivarova, associate portfolio manager at Federated Investors in New York, pointing to the benefits of lower oil prices for main street. "When you take a wide look at the consumer, not just retail sales, the consumer looks healthy." Retail sales data out next Friday could confirm the upbeat state of consumers heading into the key holiday season. The end of year seasonality could also be supportive of higher stock prices. December is historically the best month for the S&P 500 according to data from the Stock Trader's Almanac. "We should enjoy the rally and perhaps wait until we transition into the new year to focus back on fundamentals," Krosby said.—Reuters

LUXURY IS WITHIN REACH WITH CADILLAC ATS - ONLY KD 9,999

KUWAIT: With the end of the year fast approaching, the opportunity to start the new year with a whole new level of luxury presents itself: Yusuf Ahmed Alghanim & Sons Automotive, the sole distributor of Chevrolet and Cadillac cars in Kuwait, is proudly offering the impressive Cadillac ATS at only KD 9,999. And with this invitation to the world of prestige comes a showcase of the 2016 Cadillac SRX at KD 12,999.

So a visit to the Cadillac showroom at Safat Alghanim in Al Rai is an absolute must for an engaging test drive. Regardless of the model, all Cadillac owners will enjoy the Cadillac User Experience (CUE), a comprehensive in-vehicle experience that merges intuitive design with auto industry-first controls while providing connectivity, control and convenience to the driver and passengers alike.

It pairs entertainment and information data from up to 10 Bluetooth-enabled mobile devices, USBs, SD cards and MP3 players with a vehicle infotainment system - a setup that will reduce complexity through natural voice commands, customized information, fewer buttons and larger icons. CUE is operated from a vibrant 8-inch LCD touch screen that resembles a smart phone's screen by using large, easy to see icons to control commands and functions. The screen is seamlessly integrated into the top of the central instrument panel, and a motorized fully capacitive faceplate at the bottom conceals a large storage area.

If you are looking for a luxury drive that performs excellently on all terrains, look no further than the Cadillac ATS. Now priced at an attractive price of only KD 9,999, the Cadillac ATS compact luxury sports sedan challenges the world's best premium cars with an acclaimed balance of performance and refinement, effectively wrapped in a progressive expression of Cadillac's Art & Science design philosophy.

With one of the lowest curb weights in the segment-less than 1,542 kg-the ATS's driving dynamics are rooted in mass efficiency, which helps make it Cadillac's lightest and most agile sedan. Cadillac proprietary computational fluid dynamics (CFD) analysis techniques were used to develop an all-new combustion system with a higher compression ratio, which also helps boost efficiency. The award-winning 3.6L V-6 collection is rated at 321 horsepower and 373 Nm of torque, and comes equipped with Magnetic Ride Control, Brembo Brakes and Cadillac's advanced crash-avoidance systems that can pre-fill and automatically apply braking in response to potential hazards.

If you plan on test-driving the Cadillac ATS, then make your visit even more worthwhile by checking out the 2016 Cadillac SRX that is now available at KD 12,999. One look at the 2016 Cadillac SRX will reveal the opulent doses of luxury that touch every corner of the vehicle, from the high performance powertrain and technology drenched dashboard to the exclusive comfort and convenience features designed to surpass expectations. In addition to its roomy interior with seating for five and a large cargo area, the 2016 SRX is also beautifully sculpted; its exterior design is distinguished by striking angles and refined detail while its signature shield grille offers expressive depth and refinement.

Performance is integral in the SRX, which is powered by a 3.6L direct-injected V-6 engine rated at a SAE-certified 308 horsepower (230 kW) and 359 Nm of torque. Lightweight features help reduce overall weight for greater efficiency and a more favorable front-to-rear weight balance. Examples include a composite intake manifold that saves approximately 2.5 kg over the weight of a comparable aluminum intake and an integrated cylinder head/exhaust manifold

design that saves approximately 6 kg per engine. An all-wheel drive is offered on all models. The SRX also includes radar-based Adaptive Cruise Control and Automatic Front and Rear Braking, front and rear automatic braking that relies on short-range radar technology and ultrasonic sensors to help the driver prevent front and rear low-speed collisions via a progression of alerts that extend to complete braking, if necessary.

Plus, additional advanced safety features are offered on the SRX's Driver Awareness and Driver Assist packages. Cadillac has been a leading luxury auto brand since 1902. Today, Cadillac is growing globally, driven by an expanding product portfolio featuring dramatic design and technolo-

gy. Described as having a luxurious, bold and daring image as well as being powerful and safe, Cadillac has maintained an iconic presence for over 85 years in the Middle East.

Yusuf Ahmed Alghanim & Sons Automotive further's Cadillac's superiority by showcasing the company's commitment to enhance customers' unique Cadillac experience by offering customers peace of mind with a comprehensive insurance program. In addition, all Cadillac owners will enjoy service and maintenance for four years or 100,000 km, warranty for 4 years or 100,000 km, 24-hour roadside assistance anywhere in the Middle East for four years (unlimited miles) plus a courtesy transportation and a replacement vehicle upon availability.



MICROSOFT AND CODE.ORG TEAM UP TO BRING 'MINECRAFT' TO HOUR OF CODE

KUWAIT: Microsoft Corp, Mojang AB, and Code.org unveiled a "Minecraft" coding tutorial for students and educators, created especially for the third-annual Hour of Code, a campaign to broaden global participation in computer science, held during Computer Science Education Week, Dec. 7-13. The new tutorial, now available at <https://www.code.org/mc>, introduces players to basic coding within the fun and popular "Minecraft" environment. Created by "Minecraft" game designers together with Code.org, the tutorial features Steve and Alex from "Minecraft" and "Minecraft"-inspired challenges that will be familiar to its more than 100 million players around the world.

"A core part of our mission to empower every person on the planet is equipping youth with computational thinking and problem-solving skills to succeed in an increasingly digital world," said Satya

Nadella, chief executive officer, Microsoft. "With 'Minecraft' and Code.org, we aim to spark creativity in the next generation of innovators in a way that is natural, collaborative and fun."

Coding skills

Designed for ages 6 and up, the "Minecraft" tutorial introduces players to basic coding skills, encouraging them to navigate, mine, craft and explore in a 2-D "Minecraft" world by plugging together blocks to complete all actions and generate computer code. Players are offered a set of 14 challenges, including free play time, to explore coding concepts they've learned through the tutorial. "Minecraft" is a special game that girls and boys alike often can't be pried away from," said Code.org CEO and Co-founder Hadi Partovi. "Microsoft continues to be Code.org's most generous donor and one of the largest supporters of the world-



Charles Nahas

wide movement to give every student the opportunity to learn computer science. This year's 'Minecraft' tutorial will empower mil-

lions of learners around the world to explore how a game they love actually works and will inspire them to impact the world by creating their own technology or apps."

Commenting on "Minecraft", Charles Nahas, Microsoft Kuwait General Manager said: "We are fully committed to empower our youth, providing them access to a solid foundation of skills. In line with that, Minecraft code tutorial empowers and inspires youth in Kuwait but across the world and in Kuwait to develop coding skills in a fun way". "Microsoft's support to youth has been evident through many of its own tailored initiatives such as Imagine Cup as well as other events with local schools and universities. Our commitment comes as a result of our strong belief in the power of youth and ability to form the future" Nahas added.

100 million students

To date, more than 100 million students

across 180 countries and 40 languages have participated in the Hour of Code, including one in three students in US schools. This year, the campaign expects to exceed 100,000 events during Dec 7-13 and to continue introducing more girls and underrepresented students of color to this foundational 21st century field.

In support of Code.org and the global Hour of Code campaign, Microsoft will also lead thousands of Hour of Code events in more than 50 countries around the world. Events will take place at Microsoft stores, offices and innovation centers as well as facilities of Microsoft's YouthSpark nonprofit partners and schools. They will be led by over 7,000 Microsoft Student Partners, Most Valuable Professionals (MVPs) and employee volunteers. In addition, Microsoft is gifting Windows Store credit to every educator who organizes an Hour of Code event worldwide.

SOCIAL MEDIA, THE NEW MEGAPHONE FOR VIOLENT PERPETRATORS

PALO ALTO: Tashfeen Malik, the woman involved in this week's Southern California mass shooting, has another claim to notoriety: She's the latest in a growing line of extremists and disturbed killers who have used social media to punctuate their horrific violence.

A Facebook official said Friday that Malik, using an alias, praised the Islamic State group in a Facebook post shortly before - or during - the attack. Malik's posting echoes similar bids for attention by violent perpetrators, including a disgruntled Virginia broadcaster who recorded himself shooting two co-workers and then posted the video online and a Florida man who killed his wife and shared a photo of her body on social media. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other social media companies do their best to block or remove posts that glorify violence. But experts say it's an uphill battle, and the advent of new services that let people stream live video from any event will only make the task more challenging. "Now everyone has the opportunity to talk to a larger audience," said Karen North, a professor of digital social media at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School. "If you commit an act and you want people to know about it, you now have a way to promote it."

Social media didn't invent extremist violence. But the Islamic State and similar groups have become deft at using social media to spread their message, both to recruit followers and to threaten their perceived enemies. "They can rapidly and easily identify others who share their beliefs," said Marcus Thomas, a former assistant director of the FBI's operational technology division.

Like many young adults, the 27-year-old Malik and her 28-year-old husband, Syed Farook, seemed comfortable with social media. A US intelligence official said Farook had been in contact with known Islamic extremists online. But there is no sign anyone from the Islamic State communicated with Malik or provided any guidance for the attack on a San Bernardino social service center, which left 14 people dead and 21 wounded.

Automated software

YouTube, Twitter and other online services use automated software to help detect posts that violate their terms of service, including those that depict or encourage violence. They also encourage users to report such material, so it can be reviewed and removed.

Facebook declined comment Friday. But the page containing statements posted by the woman involved in this week's San Bernardino shootings was taken down. Malik and her husband, Syed Farook, died hours after the attack in a gun battle with police. The social network has done "a fairly good job of making sure that users understand" that posts or videos glorifying violence will be taken down, said Stephen Balkam, head of the nonprofit Family Online Safety Institute, which works with Facebook and other sites to promote safe practices for children.

Still, he cautioned: "All the policies in the world won't help" unless companies also devote staff and resources to enforcing them. Even then, he said, it's not always easy to determine whether



This undated photo provided by the FBI shows Tashfeen Malik. Malik and her husband, Syed Farook, died in a fierce gunbattle with authorities several hours after their commando-style assault on a gathering of Farook's colleagues from San Bernardino, California, County's health department Wednesday, December 2, 2015. — AP

taking something down is the right thing to do.

Two years ago, Balkam publicly criticized Facebook when the giant social network reversed its own decision to take down a graphic video of a masked man beheading a woman. In that case, Facebook said it decided to allow the video because users were sharing it as a way of condemning the violence attributed to Mexican drug gangs. But the company eventually concluded the post was too offensive and removed it again.

Violent posts

Another problem: Violent posts can resurface even after they are taken down. When a fired TV reporter with a grudge killed two former co-workers in Virginia over the summer, he videotaped his own actions and then uploaded the clip to Facebook. The company took it down, but not before someone else had copied it and reposted it on other sites, North said.

Facebook explicitly bans content being shared by "dangerous organizations" engaged in terrorist activity or organized crime. But even that requires a judgment call, because not everyone around the world defines terrorism in the same way, said David Greene, civil liberties director for the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a digital rights group. "Most of these areas are more gray than black or white, and that can put these companies in a very difficult position," Greene said. Lawmakers in the US Senate recently considered a bill that would require social media companies to report any "terrorist activity" they found on their site to government authorities. Opponents questioned whether private companies were qualified to decide what constitutes terrorist activity. Tech representatives also warned the bill would have resulted in excessive reports to law enforcement and an overload of unhelpful data. The provision was later dropped. — AP

FACEBOOK EXPANDS SHARING OPTIONS TO INCLUDE LIVE VIDEO

SAN FRANCISCO: Get ready to start watching live video of your friends and family doing something fun, boring or even dumb on Facebook. The world's largest social network is testing a new feature that will enable its 1.5 billion users to use their smartphones to shoot video so other people can see what they are doing as it happens.

Facebook began testing the live video option Thursday among a sliver of its US audience with iPhones. The Menlo Park, California, company didn't specify when everyone with a Facebook account and a smartphone will have an opportunity to broadcast live. The feature represents Facebook's latest challenge to online messaging service Twitter, which introduced a live video application called Periscope earlier this year. Another popular app called Meerkat also can be used to share live video in social circles.

This isn't the first time that Facebook Inc. has copied others' ideas in an attempt to ensure its social network remains the leading digital hangout. In recent years, Facebook also has embraced the hashtag symbol, a Twitter technique for flagging major events and topics of conversation, and cloned an option to check into specific places that was popularized by Foursquare.

In another move of mimicry, Facebook is introducing another feature called "Collage" that will automatically bundle photos and video taken in the same place or at the same event into a slideshow. The concept

mirrors a feature that Google introduced in its Plus social network years ago and imported into its Photo app six months ago.

The Collage option initially will be available on Facebook's iPhone app before expanding on to its version for Android phones early next year. Facebook is touting live video and Collage as a leap forward in its attempt to bring its users closer together even though they may be located thousands of miles apart. The idea is to allow people to feel as if they are on the same beach on a Hawaiian vacation, in the same kitchen while testing out a new recipe, in the same living room unwrapping Christmas gifts, or in the same room singing together during the concert of a favorite band.

Eventually, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg hopes to deploy the virtual reality technology that the company acquired last year in a \$2 billion purchase of Oculus to transform video into an even more-lifelike encounter.

The live video option also could create legal headaches for Facebook and copyright owners, based on what has happened with Periscope. That's because some people have used live video to share shots of movies and pay-per-view sporting events that are protected by copyright. The practice has forced copyright owners to monitor Periscope for violations of their rights and notify Twitter so it can block or take down the videos. — AP

NIelsen: SMARTPHONES AND THE INTERNET ARE EATING OUR TV TIME

LOS ANGELES: The use of Internet-ready devices like smartphones appears to have seriously cut into the time Americans spend watching traditional TV, new Nielsen data show, potentially undermining the notion that mobile devices merely serve as "second screens" while people are plopped in front of the set.

Data provided to The Associated Press show an increase in the number of 18-to-34-year-olds who used a smartphone, tablet or TV-connected device like a streaming box or game console. That grew 26 percent in May compared with a year earlier, to an average of 8.5 million people per minute.

Those devices, which all showed gains in usage, more than offset declines in traditional TV, radio and computers. In the same age group, the demographic most highly coveted by advertisers, use of those devices fell 8 percent over the same period to a combined 16.6 million people per minute.

It's not a one-to-one tradeoff, though. Sometimes people are using smartphones while watching TV, or using them outside the home where it wouldn't cut into TV time. In addition, some mobile device use is, well, to watch TV shows.

Nielsen's inaugural "Comparable Metrics" report for the first time presents data on average use per minute, making it possible to directly compare various devices. The study counts all apps, Web surfing and game play but not texts or calling.

The results confirm a trend in other Nielsen data

that found viewing of traditional TV - through a cable or satellite connection or an antenna - peaked in the 2009-10 season.

"It's pretty clear the increased use of mobile devices is having some effect on the system as a whole," said Glenn Enoch, Nielsen's senior vice president of audience insights. The audience for TV viewing alone fell by 10 percent, to 8.4 million people a minute, in the 18-to-34-year-old category.

The new Nielsen data also looks at time spent watching video on various devices, but not for TV-connected devices, where users were clocked playing games as well. However, even excluding TV-connected devices, the shift in video watching away from the TV is pronounced.

For the young group, viewing on TVs fell 10 minutes to an average of 5 hours and 43 minutes a day. That's more than compensated for the 33-minute gain in viewing video on computers, smartphones and tablets, which rose to 3 hours and 43 minutes.

Since Nielsen inaugurated its tracking service in 1949, average daily TV viewing has grown steadily, from 4 hours and 35 minutes a day to a peak of 8 hours and 55 minutes in 2009-10. That increase coincided with growing numbers of TV sets sold and the proliferation of programming on cable channels. But viewership has been declining ever since. From late September until mid-November this year, daily TV watching accounted for only 8 hours and 13 minutes, Nielsen said. — AP

Less TV viewing

Since the average TV watching per day peaked in 2009-2010 it has been on the decline ever since.

SEASON*	HOUSEHOLD AVE. HOURS & MINS.
'14-'15	8:10
'13-'14	8:26
'12-'13	8:35
'11-'12	8:31
'10-'11	8:51
'09-'10	8:55
'08-'09	8:50
'07-'08	8:43
'06-'07	8:29
'05-'06	8:21

*Broadcast years end in September

SOURCE: Nielsen

AP

FIGHT OVER NET NEUTRALITY RULES RETURNS TO APPEALS COURT

WASHINGTON: A long-running legal battle over government rules that require Internet providers to treat all Web traffic equally is back for another round before a federal appeals court.

Cable and telecom industry groups will urge a three-judge panel on Friday to throw out regulations that forbid online content from being blocked or channeled into fast and slow lanes.

The Federal Communications Commission approved the new rules in February after its previous attempt to mandate "net neutrality" was struck down last year by the US Court of Appeals for the DC Circuit. The rules, which for the first time treat broadband like a public utility, have won praise from consumer advocates and content companies such as Netflix and crowdfunding site Kickstarter. They want to prevent Internet service providers from manipulating data moving across their networks or offering paid preferential treatment to some content over others.

But providers like Comcast, Verizon and AT&T say the FCC's move will threaten innovation and undermine investment in broadband infrastructure. The US Telecom Association, an industry group, calls the latest rules "a sweeping bureaucratic power grab" that subjects companies to "intrusive, central-planner-style oversight." In an added twist, one of the judges hearing the latest case has twice authored opinions striking down the FCC's earlier attempts to enforce net neutrality.

Information service

Judge David Tatel ruled last year that the FCC rules were not grounded in legal authority because the commission at the time classified broadband as an information service. After Tatel's 2014 opinion, the agency reclassified broadband providers as common carriers akin to utilities, giving it power to impose the new rules. Tatel had also ruled against the agency in a similar 2010 case, finding that the FCC could not prevent Comcast Corp. from slowing Internet access to a popular file-sharing service.

Barbara Cherry, a professor of telecommunications at Indiana University who supports net neutrality, said the FCC is simply restoring the classification that Internet providers should have had all along. "It's a legal chess game basically," Cherry said. "They never should have classified it as an information service in the first place." Tatel was appointed to the court by President Bill Clinton in 1994. The other judges on the panel are Stephen Williams, appointed by President Ronald Reagan, and Sri Srinivasan, appointed by President Barack Obama.



