

Healthcare drives up development: Obaidi



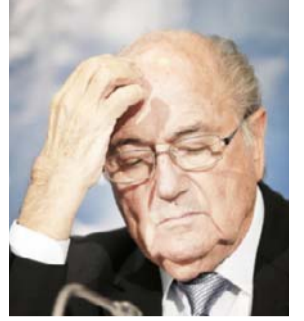
IS earns \$80m a month but starting to struggle



Shift in oil-rich Venezuela as opposition wins election



Blatter in FBI spotlight over \$100 million bribery case



GATES 'VERY IMPRESSED' WITH GENEROSITY OF KUWAITI YOUTH

AMIR HONORS GATES WITH STATE AWARD, INFORMATICS MEDAL



Min 4°
Max 15°
High Tide 09:09 & 20:51
Low Tide 03:04 & 14:04

150 FILLS
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40 PAGES



KUWAIT: Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates receives the state first-degree award (left) and informatics medal (right) from HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah during ceremonies at Bayan Palace yesterday. — KUNA (See Page 3)



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah yesterday received Bill Gates, Microsoft cofounder and co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, with the attendance of HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, on the occasion of his official visit to the country.

Sheikh Sabah decorated Gates with the state first-degree award in appreciation for his tremendous efforts and distinguished tasks in the field of humanitarian and voluntary actions. "I want to thank His Highness the Amir for welcoming me on my first visit to Kuwait. It is an honor to meet a man who has had such an important role in global development, and (to) discuss ways to further our partnership," Gates said. HH the Amir also decorated Gates with the informatics medal at the Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award at Bayan Palace.

Later, in an open dialogue session with young Kuwaitis at Bayan Palace yesterday, Gates said he was "very impressed" with the level of generosity of the youth of Kuwait, describing his visit to Kuwait as "fitting" to his second career in philanthropy. Gates again thanked HH Sheikh Sabah for inviting him to the country, offering sage advice to the youth gathered at the ballroom by saying "passion is the most important attribute to attaining prosperity".

Gates stressed the importance of a sound college education, calling it a chance to "explore and familiarize oneself with the world" in order to make a huge difference. In order to make a difference, he said, "we don't have to have a lot of money or a lot of time."

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OBAMA TELLS FEARFUL US THAT IS WILL BE DEFEATED

WASHINGTON: US President Barack Obama vowed Sunday that America would destroy the Islamic State group and hunt down its followers at home or abroad, in a rare address from the Oval Office to a jittery nation. Facing questions about his leadership and strategy, Obama harnessed the highest trappings of US power to calm a country rattled by a rampage in California that killed 14 people. "After so much war, many Americans are asking whether we are confronted by a cancer that has no immediate cure," Obama said in a solemn speech, adding that the San Bernardino massacre was evidence of an "evolving" and increasingly homegrown threat.



WASHINGTON: US President Barack Obama speaks during an address to the nation from the Oval Office of the White House on Sunday. — AFP

As a father of two daughters, Obama said, he could imagine himself or his kin in San Bernardino or in Paris, where scores of people were killed last month in attacks claimed by Islamic State. "Here's what I want you to know," he said. "The threat from terrorism is real, but we will overcome it. We will destroy ISIL and any other organization that tries to harm us," he said. "Our military will continue to hunt down terrorist plotters in any country where it is necessary."

Obama urged Muslims in America and around the world to "decisively and unequivocally reject the hateful ideology that groups like ISIL and Al-Qaeda promote." He detailed a multi-pronged strategy against the jihadists that will rely as much on community action, technology and countering propaganda as military force.

It is just the third time Obama has delivered an Oval Office address - used by presidents since Harry Truman to convey resolve

in the face of a national crisis. A senior administration official said the speech was designed to convey the seriousness with which Obama was taking the shootings, which are being investigated as a terror attack. On Wednesday, US-born Syed Farook and his Pakistani wife Tashfeen Malik dropped off their six-month-old daughter with her grandmother, donned tactical gear and burst into an office party full of Farook's co-workers, spraying them with bullets. Obama said the pair "had gone down the dark path of radicalization." They had stockpiled assault weapons, ammunition,

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KUWAIT KEEN TO PUSH REFORMS: IMF GCC AGREES ON KEY ISSUES FOR IMPLEMENTING VAT

DUBAI/ABU DHABI: Kuwait's government is showing a willingness to push forward fiscal reforms including subsidy cuts needed to support its currency in an era of low oil prices, a senior IMF official said. Gulf states, including Kuwait, traditionally relied on petrodollar revenues to fuel public sector spending and social programs, but the slump in the oil price since the middle of last year has forced governments to make difficult decisions to reign in significant budget deficits.

Kuwait's budget for the year that began on April 1 projects a deficit of KD 8.18 billion (\$27 billion), after the transfer of 10 percent of the revenues to the Future Generations Fund, part of Kuwait's sovereign wealth fund.

There now seems to be a "willingness" to introduce reforms on subsidies and boost the country's fiscal position, Prasad Ananthakrishnan, IMF mission chief to Kuwait, told reporters in a conference call. "Authorities will go very gradually to ensure that the people who deserve those subsidies are not affected," Ananthakrishnan said.