WASHINGTON: In this March 17, 2015 file photo, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Chairman Tom Wheeler testifies before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing on net neutrality, on Capitol Hill in Washington. — AP

Placing Internet service in the same regulatory camp as telephone service means providers have to act in the "public interest" when supplying service. It gives the government power to investigate complaints about unjust or

unreasonable behavior by service providers, such as controlling Internet traffic in a way that promotes their own financial interest. Obama endorsed the idea of net neutrality last year, calling on the FCC to regulate

Internet service like it does other public utilities to protect consumers.

Too far

Cable and telecom opponents say the FCC went too far in reclassifying broadband as a common carrier. They argue the new rules will prevent them from recovering costs for connecting to broadband hogs like Netflix that generate a huge amount of Internet traffic. "Congress never envisioned entrusting the FCC with the extraordinary authority that the order purports to exercise or subjecting the Internet to intrusive central-planner-style oversight," says a brief from the US Telecom Association.

Defending the regulations, the FCC said in court briefs that it has the authority "to ensure that the Internet, the central means of communication in the 21st century, remains open to all Americans." A small Texas broadband provider, Alamo Broadband Inc., has also challenged the rules, claiming among other things that they violate free speech rights. A ruling could take several months. — AP

UAE EARNS REP AS INTERNATIONAL HUB FOR HI-TECH PRODUCTIONS

LOS ANGELES: What do the latest "Star Wars," "Fast and Furious" and "Star Trek" installments have in common? They all recently shot in the United Arab Emirates, where a combination of incentives, security, transportation, state-of-the-art studio space, a futuristic skyline and exotic desert ambiance are positioning Dubai and Abu Dhabi as the prime Middle East hub for different types of international productions.

In October, after three months in Vancouver, Canada, Paramount's "Star Trek: Beyond" touched down in Dubai for a two-week shoot, brought by executive producer Jeffrey Chernov who in 2010 had come with "Mission: Impossible-Ghost Protocol" in which Tom Cruise famously rappels down from Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building.

In September, director Stanley Tong started principal photography in Dubai on Jackie Chan starrer "Kung Fu Yoga," which will feature several car chases amid its iconic skyscrapers. At Dubai Studio City "Star Trek" occupied almost all of the largest soundstage in the Middle East-50,000 square-feet, which can be split into two 25,000-sq-ft. facilities, designed and built by California-based studio Bastien and Associates.

"The film industry has been rising in this part of the world," boasts Jamal Al Sharif, chairman of Dubai Film and TV Commission. "Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and the UAE in general, have really provided the platform and the infrastructure, and also the talent is starting to grow." According to sources, the Brad Pitt satire "War Machine," a Netflix original production, started shooting in November in the desert near Abu Dhabi, though this pic is being kept under tight wraps.

Big Incentives

UAE lures filmmakers to the region with financial incentives, rebates and plum travel perks. Dubai Studio City boasts the largest soundstage in the Middle East, measuring a hefty 50,000 square feet. Last year the Liwa desert was also the location of choice for the Abu Dhabi portion of "Star Wars: The Force Awakens," as is clear from the trailers. When he heard that "Star Wars" was ramping up, Paul Baker, exec director of Twofour54's Intaj unit, dedicated to production services, called up executive producer Tommy Harper and asked him what his plans were.

"They were pretty much set up at another location," he says. "I said: 'Look, we've launched the rebate here,

the infrastructure is starting to build.' "A couple of weeks later he got a call back" and the guys wanted to come in and scout."

Besides Abu Dhabi's 30 percent rebate, applicable to below-the-line-spend, Baker says the clincher is the type of support the UAE can offer in terms of clearing all red tape, including visas and customs. "We've brought enough C-4 explosive into the UAE to start World War III," he says. To do that, "you have to have very strong connections and commitment from the government." And as a filmmaker, "knowing that you have access to that means a great deal."

In Dubai, instead of offering a rebate, Al Sharif has finessed a system of incentives tailored to each shoot. It has an attractive logic. Massive discounts from government-owned Emirates airlines, several hotel chains and Dubai Studio City played "a big role in luring 'Star Trek,'" he says. To the point that "when you sum it up you find that you are receiving more than a 30% rebate in soft incentives."

And while there is certainly more than a hint of rivalry between the two cities, which are only 65 miles apart, there are productions that have shot in both, including the CBS soap "The Bold and the Beautiful." — Reuters

AN UNSPOKEN OPTION IF CLIMATE TALKS FAIL: GEOENGINEERING

PARIS: It's the option climate negotiators here are loath to talk about. What if they fail to curb global warming and the environment gets so dangerous that someone decides to do something drastic and play mad scientist? Should nations purposely pollute the planet to try to counteract man-made warming and cool the world? Scientists are pretty sure they can do it, but should they?

The issue is called geoengineering - purposely tinkering with the planet as opposed to the unintentional warming that's happening now. The most talked about and advanced method involves putting heat-reflecting particles high in the air, but there also have been proposals to seed clouds other ways, put mirrors in space and seed the oceans with iron.

Scientists noticed a temporary but pronounced cooling after the 1991 eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines. What's in mind would be, essentially, an artificial and

constant man-made volcano with material released by aircraft or cannons.

No one is talking about doing it - yet. But some scientists want to study it to find about side effects and other issues. And earlier this year, the U.S. National Academy of Sciences said small-scale and controlled experiments could be helpful to inform future decisions.

Even geoengineering's most ardent research supporters aren't proposing it instead of cutting back heat-trapping emissions from burning fossil fuels. But they say someday it may be needed. However, it doesn't solve all climate change problems, just the temperature part. Stanford University climate scientist Ken Caldeira isn't advocating seeding clouds with sulfur particles any time soon, but he does fear a failure in climate talks and believes that at some point in the future, drastic options will look more palatable. He thinks scientists need to prepare now.

"I think of it as kind of symptomatic relief," Caldeira said in an interview on the sidelines of the UN-led Paris talks. "I'm thinking like morphine for the cancer patient." But others inside the negotiations shudder at even talking about the issue.

"The emissions and the climate change that we're causing with that is already a massive experiment on our world that we don't really know the outcome of," said UN Assistant Secretary-General Janos Pasztor. "So I don't think we should start another set of experiments and go into geoengineering. I think we should get our act together and reduce our emissions."

Joe Ware, a spokesman for the faith group Christian Aid, was even more blunt. "It's probably playing God a bit too much for the faith community," Ware said Friday. He said the world needs more wind farms and solar power instead.

Harvard scientist David Keith has been working on plans to test what he calls solar

geoengineering in the atmosphere at a very small scale. Year one would involve balloons putting small amounts of sulfate in the air and tracking changes and side effects. Although he has received interest from private individuals, he has been unable to get the federal government to pay attention, he said.

"You can't uninvent this technology," Keith said. "The next generation of our kids will make decisions about this as we deal with climate risk, whatever we do. If we decide not to have a research program, we give them the gift of ignorance."

One problem, Keith and others said, is that there are no rules, nationally or internationally, that tell people what they can or cannot do. Pasztor said there are no plans for any international bans of the idea.

Marcia McNutt, the former US Geological Survey chief who was tapped to be the next head of the National Academy of Sciences, led an academy panel that looked at the

issue and recommended very cautious and small-scale research.

She said that someday a nation in crisis, such as in a long-term devastating drought, might feel the need to do something. But, she asked, what if it hurts other nations?

Jeffrey Sachs, director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, said there's "just a plethora of dangerous and unsolved problems that makes (geoengineering) very, very unattractive."

Putting sulfates in the world is a "tremendously bad idea," and is a huge gamble for the world, Sachs said. Dana Fisher, director of the University of Maryland's Program for Society and the Environment, said "geoengineering seems very American to me." That's because it's an option that doesn't seem to involve sacrifice or change and takes advantage of technology.

"Technology makes us happy and sets us free," Fisher said. "But there are unintended consequences." —AP

BATTLING CLIMATE CHANGE WITH WORMS

CARBON STOCKED IN SOIL NOURISHES PLANTS

PIACE: Nicolas Denieul plants his spade in the ground and turns over a clod of soil to reveal a mass of earthworms seething around plant roots-fat ones and thin ones, delicate translucent violet and dark brown.

"That is magnificent. Ten years ago, I never thought I'd see anything like that!" said Denieul, a cheerful French farmer, his hands full of earth in the biting wind.

organisms that signify a healthy soil. Like forests and oceans, soils also capture carbon, through the vegetable matter that decomposes in them. Instead of being released in the form of gases that contribute to global warming, carbon stocked in soil nourishes plants.

An increase of 0.4 percent a year in the level of carbon in soils would make it possible to stop the current growth of carbon dioxide-

End of ploughing

On top of urbanisation and deforestation, soils around the world have suffered as a result of the intensification of farming since World War II. "We have massacred the soil" with bigger combine harvesters, deeper ploughing and chemical fertilisers and pesticides, Denieul said. These factors have had a devastating effect on the topsoil-the most important layer, where worms absorb and digest

After this, Denieul radically changed the way he worked. With some colleagues he decided to stop ploughing. A huge step, taken with the help of Base, a network that promotes farming based on soil conservation.

"The plough turns the soil to a depth of 25 centimetres. We had to find seed drills that disturbed the earth as little as possible" by bedding seeds under a thin layer of soil, he explained.

He also takes care never to leave the fields bare. After the wheat harvest, for example, he plants beans and alfalfa, which improve the soil's fertility. After a decade of working like this, the level of organic matter in his fields has risen from 1.5 percent to three percent. Some farmers using these methods-there are around 5,000 in France-have achieved levels approaching five percent, compared with just two percent in some intensive wheat-farming areas.

Substantial savings

The fields have changed in appearance-goodbye regular ploughed furrows, hello earthworm "cabins", tiny piles of earth formed by their excretions. Also gone is the regular washing away of soil in storms, as the rain is now able to filter down into the fields instead of over its surface thanks to the tiny tunnels dug by the worms.

Importantly, Denieul is now seeing the same returns as he did with more intensive methods after several years of lower yields while the land regenerated.

And he has seen substantial savings-sowing without ploughing means his tractor uses half as much fuel as before.

He also now uses far less chemical weedkiller and no synthetic fertiliser at all-manure from the pigs does the job, now that the soil is more fertile naturally thanks to the worms.

"The gamble's paid off-we are more competitive than a normal production system," he said.

Convinced that he needs to help change minds, Denieul will soon open his doors to fellow farmers.

"Nature doesn't hold grudges-if you change the way you work, things return to their natural order," he said. —AFP



PIACE: French farmer Nicolas Denieul touches the ground in a field no-till farming is used in Piace, northwestern France, on November 30, 2015. French farmer Nicolas Denieul plants his spade in the ground and turns over a clod of soil to reveal a mass of earthworms seething around plant roots — fat ones and thin ones, delicate translucent violet and dark brown. —AFP

For 10 years ago, there were no worms roaming about his land, near the western city of Le Mans, where he grows wheat, corn and rapeseed to feed the 350 pigs he and his brothers keep.

Back then his spade met smooth earth, empty of worms, insects and the other small

a major greenhouse gas-in the atmosphere, according to the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (Inra). France's agriculture ministry launched an international research programme on the subject this year, which 40 countries signed up to at the ongoing UN climate talks in Paris.

dead plant matter, transforming it into natural fertiliser that they spread through the earth.

For Denieul, the eureka moment came in the mid-2000s, after he heard a Canadian expert explain that in just a small quantity of soil there were more living organisms than people on the whole planet.



NANTES: A woman holds banners reading "Notre-Dames-des-Landes (NDDL) airport is not COP!" and "If we are in COP, we are capable" during a protest march against the project for the creation of an international airport near Nantes take part in a protest march yesterday. —AFP

INDIA, BRAZIL RESIST BID FOR LONG-TERM CARBON GOALS

LE BOURGET: Attempts to inscribe a long-term goal to phase out carbon emissions in an envisioned global climate pact are facing pushback at UN talks from big developing countries including India and Brazil.

Negotiators from both countries said Wednesday they favor sticking to the already established goal of limiting global warming to 2 degrees C (3.6 degrees F) above pre-industrial times - a level that scientists say could avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

That goal was formally introduced in the UN talks in 2010. But many countries are calling for the Paris deal to include a road map on how to achieve it, such as a joint target for phasing out the emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases blamed for global warming.

Various options have been proposed. The United States and other members of the Group of Seven wealthy countries earlier this year endorsed a "decarbonization of the global economy over the course of this century."

"Decarbonization is something that has appeared recently. We don't even know what that means," Indian delegate Ajay Mathur told reporters. "Does it mean zero carbon? Does it mean net zero carbon?"

The term is generally understood to mean sharp reductions of carbon emissions from the burning of fossil fuels, but it hasn't been defined precisely. Brazil's lead negotiator Antonio Marcondes told The Associated Press that there was no need to come up with a new joint climate goal.

"The long-term goal is already there: It's 2 degree Celsius," he said. Marcondes added that Brazil would consider options that emphasize that phasing out fossil fuels will be easier for some countries than others. He referred to a joint Brazilian-German declaration in August that backed a "decarbonization of the global economy" while noting that some countries will need financial and technological help to make the transition to cleaner energy.

The long-term goal is one of the issues that split the larger group of developing countries in the climate talks. Oil-rich Saudi Arabia opposes wording calling for a phase-out of carbon emissions, while small island nations that face an existential risk from rising seas are among the strongest advocates. China has largely stayed silent.

It's among the crunch issues that need to be resolved before negotiators can ink what would be the first climate deal to ask all countries to limit their greenhouse gas emissions. Another is how to ramp up the individual emissions targets that nations have proposed because scientific analyses show they're not consistent with the 2-degree target. "We must speed the process up because we have much work to do," French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius told a news conference on Wednesday.

Fabius said negotiators need to come up with a new draft agreement by noon Saturday so that environment and foreign ministers have something to work with when they arrive for the second week of talks.

Speaking at a NATO conference in Brussels, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said he thought the climate talks "got off to an encouraging start" with 150 world leaders - the biggest ever gathering of heads of state and government - attending the opening day. Kerry is expected to join the meeting next week.

However, the talks have made little progress after the leaders left. At a stock-taking meeting Wednesday evening delegates noted that they had reached compromises on only a few of the scores of issues being negotiated. That's not unusual though in the climate talks, where compromises are typically reached only in the final hours.

UN climate chief Christiana Figueres said there was no reason to worry just yet. Negotiations "will go through ups and downs," she said. "There will be many commas inserted and many commas removed because that is the nature of this." —AP

CHIPOTLE WARNS OF SALES SLIDE AS E COLI OUTBREAK EXPANDS

NEW YORK: Chipotle warned yesterday that an outbreak of E. coli linked to its restaurants is hurting its sales and warned that if recent trends continue, it expects earnings for the current quarter to come in way below analysts' prediction. Shares slid more than 7 percent in after-market trading.

The outbreak has expanded to nine states, with a total of 52 reported illnesses. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention had said Friday that seven additional people were sickened, including in three more states - Illinois, Maryland and Pennsylvania. The most recent illness started on Nov. 13, it said.

The majority of the illnesses have been in Oregon and Washington, where cases were initially reported at the end of October. Additional cases were later reported in California, Minnesota, New York and Ohio. Of the 52 people infected, the CDC says 47 reported eating at a Chipotle restaurant the week before the illness started. The agency has not yet determined the ingredient that made people sick. The CDC also said illnesses that started after Nov. 11 may not be reported yet.

People usually get sick from Shiga toxin-pro-

ducing E. coli, the bacteria commonly associated with foodborne outbreaks, for two to eight days after swallowing the germ, according to the CDC. Most infected people get diarrhea and abdominal cramps. Chipotle said Friday that store closures and bad publicity linked to the outbreak have slammed its sales. It said that if "recent sales trends continue," it expects a decline in sales at established locations of 8 percent to 11 percent during the fourth quarter, and for fourth-quarter earnings per share to fall to between \$2.45 and \$2.85, from last year's \$3.84 per share. Analysts surveyed by FactSet had expected Chipotle to earn \$4.12 per share for the December quarter.

Tightening food standards

The company said it was also pulling its comparable sales outlook for 2016 because of the recent sales trends and uncertainty related to the outbreak.

Shares of the company's stock have dropped 25 percent since mid-October. Earlier Friday, Chipotle had said it was tightening its food standards. The Denver-based chain known for touting the quality

of its ingredients said it hired IEH Laboratories in Seattle to help improve its procedures. It said it will implement testing of all produce before it is shipped to restaurants and enhance employee training for food safety and handling. Chipotle said it tested ingredients before, but that it is moving to testing smaller batches and a larger number of samples.

"In testing for pathogens, in many ways you're looking for needles in haystacks. Through this high resolution testing program, we are making the haystacks smaller by working with smaller lots," the company said.

It said that no ingredients that are likely to have been connected to the incident remain in its restaurants or supply system.

Chris Arnold, a spokesman for Chipotle Mexican Grill Inc., said the company's local produce suppliers may not all be able to meet the new standards. The company noted that its local produce program accounts for a "relatively small percentage" of the produce it uses, and only runs from around June through October in most parts of the country. —AP



CONCORD: Photo shows classic latkes in Concord, N.H. This recipe by Alison Ladman is spiked with chipotle sour cream. —AP

JAPAN BANS FRENCH FOIE GRAS IMPORTS OVER BIRD FLU VIRUS

TOKYO: Japan has banned imports of French foie gras due to a bird flu outbreak, an agriculture ministry official said Friday.

The ban, which became effective November 26, will be lifted 90 days after all affected French poultry farms finish culling their birds and conclude necessary sanitary procedures, the official told AFP.

Japan took action to stop imports of French poultry and live birds after the European Commission confirmed birds at a French chicken

farm were infected with the H5N1 strain.

However, French poultry products made before October 23 can be imported, the official said, citing a three-week incubation period for the virus.

"Products that were made after that date are banned to prevent the virus from entering into Japan," he said. "We are relying on the French authorities to give us information."

"We would lift the import ban 90 days after the affected farms finish culling their birds and go

through full disinfection," he said. For the first eight months of this year Japan was the top global importer of foie gras, according to a French industry group. France produces 75 percent of global foie gras and the country exported 4,934 tonnes of it in 2014.

Algeria, China, Egypt, Japan, Morocco, South Korea, Thailand and Tunisia have banned French poultry imports following the outbreak last month in the southwestern area of Dordogne, said Loic

Evain, deputy head of the French agriculture ministry's food division.

"The list is not exhaustive," Evain said Thursday, but does not include France's 27 European Union partners, who have accepted containment measures proposed by Paris under World Health Organization guidelines.

"Unfortunately some countries' first reaction is to close their borders and only then to discuss" strategy, Evain said. —AFP

CANADA'S GOVT PROMISES TO LEGALIZE MARIJUANA

TORONTO: Canada's new Liberal government again promised Friday to legalize marijuana in a speech outlining its agenda as Parliament resumes after the Oct. 19 election. A speech delivered by Gov. Gen. David Johnston reiterated new Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's plan to legalize and regulate the recreational use of marijuana. It is a position Trudeau has held since becoming leader of the Liberal Party in 2013. However, for the first time, the government said it will restrict access to marijuana but did not elaborate.