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RIYADH: (From left) Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, Qatari Foreign Minister Khalid Al-Attiyah, Omani Foreign Minister Youssef bin Alawi, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir, Bahraini Foreign Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Khalifa and Emirati Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah Al-Nahyan pose for a picture during a meeting of Gulf foreign ministers in the Saudi capital yesterday, ahead of the Gulf Cooperation Council summit due to be held tomorrow and expected to focus on the conflicts in Syria and Yemen. — AFP



ALEPPO: Syrian men remove a toddler from the rubble of a building following an air strike by Syrian government forces on the Sukkari neighborhood of this northern city yesterday. — AFP

SYRIA ACCUSES COALITION OF KILLING REGIME TROOPS

DAMASCUS: Syria expressed outrage yesterday after a suspected US-led coalition strike for the first time killed regime troops, but the coalition denied its warplanes hit an army base. In a letter to the United Nations Security Council and Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, Syria's foreign ministry condemned what it called a "flagrant aggression" that killed at least three soldiers late Sunday. But a spokesman for the

US-led coalition said its only strikes in the area on Sunday were some 55 km south-east of the Syrian army base.

"The Syrian Arab Republic strongly condemns this flagrant aggression by the US-led coalition forces, which blatantly violates the objectives of the UN charter," the foreign ministry said in the letter. It demanded the Council "act immediately in the face of this

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MAID ALLEGES POLICE OFFICER BEAT HER BADLY

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: A 42-year-old Filipina housemaid miraculously escaped death after trying to escape from her employer's home, but was severely injured in the process. Norlita (not real name), claimed that she was fleeing her sponsor, a police officer, after he severely beat her, and in her attempt fell while climbing down from the rooftop.

Now at Mubarak Hospital, the woman has undergone major surgery and is awaiting further surgeries to repair damage to her spine and other injuries sustained in the beating and the fall. She told Kuwait Times, in the presence of Philippine Charge d'Affaires and Consul General Raul Dado and ATN Officer Mar Hassan, that she was beaten severely by her sponsor, a police officer. She alleged that he slammed her to the ground several times, smashed her head against the wall and floor and strangled her before severely whipping her head with a police belt. Norlita, who could barely speak, can only move her head and one hand - the rest of her body is paralyzed, although it's unclear if this is temporary or permanent damage. "I was trying to escape when I fell from the second floor," she narrated. "My sponsor strangled me with his hand and flung me about many times. He hit my head against the wall and floor and told me he could kill me any time because he is a police officer," she said. "I was afraid and tried to flee from the roof, and from there I accidentally fell."

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TANA READIES NEW GRILLING OF SUBAIH

PREACHERS' DEPORTATION QUESTIONED

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: MP Mohammad Tana yesterday sent a series of questions to Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Subaih over attending a function for the disabled in what appears to be a preparation of a second grilling. Tana has announced that he will file a request to grill Subaih because she walked out from a function for the disabled in Jahra although she was supposed to represent HH the Amir.

The lawmaker claimed that the minister arrived at the event venue at 6.00 pm although she was informed in the invitation that the function was due to start at

7.00 pm. As a result, the minister walked out of the function before it even started, he said. In his questions, Tana asked the minister if she knew that the event was going to start at 7 pm and still arrived one hour earlier. He asked the minister if she had officially requested the organizers to convene the function one hour ahead of schedule.

Tana grilled the minister in the opening session of the new term on Oct 27 over alleged financial and administrative violations. The grilling ended without filing a no-confidence motion and the minister pledged to carry out a number of recommendations.

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KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Head of Government of the Federal District the Mayor of Mexico City Miguel Angel. —Amiri Diwan photo

AMIR RECEIVES MEXICO CITY MAYOR

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday at Bayan palace the Head of Government of the Federal District the Mayor of Mexico City Miguel Angel and his accompanying delegation. The meeting was attended by Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah and the Asimah (Capital) Governor Major General Thabet Al-Muhanna.

Separately, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Chief of the National Security Apparatus Sheikh Thamer Ali Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, and National Assembly's Deputy Speaker Mubarak Al-Khurainej.

Later, National Assembly Speaker

Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem received in his office Mayor of Mexico City Miguel Angel and his accompanying delegation. The meeting was attended by National Assembly Observer MP Abdullah Al-Tamimi and Head of the Kuwaiti parliamentary friendship committee MP Yousef Al-Zalzal and the Asimah governor Major General Thabet Al-Muhanna.

Meanwhile, Ghanem also received the UK Prime Minister's envoy and Deputy National Security Adviser Paddy McGuinness, accompanied by the British Ambassador to Kuwait Mathew Lodge. The meeting was attended by Head of the Parliamentary Legislative and Legal Affairs Committee MP Mubarak Al-Hurais. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah meets with British Deputy National Security Adviser, Intelligence Security and Resilience Paddy McGuinness.



KUWAIT: Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah meets with Director of Bahraini National Security Adel Al-Fadhel.

INTERIOR MINISTER MEETS BRITISH, BAHRAINI OFFICIALS

KUWAIT: Deputy Premier and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah held separate talks Sunday with British Deputy National Security Adviser, Intelligence Security and Resilience Paddy McGuinness, and Director of Bahraini National Security Adel Al-Fadhel over bilateral security cooperation.

In a press statement, the Interior Ministry said that Sheikh Mohammad Khaled discussed with Paddy and his accompanying delegation means to bolster the deeply-rooted Kuwaiti-British relations. They also tackled security

cooperation, exchange of information and expertise and the regional and international development of common interest.

Separately, Sheikh Mohammad held a meeting with Bahraini National Security Agency Director Al-Fadhel and his accompanying delegation. The meeting focused on boosting bilateral relations and cooperation in fighting terror and organized crimes. They also discussed issues of common interest. During the meeting, Sheikh Mohammad stressed that the Gulf countries' security is one whole and indivisible. —KUNA

TERRORISM DOMINATES GCC STATES' CONCERNS

RIYADH: The subject of the fight against terrorism has dominated on the concerns of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), making it at the forefront of the concerns of the GCC leaders and will be among the top priorities for their discussions at the 36th GCC summit due in Riyadh tomorrow.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) considers that terrorism acts are contrary to the teachings of Islam, its values, morals and humanitarian principles and poses a threat to the Gulf communities and the world.