Trudeau has said that legalizing marijuana would fix a "failed system" and help remove the "criminal element" linked to the drug. He also has said Canadians would benefit from analyzing the experiences of Colorado and Washington state, which recently legalized pot.

The speech also expanded on five themes that were central to the Liberals' election victory, which ended the near-decade-long Conservative Party's reign. The speech reiterated Trudeau's pledge to cut

the tax rate for middle-income earners and provide a more generous child benefit to those who need it, paid for by a tax hike on the wealthiest 1 percent.

It also promised significant new investment in infrastructure to boost Canada's stagnant economy. Trudeau, who just returned from the climate conference in Paris, promised to continue working with provinces to put a price on carbon, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and introduce a new environmental assessment process.

The speech also indicated that the new government would create a new relationship with aboriginal governments and people. It promised to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on residential schools, where aboriginal children were abused and stripped of their native culture and language between the 1880s and 1996, when the last school closed. The government also promised to launch an inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women. —AP



OTTAWA: Snow is cleared from Parliament Hill in this December 18, 2007, file photo in Ottawa, Canada. Canada will next year become the first country in the G7 bloc of leading economies to legalize marijuana, the government said on Friday, in a speech by the governor general. —AFP

LIBERIA RELEASES LAST KNOWN EBOLA PATIENTS

MONROVIA: Liberia has discharged its last two known Ebola patients from a treatment center, beginning its third countdown to become free from transmission of the deadly virus, health authorities said Friday.

Three cases were reported Nov. 20 in Liberia - one of the three West African countries hit hardest by the worst ever Ebola outbreak. One of them, a 15-year-old boy, died Nov. 23.

The boy, who lived in the eastern Paynesville

district, was Liberia's first Ebola patient since it was declared Ebola-free for a second time in September. The boy's father and brother were released Thursday after recovering from Ebola and have reunited with their families, said Deputy Health Minister Tolbert Nyenswah.

"We don't have any confirmed cases anywhere in the country that we know about," said Nyenswah, who is also the head of Liberia's Ebola Case Management System. —AP



ILLINOIS: Joshua Gillan sits at his home on Friday, in Rockford, Ill. Nearly two years after Illinois decided gun owners could also use medical marijuana, official letters revoking patients' firearms cards and wording on the Illinois State Police website indicate the police agency is still struggling with the conflict between state and federal laws on pot. Gillan said it came as quite a shock when he received a letter last week from state police ordering him to surrender his firearm owner's ID card because he was an unlawful user of a controlled substance. —AP

ERRONEOUS LETTERS TELL ILLINOIS POT USERS TO GIVE UP GUNS

CHICAGO: Nearly two years after Illinois decided medical marijuana users shouldn't be prohibited from owning guns, several patients received letters from state police telling them their firearms cards were being revoked.

Although the agency insists the letters were sent to just four people before the mistake was corrected, some cannabis supporters say the error signifies an underlying ambivalence about medical marijuana in the 23 states where it's now legal.

For example, a checklist for firearm owners on the Illinois State Police website includes this requirement: "I am not a medical marijuana patient registry card holder." That, too, was an error that a vendor is now working to remove from the site, ISP spokesman Matt Boerwinkle said. But Tyler Anthony, a Chicago attorney with the Canna Law Group, said he's skeptical the prohibiting language was added inadvertently.

"The opposite is probably true," Anthony said. "Even taking their word for it, they shouldn't be careless with citizens' constitutional rights, especially when their position lacks any clear legal basis."

Guns and marijuana caused a stir two years ago when Illinois started its medical cannabis pilot program and, in draft rules, told future patients they couldn't keep their firearms. Irate gun owners com-

plained and got the language removed.

Joshua Gillan said it came as quite a shock when he received a letter last week from state police ordering him to surrender his firearm owner's ID card because he was an unlawful user of a controlled substance. "The very first thing I said was: 'From my cold, dead hands,'" said Gillan, 31, of Rockford, quoting a gun-rights slogan.

The father of three said he uses the drug to relax since suffering a traumatic brain injury when a roadside bomb went off during an Army tour in Iraq. Boerwinkle said the patients' FOID cards are still active and that state police are "working to ensure that future issues associated with these card holders are addressed."

But Gillan lost a gun in the Illinois confusion, he said, and until late Wednesday his status still said "DENIED" on an ISP website used by consumers to check FOIDs before private gun sales. The link is now disabled with an error message that says "temporarily unavailable." The recent confusion likely stems from a clash between state and federal views on the issue.

Like in other states, Illinois' law doesn't address gun ownership among medical marijuana patients or their caregivers, said Karmen Hanson, medical marijuana policy expert for the National Conference

of State Legislatures.

But it does include a general protection of patients' rights, said Chris Lindsey, legislative analyst for the Marijuana Policy Project. "Illinois' law is clear that it protects medical marijuana patients from being denied any right or privilege, and this is certainly one of those areas we believe state lawmakers intended to protect," Lindsey said.

On the federal side, in 2011, an open letter from the federal Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives spelled out to firearms dealers that medical marijuana users are prohibited by federal law from possessing firearms and ammunition.

And, in Oregon, the issue landed in the courts when sheriffs in two counties withheld concealed handgun licenses from medical marijuana users. The Oregon Supreme Court ordered the sheriffs to allow the gun licenses. The US Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal, a decision hailed as a victory for gun owners and medical marijuana users.

As for Gillan, a gun dealer wouldn't return to him a pistol he'd left at the shop pending a trade because his FOID card status was in question, he said. "I don't believe the state can produce a document that supersedes the Constitution that I fought for with my bloody hands," Gillan said. —AP

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ACICO GROUP RUN TOGETHER FOR RUN Q8

Every year ACICO Group continue bringing together ACICO Employees run for Run Q8 to support the good cause behind this initiative by Fawzia Sultan Rehabilitation Center, Kuwait. ACICO is always in front in Corporate Responsibility and ACICO believe that "Social Responsibility is not just good practice, it is good business" and hence the HR department encourage all ACICO Employees to "Run for a Cause." As per ACICO, encouraging our employees to embrace fitness as a lifestyle choice pays off in numerous ways. We want our employees to enjoy the run and the team spirit as well. We believe that the attitude of the fit employees are always better because they generally 'feel good.'



ACK ANNOUNCES KEY APPLICATION DATES FOR UPCOMING SEMESTER

The Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) announces that the Private Universities Council (PUC) scholarship application period will take place from the 6th of December till the 13th of December, 2015. In addition, the PUC application period for ACK and Box Hill College Diploma graduates looking to enroll in a Bachelor's Degree program at ACK will be from the 10th of January till the 13th of January, 2016. ACK's Admissions and Registration Department also announces that the 24th of January, 2016 will be the first day of next academic semester.



The Ambassador of Pakistan Muhammad Aslam Khan hosted a reception for the visiting delegation of Sialkot City Chamber of Commerce at his residence over the weekend. Local businessmen and media persons attended the event. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



GLASGOW CELTIC FC FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT VISIT TO KUWAIT

Tony Massie, the Glasgow Celtic International Academies Manager, along with Academy Coaches Michael McCahill and Zeshan Ullah paid a five-day visit to Kuwait recently as guests of the Premier Sport Academy. Coaching sessions for all players at the P S A Everton Academy took place in Bayan along with a three

day coach education program, attended by over 20 football coaches from Kuwait. Football development meetings were also held with officials from the Ministry of Education and Kuwait Football Federation Clubs with the aim of providing support and expertise to European Champions League Club standards, hoping to raise the

level of Kuwaiti football for future generations. The visit was sponsored by Movenpick Hotel, Al-Bidaa Salmiya, who were pleased to support this youth development initiative. The delegation also visited the British Embassy, The Historic Car Museum and Porsche Centre Kuwait during their stay.

EVERTON WINTER FOOTBALL FESTIVAL NEXT SATURDAY

The Annual Everton Winter Football Festival and Seasonal Carnival takes place in Bayan on Saturday 12th December from 8am to 4pm. Over 500 children will be participating in this day long event and spaces are available for vendors and stall holders wishing to attend. There will be bouncy castles, the Porsche Kids Driving School BBQ and cafeteria and lots of fun and games for all the family.

FRIDAY FORUM CONDUCTS INTER SCHOOL ISLAMIC ELOCUTION COMPETITION

Friday Forum Kuwait is back again with one of the most successful and much awaited event the 10th Inter School Islamic Elocution Competition, bringing forth the smartest to show their talents on eloquence, on 1st January 2016 at Hotel Rajadhani Palace, Khaitan from 3.00 pm to 8.00 pm. Students from seventeen Indian schools in Kuwait will participate in Junior and Senior categories. The event will be attended by dignitaries from various socio-cultural arena, parents and teachers as well. Participants are requested to co-ordinate with the Islamic Studies Head teacher of the respective schools and ensure their registration on time. For more details please contact 50796776 or 94029024.



MCDONALD'S OPEN ITS DOORS TO THE PUBLIC TO REAFFIRM COMMITMENT TO TRANSPARENCY



—Photos by Joseph Shagra

McDonald's Kuwait has once again confirmed its commitment to complete and uncensored transparency, opening its doors to the public as part of the brand's famed Open Door program.

The Open Door tours offer people the opportunity to see for themselves the brand's dedication to abiding by the highest quality, safety and cleanliness measures across all restaurants. The 20 minute tours grant the participants access to all kitchen and storage areas, and allow them to witness first-hand all preparation and cooking process that take place.

The re-launched Open Door program began with a special tour, which took place at McDonald's Corniche with participation from three of the country's leading social

media influencers: Bibi Abdulmohsen, Omar Al-Othman and 3bodka. Following that, McDonald's also invited members of the press to take part in an exclusive media tour which concluded with a roundtable discussion.

Commenting on the Open Door Program, Luai Al-Kilani, Deputy General Manager at McDonald's Kuwait said: "McDonald's prides itself on its utter transparency with its customers, especially when it comes to matters of quality. One of our main priorities has always been upholding the highest international standards of quality, food safety and cleanliness, and this is something that is an integral part of the McDonald's ethos. "We also believe that our customers have a right to be fully informed and aware about our

food, our ingredients and our procedures, as evidence by our Open Door initiative," added Kilani.

Since its launch in 2006 as a worldwide McDonald's initiative, the Open Door Program has attracted hundreds of thousands of participants worldwide. The unique program set a precedent across the quick service food industry, with McDonald's being the only quick service restaurant in the region to allow customers into its kitchen - for an up-close and unfiltered look at all procedures, processes and quality standards. On his part, Sherif Coutry, Marketing Director at McDonald's Kuwait commented: "The Open Door program is just one example of our unwavering dedication to transparency, and we are always looking to push

ourselves further and even more open with our customers. Another great example of this is our recently launched "Your Right to Know" platform, which allows our customers to ask us anything and expect an honest and clear answer."

As of December 1st, Open Door tours will be available at 14 McDonald's restaurants across Kuwait, including: Corniche (Gulf Road), Fintas, Surra, Siddeeq, Platinum, Rehab, Sabah ElSalem, Farwaniya, Mishreef, Jahra, Sharq Coop, Hawalli (Tunis Street), Sahari Mall and Zahra. Customers will be able to sign up for the tours which will be taking place on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday of every week from 4:30 pm until 6:30 pm.



COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT KUWAIT CITY LAUNCHES AWADHI FOOD FESTIVAL

Courtyard by Marriott Kuwait City held an opening ceremony to kick off the two-week Awadhi Indian Food Festival on December 1st, 2015. The event was attended by Sunil Jain, the Ambassador of India to Kuwait, representatives of different companies in Kuwait and the local media.

The attendees were treated to a mouthwatering selection of food and beverages, including awadhiana murg, subz rasili, mughlai, jhinga biryani, sheer korma and a lot more.

The invitees were impressed with the rich variety of food, breathtaking decor and comfortable seating, which make "Soul and Spice Restaurant" the ideal venue to enjoy the true flavors of India.

A symbol of regal cuisine influenced by flavors from the

kitchen of Mughals, Awadhi Food Festival emerged throughout India in celebration of the distinctive cooking techniques and assortment of kebabs and breads.

The Awadhi Food Festival at Soul and Spice Restaurant is a great treat for foodies. The elegant and majestic spreads of dishes include 'galouti kebab', 'awadhi paneer tikka', 'tunde ke kebab' and a lot more. Furthermore, the menu offers a wide range of vegetarian and non-vegetarian food from delectable starters to main courses and mouthwatering desserts. "The Indian cuisine is very rich in terms of flavors, colors and heritage," said George Aoun, The hotel's General Manager. "Through this festival, we want our guests to experience the magic of Awadhi cuisine and enjoy the royal flavors that India has to offer," he added.



X-CITE ANNOUNCES FIRST WINNERS IN 'WIN MORE THAN \$500,000 CASH' PROMO

X-cite by Alghanim Electronics is pleased to announce the names of the first week's winners of the biggest shopping festival in Kuwait, which offers customers the opportunity to win more than \$500,000 Cash in 5 weekly draws with a weekly grand prize of KD 25,000. This one-of-a-kind promotion was launched on November 19th and will last until December 26th.

The first week's winners are:

- 1st place winner of KD 25,000: Khaled Abdullah Al-Daihani
- 2nd place winner of KD 5,000: Jamal Aldeen Ahmad

- 3rd place winner of KD 2,500: Yasmine Bridmore
 - 4th place winner of KD 1,000: Awad Saleh Al-Mutairi
 - 5th place winner of KD 1,000: Eman Hussien Yaacoub
 - 6th place winner of KD 500: Hmoud Al Sabah
 - 7th place winner of KD 500: Kolomi Mohammad Rafiq
- First Place winner Khaled Al-Daihani was full of appreciation with the prize saying, "Thank you to X-cite for this amazing prize. This prize is a dream come true and best of luck to everyone in the upcoming draws"
- You too can be a lucky winner with X-cite! In order to participate and get the

chance to win any of the remaining cash prizes, all you need to do is visit any of X-cite's 18 showrooms spread across the country, www.xcite.com, or X-cite's smartphone app, and for every KD 25 you will get one chance to win great cash prizes. The earlier you make a purchase, the greater your chances of winning!

The weekly draws are open to the public and take place at Al-Rai showroom in Safat Alghanim at 11AM supervised by a representative from the Ministry of Commerce. The name of the winners are announced on www.xcite.com/whatsyourexcuse, their social media channels: (Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat @xcitealghanim) (Facebook: xcitebyalghanim) or via the hashtag, #WhatsYourExcuse.

- Discovery Channel HD**
- 03:40 Auction Hunters
 - 04:05 Garage Gold
 - 04:30 Storage Hunters UK
 - 05:00 Americana
 - 05:30 How It's Made
 - 06:00 Alaskan Bush People
 - 06:50 Desert Car Kings
 - 07:40 Fast N' Loud
 - 08:30 Auction Hunters
 - 08:55 Garage Gold
 - 09:20 Storage Hunters UK
 - 09:45 Americana
 - 10:10 How It's Made
 - 10:35 Deadliest Catch
 - 11:25 Outback Truckers
 - 12:15 Manhunt With Joel Lambert
 - 13:05 Auction Hunters
 - 13:30 Garage Gold
 - 13:55 Storage Hunters UK
 - 14:20 Ice Lake Rebels: Winter Is Coming
 - 15:10 Desert Car Kings
 - 16:00 Fast N' Loud
 - 16:50 Americana
 - 17:15 How It's Made
 - 17:40 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
 - 18:30 Dual Survival
 - 19:20 Treasure Quest: Snake Island
 - 20:10 Property Wars
 - 20:35 Storage Hunters UK
 - 21:00 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
 - 21:50 Boy To Man
 - 22:40 River Monsters
 - 23:30 Desert Car Kings

- Disney Junior**
- 03:05 Calimero
 - 03:20 Zou
 - 03:30 Loopedoo
 - 03:45 Art Attack
 - 04:10 Henry Hugglemonster
 - 04:20 Calimero
 - 04:35 Zou
 - 04:45 Loopedoo
 - 05:00 Art Attack
 - 05:25 Henry Hugglemonster
 - 05:35 Calimero
 - 05:50 Zou
 - 06:00 Loopedoo
 - 06:15 Art Attack
 - 06:35 Henry Hugglemonster
 - 06:50 Calimero
 - 07:00 Zou
 - 07:20 Loopedoo
 - 07:35 Art Attack
 - 08:00 Calimero
 - 08:10 Zou
 - 08:25 Limon And Oli
 - 08:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
 - 09:05 Sofia The First
 - 09:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
 - 10:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
 - 10:30 Doc McStuffins
 - 11:00 Sofia The First
 - 11:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
 - 11:55 Miles From Tomorrow
 - 12:25 Henry Hugglemonster
 - 12:55 Loopedoo
 - 13:10 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
 - 13:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
 - 14:00 Sofia The First
 - 14:30 Henry Hugglemonster
 - 14:45 Calimero
 - 15:00 Doc McStuffins
 - 15:30 Zou
 - 15:45 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
 - 16:15 Sofia The First
 - 16:45 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
 - 17:10 Aladdin
 - 17:40 Adventures Of The Gummi Bears
 - 18:10 Chip n Dale Rescue Rangers
 - 18:40 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
 - 18:55 Cars Toons
 - 19:00 Miles From Tomorrow
 - 19:30 Sofia The First
 - 19:55 Doc McStuffins
 - 20:15 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
 - 20:45 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
 - 21:05 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
 - 21:35 Sofia The First
 - 22:00 Aladdin
 - 22:30 Adventures Of The Gummi Bears
 - 23:00 Chip n Dale Rescue Rangers
 - 23:30 Lilo & Stitch

- ITV CHOICE**
- 03:25 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
 - 04:20 The Jonathan Ross Show
 - 05:15 Come Date With Me Australia
 - 05:45 Come Date With Me Australia
 - 06:10 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
 - 06:40 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
 - 07:05 Coronation Street
 - 07:30 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
 - 08:25 The Jonathan Ross Show
 - 09:20 Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover
 - 10:10 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
 - 10:40 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
 - 11:05 Dancing On Ice
 - 12:30 Come Date With Me Australia
 - 13:00 Come Date With Me Australia
 - 13:25 Emmerdale
 - 13:50 Coach Trip
 - 14:20 Coronation Street
 - 14:45 Coronation Street
 - 15:10 Paul O'Grady: For The Love Of Dogs
 - 15:35 Seven Days With Aï
 - 16:30 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
 - 17:50 Come Date With Me Australia
 - 18:20 Come Date With Me Australia
 - 18:45 Coronation Street
 - 19:10 Coronation Street
 - 19:35 Seven Days With Aï
 - 20:30 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
 - 21:50 Coach Trip
 - 22:20 Coronation Street
 - 22:50 Coronation Street
 - 23:15 Emmerdale
 - 23:40 Dancing On Ice

- NAT GEO WILD HD**
- 08:05 The Food Files
 - 08:30 Hotel India
 - 09:20 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
 - 09:45 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
 - 10:10 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
 - 10:35 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
 - 11:00 Warrior Road Trip
 - 11:50 Baking Good, Baking Bad
 - 12:15 Meat v Veg
 - 12:40 Dream Cruises
 - 13:35 Food School
 - 14:00 The Food Files
 - 14:30 Hotel India
 - 15:25 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
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 - 16:20 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
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 - 22:05 Food School
 - 22:30 Meat v Veg
 - 22:55 Dream Cruises
 - 23:45 Food School

- Discovery Science**
- 03:10 Cosmic Collisions
 - 04:00 Mythbusters
 - 04:48 NASA's Unexplained Files
 - 05:36 Home Factory
 - 06:00 Home Factory
 - 06:24 Cosmic Collisions
 - 07:12 Weird Connections
 - 07:36 Weird Connections
 - 08:00 Strangest Weather On Earth
 - 08:25 Strangest Weather On Earth
 - 08:50 Food Factory
 - 09:15 Food Factory
 - 09:40 How It's Made
 - 10:05 How It's Made
 - 10:30 NASA's Unexplained Files
 - 11:20 Primal Connections
 - 12:10 Cosmic Collisions
 - 13:00 Mythbusters
 - 13:50 Food Factory
 - 14:12 Food Factory
 - 14:35 Primal Connections
 - 15:20 Cosmic Collisions
 - 16:05 Weird Connections
 - 16:27 Weird Connections
 - 16:50 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
 - 17:35 NYC: Inside Out
 - 18:20 NASA's Unexplained Files
 - 19:05 Mythbusters
 - 19:50 Food Factory
 - 20:15 Food Factory
 - 20:40 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
 - 21:25 How It's Made
 - 21:50 How It's Made
 - 22:15 How The Universe Works
 - 23:00 Food Factory
 - 23:22 Food Factory
 - 23:45 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?