The growing extremist terrorist movements and the spread of sectarian thought have posed serious challenges in the region, thus, prompting the GCC countries to protect their security, stability and worked on maintaining their gains and achievements of the development.

Also, the concentration of many groups and organizations designated by the United Nations as terrorist in volatile security areas and geographically close to the GCC countries constituted a grave security concern to keep away from the impact of the activities of these groups and organizations.

Common strategies

The GCC states have been witnessing various political and security movements at the highest levels to develop common strategies and cooperation with the international community to eradicate terrorism, especially as the three countries of the Council namely Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain recently had been targeted by a number of terrorist attacks which killed scores of innocent victims.

The GCC countries have adopted local steps through religious, media and social awareness campaigns to educate communities about dangers of drifting behind the terrorist misleading ideas that seek to sow discord between the people of one homeland and undermine the unity of the community, as well as urging them not to respond to such ideas.

At the level of political moves, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, and Bahrain joined the international coalition led by America against the organization of the so-called Islamic State or (IS), one of the largest terrorist organizations in the region, through the provision of political and logistical assistance to the alliance.

The GCC countries also supported the Security Council resolution No 2199 of 2015, which passed unanimously under Chapter VII on drying up the sources of terrorist financing and to tighten control over the terrorists and trapping financing of IS and the Nusra front.

The decision called for preventing the trade of goods and valuable material in Syrian and Iraq at areas controlled by terrorist organizations, strengthening the prohibition on the funding sources received by such organizations, while stressing the obligation of States to ensure that no funds, financial assets or economic resources go for the benefit of the terrorist groups linked to Al-Qaeda.

Joint coordination

And about the positions of the Gulf States to counter-terrorism, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz had stressed during the fourth summit between the Arab countries and the countries of Latin America in November on the pursuit of joint coordination in the face of the threat of terrorism. The King said, "We look forward to coordinate our positions towards the issues on the international arena and the fight against terrorism, extremism and to spread the culture of peace and dialogue".

His Highness the Prime Minister of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah had said during a meeting with heads of Arab News Agencies in November in Kuwait, "Kuwait has warned other countries of this growing danger that has no homeland or religion where no single nation alone can unless with concerted efforts to track down and eradicate terrorism".

The premier stressed the need for continued cooperation between the security services in the different countries and the exchange of information to track down terrorists and drying the sources of financing and to pursue them everywhere and then eliminate them.

First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah also stressed during his meeting with heads of Arab News Agencies in November that terrorism outbreak in the region matters take a negative trend, stressing that this would not diminish the resolve of the GCC's commitment to achieve the aspiration of the GCC peoples for prosperity.

The Interior Ministers of the GCC States who had late last month in Doha emphasized the interest of these countries for joint security coordination to fight terrorism and the threat posed to the Gulf societies. Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah said that the developments of the security situation in the region "is now threatening the security of our people and the best interests of our countries and pose a threat to our civilization, economic and cultural achievements".

The Saudi Crown Prince and Interior Minister, Prince Mohammed bin Nayef bin Abdul Aziz said the GCC will continue the efforts of joint cooperation and coordination to confront the terrorist campaigns targeting security and stability.

He said that terrorism is a crime against the entire human society, which requires the cooperation of everyone and the faith of those behind such terrorist activities should not be used to offend a particular race or nation.

Real causes

In turn, Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of Qatar, Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Al-Thani stressed the support of the GCC states for the regional and international efforts to combat terrorism, stressing that fighting terrorism will only be achieved through the elimination of the real causes, whether political, social, religious, sectarian or other reasons.

The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has confirmed in line with its initial conviction of the need to address the phenomenon of terrorism through regional and international efforts, it had approved a security strategy to combat extremism associated with terrorism in 2002 and released in the same year (Muscat Declaration) on counter-terrorism. The GCC states also signed the GCC agreement to combat terrorism in 2004 and then formed a security committee to fight terrorism in 2006 which hold meetings on a regular basis.

The Mosque of Imam Al-Sadeq in Al-Sawabir area in Kuwait suffered a terrorist bombing last June 26 during Friday prayers in the holy Ramadan as a suicide bomber killed 26 people and injured 227 others. Saudi Arabia also witnessed during the past few months a number of bombings of four mosques in the areas of Qatif, Dammam, Asir and Najran resulted in the deaths and wounding of dozens.

Bahrain also witnessed last July a suicide terrorist attack in the town of Sitra that targeted policemen during their duty killing two of them and wounding a third seriously, in addition to the injury of five police officers.

GCC Secretary General Dr Abdullaatif Al-Zayani said in a press statement after an earlier meeting of GCC foreign ministers that the GCC joint action and topics related to the development of the Gulf Cooperation and Integration will be on the agenda of the 36th summit. He said the ministers expressed their strong condemnation of the multiple terrorist attacks in the French capital Paris, which left behind a large number of innocent civilian killed and wounded. —KUNA

GCC CHIEF PRAISES KUWAIT'S EFFORTS IN BOOSTING JOINT MARCH

RIYADH: Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Dr Abdullaatif Al-Zayani has praised the efforts of the state of Kuwait in boosting the joint Gulf march. Zayani expressed in a statement to KUNA yesterday his admiration of the noble efforts exerted by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah in consolidating the Gulf unity and solidarity and his keenness to push forward the march of the Gulf Cooperation Council for achieving more accomplishments that are in the best interest of the GCC peoples.

He added that the wise directives of His Highness the Amir always call for bolstering cooperation among the GCC states and establishing joint projects for the best interest of the GCC states and their peoples.