- Discovery Science**
- 03:15 Escape Club
 - 04:10 E! Entertainment Special
 - 05:05 The E! True Hollywood Story
 - 06:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 - 06:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 - 07:50 Style Star
 - 08:20 Giuliana & Bill
 - 09:15 Giuliana & Bill
 - 10:15 Giuliana & Bill
 - 11:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
 - 11:35 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
 - 12:05 House Of DVF
 - 13:05 House Of DVF
 - 14:05 Fashion Bloggers
 - 14:30 Fashion Bloggers
 - 15:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 - 16:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 - 17:00 Giuliana & Bill
 - 18:00 House Of DVF
 - 19:00 WAGs
 - 20:00 Christina Milian Turned Up
 - 21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 - 22:00 Dash Dolls
 - 23:00 Dash Dolls

- NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD**
- 03:50 Explorer
 - 04:45 Bad Trip
 - 05:40 Apocalypse: The Second World War
 - 06:35 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South
 - 07:30 Monster Fish
 - 08:25 Is It Real?
 - 09:20 Riding Britain's Railways
 - 10:15 Yukon River Run
 - 11:10 Air Crash Investigation
 - 12:05 Hard Time
 - 13:00 Is It Real?
 - 14:00 Monster Fish
 - 15:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South
 - 16:00 Yukon River Run
 - 17:00 Air Crash Investigation
 - 18:00 Drugs Inc: Complications
 - 19:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South
 - 20:00 Yukon River Run
 - 20:50 Air Crash Investigation
 - 21:40 Drugs Inc: Complications
 - 22:30 Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey
 - 23:20 Apocalypse: The Second World War

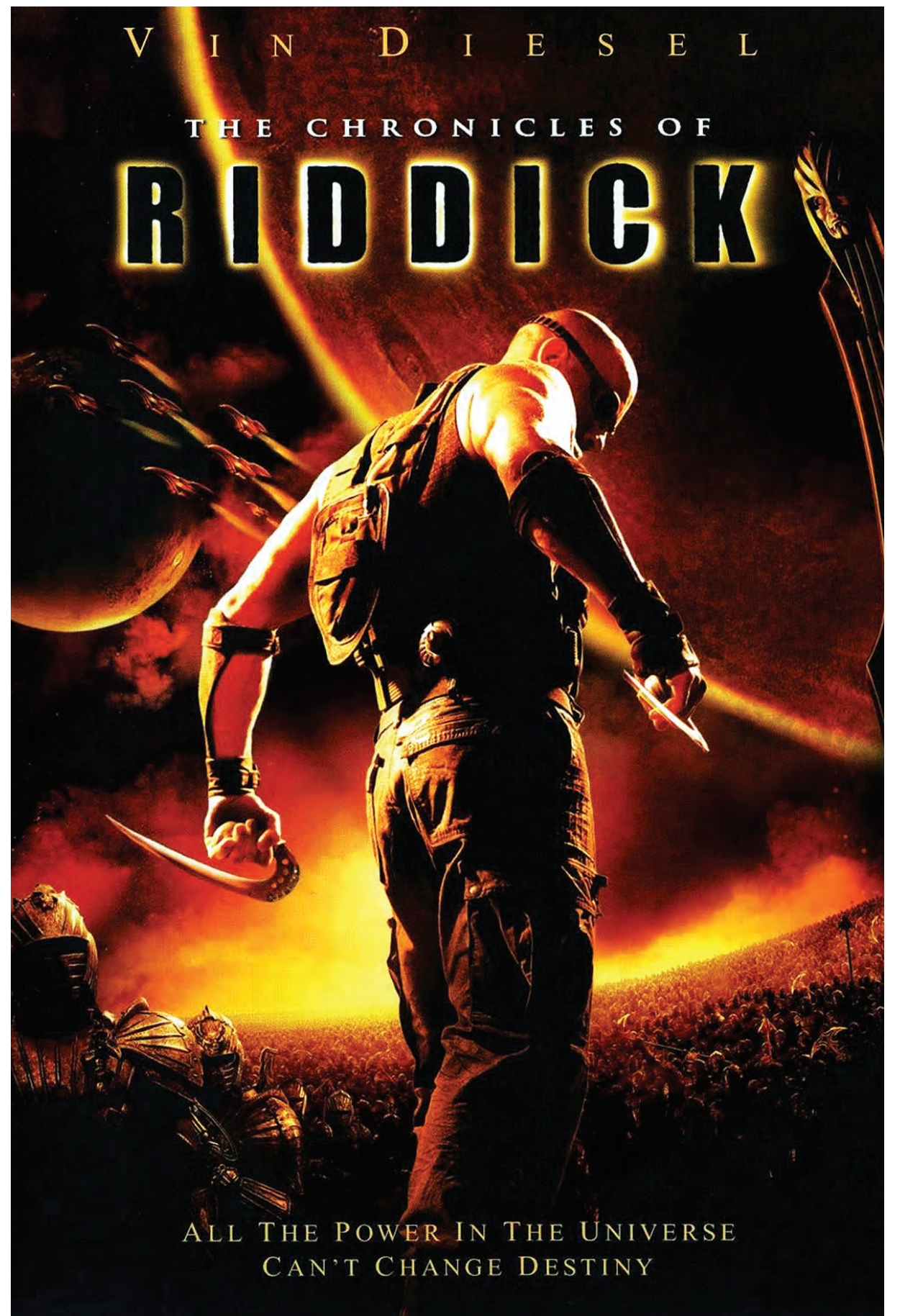
- OSN FIRST HD COMEDY**
- 03:00 Young & Hungry
 - 03:30 2 Broke Girls
 - 04:00 The Goldbergs
 - 04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
 - 05:30 Last Man Standing
 - 06:00 Community
 - 06:30 My Name Is Earl
 - 07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
 - 08:00 The Goldbergs
 - 08:30 Last Man Standing
 - 09:00 Young & Hungry
 - 09:30 About A Boy
 - 10:00 Last Man On Earth
 - 10:30 My Name Is Earl
 - 11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
 - 12:00 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
 - 12:30 The Goldbergs
 - 13:00 Last Man Standing
 - 13:30 My Name Is Earl
 - 14:00 2 Broke Girls
 - 14:30 About A Boy
 - 15:00 Last Man On Earth
 - 15:30 Melissa & Joey
 - 16:00 The Tonight Show With Larry Wilmore
 - 16:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
 - 17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
 - 18:30 2 Broke Girls
 - 19:00 Modern Family
 - 19:30 Modern Family
 - 20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
 - 21:00 Hot In Cleveland
 - 21:30 The Tonight Show With Larry Wilmore
 - 22:00 Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll
 - 22:30 Comedians
 - 23:00 Getting On
 - 23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers

- Disney Channel**
- 03:15 The Hive
 - 03:20 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
 - 03:45 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
 - 04:10 Wolfblood
 - 04:35 Wolfblood
 - 05:00 Violetta
 - 05:45 The Hive
 - 05:50 Mouk
 - 06:00 Lollipop
 - 06:25 Hank Zipzer
 - 06:50 Girl Meets World
 - 07:15 H2O: Just Add Water
 - 07:40 H2O: Just Add Water
 - 08:05 Austin & Ally
 - 08:30 Austin & Ally
 - 08:55 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
 - 09:20 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
 - 09:45 Jessie
 - 10:10 Jessie
 - 10:35 Read It & Weep
 - 12:05 Phineas And Ferb
 - 12:20 Hank Zipzer
 - 12:45 Didn't Do It
 - 13:10 Didn't Do It
 - 13:35 Liv And Maddie
 - 14:00 Liv And Maddie
 - 14:30 H2O: Just Add Water
 - 14:55 First Class Chefs
 - 15:20 Dog With A Blog
 - 15:45 Girl Meets World
 - 16:10 Violetta
 - 17:00 The Next Step
 - 17:25 Mako Mermaids
 - 17:50 Girl Meets World
 - 18:15 Dog With A Blog
 - 18:40 First Class Chefs

- Disney Channel**
- 03:15 Escape Club
 - 04:10 E! Entertainment Special
 - 05:05 The E! True Hollywood Story
 - 06:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 - 06:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 - 07:50 Style Star
 - 08:20 Giuliana & Bill
 - 09:15 Giuliana & Bill
 - 10:15 Giuliana & Bill
 - 11:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
 - 11:35 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
 - 12:05 House Of DVF
 - 13:05 House Of DVF
 - 14:05 Fashion Bloggers
 - 14:30 Fashion Bloggers
 - 15:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 - 16:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 - 17:00 Giuliana & Bill
 - 18:00 House Of DVF
 - 19:00 WAGs
 - 20:00 Christina Milian Turned Up
 - 21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 - 22:00 Dash Dolls
 - 23:00 Dash Dolls

- NAT GEO people HD**
- 03:30 Miguel's Tropical Kitchen
 - 03:55 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
 - 04:20 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
 - 04:45 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia
 - 05:10 Warrior Road Trip
 - 06:00 Baking Good, Baking Bad
 - 06:25 Meat v Veg
 - 06:50 Dream Cruises
 - 07:40 Baking Good, Baking Bad

- OSN FIRST HD COMEDY**
- 03:00 The Leftovers
 - 04:00 Suits
 - 05:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 - 06:00 Backstrom
 - 07:00 Suits
 - 08:00 Criminal Minds
 - 09:00 Quantico
 - 10:00 Backstrom
 - 11:00 Suits
 - 12:00 Emmerdale
 - 12:30 Coronation Street
 - 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 - 14:00 Criminal Minds



RIDDICK ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

- OSN MOVIES HD ACTION**
- 15:00 Backstrom
 - 16:00 Emmerdale
 - 16:30 Coronation Street
 - 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 - 18:00 Criminal Minds
 - 19:00 The Voice
 - 21:00 Blood & Oil
 - 22:00 Supergirl
 - 23:00 Scream Queens

- OSN MOVIES HD ACTION**
- 00:00 300-18
 - 02:00 Left Behind-PG15
 - 04:00 Escape Plan-PG15
 - 06:00 The Legend Of Hercules-PG15
 - 08:00 Marvel's Next Avengers: Heroes Of Tomorrow-PG
 - 10:00 Left Behind-PG15
 - 12:00 Arachnophobia-PG15
 - 14:00 Escape Plan-PG15
 - 16:00 A Stranger In Paradise-PG15
 - 17:30 G.I. Joe: The Rise Of Cobra-PG15
 - 19:30 The Hunger Games: Catching Fire-PG15
 - 22:00 Riddick-18

- OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY**
- 00:00 Malavita
 - 02:00 The Ladykillers
 - 04:00 Problem Child
 - 06:00 The Misadventures Of The Dunderheads
 - 08:00 Life With Mikey
 - 10:00 Problem Child
 - 12:00 The Ladykillers
 - 14:00 Problem Child 2
 - 16:00 Life With Mikey
 - 18:00 The Naked Gun: From The Files Of Police Squad
 - 20:00 I Give It A Year
 - 22:00 Hot Tub Time Machine 2

- OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY**
- 13:00 A Christmas Wish-PG15
 - 15:00 Automata-PG15
 - 17:00 Brat In The PG-15
 - 19:00 Dracula Untold-PG15
 - 21:00 Stonehearst Asylum-PG15
 - 23:00 The Wedding Ringer-18



ESCAPE PLAN ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

- OSN MOVIES HD DRAMA**
- 03:00 The Wee Man-PG15
 - 05:00 My Last Day Without You-PG15
 - 07:00 Transcendence-PG15
 - 09:00 Kon-Tiki-PG15
 - 11:00 My Last Day Without You-PG15
 - 13:00 Breathless-PG15
 - 15:00 Transcendence-PG15
 - 17:00 Kon-Tiki-PG15
 - 19:00 Two Men In Town-PG15
 - 21:00 Middle Of Nowhere-PG15
 - 23:00 Before Midnight-18

- OSN NEWS**
- 07:00 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
 - 07:25 Supa Strikas
 - 08:15 K.C Undercover
 - 08:40 Lab Rats
 - 09:10 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
 - 09:35 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
 - 10:00 Annedroids
 - 10:30 Phineas And Ferb
 - 10:55 Rocket Monkeys
 - 11:20 Boyster
 - 11:45 Super Matrak
 - 12:40 Mighty Med
 - 13:05 Marvel Avengers Assemble
 - 13:30 Supa Strikas
 - 14:00 Kickin' It
 - 14:25 Pokemon: XY
 - 14:50 Phineas And Ferb
 - 15:15 Rocket Monkeys
 - 15:40 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
 - 16:10 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
 - 16:35 Kirby Buckets
 - 17:00 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
 - 17:25 K.C Undercover
 - 17:55 Supa Strikas
 - 18:20 Lab Rats
 - 18:45 Mighty Med
 - 19:10 Annedroids
 - 19:40 Kickin' It
 - 20:05 K.C Undercover
 - 20:30 Supa Strikas
 - 20:55 Lab Rats
 - 21:25 Gamer's Guide To Pretty Much Everything
 - 21:50 Kickin' It
 - 22:15 Mighty Med
 - 22:40 Phineas And Ferb
 - 23:05 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
 - 23:30 Phineas And Ferb
 - 00:00 Programmes Start At 7:00am KSA

- BBC entertainment**
- 00:25 Eastenders
 - 00:55 Upstairs Downstairs
 - 01:50 The Paradise
 - 02:45 The Paradise
 - 03:40 Friday Night Dinner
 - 04:05 The Cafe
 - 04:30 Only Fools And Horses
 - 05:00 Teletubbies
 - 05:25 The Green Balloon Club
 - 05:45 Gogglebiz
 - 06:00 Teletubbies
 - 06:25 The Green Balloon Club
 - 06:50 Gogglebiz
 - 07:05 Woolly & Tig
 - 07:10 The Weakest Link
 - 07:55 My Hero
 - 08:25 Doctors
 - 08:55 Eastenders
 - 09:25 Upstairs Downstairs
 - 10:20 Outcasts
 - 11:15 The Weakest Link
 - 12:00 Blackadder II
 - 12:30 My Hero
 - 13:00 Upstairs Downstairs
 - 13:55 Outcasts
 - 14:50 Blackadder II
 - 15:20 My Hero
 - 15:50 Doctors
 - 16:20 The Weakest Link
 - 17:35 Blackadder II

CLASSIFIEDS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2015



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

Time	Programme	Time	Programme	Time	Programme	Time	Programme
11:30 AM	SHARQIA-1V8-2	9:45 PM	AVENUES-3	11:30 AM	BUS 657	3:45 PM	BUS 657
1:30 PM	V8-2	12:30 AM	CREED	2:15 PM	BRIDGE OF SPIES	5:45 PM	BUS 657
3:45 PM	KRAMPUS			5:00 PM	BUS 657	7:30 PM	BUS 657
6:00 PM	V8-2	12:45 PM	FANAR-3	7:45 PM	BUS 657	10:30 PM	BUS 657
8:00 PM	V8-2	3:00 PM	THE LAST SURVIVORS	10:30 PM	BUS 657	12:30 AM	BUS 657
10:00 PM	V8-2	6:00 PM	TAMASHA - Hindi	1:15 AM	AL-KOUT.4		
12:05 AM	KRAMPUS	9:00 PM	THE LAST SURVIVORS		KRAMPUS	11:30 AM	KRAMPUS
		11:00 PM	THE LAST SURVIVORS		KRAMPUS	1:30 PM	KRAMPUS
		1:00 AM	AVENUES-4		KRAMPUS	3:30 PM	KRAMPUS
		1:45 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA		KRAMPUS	5:30 PM	KRAMPUS
		3:45 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA		CREED	7:45 PM	CREED
		6:30 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA		KRAMPUS	10:00 PM	KRAMPUS
		9:15 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA		BAIRAQ-1	12:45 AM	BAIRAQ-1
		12:05 AM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA		BUS 657	11:45 AM	BUS 657
					IN THE HEART OF THE SEA-3D	1:45 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA-3D
					IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	4:15 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA
					IN THE HEART OF THE SEA-3D	6:45 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA-3D
					IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	9:15 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA
					IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	11:45 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA
					BAIRAQ-2		BAIRAQ-2
					V8-2	11:30 AM	V8-2
					V8-2	1:30 PM	V8-2
					V8-2	3:30 PM	V8-2
					V8-2	5:30 PM	V8-2
					BRIDGE OF SPIES	7:30 PM	BRIDGE OF SPIES
					KRAMPUS	9:30 PM	KRAMPUS
					BAIRAQ-3	12:15 AM	BAIRAQ-3
					KRAMPUS		KRAMPUS
					BUS 657	12:45 PM	BUS 657
					TAMASHA - Hindi	3:00 PM	TAMASHA - Hindi
					KRAMPUS	5:00 PM	KRAMPUS
					BUS 657	8:00 PM	BUS 657
					BUS 657	10:00 PM	BUS 657
					PLAZA	12:05 AM	PLAZA
					CREED		CREED
					BUS 657	3:30 PM	BUS 657
					PATHEMARI - Malayalam	6:15 PM	PATHEMARI - Malayalam
					KRAMPUS	8:15 PM	KRAMPUS
					LAILA	10:45 PM	LAILA
					BUS 657		BUS 657
					NO TUE+WED	3:45 PM	NO TUE+WED
					BRIDGE OF SPIES	5:45 PM	BRIDGE OF SPIES
					NO TUE+WED	8:30 PM	NO TUE+WED
					IN THE HEART OF THE SEA		IN THE HEART OF THE SEA
					NO TUE+WED	11:00 PM	NO TUE+WED
					BUS 657		BUS 657
					NO TUE+WED		NO TUE+WED
					AJIAL.1	4:30 PM	AJIAL.1
					V8-2	7:00 PM	V8-2
					PATHEMARI - Malayalam	9:30 PM	PATHEMARI - Malayalam
					PATHEMARI - Malayalam		PATHEMARI - Malayalam
					PATHEMARI - Malayalam		PATHEMARI - Malayalam
					AJIAL.2	3:45 PM	AJIAL.2
					AMAR AKBAR ANTHONY - Malayalam	6:30 PM	AMAR AKBAR ANTHONY - Malayalam
					AMAR AKBAR ANTHONY - Malayalam	10:00 PM	AMAR AKBAR ANTHONY - Malayalam
					SHANKARAABHARANAM - Telugu	3:45 PM	SHANKARAABHARANAM - Telugu
					SHANKARAABHARANAM - Telugu	6:45 PM	SHANKARAABHARANAM - Telugu
					SHANKARAABHARANAM - Telugu		SHANKARAABHARANAM - Telugu
					AL-KOUT.3		AL-KOUT.3
					BUS 657		BUS 657
					BUS 657		BUS 657

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

CHANGE OF NAME

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

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

I, Kaeed Zohar Hatimali Bohra holder of Indian Passport No. K2099492, 6 Tajmention, 3rd floor, Room-33, 1st Sankli Street, Byculla, Mumbai-8, have changed my name to Kaeed Zohar Hatimali Bhinderwala. (C 5088) 1-12-2015

LOST

It is notified for the information that my original examination certificates, secondary, senior secondary examination of year 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

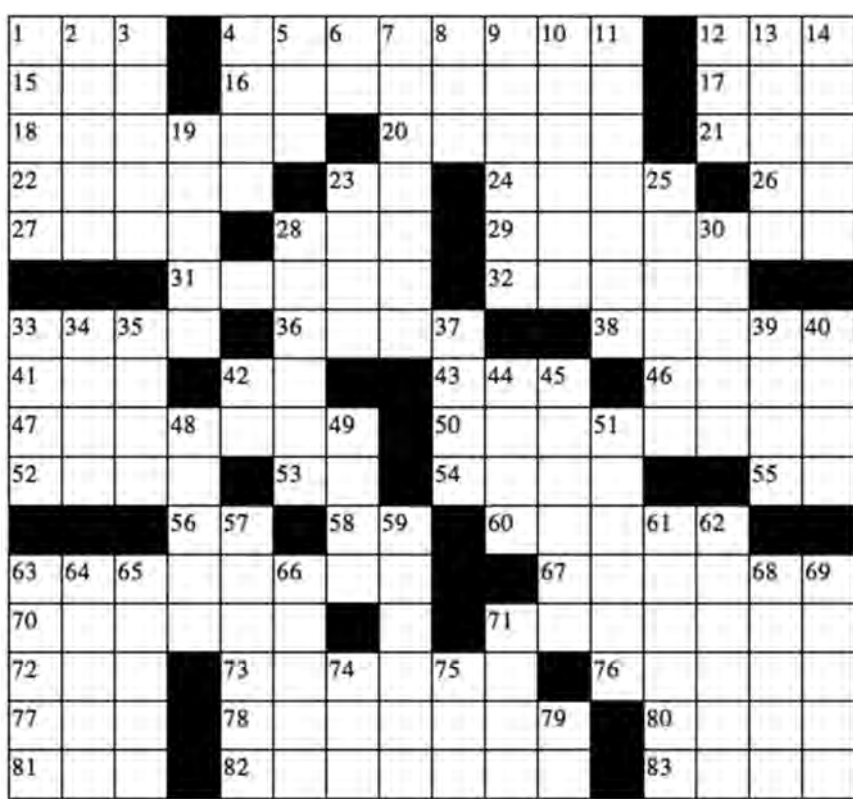
One spacious room available for family or working woman in 2 bedroom, 2 bathroom & maid room, clean flat. Closer to Avenues, old Riggae behind Cakes & Bakes. Contact: 97972324. (C 5090) 2-12-2015

Flight Schedule

Arrival Flights on Sunday 6/12/2015				Departure Flights on Sunday 6/12/2015			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	415	Sohag	00:05	JZR	1147	Dammam	17:45
JZR	239	Amman	00:25	KAC	786	Riyadh	17:45
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	KAC	786	Riyadh	17:45
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	KAC	786	Riyadh	17:45
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	GFA	221	Bahrain	18:00
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	KNE	472	Jeddah	18:00
THY	772	Istanbul	01:05	OMA	645	Muscat	18:00
MSR	614	Cairo	01:20	JZR	1147	Dammam	18:00
DLH	3402	Addis Ababa/Riyadh	01:30	KAC	562	Amman	18:00
DLH	635	Doha	01:35	ABY	127	Sharjah	18:00
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	UAE	857	Dubai	18:00
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	QTR	1072	Doha	18:00
JZR	555	Alexandria	02:25	JZR	787	Riyadh	18:00
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	FDB	051	Dubai	18:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	18:00
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	RJA	640	Amman	18:00
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05	KAC	542	Cairo	18:00
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10	SVA	510	Riyadh	18:00
CEB	7694	Manila	03:15	GFA	215	Bahrain	18:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15	JZR	1141	Dammam	18:00
KKK	6507	Istanbul	03:20	KAC	678	Muscat/Abu Dhabi	18:00
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:25	JZR	777	Jeddah	18:00
KAC	544	Cairo	03:35	UAE	875	Dubai	18:00
LMU	510	Cairo	04:05	KAC	502	Beirut	18:00
DXH	170	Bahrain	05:40	FDB	063	Dubai	18:00
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55	KAC	792	Madinah	18:00
QTR	8511	Doha	06:10	UAL	982	IAD	18:00
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:30	JZR	177	Dubai	18:00
BAW	157	London	06:40	KAC	786	Jeddah	18:00
JZR	1353	Al Najaf	07:10	ABY	123	Sharjah	18:00
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	07:20	QTR	1080	Doha	18:00
FDB	053	Dubai	07:25	KAC	742	Dammam	18:00
QTR	1086	Doha	07:40	KAC	774	Riyadh	18:00
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	GFA	217	Bahrain	18:00
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:50	KAC	166	Paris/Rome	18:00
KAC	382	Delhi	08:00	KAC	618	Doha	18:00
OMA	641	Muscat	08:00	JZR	483	Istanbul	18:00
KAC	354	BLR	08:15	KAC	674	Dubai	18:00
KAC	206	Islamabad	08:25	KAC	102	New York/London	18:00
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	08:30	FDB	061	Dubai	18:00
KAC	352	Kochi	08:30	OMA	647	Muscat	18:00
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	MSR	606	Luxor	18:00
KAC	362	Colombo	08:50	FDB	5053	Dubai	18:00
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:50	JAI	572	Mumbai	18:00
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	DLH	634	Frankfurt	18:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:20	MEA	402	Beirut	18:00
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	18:00
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	ALK	229	Colombo	18:00
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:40	UAE	859	Dubai	18:00
IRC	528	Ahwaz	10:00	GFA	219	Bahrain	18:00
IRC	6507	Shiraz	10:30	QTR	1082	Doha	18:00
JZR	1144	Dammam	10:35	JZR	125	Bahrain	18:00
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KLM	417	Amsterdam	18:00
UAE	873	Dubai	11:05	AIC	981	Chennai/Ahmedabad	18:00
SYR	341	Damascus	11:25	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	18:00
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30	FDB	059	Dubai	18:00
AGY	682	Asyut	11:40	KAC	172	Frankfurt	18:00
MEA	404	Beirut	11:55	MSC	501	Alexandria	18:00
JZR	1355	Al Najaf	12:10	JZR	239	Amman	18:00
SAW	701	Damascus	12:20	JZR	185	Dubai	18:00
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	JZR	185	Dubai	18:00
JZR	561	Sohag	12:45	UAL	981	Bahrain	18:00
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50	PIA	205	Lahore	18:00
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	FDB	071	Dubai	18:00
FDB	057	Dubai	14:10	THY	764	Istanbul	18:00
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10	JAI	574	Mumbai	18:00

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

CROSSWORD 1101



ACROSS

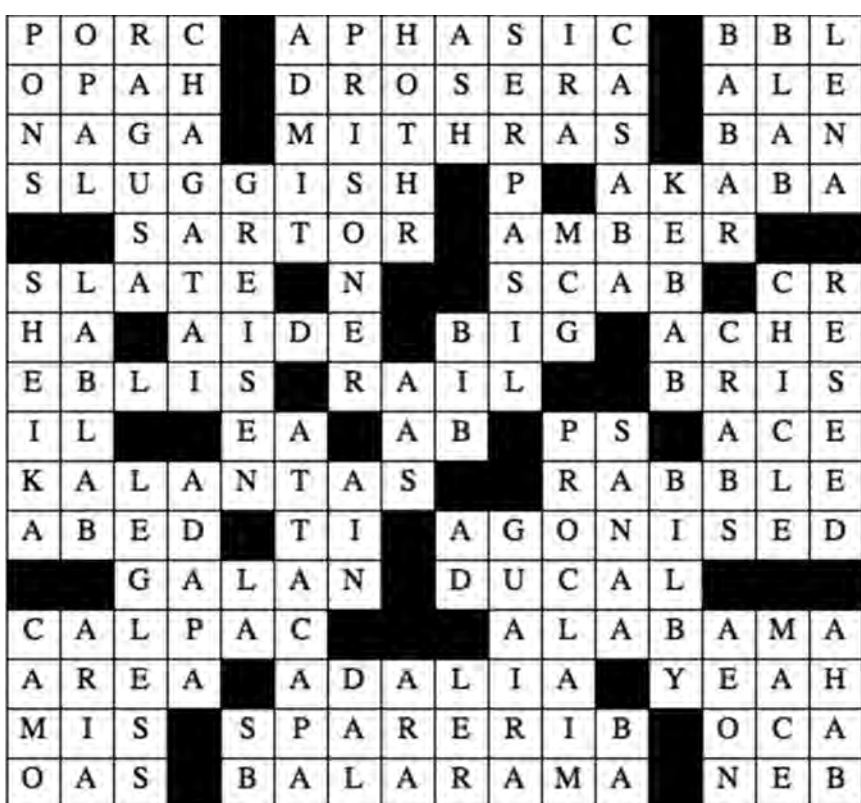
1. Rate of revolution of a motor.
4. Successfully completed or brought to an end.
12. A federal agency established to regulate the release of new foods and health-related products.
15. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
16. Produce ankylosis by surgery.
17. A resource.
18. Farther along in space or time or degree.
20. An army unit usually consisting of two or more divisions.
21. An undergarment worn by women to support their breasts.
22. A coffee cake flavored with orange rind and raisins and almonds.
24. (military) Signal to turn the lights out.
26. A soft white precious univalent metallic element having the highest electrical and thermal conductivity of any metal.
27. The content of cognition.
29. Speak, pronounce, or utter in a certain way.
31. Large dark brown North American arboreal carnivorous mammal.
32. An Italian poet famous for 'The Divine Comedy'—a journey through hell and purgatory and paradise guided by Virgil and his idealized Beatrice (1265-1321).
33. Of or relating to or characteristic of Thailand or its people.
36. Not only so, but.
38. Consisting of or involving two parts or components usually in pairs.
41. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
43. An implement used to propel or steer a boat.
46. A sudden short attack.
47. A festival featuring African-American culture.
50. A smooth prominence of the frontal bone between and above the eyebrows.
52. A town and port in northwestern Israel in the eastern Mediterranean.
53. A small pellet fired from an air rifle or BB gun.
54. Offering fun and gaiety.
55. A soft silvery metallic element of the rare earth group.
56. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
58. A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
60. A city in central Alabama on the Alabama river.
63. The Palestinian uprising (beginning in 1987) against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
67. Russian composer (1804-1857).
70. A range of mountains (usually with jagged peaks and irregular outline).
72. A unit of pressure.
73. Of or containing iridium.
76. A social division of (usually preliterary) people.
77. Alsatian artist and poet who was cofounder of Dadaism in Zurich.
78. A member of a North American Indian people living around the mouth of the Colorado river.
80. A theocratic republic in the Middle East in western Asia.
81. The corporate executive responsible for the operations of the firm.

82. Any woodland plant of the genus Anemone grown for its beautiful flowers and whorls of dissected leaves.
83. A small cake leavened with yeast.

DOWN

1. Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation.
2. Appeal or request earnestly.
3. By chance.
4. Type genus of the Ranidae.
5. Either extremity of something that has length.
6. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
7. Type genus of the Lycaenidae.
8. The United Nations agency concerned with the interests of labor.
9. Arranged according to size.
10. A parliamentary monarchy in southwestern Europe on the Iberian Peninsula.
11. Lose confidence or hope.
12. Extremely pleasing.
13. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
14. A condensed but memorable saying embodying some important fact of experience that is taken as true by many people.
19. Similar to the giraffe but smaller with much shorter neck and stripe on the legs.
23. (Scottish) Bluish-black or gray-blue.
25. An immovable joint (especially between the bones of the skull).
28. United States space station.
30. A small Asian country high in the Himalayas between India and Tibet.
34. Diurnal bird of prey typically having short rounded wings and a long tail.
35. Any of various strong liquors distilled from the fermented sap of toddy palms or from fermented molasses.
37. Scottish writer of rustic verse (1770-1835).
39. A jaunty rhythm in music.
40. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls.
42. The azimuth of a celestial body is the angle between the vertical plane containing it and the plane of the meridian.
44. By bad luck.
45. English courtier (a favorite of Elizabeth I) who tried to colonize Virginia.
48. An extreme state of adversity.
49. In bed.
51. A theatrical representation of a story performed to music by ballet dancers.
57. The second largest continent.
59. Lacking any definite plan or order or purpose.
61. The vein in the center of a leaf.
62. Small genus of evergreen trees of tropical America and western Africa.
64. (KNO3) Used especially as a fertilizer and explosive.
65. (music) The speed at which a composition is to be played.
66. American professional baseball player who hit more home runs than Babe Ruth (born in 1934).
68. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
69. A particular environment or walk of life.
71. The act of scanning.
74. Water frozen in the solid state.
75. A corporation's first offer to sell stock to the public.
79. A very light colorless element that is one of the six inert gasses.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may have that feeling that your life situation is much better than in the past. Old friends are in-touch this morning and if you are not making plans to see them, you are at least visiting on the phone. There is seriousness to your inclination to get with the program of taking better care of yourself at this time. Diet, exercise and work all somehow mean more to you now; you just want to feel good about yourself and the way that you do things. Getting things organized may be the number one secret to success at this time. Finding a place for everything and then keeping everything in place is very beneficial. You are determined to establish a good nutritional program so a shopping trip to the market is in order. A new recipe could become quite popular.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Family members want to prepare the house. This may mean decorate or it could mean they want to make some adjustments that will help keep them warm. Understanding and focusing on what others want endears you to the group. Get a shoebox and have each person submit their ideas. You can read them and everyone can decide on how to bring in the funds to support the needs or ideas. You are keen to help achieve as much as possible and instead of spending a great deal of money, you may find that when all have a hand in the planning it makes for pleasant endings. The requests that need funds for a change, such as a party or a new bookshelf, will be achieved eventually. Voting on some requests is a good way to involve everyone. Enjoy the feedback.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Some very personal or sensitive issues regarding your life circumstances could find you at odds with those around you. Remember, suffering has nothing to do with the events but with one's reaction to the events. You may uncover some blocks, difficulties or hot spots that require you to use discretion. Frustration may turn around into a blessing today, both at home and at work. You could be helping someone move later this afternoon. You learn to use paper towels instead of newspaper as you wrap breakables. These towels cushion the ride and can be used to clean with after the move is completed. The rest of your evening is full of good food, spices, good smells and beautiful music. Someone could be waiting on your needs this evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

This is a time when you are definitely feeling secure and brave with your knowledge and your abilities. You seek to make a positive difference as you embark on a very new field of interest. This may include some competition, but the competition may be the stimulating part of the new interest. Physical activity of any kind is both stimulating and good for your health. A little fast-paced walking will get rid of stress and help to circulate the blood. Relations with a spouse are on a solid ground. You have support for your endeavors. Expressing affections should come easily at this time and can do much good for your disposition. Good food, good exercise and a winning attitude create for you one of your best days to remember thus far, this year.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Putting the past behind you or getting in touch with the mystical and the spiritual are the things that give you a feeling of satisfaction and wholeness. Compassion and comprehension are emotional qualities that mean more at this time. That which you thought was real, you now see as an illusion. In a similar vein, illusions may now seem all too real. You realize that it is wisdom and not knowledge, that counts the most. Some nice compliments come your way today and it may involve the little personal touches you give to your customers or to your surroundings. It should be easy for you to enjoy your own life circumstances today. This should also be an excellent time to prepare for winter and the events of the holidays!



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You are likely to be wearing rose-colored glasses today, as everything takes on a wonderful hue. You appreciate all things beautiful and natural. Your surroundings may even remind you of a remembered garden place. Perhaps you have wind chimes, a fish tank, a waterfall lamp, hanging baskets of ivy or orchids, etc., etc. You have a most relaxing home and many times, you carry your surroundings with you as you have an almost old-spirit type of demeanor. The things you hear are usually things like Mozart, etc. You are relaxed in most circumstances with just enough energy to be curious about anything that moves. This could all lead to a discovery of insights into day-to-day problems that will be of benefit throughout your life. Hold fast, steady as she goes!