He said he is confident the meeting of the GCC leaders in their 36th summit tomorrow would come out with tangible results, pointed out that the agenda is full of significant issues pertinent to the joint GCC action as well as a number of topics of concern to the region that must be addressed thoroughly.

Terrorism

Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for GCC Affairs Nasser Al-Mezayen said meanwhile that the issue of terrorism has been extensively discussed during the senior-level meeting of the GCC drafting committee. "Terrorism has become a global phe-

nomenon that poses a threat to the security of the Gulf region and other parts of the world," Ambassador Mezyen told KUNA following the committee meeting Sunday night.

"However, it's unfair to associate this phenomenon with a particular race or faith," he said noting that the so-called Islamic State (IS) is only a manifestation of this serious phenomenon. The conferees stressed the need to join forces to combat the terrorist organizations through both ideological and security means, the Kuwaiti diplomat pointed out.

He added that the meeting, besides the security issue, discussed other political and economic topics relating to the GCC joint action as well as regional issues of common concern such as the situations in Syria, Yemen, Libya, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the GCC relations with Iran.

"We have also debated the progress of strategic dialogues with the world's major powers and regional economic blocs," Mezyen disclosed. Regarding Saudi Arabia's plan to host a meeting of the Syrian opposition groups, he said the GCC representatives warmly welcomed this plan as a means of realizing the aspirations of the Syrian people for stability and security. On Yemen, the conferees reaffirmed the GCC commitment to support the legitimate authority in the sisterly Yemen under President Abd-Rabbuh Mansour Hadi. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah prepares to leave for Riyadh yesterday to chair Kuwait's delegation to the 137th supplementary preparatory session of the ministerial council for the 36th GCC summit. —KUNA

HEALTHCARE DRIVES UP DEVELOPMENT: MINISTER

KUWAIT: Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi said Sunday that healthcare is a useful lever to achieve the goals of comprehensive development and gauge the progress of the society. He extolled the late couple Shaikhan Al-Faresi and his wife Sharifa Al-Awadhi for donating KD 1.5 million to the launching of a health center in Surra area.

"This generous donation reflects a clear vision for investment in human development which is the key to comprehensive development," the minister told reporters while inaugurating the center named after the two donors.

"Shaikhan Al-Faresi and Sharifa Al-Awadhi Health Center covers a total area of 5,500 square meters and is composed of a two-story building, which has the world's latest medical equipment, and a car parking area," Dr Obaidi pointed out.

The ground floor includes the casualty reception and the primary health wards such as the general medicine, family medicine, diabetes, nursery, pharmacy and laboratory, while the first floor includes the clinics of pediatrics, psychiatric counseling, dentistry, breast cancer early detection, and chronic dis-



KUWAIT: Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi inaugurates the Shaikhan Al-Faresi and Sharifa Al-Awadhi Health Center. —KUNA

eases, he noted.

"The center will offer integrated healthcare for a total of 364,760 residents in Surra area from 7:00 am to midnight daily," he said, voicing confidence in the keenness of the medical staff of the center to make the center a launch pad for health awareness programs in partnership with government bodies and civil society actors.

The minister affirmed the commitment of his ministry to the initiatives meant to promote health awareness among the public such as the health cities program which is part of the state plan for compre-

hensive development and falls in the framework of the post-2015 development agenda.

"Kuwait's assumption of the presidency of the 62nd session of the Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean of the World Health Organization adds a new responsibility for us to boost the capacity of our entire health system, particularly the primary health sector," he stressed.

Dr Al-Obaidi noted that his ministry made headway in leveraging the electronic system of primary health information, and the implementation of a new scientific

methodology for assessing the progress in preventive medicine and treatment.

Meanwhile, Abdulrahman Shaikhan said his philanthropic parents had a deep conviction in the importance of helping sick people and promoting health. He added that Dr Al-Obaidi oversaw the progress of the construction process of the center and equipping it. He thanked the Zakat House and its board chairman, the Minister of Justice and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane, for their supervisory role in the implementation of this project. —KUNA



Bill Gates meets Kuwaiti businessman Jawad BuKhamseen.



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Acting Premier Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, Bill Gates, and members of the Board of Trustees of Abdulrahman Al-Sumait Prize for African Development. — Amiri Diwan photos



KUWAIT: Bill Gates (left) is pictured during his meeting with Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem at the National Assembly yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

AMIR RECEIVES GATES, ABDULRAHMAN AL-SUMAIT PRIZE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister and Director of Board of Trustees of Abdulrahman Al-Sumait Prize for African Development Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah and the Co-Chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) Bill Gates, and members of the Board of Trustees of Abdulrahman Al-Sumait Prize for African

Development. Meanwhile, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem received Gates in his office. The two held a meeting that addressed similarities between the charity BMGF and the State of Kuwait, for both are seeking to offer humanitarian aid and relief efforts to the needy around the globe, regardless of geographical location, religion or ethnicity. Gates lauded Kuwait's humanitarian and

relief role to help the needy and the afflicted people worldwide. He referred to the UN honoring of His Highness the Amir as a 'Humanitarian Leader' and Kuwait as a 'Humanitarian Center.' Ghanem commended the exceptional efforts by the Foundation, especially in combating diseases and epidemics in the world's least developed areas. The chief parliamentarian congratulated Gates on the state first-

degree award given to him by His Highness the Amir earlier today in appreciation for his tremendous efforts and distinguished tasks in the field of humanitarian and voluntary actions. In addition, Ghanem voiced Kuwaitis' gratitude to Gates for his recent article on the great works and achievements of the late Dr Abdulrahman Al-Sumait, a Kuwaiti pioneer of relief and charity work in Africa. The meeting

was attended by head of the accompanying mission of honor, Amiri Diwan Advisor Dr Yousef Al-Ibrahim, and National Assembly Secretary General Allam Al-Kandari. Also yesterday, Gates separately received a number of Kuwaiti businessmen, and representatives of charitable societies and developmental institutions in Kuwait. Gates also visited the Botanical Garden in Bayan Palace. — KUNA



KUWAIT: (From left) His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates attend a ceremony to honor winners of the 15th Round of His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award. — Amiri Diwan photos

CEREMONY FOR SHEIKH SALEM AL-ALI AWARD WINNERS HELD



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah (center) cheers for the winners.