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Someone that you are close to could be having some problems concerning a very personal or emotional issue. This would be a good time to invite this person to talk with you—you are a good listener. Your understanding of a problem will lead you to a quick resolution of what would otherwise become a difficult situation. You have the ability to cut through the red tape and get at what is behind a problem. It may be a little bit difficult to keep the cobwebs cleared out of your head this afternoon. Thoughts and ideas that come to you now may be important to some special future event—take notes and then practice letting go. This may be all about traveling. There are a lot of good energies present now for whatever you want to accomplish.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

This is a good time for solving problems. Your thinking is focused and you know just how you feel about a situation or a project. You could find yourself in the workplace for a short while today. Someone in authority has probably picked up on your talent to manage and direct others, and could be coming to you for help in taking on some special project. This may be the reason for taking a little time to work today; you want to work out the steps to success. You are able to rise to the occasion and complete tasks successfully. You want to be able to give this project a lot of energy so you may plan to allocate a few of those tasks before you become too overwhelmed. A little visit with friends later helps you to relax and enjoy the evening.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 19)

You seek more education and may decide to check out one of the internet sites that promise a degree in a short amount of time. If you build upon your knowledge and understanding, you will come closer to those long-term goals of yours. Your communication skills have increased and you effectively communicate with a loved one or close family member—bringing a new understanding. Long distance communication is also possible this whole weekend. Communicating with people that you have not seen in a long time helps to bring back good memories. You might find yourself working on a scrapbook or a photo album this afternoon. This new birth year will be full of love and good friendship!



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Mentally, you will be wearing your thinking cap and could be caught up in some very deep thoughts. Analytically speaking you are at a high point. Financial expertise and businesslike skills are qualities that take on a greater meaning in your life just now. You may decide that now is the time to overhaul your resume and bring it up-to-date. Shopping later this afternoon you may be able to lend a helping hand to someone looking for a first set of furniture. Those around you are very impressed with your ability to make wise purchases. You just naturally know what others need. You have already done the work to compare prices and quality on a vehicle and later today may be the day you bring home a new vehicle.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

The power of persuasion will be working in your favor. You are quite articulate in speech and communication. The circumstances are a natural for self-expression. An enjoyable conversation with someone you love is possible. You may feel something pulling you toward the social life today and you may want to be out shopping in the malls and neighborhood stores. You should find this a very successful shopping day. You carry around with you the aura of personal confidence and heads turn as you walk down the aisle of a store. Volunteering your services to a friend can be most rewarding this evening. Remember that friends are very important and this would be a good time to build on those relationships.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Romance is high on the list of favored activities today. Entertainment that involves you is not only fun but also it is very gratifying to be included. This could mean showing an animal in some sort of competition or performing in some group or get-together. Whatever the case, plenty of pictures will show your efforts. You may just want to get out and walk or exercise this afternoon. Your ability to take care of things on the behalf of others will be appreciated or valued. This is a time when you can anticipate and help people. You should be feeling a sense of rapport—the lines of communication are wide open. All of the support that you need should be available for you now. This evening you return to the subject of romance. Love is in the air!

WORD SEARCH

Real Estate 1

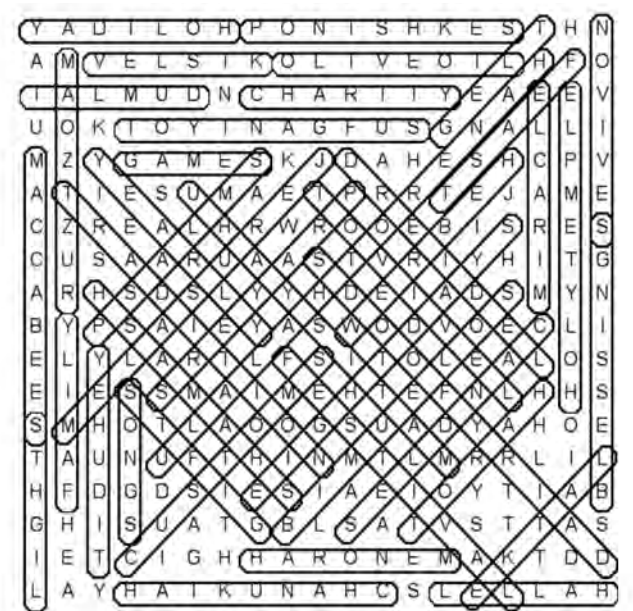
Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 22 letters spell a common Real Estate phrase.



AGENT	CONTRACT	INTERIOR	REALTOR
AMORTIZATION	CREDITOR	LAND	SELL
APPRAISAL	DEED	LAWYER	SKYSCRAPER
ASSESSMENT	DEPOSIT	LENDER	SOLD
ASSET	DEPRECIATION	LIEN	SQUARE FOOTAGE
BUILDING	DUPLEX	LOAN	TAXES
BUNGALOW	EXTERIOR	LOFT	TIMESHARE
BUYING	FLIPPING	MARKET VALUE	TOUR
CLOSER	FOR SALE	OFFER	TRIPLEX
COLLATERAL	HOUSE	PAYMENT	VACATION
CONDEMNED	INSPECTOR	PLOT	VANUITY
CONDO	INSURANCE	PROPERTY	ZONE

Yesterday Solution

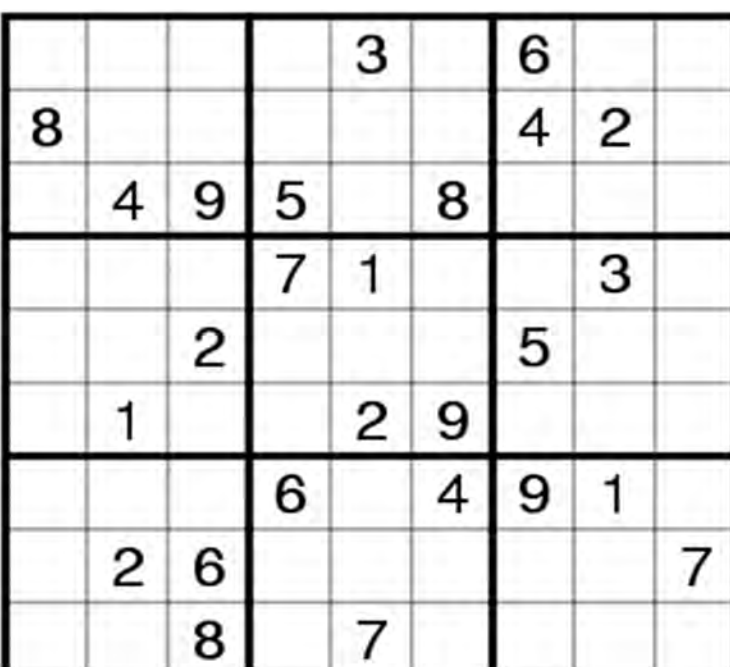
Hanukkah



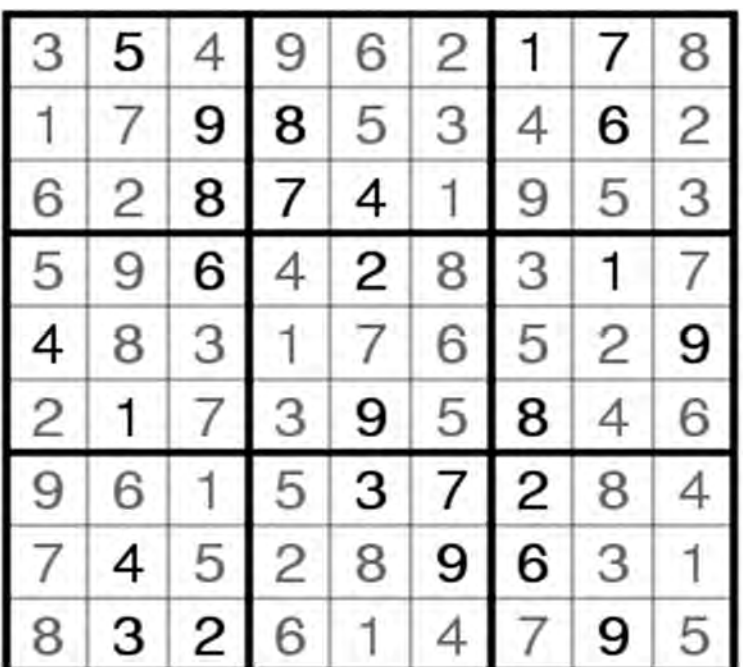
BIMUELOS	FESTIVAL	LATKE	PSALMS
BLESSINGS	GAMES	LEVIVOT	SEVIVON
CANDLES	GELT	LIGHTS	SHAMASH
CHANUKIAH	GIFTS	MA'OZ TZUR	SONGS
CHARITY	HALLEL	MACCABEES	SUFGANIYOT
CUSTOMS	HANEROT HALALU	MATISYAHU	TALMUD
DAIRY FOODS	HEBREW	MENORAH	TORAH
DREIDEL	HOLIDAY	MIRACLE	TRADITION
EIGHT DAYS	HOLY TEMPLE	OLIVE OIL	YEARLY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

The hidden message is: HANUKKAH IS A JEWISH HOLIDAY THAT LASTS EIGHT DAYS

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128



PHARMACIES
ON 24 HRS DUTY

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

STATE OF KUWAIT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw

DAY: Saturday

05/12/2015

Issue Time 07:00

Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Clouds will increase gradually with moderate to fresh north westerly wind, with speed of 20 - 40 km/h with a chance for scattered rain

BY NIGHT: Partly cloudy to cloudy with moderate freshening at times north westerly wind, with speed of 20 - 40 km/h with a chance for scattered rain later on

STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	17 °C	10 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	16 °C	10 °C
ABDALY	16 °C	05 °C
BUBYAN	19 °C	08 °C
JAHRA	18 °C	08 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	19 °C	10 °C
SALMIYAH	19 °C	11 °C
AHMADI	19 °C	11 °C
JAL ALIYAH	18 °C	05 °C
QAROH ISLAND	20 °C	15 °C
UMM AL-MARADEM	20 °C	14 °C

DAY	DATE	WEATHER	MAX. Temp.	MIN. Temp.	Wind Direction	Wind Speed
Sunday	12/06	Cloudy + scattered thunder rain	13 °C	06 °C	NW	20 - 45 km/h
Monday	12/07	Cold	14 °C	05 °C	NW	15 - 38 km/h
Tuesday	12/08	Cold	15 °C	07 °C	NW	15 - 38 km/h
Wednesday	12/09	Cold	16 °C	07 °C	NW	15 - 35 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	05:04
Sunrise	06:28
Zuhr	11:38
Asr	14:31
Sunset	16:49
Isha	18:11

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	19 °C
MIN. Temp.	12 °C
MAX. RH	100 %
MIN. RH	23 %
MAX. Wind	N 46 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	00 mm

All times are local time unless otherwise stated. U.P.0

2015/12/05 10:49 UTC V1.00 T2.1 2-1/ع.ق.ت

PRIVATE CLINICS



Ophthalmologists
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor 25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabea 25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb 25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy 25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel 25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl 25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly 25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner 24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali 25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel 25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah 25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daary 25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary 22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz 25651426
General Practitioners
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi 24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar 24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaizeem 25736920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi 25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah 25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi 24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea 25333501
Urologists
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy 22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul 22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi 22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C) 25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph 66703427

Plastic Surgeons
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf 22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari 22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah 25625030/60
Family Doctor
Dr Divya Damodar 23729596/23729581
Psychiatrists
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari 22635047
Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan 22613623/0
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians
Dr Adrian arbe 23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin 2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan 22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami 25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly 25739272
Dr. Salem soso 22618787
General Surgeons
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer 22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher 25327148
Internists, Chest & Heart
Dr. Adnan Ebil 22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada 22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan 25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra 25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub 24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani 25654300/3

Paediatricians
Dr. Khaled Hamadi 25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed 25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard 25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar 22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarroof 25713514
Dr. Pradip Gupare 23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew 24334282
Dermatology
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University 23845955
Dentists
Dr Anil Thomas 3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar 22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed 22562226
Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer 22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan 22619557
Dr. Abdalateef Al-Katrash 22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan 25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari 25620111
Neurologists
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri 25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan 25345875
Gastrologists
Dr. Sami Aman 22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly 25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali 22633135

Endocrinologist
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman 25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari 25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr 25329924
Physiotherapists & VD
Dr. Deyaa Shehab 25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees 22666288
Rheumatologists:
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi 25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah 25722290
Internist, Chest & Heart
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Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital 25339667
Consultant Cardiologist
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC 2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123

Afghanistan	0093	Luxembourg	00352
Albania	00355	Lesotho	00266
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antigua	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Bahamas	001242	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahrain	00973	Martinique	00596
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritania	00222
Barbados	001246	Mauritius	00230
Belarus	00375	Mayotte	00269
Belgium	0032	Mexico	0052
Belize	00501	Micronesia	00691
Benin	00229	Moldova	00373
Bermuda	001441	Monaco	00377
Bhutan	00975	Mongolia	00976
Bolivia	00591	Montserrat	001664
Bosnia	00387	Morocco	00212
Botswana	00267	Mozambique	00258
Brazil	0055	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brunei	00673	Namibia	00264
Bulgaria	00359	Nepal	00977
Burkina	00226	Netherlands	0031
Burundi	00257	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Cambodia	00855	New Caledonia	00687
Cameroon	00237	New Zealand	0064
Canada	001	Nicaragua	00505
Cape Verde	00238	Niger	00227
Cayman Islands	001345	Nigeria	00234
Central African	00236	Niue	00683
Chad	00235	Norfolk Island	00672
Chile	0056	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
China	0086	North Korea	00850
Colombia	0057	Norway	0047
Comoros	00269	Oman	00968
Congo	00242	Pakistan	0092
Cook Islands	00682	Palau	00680
Costa Rica	00506	Panama	00507
Croatia	00385	Papua New Guinea	00675
Cuba	0053	Paraguay	00595
Cyprus	00357	Peru	0051
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Philippines	0063
Czech Republic	00420	Poland	0048
Denmark	0045	Portugal	00351
Diego Garcia	00246	Puerto Rico	001787
Djibouti	00253	Qatar	00974
Dominica	001767	Romania	0040
Dominican Republic	001809	Russian Federation	007
Ecuador	00593	Rwanda	00250
Egypt	0020	Saint Helena	00290
El Salvador	00503	Saint Kitts	001869
England (UK)	0044	Saint Lucia	001758
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Pierre	00508
Eritrea	00291	Saint Vincent	001784
Estonia	00372	Samoa US	00684
Ethiopia	00251	Samoa West	00685
Falkland Islands	00500	San Marino	00378
Faroe Islands	00298	Sao Tone	00239
Fiji	00679	Saudi Arabia	00966
Finland	00358	Scotland (UK)	0044
France	0033	Senegal	00221
French Guiana	00594	Seychelles	00284
French Polynesia	00689	Sierra Leone	00232
Gabon	00241	Singapore	0065
Gambia	00220	Slovakia	00421
Georgia	00995	Slovenia	00386
Germany	0049	Solomon Islands	00677
Ghana	00233	Somalia	00252
Gibraltar	00350	South Africa	0027
Greece	0030	South Korea	0082
Greenland	00299	Spain	0034
Grenada	001473	Sri Lanka	0094
Guadeloupe	00590	Sudan	00249
Guam	001671	Suriname	00597
Guatemala	00502	Swaziland	00268
Guinea	00224	Sweden	0046
Guyana	00592	Switzerland	0041
Haiti	00509	Syria	00963
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Serbia	00381
Honduras	00504	Taiwan	00886
Hong Kong	00852	Tanzania	00255
Hungary	0036	Thailand	0066
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Toga	00228
Iceland	00354	Tonga	00676
India	0091	Tokelau	00690
Indian Ocean	00873	Trinidad	001868
Indonesia	0062	Tunisia	00216
Iran	0098	Turkey	0090
Iraq	00964	Tuvalu	00688
Ireland	00353	Uganda	00256
Italy	0039	Ukraine	00380
Ivory Coast	00225	United Arab Emirates	00976
Jamaica	001876	United Kingdom	0044
Japan	0081	Uruguay	00598
Jordan	00962	USA	001
Kazakhstan	007	Uzbekistan	00998
Kenya	00254	Vanuatu	00678
Kiribati	00686	Venezuela	00582
Kuwait	00965	Vietnam	0084
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Laos	00856	Virgin Islands US	001340
Latvia	00371	Wales (UK)	0044
Lebanon	00961	Yemen	00967
Liberia	00231	Yugoslavia	00381
Libya	00218	Zambia	00260
Lithuania	00370	Zimbabwe	00263

Gossip



Vanessa White is terrified of drowning

The Saturdays singer recently took part in a tough endurance race where she had to face her worst fear. She said: "My biggest fear is drowning. I recently took part in a Tough Mudder obstacle race and had to get into a tank of water, full of ice cubes. It was terrifying." Meanwhile, the 'Issues' singer is never happier than when she is working on new music - unless she's having a good rest. She said "My happy place is in the studio writing songs. That, or in bed asleep." And if she has a problem, Vanessa knows she can always turn to her mother for help and support. She said: "The last time I said I love you

was today, on the phone to my mum. We're close and speak every day." The 26-year-old singer has always loved from performing and her earliest memory is of being on stage. She told *Closer* magazine: "I'm chatty, loud, and determined... My earliest memory is aged five, singing 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star' on stage on a trip to the Philippines. No one asked me to do it."



Eddie Redmayne loves being married

The 'Danish Girl' actor feels incredibly lucky to have tied the knot with his longterm girlfriend Hannah Bagshawe in December 2014 and believes becoming husband and wife has put some stability into his life. He explained to Britain's *Glamour* magazine: "I love being married. I feel so settled in my skin, so lucky to have the most wonderful, supportive, wife. I'm an ordered person, I need structure, and yet everything about what I do is the opposite. You have no control, you're subject to everyone else's chaos. I sometimes wonder if something is continuously forcing me out of my comfort zone. And, although the couple have been wed for almost 12 months, he recently admitted they're still very much in the honeymoon period of their marriage. Asked if they're still in the honeymoon phase, Eddie smiled and said: "Yeah, very much so." Though it is the couple's anniversary in just two weeks time, the 33-year-old actor admitted he still hasn't decided how to mark the occasion, and is perplexed by the notion that a paper-based gift is traditionally given on the first anniversary.



Dominic West believes marriage has given him freedom

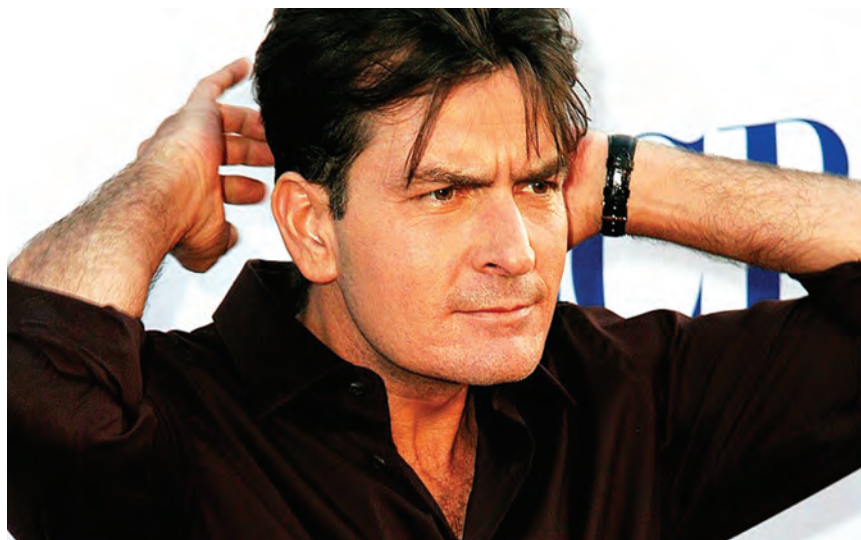
The 46-year-old actor married his wife Catherine Fitzgerald, with whom he has four children Dora, Senan, Francis and Rose, five years ago but has admitted they are still just as strong as they were when they first tied the knot. He explained: "I fell in love with my wife when I was at university and I managed to persuade her to fall in love with me for three months but then she ran away and married someone else. "But I've been in love with her since then and still am, even more so ... I think I have a really good marriage, mainly because my wife is so cool and I adore her and we have all these kids. "The mistake people might make, if I may be so bold, is expecting so much of a marriage and hop-

ing that there can be perfection. "I think, really, what marriage is, is two people helping each other to live the best lives they can. And that's what happened with me and my missus. That's why it works. She doesn't get jealous, either." And, despite Dominic, who has daughter Martha from a past relationship, having a highly successful career under his belt, he believes it is "essential" Catherine has her own job and that's why he's so proud of her eight-year restoration project at Hillsborough Castle in Northern Ireland.

Charlie Sheen has hit back at Rossi's claims

The 'Anger Management' star's lawyer Martin D Singer insists the actor will fight his former fiancée's claims after she alleged he caused her "emotional distress and negligence" by not telling her he was HIV positive when they began their intimate relationship in 2013. Brett, who is also known as Scottine, also claims Sheen - who confirmed last month he is HIV positive in a televised interview - forced her to have an abortion so they wouldn't "give birth to a retarded child". But Martin told *Us Weekly*: "Charlie Sheen intends to vigorously defend the lawsuit filed by Scottine Ross. "We are confident that Mr Sheen will prevail in this action and will prevail on his claims for affirmative

relief against her." Rossi insists she would never have engaged in sex with him if she'd known he was HIV positive. Documents filed at Los Angeles Superior Court state: "If Sheen had disclosed to the Plaintiff that he was HIV positive when they met for the very first time, the Plaintiff never would have engaged in sex with him, and the resulting relationship between the two would never have occurred." Rossi's legal team are also claiming that Charlie's lawyers tried to settle the matter out of court by offering to pay \$1 million by December 2.



Peaches Geldof owed around £450,000 at time of her death

According to the *Daily Mirror* newspaper, the late star, who died from a drug overdose in April 2014 aged 25, did not have a will but details of her estate have revealed she left £884,274. But the publication claims her gross estate was reduced to £394,630 after debts and outstanding affairs were settled. It is not known what the debts relate to but by law if someone without a will dies then the first £250,000 of their estate goes to their civil or married partner. As a result, Peaches' musician husband Thomas Cohen will receive a quarter of a million from her estate, and the additional £144,630 will be split between him, and the couple's two sons, Astala, three, and two-year-old Phaedra. This comes just days after Peaches' father Bob Geldof - who is worth a reported £35 million - revealed he had "half-expected" his daughter's death. The 64-year-old star said: "Part of me kind of half-expected [it with] Peaches, to be honest with you - the way she was carrying on, there's nothing you can do about it." Peaches' mother Paula Yates died from a heroin overdose aged 41 in 2000.

Daisy Ridley has revealed JJ almost made her cry

The 23-year-old actress was cast as the lead role Rey in the upcoming blockbuster movie but has admitted she considered bowing out of the film after she almost suffered a panic attack when the director, JJ, criticized her work. She explained: "I was petrified. I thought I was gonna have a panic attack on the first day. [I remember thinking], 'I can't do it.' Because JJ, he probably doesn't remember telling me that my performance was wooden. "This was the first day! And I honestly wanted to die. I thought I was gonna cry, I couldn't breathe. And there were so many crew there, because obviously all the creatures [had stand-ins], and there were loads of extra crew making sure everyone was safe because it was so hot." But the brunette beauty - who plays "a scavenger in a ship graveyard" who fights off evil forces - expected Abrams to be tough on her because she knew what he wanted from her. She told *Glamour* magazine: "To find someone to shoulder a 'Star Wars' movie, you need to find people who can make you laugh and show emotion and do action and also handle the pressure of starring in 'Star Wars.' It's like finding someone who can compete in every event in the Olympics."





Courtney Cox, McDaid call off their engagement

The former 'Friends' actress and the 'Snow Patrol' rocker - who got engaged in June 2014 after a whirlwind six month romance - are believed to have secretly split one month ago. HollywoodLife.com first reported the news, with a source saying: "He just decided he wanted to separate. He hasn't really given a reason, but mainly said he wants to focus on his music and can't take the fighting." Courtney is extremely upset about. She truly is just miserable about it." TMZ added that Johnny, 39, moved out of 51-year-old Courtney's Malibu home before Thanksgiving and flew home to Northern Ireland. Both publications revealed the pair had been in therapy together but it failed to save their relationship. Courtney was previously married to David Arquette - the father of her daughter Coco - for 11 years and she and Johnny were introduced by mutual pal Ed Sheeran. Ed previously spoke about how happy he was for them and revealed the relationship was progressing quickly. He said: "I'm not sure that it's public knowledge, so maybe I shouldn't have said anything-but, yes, they're already living together. "Things are moving fast. He moved in and, judging by the last time I saw them, they couldn't be happier."



Tinie Tempah wants to own a farm

The 27-year-old rapper - whose real name is Patrick Chukwuemeka Okogwu - dreams of having his own plot of land in Kent, South East England, one day so he can adopt lots of animals and build a large vegetable patch. Asked to divulge his dream day, he told HELLO! Fashion Monthly magazine: "I would hang out at my friend's farm. He's got dogs and donkeys and all kinds of animals and I like chilling with them all. "I really like the English countryside and would love to have my own farm in Kent one day and grow my own food." But regardless of where he sets up home, the 'Pass Out' hitmaker wants to live near his family because he believes they keep him grounded and focused on success. He said previously: "Fame can be tough to deal with ... you are propelled into an upper echelon where everyone feeds your ego and you get whatever you want. You know, 'You want two? Take three!'" But in reality you want what you haven't got. You have a girlfriend and you wish you were single, you're old and you wish you were young. That's the way life is and I'd rather deal with the problems that come with success than always wondering what it would have been like. I've got real people around me. My mum will tell me if I'm acting up."

Kim Kardashian struck by a sinus infection and flu

The 'Keeping Up With the Kardashians' star - who is expected to give birth in the coming weeks - has been struck down by a sinus infection and flu. She took to Twitter to post a picture of her pregnant belly and is clearly feeling down about the situation as she added a sad emoji to her tweet. The raven-haired star - who is carrying her second child with husband Kanye West - added the caption: "37 WEEKS x SINUS INFECTION x FLU = [sad emoji] (sic)" Kim has been pregnant longer with her second child than she was with first baby, two-year-old North West, after she was forced to give birth to the little one five weeks early. It is well documented that the 35-year-old star doesn't enjoy being pregnant much, having previously described it as the "worst experience of my life". And last month, Kim revealed she had piled on 52lbs during her latest pregnancy. She tweeted: "Ok I'm 52 lbs up today....and I still have 6 weeks to go! I got my work cut out for me!!!! (sic)" The reality TV star previously blasted: "I'm gonna keep it real: For me, pregnancy is the worst experience of my life! LOL! I don't enjoy one moment of it and I don't understand people who enjoy it."



Nadine Coyle is hoping for Girls Aloud reunion

The 'Insatiable' singer recently bounced back into the spotlight when she released her new single 'I Could Be' with former Westlife star Shane Filan, and she now has her sights on performing with Sarah Harding, Cheryl Fernandez-Versini, Nicola Roberts and Kimberley Walsh again. Asked if there will be a reunion, she told OK! magazine: "I hope so at some point. We need to get some more collaborations going so Shane can come along too." However, Nadine may not get her wish as it was recently claimed the group are planning a reunion - but without her. Cheryl - who slammed Nadine as "full of s**t" last year for claiming she never wanted the group to go on hiatus - is said to be inviting the rest of the group to contribute to her next solo album, which will pave the way for a new Girls Aloud record afterwards. A source said previously: "Cheryl's working on one of her biggest career plans yet, to get some of Girls Aloud back together for a new record - but Nadine is definitely not invited. Cheryl wants to get in the studio and have each of the girls making cameo appearances on songs she's been working on for release next year."

Alice Eve still stands by her comments about Jenner

The 'Star Trek Into Darkness' actress doesn't regret her claims made earlier this year about the 66-year-old former athlete not being a true woman, despite sparking outrage and being branded a "transphobic" by some angry fans. She explained: "I maintain that we need to have equality and that was a moment I thought was worth mentioning - that we are not equal. I think it's a really complicated time in terms of gender equality. I think we're redefining what those parameters are and I think that I was part of a movement of re-evaluation and I still hope to be a part of that." And the subject of inequality is something the 33-year-old star holds very close to her heart as she has admitted she's experienced sexism in Hollywood throughout her career. She told Hello! Fashion Monthly: "I've certainly experienced things that made me feel uncomfortable. In life, too. Being a woman, you have to know boundaries and it's good that we're talking about it so that everybody knows the rules." Meanwhile, Alice came under fire in April and was forced to delete her comment on Instagram after she claimed Caitlyn - who was known as Bruce Jenner prior to her gender transition surgery - wasn't a proper woman because she doesn't experience inequality like other females do.



Alex Pettyfer has confirmed he, Channing Tatum feuded



The 25-year-old actor claims the Hollywood star was "looking for an excuse not to like me", but he was the one who ended up with a bad reputation while shooting the male stripper movie because he wouldn't talk to anyone on set after being advised to keep a low-profile by his representatives. He said: "Channing Tatum does not like me - and for many reasons [and] many being my own fault. "I was scared to speak. I actually did my work and I sat in the corner and listened to music because I had been told anything I did was wrong by my reps. I was very insecure as a human being. "That also gave me a bad rep because everyone was like, 'Alex doesn't speak because he thinks he's better than everyone else.' That's not true. I was just generally nervous and scared to be myself. I was in character." Alex claims Channing wasn't that keen on hiring him for the film - in which the pair played male strippers - and insists the 'Step Up' actor took a further disliking to him when he failed to pay the rent on a flat he was staying at which was owned by one of the 35-year-old star's friends.



ADELE 25



Adele's '25' breaks new record

Adele's "25" has sold more than one million copies in its second week of release, making it the first album of the SoundScan era to sell one million copies in two separate weeks. Adele's "25" tops US Album Chart, "21" Jumps Back Into Top 10. "25" shattered the record for fastest-selling album in a single week when it bowed in November, moving 3.48 million units in the week ending Nov. 26. It's the 20th album to top one million copies since Nielsen SoundScan began tracking purchases in 1991. Adele's third studio album is a lock for No. 1 on the US album sales chart for the week, which will be confirmed over the weekend.

Physical copies of "25" flew off shelves on Black Friday and Small Business Saturday, bolstering its stellar word of mouth. The songstress had two albums on last week's top 10; after topping the chart for multiple weeks after its 2011 release, "21" charged up the chart from 25th place to ninth place, having moved 46,000 units alongside the release of "25." "21" is the tenth-largest selling album of the Nielsen era, with more than 11.2 million sold units on the books.— Reuters

Oscar-nominated actor Robert Loggia dies at 85

Robert Loggia, a durable and versatile tough guy actor in movies and TV shows including Brian De Palma's 1983 drama "Scarface" and "Big," died Friday at his home in Los Angeles, his widow Audrey confirmed to Variety. He was 85. Loggia had been battling Alzheimer's Disease for the past five years, according to his widow. They had been married for 33 years. He was nominated for a supporting actor Academy Award for "Jagged Edge" in 1986 for his portrayal of blunt private detective Sam Ransom. Loggia's most notable film credits included "An Officer and a Gentleman," "Prizzi's Honor," "Independence Day," David Lynch's "Lost Highway" and "Big," in which he played a toy company owner and performed a memorable duet on a giant foot-operated piano with Tom Hanks. He played Miami drug lord Frank Lopez in "Scarface."

Loggia was nominated for an Emmy in 1989 for his portrayal of FBI agent Nick Mancuso in the series "Mancuso FBI"—which has a spin-off of the character he created in the "Favorite Son" miniseries starring Harry Hamlin—and again in 2000 for his guest star role in "Malcolm in the Middle." Loggia was a versatile supporting actor, assembling credits on three different episodes of "The Rockford Files" as three different characters. He also appeared in three different "Pink Panther" movies with three different character names.

Loggia played Anwar Sadat in the 1982 TV movie "A Woman Called Golda" opposite Ingrid Bergman. He also portrayed fearsome mobster-bakery owner Feech La Manna on several episodes of "The Sopranos." Loggia was a native of Staten Island, born to Italian immigrants. He received a football scholarship to Wagner College and transferred to the University of Missouri. After serving two years in the US Army, he began classes with Stella Adler and at the Actors Studio.

"He loved being an actor," his widow told Variety. "He used to say that he never had to work. He never had to wait tables." "I loved Bob like a father," Lionsgate Vice Chairman Michael Burns told Variety. "I will miss him tremendously." He broke into the entertainment business performing in stage plays in New York. His first film credit came in 1957 in the noirish "The Garment Jungle." His first TV credits came in 1958 in "The Nine Lives of Elfege Baca" in a series of Walt Disney TV shows. He starred in the 1966-67 series "THE Cat" as a former circus aerialist and cat burglar turned professional bodyguard who would introduce himself as "T Hewitt Edward Cat."

Loggia's TV credits included "The Untouchables," "Columbo," "Gunsmoke," "Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea," "The Big Valley," "Rawhide," "Little House on the Prairie," "Starsky and Hutch," "Charlie's Angels," "Magnum, P.I.," "Kojak," "Hawaii Five-0," "The Bionic Woman," "Frasier" and "Monk." His other film roles include "Revenge of the Pink Panther," "Trail of the Pink Panther," "Curse of the Pink Panther," "Over the Top," "Necessary Roughness," "Return to Me" and "Armed and Dangerous." Loggia is survived by his widow; three children, Tracy, John and Kristina, and a stepchild, Cynthia. His family has asked that donations be made to the Motion Picture and Television Fund. Loggia was an active supporter of the fund. Funeral services will be private.— Reuters



Robert Loggia

Digital Tracking: 'Krampus' wants to spoil 'Mockingjay' holiday fun

Does digital data offer indicators that can be used to monitor marketing effectiveness and predict box office success even before awareness turns into intent? Moviepilot—which studies social data and box office trends—analyzes this weekend's new movies across Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and Google (the methodology behind the numbers is laid out in the appendix below) over the seven days leading up to their release, when marketing campaigns are at their peak.

Sandwiched between the leftovers of the Thanksgiving turkeys and the yuletide feast of "Star Wars" and awards certs "The Revenant" and "Joy," "Krampus" creeps up on us looking to steal away some box office plunder. Universal has seen great success with its horror titles in recent years, with inventive marketing campaigns and eye-catching creative becoming the norm. "Krampus" has been very active on Snapchat, with video ads playing as users watch curated stories. "Krampus" also partnered with Reddit for a gift exchange.

With over 97,300 searches, "Krampus" looks set for a solid start this weekend, measuring up similarly to "Unfriended" which opened to \$15 million. We'd expect a similar start for the yuletide ghoul this weekend. Tobias Bauckhage (@tbauckhage) is co-founder and CEO of moviepilot.com, a social-media-driven movie community reaching more than 29 million Facebook fans and 30 million monthly unique users. Based on community data, Moviepilot helps studios to optimize their social media

campaigns, identifying, analyzing and activating the right audiences. The company works with studios like Focus Features, 20th Century Fox and A24.

Appendix

Facebook fan (or like) numbers are a good indicator for fan awareness for a movie, even months before the release. For mainstream movies with younger target audiences, fan counts are particularly important. However, big fan numbers can be bought and movies with older target audiences typically have lower fan counts. Fan engagement measured by PTAT (People Talking About This) is a more precise but also a fickle indicator, heavily driven by content strategy and media spending. Both numbers are global and public-facing numbers from the official Facebook fanpage. YouTube trailer counts are important for measuring early awareness about a movie.

We track all English language original video content about the movie on YouTube, down to videos with 100 views, whether they are officially published by a studio or published unofficially by fans. The Buzz ratio looks at the percentage of unique viewers on YouTube that have "liked" a video and given it a "thumbs up." Movies with over 40 million views are usually mainstream and set to dominate the box office, while titles drawing around 10 million indicate a more specific audience. If a movie does not have a solid number of trailer views on YouTube four weeks before its release, it is not promising news. But again, it is impor-

tant to understand whether trailer views have been bought or grew organically. These numbers are global and public-facing. Twitter is a good real-time indicator of excitement and word of mouth, coming closer to release or following bigger PR stunts. Mainstream, comedy and horror titles all perform particularly strongly on Twitter around release. We count all tweets over the period of the last seven days before release (Friday through Thursday) that include the movie's title plus a number of search words, e.g. "movie" OR a list of movie-specific hashtags.

The numbers are global, conducted using a Twitter API partner service. Search is a solid indicator for intent moving toward release as people actively seek out titles that they are aware of and are thinking about seeing. Search is particularly significant for fan-driven franchises and family titles as parents look for information about films they may take their children to see. We look at the last seven days (Friday through Thursday) of global Wikipedia traffic as a conclusive proxy for Google Search volume. We have to consider that big simultaneous global releases tend to have higher search results compared to domestic releases.— Reuters



Actress Toni Collette attends a screening of 'Krampus' at the Arclight Cinema in Hollywood.



Actors Adam Scott (left) and Emjay Anthony attend a screening of 'Krampus' at the Arclight Cinema in Hollywood, California. — AFP photos

Bono: ISIS is 'death cult, we're life cult'

U2 lead singer Bono, appearing on Sunday's "Fareed Zakaria GPS," said that the band's return to Paris after last month's attacks reflects defiance on the part of residents of the city against ISIS. "They're a death cult. We're a life cult. Life force," he told Zakaria, in which he was joined by The Edge. "You know, as Edge was saying, the celebrating, all the things we love, food, soccer, they're trying to, you know, they're trying to destroy those things. They don't like women. What else is there? You know what I mean? Music, women... We've sensed that defiance in Paris and the word from our fans is—I think there was 300 tickets not taken up coming back—I mean something—[that's a] really small figure."