KUWAIT: The ceremony to honor winners of the 15th Round of His Highness Sheikh Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah Informatics Award kicked off yesterday at Bayan Palace, under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The event was attended by His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, top Sheikhs and Microsoft co-founder and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Co-Chairman William Henry Gates. The ceremony commenced with a presentation video on prominent stages of the previous sessions of the award, followed by a

speech performed by Chairperson of the award's Board of Trustees Sheikh Aida Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah. This edition of the award is focusing on the role of youth in developing the country, mainly in the field of knowledge economy, said Sheikh Aida in her speech. Meanwhile, deputy chairman of the award's Supreme Committee Bassam Al-Shamari said that the award also focused on the humanitarian field, as in September 2015, the award launched the 'Humanitarian Kuwait' application, in celebration of the anniversary of the UN's honoring of His Highness the Amir as a Humanitarian Leader. The application includes information on Kuwait's humanitarian efforts, Kuwaiti philanthropists, humanitarian organizations, information on humanitarian projects around the world, a section to receive donations and recent news on humanitarian works, he explained. In the meantime, member of the Supreme Committee Abdullah Al-Shihab said that social media is affecting societies prominently nowadays. He added that there are currently two billion users around the world, while there are over 200 million users in the Arab World. In the Arab World, Facebook has the highest record of 87 percent, followed by Twitter at 53 percent, Youtube at 39 percent and Instagram at 34 percent, he noted. Due to the important role of social media, the award conducted a study on the top Arab user of social media as part of its project on observing the percentage of using websites and application in the Arab World launched last year, said Shihab. After the officials' speeches, His Highness the Amir decorated Bill Gates with the "Informatics Medal", while also honoring winners of different sections of the award, including the best NGOs and governmental bodies' website. — KUNA



Bill Gates greets His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah.

AL-SUMAIT PRIZE TO FOCUS ON FOOD SECURITY IN 2016

NOMINATION EXTENDED UNTIL FEB: SHIHAB-ELDIN

KUWAIT: Dr Abdulrahman Al-Sumait Prize for African Development Board of Trustees approved yesterday the topic of "Food Security" for the 2016, while endorsing the charter of the prize. The Board of Trustees discussed at their meeting at Bayan Palace the nominations, selections and awarding of the winners, a statement by Kuwait Foundation for Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) said. The Board further discussed a paper on major Health challenges in Africa and global sustainable development, and how to dedicate the prize to mobilize resources and accelerate global efforts towards this goal. Winners of the 2015 and 2016 prizes will be simultaneously presented with the awards in a special ceremony at the 4th Arab African Summit in Equatorial Guinea, in November 2016. "Every life has equal value. The power of the Al-Sumait Prize lies in the focus on improving people's health, education and food security in Africa and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty," Director General and Chairman of the Board of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development Abdulatif Al-Hamad said in a statement after the meeting.

Next generation

Bill Gates, co-Chair of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, said during the board meeting that "Through the Al-Sumait Prize, we will celebrate his life, not just by celebrating his achievements, but also by discovering the next generation of innovators that will shape a healthier and more prosperous future for Africa and lift millions out of poverty. It's a fitting tribute to an inspirational man and I look forward to seeing his legacy continue in the lives of those he sought to serve." "The Al-Sumait Prize is a recognition and reward for excellence in Human Development in Education, Health and Food Security. I am very proud to be on the Board of Trustees of such an important undertaking for Human Kind," Former President of the African Development Bank Dr Donald Kaberuka. Former Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation, International Atomic Energy Agency Dr Kwaku Aning stated "True Africa has a lot of sustainable development challenges and these often bedevil national leaders on how best to prioritize. The negative impact on sustainable development of disease, lack of proper nourishment and proper education continues to damage Africa and its future. Al-Sumait Prize will go a long way to bring attention to these issues and encourage action both in Africa and Globally and I thank the Emir of Kuwait for this initiative."

Meanwhile, Executive Member of the Board of Public Gathering Charity Committee Kuwait Tareq Al-Mutawa pointed out that "By backing innovative work in health and education, such as that encouraged by the Al-Sumait Prizes, we can dramatically improve both the current and future lives of people across Africa, reducing inequity and solving extreme poverty and disease." The Al-Sumait Prize is an annual award by KFAS for the advancement of economic, social, human resources, and infrastructure development in the African continent. The prize has been named after Dr Abdulrahman Al-Sumait, a Kuwaiti physician who spent his lifetime dedicated towards helping the poor in Africa in the field of health and education. The objective of the prize is the appreciation, recognition of the best studies, scientific projects, applied research, and innovative initiatives, which within the Health field have made significant

impact and lasting influence in advancing progress to economic and social development in Africa.

Nomination extended

Director General of Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) Adnan Shihab-Eldin had announced that nomination for Dr Abdulrahman Al-Sumait Prize has been extended until next February.

"We have decided today to extend the nomination process and do further search to make sure the winner will be well deserved," he said in a statement following the meeting. The nomination for the 2015 will be extended until end of February from December 31, he added, adding that "we will begin receiving nominations for 2016 starting January."