U2's concert was canceled in the wake of the attacks in Paris last month, but were rescheduled for Sunday and Monday, when HBO will air "U2: Innocence and Experience: Live in Paris." Bono and The Edge compared the current situation to other authoritarian movements that have sought to restrict cultural freedoms. "There's only been a couple of political movements in the history of the world that have targeted music specifically—the Taliban banned music and during Mao's Cultural Revolution, also, music was banned," The Edge told Zakaria.

"And we think of music as the sound of freedom. We think that rock and roll has a part to play, and so going back to Paris, to us, is not just symbolic; I think we're actually starting the process of resistance, as it were, and defiance against this movement." Bono also cautioned the United States to be "very, very careful" in the response to ISIS, noting that they are "not really after the lives. They're not trying to take lives. They're trying to take away our way of life." He warned of calls to accept only Christian refugees, noting famous figures like Albert Einstein and Steve Jobs' father, a Syrian.—Reuters

Cocaine found near body of 'grunge' icon Scott Weiland

Minnesota police said Friday that they found cocaine in a tour bus near the lifeless body of Scott Weiland, the award-winning lead singer of popular rock act Stone Temple Pilots. They also arrested Thomas Delton Black-identified by US media as a band member—on charges of drug possession, as the music world paid tribute to what some called a legend of "grunge" music. Weiland, 48, who also performed with the Velvet Revolver rock group, had admitted in interviews to a longtime struggle with substance abuse. He was pronounced dead on Thursday, but officials have not said what the cause was. Condolences poured in for Weiland, who was synonymous with grunge—the alternative rock style that became popular during the 1980s and 1990s, particularly in Seattle and elsewhere on the US west coast.

Weiland, a two-time Grammy Award winner, "passed away in his sleep while on a tour stop in Bloomington, Minnesota, with his band The Wildabouts," read a posting on the singer's Facebook page, where fans expressed shock and sorrow. He had been scheduled to perform with his new band, Scott Weiland & The Wildabouts, when he was found dead in the group's tour bus. Bloomington police said that detectives collected evidence from inside the bus that included "a small quantity" of cocaine "in the bedroom where Weiland was located." Detectives also found cocaine in the area occupied by Black, "a traveling member of Weiland's party."

Struggle with drugs, alcohol

Weiland formed Stone Temple Pilots with friends more than two decades ago. Their first album "Core" came out in 1992. But he suffered from substance abuse issues and left the band. "Dear Scott," his former Stone Temple bandmates wrote in a poignant farewell on Facebook, "Let us start by saying thank you for sharing your life with us. The memories are many, and they run deep for us. We know amidst the good and the bad you struggled, time and time again. You were gifted beyond words, Scott. Part of that gift was part of your curse. All of our love and

respect. We will miss you brother." In 2003, Weiland joined the Velvet Revolver but he quit in 2008, reportedly because of more personal issues. "Even in his darkest times, we all had hope and love for him," Velvet Revolver said in a statement. "His artistry will live on, of that, there is no doubt... It's just so sad and brutal from any perspective."

The online music site Consequence of Sound wrote that "Weiland will undoubtedly be remembered as one of alt-rock's greatest yet troubled frontmen." The Recording Academy, which awards the Grammys each year, hailed Weiland as a groundbreaking music innovator. "Scott Weiland was a grunge icon and a true modern day, rock and roll front man," the group's CEO Neil Portnow said. "From the massive success he achieved as the original lead vocalist of Stone Temple Pilots to his work with rock supergroup Velvet Revolver and his most recent venture with the Wildabouts, Scott's extraordinary talent

and captivating performances will forever live on and inspire legions of rock fans worldwide."

Weiland discussed his struggle with addiction in a 2011 interview with USA Today. "I'm still on the verge all the time," he told the newspaper. "I swore, of course, never to go back to heroin but I never thought that alcohol would be the real nightmare that it actually is. And it's legal." Weiland had two children with his ex-wife Mary Forsberg. News reports said he married photographer Jamie Wachtel Weiland in 2013. Several rockers expressed their sorrow on Twitter. "Sad to hear about Scott's passing. I hope it wasn't drugs," wrote Motley Crue's Nikki Sixx. "Extremely saddened that Scott Weiland has passed. Such a gifted performer," wrote Aerosmith's Joe Perry. "Way too soon," added Lenny Kravitz.— AFP



General atmosphere of the hotel parking lot where musician Scott Weiland was found deceased in his tour bus near Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota. — AFP



Crazy Rouge is seen wearing a vintage dress and coat and a headpiece from Hong Kong at Art Basel Miami Beach at the Miami Beach Convention Center in Miami Beach, Florida. — AP/AFP photos

Actress Katie Holmes hits up Art Basel Miami for first time

Katie Holmes sings, dances and is even making her directorial debut, but the actress admits she's not much of an art collector and was eager to explore Art Basel Miami Beach for the first time. Holmes walked the red carpet for a party toasting her Ocean Drive magazine cover at a private home on South Beach on Friday night. "I really appreciate art," said Holmes, who said she follows Jose Parla on Instagram and is friends with the photographer who goes by JR.

She's also a fan of Cy Twombly. "I have a toe in the art world." She also enjoys painting with Suri, her 9-year-old daughter with ex-husband Tom Cruise, but says dismissively "it's just a hobby. We just have fun." Holmes, who wore a red Azzedine Alaia dress and Manolo Blahnik heels, was among

dozens of celebrities who descended on the prestigious art fair this week, including rocker Lenny Kravitz, who unveiled a photo exhibit, Alicia Keys, Eva Longoria, Ricky Martin and Leonardo DiCaprio.

In February, Holmes will star in the upcoming movie "Touched With Fire" produced by Spike Lee. "It's a love story between two people that are afflicted with bipolar disorder so it was an undertaking...Christine Lahti played my mother, which was incredible." She'll also reprise her role as Jacqueline Kennedy and take a turn directing in the Reelz Channel miniseries "The Kennedys: After Camelot," which also stars Greg Kinnear. "Hopefully you just get better every time you do it," she said of her recent directing gigs, which includes the upcoming movie "All We Had."

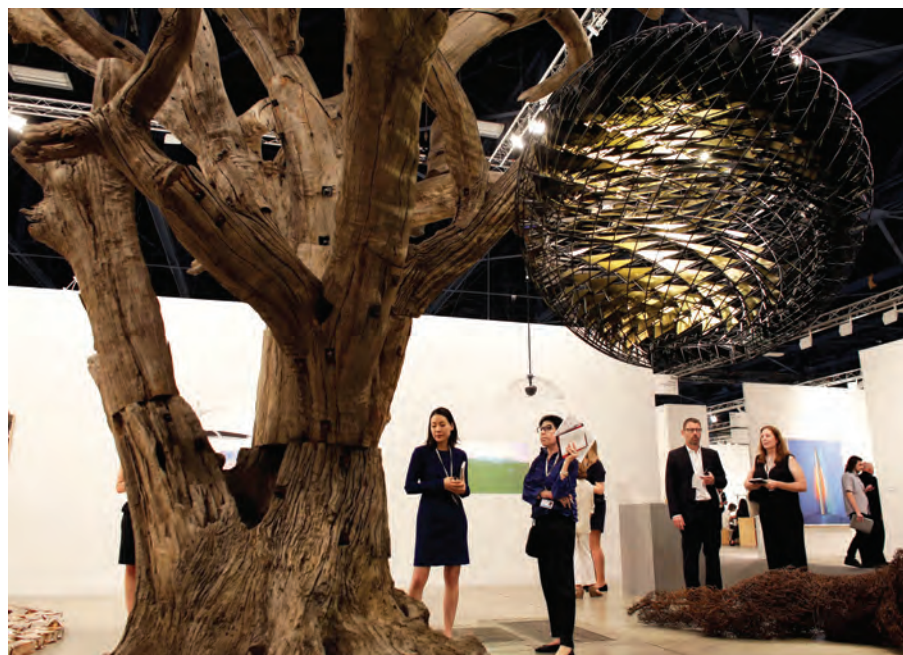
The actress, who is known for being a fiercely private, yet down-to-earth New Yorker who frequents the subway, appears untouched by the Hollywood limelight. "Hollywood is a business so if you approach it like that... it's a business. That's all." Holmes, who is the youngest of five siblings, said she'll go home to Ohio for the holidays, where she has lots of nieces and nephews to play with. "We'll probably be making a lot of Christmas cookies," and playing board games, said Holmes is a fan of the old-school games Pictionary and Scattergories. "I always love the New Year because it's the calm after the holidays." — AP



An attendee views 'Solar Feminine, 2013' by artist Carol Bove (made of powder coated steel) at the Art Basel Miami Beach.



Josh Abraham checks out the art on display at the Gavin Brown Gallery during the opening day of Art Basel.



A tree sculpture by artist Ai Weiwei and a globe sculpture by artist Olafur Eliasson are displayed at Galerie neugerriemschneider at Art Basel Miami Beach.



Benjamin Kamino, of Toronto, attempts to read a newspaper and drink a cup of coffee as water rises over him during a performance in a large aquarium titled Holoscenes, during Miami Art Week in Miami. The piece, by artist Lars Jan, is meant to convey the issue of climate change and water in the 21st century, and the ability to continue everyday behaviors.

'Fourth Direction' wins top prize at Singapore Festival

Gurvinder Singh's drama "The Fourth Direction" continued its winning ways by claiming the top prize at the Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF) yesterday. Prizes were given out at a ceremony attended by David Beckham, Dev Patel and Terence Chang as well as local Singaporean celebrities Michelle Goh and Zoe Tay. "The Fourth Direction," based on two short stories about friends during the Sikh separatists' uprising against the Indian military, was first presented in Un Certain Regard at Cannes. Last month it won top prize for an Indian film at the Mumbai Film Festival.

The SGIFF jury, headed by Brillante Mendoza, said: "Through a masterful execution, 'The Fourth Direction' makes us experience the fear and tension of the era and how the political situation is influencing the life of this family." The festival started on Nov 26 and

will finish today with a day of tributes to Iran's Mohsen Makhmalbaf and repeat screenings of the winning films.

Makhmalbaf accepted an award from festival executive Yuni Hadi and immediately dedicated it to Busan festival programmer Kim Ji-seok, who he called on stage. The otherwise slow-moving ceremony at the Marina Bay Sands MasterCard Theatre was punctuated by a performance from actress and singer Amy Cheng and had its high point with a Cinema Legend Award for Michelle Yeoh. "The best is yet to come," said the Malaysia-born Yeoh. Singapore International Film Festival 2015 Prize winners Asian Feature Category:

BEST FILM- The Fourth Direction (Chauthi Koot) dir. Gurvinder Singh (India)
SPECIAL MENTION- "Tikkun" dir. Avishai Sikun

BEST DIRECTOR- Ryusuke Hamaguchi for

"Happy Hour" (Japan)

BEST PERFORMANCE- Taha Tegin Ozdemir, Yakup Ozgur Kurtaal and Omer Uluc in "Snow Pirates"

HONORARY AWARD- Mohsen Makhmalbaf (Iran)

CINEMA LEGEND AWARD- Michelle Yeoh (Malaysia)

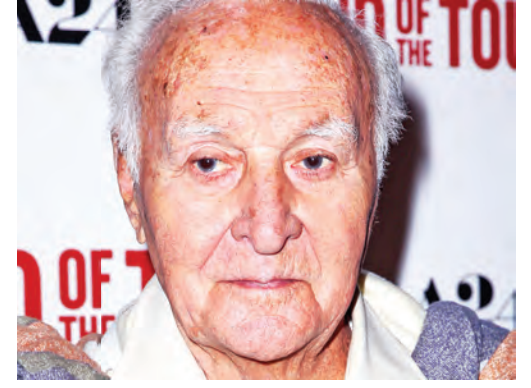
BEST SOUTHEAST ASIAN SHORT FILM- "The Fox Exploits The Tiger's Might" dir. Lucky Kuswandi

BEST SINGAPORE SHORT FILM

*"My Father After Dinner" dir. Gladys Ng

SPECIAL MENTION- "Ferris Wheel" dir. Phutti-phong Aroonpheng





Jury members (from left to right) French director and screenwriter Jean-Pierre Jeunet, Japanese director and screenwriter Naomi Kawase, Dutch director and photographer Anton Corbijn, Indian actress Richa Chadda, US director Francis Ford Coppola, Ukrainian actress Olga Kurylenko, Italian actor Sergio Castellitto, Moroccan actress Amal Ayouch and French actor Sami Bouajila pose during the opening ceremony of the 15th edition of the Marrakech international film festival. — AFP

Marrakech: 'Sand and Blood' flies to Morocco

Saul Dibb's "Sand and Blood," starring Russell Crowe will be one of the main shoots in Morocco next year. Produced by The Independent Film Company, it is line produced by leading Moroccan outfit Zak Alaoui's Zak Productions. During 2015, twenty-one long features and sixteen TV skeins were shot in Morocco through Nov 30, per Ouarzazate Film Commission sources. Total features should reach 23-24 by year-end.

Foreign shoot numbers in Morocco has edged down vs 2014 (27 features and 12 TV skeins); in terms of spend, the amount reaches \$40 million, vs. 2014's \$110 million. However, Sarim Fassi Fihri, the new head of the Moroccan Cinema Center (CCM) head, the nation's film agency, pointed out to Variety that real investment could be level since, due to new accounting regulation, producers must provide a bank certificate regarding spend associated with projects at the end of the shoot.

In terms of titles, 2014 was an especially good with shoots such as Werner Herzog's "Queen of the Desert," Christopher McQuarrie's "Mission Impossible 5," and Tom Tykwer's "A Hologram for the King." Led by comedies, Morocco saw four US shoots: Todd Phillips' black comedy "Arms and the Dudes," starring Jonah Hill and Ana de Armas, Larry Charles' comedy "Army of One," with Nicolas Cage and Wendi McLendon-Covey, Alexandre Moors' Iraq War drama "The Yellow Bird," toplining Will Poulter, Tye Sheridan, Jack Huston and Ian Olds' drama "The Fixer," with Melissa Leo, James Franco.

"2015 was not as good as 2014 but Morocco still hosted very interesting projects specially in Marrakech and Ouarzazate. And 2016 will be as good if not better than 2014," said Amine Tazi, a producer at CLA Studios, who cannot announce several big projects for reasons of confidentiality. Morocco still offers exuberant landscapes, competitive prices and a highly rated know-how from technical crews. Add the enthusiasm from locals and their understanding about possible complications caused by shoots, and a movies loving King and you have noteworthy assets for a consolidated servicing option.

Abderrazak Zitouny, topper of the Ouarzazate Film

Commission, lists more advantages: "Foreign crews are exempt from paying VAT (20%), and all materials and services used in the filming of foreign films in Morocco are VAT exempt; facilitation of the import of technical equipment and machinery needed for filming; the intervention of some state agencies, the Royal Armed Forces of the Royal Gendarmerie and National Security, and others, to provide the necessary facilities for teams' photography; and the simplification of administrative procedures regarding the granting of licenses of shoots."

Girona in Spain). O'Dell's Kanzaman, a production and financing services outfit, with bases in Spain, Monaco and France which co-produced Oliver Stone's "Alexander" and Ridley Scott's "The Kingdom of Heaven," both Moroccan shoots, said that tax breaks are "the only thing Morocco lacks."

"For us, it a Spain-Morocco combination would be perfect. We could add up the tax incentives in Spain and those from Morocco, by shooting indoors at Alicante's Ciudad de la Luz and outdoors in Morocco," she added, expressing concern

duction) in Morocco. In that case, producer could get a 20% cash rebate on eligible expenses, Fassi explained to Variety.

The Paris attacks in November have not impacted shoots, said Aloui. "We had a major American shoot here last week, concluding a 15-day shoot. I see no difference," Aloui told Variety. Honestly, since the Paris attacks in early November, I have sensed no change in terms of security consideration for foreign productions. Zitouny added: "Morocco offers the best work safety conditions. It's proved by the boost in foreign pro-



South Korean actress Kim Tae-hee (right) and Director Park Suk-young pose during a photo call for the film 'Steel Flower' at the 15th Marrakech International Film Festival in Marrakech, Morocco yesterday. The festival runs through Dec 4-12. — AP



US director Sofia Coppola (left) presents a career tribute award to US actor and executive producer Bill Murray during the 15th Marrakech International Film Festival. — AP

Cash rebates for foreign productions may now add to these lures. Denise O'Dell, who presented Zak Alaoui with an honorary prize at the Marrakech 2014 Fest, is currently shooting Terry George's historical romance "The Promise," starring Christian Bale, Shohreh Aghdashloo and Oscar Isaac at Figueras, near

about the future of Alicante's Ciudad de la Luz. A new film law including a tax break system is currently being discussed by Morocco's parliament. Its mechanisms would be close to South Africa's stipulating a minimum spend of \$1 million, a minimum 18 days of production work (not including pre-pro-

ductions these two last years. Morocco has a real policy to strengthen safety for Moroccans, all visitors and especially for cinema crews.— Reuters



A handout picture shows Princess Charlotte of Cambridge with her cuddly toy dog.

Hot demand for dress worn by baby Princess Charlotte

A small Spanish fashion label has been swamped with demand for Princess Charlotte's floral dress, its owner said on Friday, after the British royal baby was pictured wearing one of its frocks. Charlotte, the second child of Prince William and his wife Kate turned six months old on November 2 and Kensington Palace has issued fresh photographs of the youngster, taken in early November, to mark the occasion. The pictures, released on Sunday, show the princess, who is fourth in line to the throne, sitting in a chair and playing with a teddy bear.

The pictures were taken by her mother Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge. "We don't know how she got the dress," said Margarita Pato Cid, the owner of M&H, a family boutique brand which has been running for six years and has five outlets in Spain. "We found out that Princess Charlotte was wearing it at the same time as the public, through the photos. "We think it's possible, but we're not sure, that it's thanks to the nanny of William and Kate's children," she said, referring to Maria Teresa Turrión, who is Spanish and

looks after Charlotte and her two-year-old brother Prince George.

The princess has previously been seen dressed in Spanish label clothes. The dress, which costs 29.95 euros (\$32.50), sold out in quick time after the Charlotte pictures were published. The brand, which is not sold online, now has a lengthy waiting list for the dress, mainly from British and US customers, its owner said. "We intend to fulfill every possible request. We have some dresses in the making but we don't have enough material to meet all the demands," she said, without revealing the volume of requests. "It is a great honor for us," she added. Princess Charlotte Elizabeth Diana of Cambridge was born on May 2, only the fourth baby born with the title of British princess since the start of World War II. New laws mean she cannot be overtaken in the line of succession by any younger brothers. — AFP



Photo shows Princess Charlotte of Cambridge. The Duke of Duchess of Cambridge released two official photographs taken by the Duchess of Princess Charlotte at their country retreat in Sandringham. — AFP photos