Shihab-Eldin hoped the winners of the 2015 and 2016 would be awarded during the 4th Arab African summit due in Equatorial Guinea next November. Shihab-Eldin, also rapporteur of the Prize, described the board meeting as "significant" because of the importance of this prize for Africa. "That is why it attracted these big philanthropists and development specialists."

The meeting, chaired by Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, was also attended by Bill Gates, co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Abdullateef Al-Hamad, Director General and Chairman of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Fund, and Tareq Al-Mutawa, Executive member of the board of Public Gathering Charity Committee.

"We believe this prize is not just a financial reward but will mobilize resources and interest and accelerate them to topic of the prizes," said Shihab-Eldin. "We hope the winner will be someone or some institution that contributed in the last few years to addressing the very important challenges in health such as Ebola, malaria, and the health care system in Africa," he said. "If this prize is awarded to a well worthy recipient, it will trigger no doubt additional resources, (and) additional mobilization," added the KFAS chief.

Great man

Meanwhile, AFESD chief Hamad underscored the enormity of the occasion. "We gather here today to honor the memory of a great man who devoted his life to assisting the needy in the African continent," he said. "I hope this prize is recognized for its significance and for its profound contributions to the betterment of human life. We have not reviewed any applicants yet as our primary focus remains to be the aim of the prize itself, which is sustainable development in the African continent," Hamad noted.

Mutawa, in remarks to KUNA after the meeting, underscored the significance of the Sumait prize. "I am well versed in Africa, and acknowledge the importance of this prize due to the extensive work behind it. For a continent of immense size, I feel that Africa has a lot of potential yet is often overlooked," Mutawa opined. "This prize aims to bolster development in Africa in a myriad of sectors including healthcare, agriculture and education," he said.

Meanwhile, Dr Ahmad Bishara, KFAS Deputy Director General said members of the board of trustees were "impressed by Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Sumait and his legacy in Africa." He said the prize meant a lot to Kuwait because of the Arab Gulf country's association with Africa for a long time. Speaking to KUNA after the meeting, Bishara said Kuwait, through its Fund for Arab Economic

Development (KFAED), has been engaged in Africa since its independence in 1961, and the late Al-Sumait had great contributions to helping those in need in Africa.

Significant contribution

Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah had presided over a meeting for the Board of Trustees of the prize, which is christened after late philanthropist Abdulrahman Al-Sumait, and commemorates individuals and institutions that have made significant contributions to the field of healthcare. "Since independence, Kuwait has strived to contribute to the growth of underdeveloped nations around the world," Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled remarked in his opening speech. "My nation has helped finance and promote a plethora of developmental projects of various realms in the African continent."

"A mere six months after independence, Kuwait extended its first loan to economic development in Africa, through the AFESD," Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled recalled. "Since then, Kuwait has been incessant in its contributions to human development around the globe."

"The AFESD has so far produced a total of 605 developmental projects, comprised of loans and donations that have amounted to \$11.3 billion. Through these contributions, we have assisted the African continent in meeting its needs and overcoming obstacles," Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled noted. "In line with this profound work, the Abdulrahman Al-Sumait prize has been initiated to enhance the African continent's access to nutrition, education and healthcare. Moreover, Kuwait has prioritized support of the international community's efforts of resisting the spread of contagious diseases in the African continent. The AFESD has made major contributions worth \$19.850 to combat 'River Blindness,'" Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled revealed.

Epidemics

The AFESD has also saved ten million lives from succumbing to epidemics in a host of African nations. "My country has also financed efforts to resist the 'Guinea Worm' disease, with a loan amounting to \$250,000. Kuwait has also made vast contributions to the Tropical Disease Fund with donations totaling \$1 million. Meanwhile, Kuwait has formed a special team tasked with monitoring the progress of humanitarian aid and contributions initiated by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. These contributions include loans to ease the burden that many African nations have to endure. The loans amount to \$million and will be distributed through the AFESD, in conjunction with various international organizations. An annual monetary award of \$1 million will be given, which will be sponsored by Kuwait Institute for Scientific Development, in commemoration of Al-Sumait," Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled noted.

"The award is a token of appreciation for a man who dedicated his life to serving others. Through his remarkable work, a total of 860 schools, four colleges and 124 hospitals have been built in the African continent. Al-Sumait has certainly left an indelible humanitarian mark in our world," Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled affirmed. "The winners of the prestigious prize will be announced shortly before the Africa Arab Summit in Equatorial Guinea in November 2016. The winners of the prize will be honored by His Highness the Amir," Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled announced. — KUNA

NBK SPONSORS CITYSCAPE KUWAIT EXHIBITION

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) is the official sponsor of the Cityscape Kuwait exhibition that will be held at Kuwait International Fairgrounds under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah tomorrow, December 9, 2015 and will last for three days. NBK customers will have direct contact to learn more about NBK's real estate services and financing offers giving it more exposure to the

market as a well-known trusted household brand that also has a presence in key business countries offering mortgage loans and other real estate services. With its large international network, NBK continues to enjoy the widest banking presence with an international network worldwide. NBK's international presence spans many of the world's leading financial centers including London, Paris, Geneva, New York and Singapore, as well as China (Shanghai).

Meanwhile, regional coverage extends to Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey.

Also, NBK offers its customers in Kuwait overseas banking solutions, products and mortgages through its specialized center in Ras Al-Salmiya branch. This first of its kind center assists Kuwaitis and expatriates with their overseas banking demands in coordination with NBK's overseas subsidiaries.



KUWAIT: Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Minister of Electricity and Water Sheikh Mohammad Al-Sabah (center) is seen in a group photo with officials at the plant yesterday.

SHAMAL AZZOUR AL-OULA CELEBRATES CROSSING OF MAJOR PRODUCTION CONSTRUCTION MILESTONE FOR AZZOUR NORTH ONE PLANT

KUWAIT: Shamal Azzour Al-Oula KSC yesterday celebrated the on-schedule crossing of the 664.2 megawatt power production milestone, representing 40 percent of total power output, by its Azzour North One power and water desalination plant. The plant is Kuwait's first independently owned plant established under Kuwait's Public Private Partnerships (PPP) law of 2008.

Azzour North One power and water plant is the first gas-fired combined cycle power and water desalination plant in Kuwait, and will have a capacity exceeding 1,500 megawatts (MW) of electricity and 107 million imperial gallons of water per day (MIGD) once completed by the fourth quarter of 2016. This represents 10 percent of Kuwait's power capacity and 20 percent of Kuwait's water capacity.

The ceremony was attended by Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Minister of Electricity and Water Sheikh Mohammad Al-Sabah and President of Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects Adel Al-Roumi. The ceremony was also attended by Shamal Azzour Al-Oula partners and primary contractors.

Shamal Azzour Al-Oula Chairman Yousef Al-Hajri said, "We are very proud to announce the crossing of this major milestone today and we are on schedule to operate at 100 percent capacity by the last quarter of next year. The ongoing achievements of the project is a testament to the success of the various government and private partnerships that this company was founded on."

Shamal Azzour Al-Oula CEO Andrew Biffen said, "This milestone is the direct result of the great work and cooperation by everyone working at Azzour North plant, our government and private shareholders, and our construction partners Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) and Societe Internationale De Deselement (SIDEM) Sidem, for without them today's announcement wouldn't have been possible. I would like to thank everyone who had a role in bringing

us to cross the 50 percent power production milestone on schedule and we look forward to announcing the 100 percent power production milestone by this time next year."

Consortium

Shamal Azzour Al-Oula is 40 percent owned by a private consortium comprising ENGIE (formerly GDF SUEZ), Sumitomo Corporation, and A H Al-Sagar and Brothers. The remaining 60 percent, owned by the Government of Kuwait, through the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA: 5 percent), the Public Institution for Social Security (PIFSS: 5 percent) and Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects (KAPP: 50 percent). The Government of Kuwait is mandated to sell 50 percent of the total ownership through an Initial Public Offering (IPO) to Kuwaiti citizens after construction is completed. The government will retain 10 percent stake following the IPO.

The plant aims to meet Kuwait's plan to significantly increase capacity over the coming years, in a larger effort to meet an anticipated peak demand of 25 gigawatts (GW) by 2025. The treated water and the power produced from the plant will be entirely supplied to the country's national power and water grid operated by the Kuwait Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) under a 40-year long-term Energy Conversion and Water Purchase Agreement (ECWPA). ENGIE and Sumitomo will undertake the operation and maintenance (OandM) of the plant on an equal share basis.

Project Achievements:

- Cumulative Man Hours: over 22 Million
- Project has maintained between 6 percent and 7 percent progress ahead of schedule
- Environmental incidents: 0
- Early power generated after 18.5 months since start of development
- Project is developing within budget

Project Facts:

- Total construction cost: US\$1.4 billion
- Power plant: engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contractor: Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI)
- Water plant: engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contractor: Societe Internationale De Deselement (SIDEM), a subsidiary of Veolia, France

Technical Facts:

- The power plant will produce 1539.2 MW in net contracted power capacity once completed in fourth quarter of 2016.
- The power plant is operated by a combined cycle gas turbine: natural gas as main fuel and gas oil as backup fuel.
- The power plant comprises 5 General Electric GTG 9F-3 turbines generating 225.8 MW each and 2 General Electric STG D1 turbines generating 251 MW each
- The water desalination plant will comprise a multiple-effect distillation (MED) unit capable of producing 107 million imperial gallons per day (MIGD) (the equivalent of 486,400 m3/d) of desalinated water. The water desalination plant's output will represent 20 percent of Kuwait's installed water treatment capacity.
- The water plant will use MED technology through 10 SIDEM MED units, each generating 10.84 MIGD.

Azzour North One power and water plant was awarded under the IWPP law and implemented through a process managed by the Kuwait Authority for Partnership Projects. The plant forms part of an overall IWPP located in the Azzour area. The overall IWPP is expected to be developed over five phases, for a total capacity of 4,800 MW of electricity and approximately 280 MIGD of desalinated water to be tendered over a period of four to six years to meet a projected rapid increase in electricity demand, which is expected to increase at a high rate of 7.6 percent per annum until 2020



Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Minister of Electricity and Water Sheikh Mohammad Al-Sabah tours the facility.

against the backdrop of fast economic growth.

Azzour North One Project Timeline:

- March 2011: Request for proposal (RFP) issued for the Azzour North One Plant development
- March 2012: Preferred bidder was chosen
- December 2012: Successful bidder announced
- December 12, 2013: Kuwait's first RFP process was successfully completed Signing ceremony with MEW and construction started
- January 10, 2014: Kuwait's first RFP process was successfully completed Signing ceremony with MEW and construction started
- January 10, 2014: Shamal Azzour Al-Oula reaches its financial close
- March 13, 2015: Key interfaces connection with MEW and KOC: Electricity transmission facilities (MEW), Main fuel connection - Gas

- (KOC), Backup fuel connection - fuel oil (KOC)
- Main fuel connection (KOC)
- Backup fuel connection (KOC)
- May 3, 2015: First megawatt of power was generated into the national grid of Kuwait
- June 28, 2015: ECOD 1 :1 GTG in SC - 214.3 MW
- August 11, 2015: ECOD 2 :2 GTGs in SC - 440.5 MW (achieved two days early)
- September 18, 2015: ECOD 3 :3 GTGs in SC - 664.2 MW (achieved ten days early)

Upcoming milestones

- March 27, 2016: Scheduled shutdown of early operating units in preparation for full production.
- August 26, 2016: First desalinated water to be delivered to MEW from MED
- November 26, 2016: PCOD (5 GTG's, 2 STG's, 10 MED's) 1539.2 MW and 107 MIGD net output commences



KUWAIT: (From left) Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah and Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.



Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah (left) and Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah



Guests at Hashtag Kuwait Conference

SOCIAL MEDIA, YOUTH IN FOCUS AT HASHTAG CONF

By Athoob A Al-Shuaibi

KUWAIT: Senior Kuwaiti officials spoke about the impact of social media and its effects on society and youths at the two-day Hashtag Kuwait conference that kicked off on Sunday at the Regency Hotel. "The new media and what goes around it require the correct utilization of the energies of the youth and an optimal use of technology based on the values and traditions of our roots," Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah said.

"The Hashtag Kuwait conference reflects our agreement on the importance of communication and dialogue between the community and officials via social media. Therefore, we have set up a specialized sector of the new media within the ministry of information to keep up with the rapid developments," said Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs.

Speaking about the importance of the conference, Organizing Committee Chairman Mohammed bin Naji reminded that Kuwait ranks first in the Arab world in social media use, with 2.4 million users. He added that the conference proposes to establish positive Arab dialogue between the society and its institutions and users of social media after observing the good and

evil sides of this platform. "This conference demonstrates the involvement of the Kuwaiti people to use these tools and use them for the exchange of personal, commercial and political information, and to promote various projects," Majida Al-Naqib, Assistant Undersecretary at the National Projects Central Agency for Information and Technology, told Kuwait Times. "Personally, I believe it to be one of the most important conferences which must be held each year to enable the youth to express thoughts and aspirations over their contribution to the development of this field," she added.

Held under the patronage of Sheikh Salman, the conference was attended by Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah. Among the guests were Hassan Schori, Moroccan Minister of Youth and Sports, Ahmed Hindawi, envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Youth, and Badr al-Din Al-Ali, Assistant Secretary-General of the Arab League.

The conference was coordinated by the ministry of information in a strategic partnership with the state ministry of youth affairs. A play was also staged about social media celebrities. The second day of the conference yesterday was given to workshops and panel discussions with the participation of about 30 experts from Kuwait and Gulf countries.



Majida Al-Naqib, Assistant Under Secretary for National Projects Central Agency for Information and Technology



Discussion forum with the conference's attendees.

AUB: FLY TO YOUR DREAM PLACE WITH PEARLS AWARD PROGRAM

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank (AUB) emphasizes the success of its Travel Awards Program "Pearls Awards", which is offered to its credit card holders. For every Kuwaiti dinar spent at any shop around the world participating in the program, the participant will get 3 points. These points may be converted to air miles and claimed from any of the following leading airlines: Kuwait Airways, Qatar Airways and Gulf Air.

The Pearls Awards Program is one of the best of its kind offered in Kuwait. The program offers the potential for free air travel, free hotel accommoda-

tion and free car rental. The more you use your credit card, the more points you will receive to redeem as you choose.

Pearls Award points are easily obtainable. By using your credit card for purchases, you will receive more points and consequently more miles to benefit from free travel aboard the participating airlines and upgraded accommodation. In addition other additional privileges as provided by each of the airlines through their membership program are available, based on terms and conditions of each airline. Ahli United Bank's clients may also obtain free

travel insurance and medical coverage in case of emergency anywhere around the world when they buy tickets through their Ahli United Bank credit cards. On this occasion, Ahli United Bank issued a press statement which said: "We are pleased the "Pearls Awards Program" has received such a strong level of interest from our esteemed clients who have benefited from a suite of advantages provided by this unique program. We assure them that we continue our efforts to offer improved banking services and products that fit their loyalty and trust in Ahli United Bank."

MAN SENTENCED FOR JOINING NUSRA FRONT

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The criminal court yesterday sentenced a citizen to 10 years in prison with labor for joining and fighting with the Nusra Front in Syria. The defendant faced charges of committing hostile activities against Syria by joining the group and pledging allegiance to the organization's leader Abu Mohammed Al-Jolani, and undergoing a two-month military training course after infiltrating into Syria through Turkey. Meanwhile, the court of misdemeanor yesterday accepted a contest filed by one of the defendants accused in the 2007 power emergency plan case and acquitted him. Notably, the court recently sentenced 15 (out of 16) former government officials, including former MEW minister Ahmad Al-Jassar to two years in prison with labor, KD 1,000 to suspend the sentence and a KD 20,000 fine each.

MPW projects

Well-informed Ministry of Public Works (MPW) sources at the development proj-

ects sector said that the total projects scheduled in this year's budget reached 109, including construction, roads, drainage and maintenance mega projects with a total budget of KD 511 million. The sources added that record achievements had been made in these projects and that some of them were about to conclude and be handed over to MPW. Meanwhile, well-informed sources at the Ministry of Electricity and Water's (MEW) power and water desalination sector said that the ministry had allocated KD 6 million to pay shift allowances to the sector's employees for the current fiscal year.

Inspection

Responding to complaints made by the Green Line group environmentalists, Capital municipality teams inspected the coastline between Green Island and Al-Salam beach. The six-hour inspection resulted in fining five violators for barbecuing along the beach and arresting a number of peddlers. The fines varied between KD 5 to KD 100.

9 ARRESTED FOR RUNNING FAKE MAIDS' OFFICES

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Residency Affairs Department detectives arrested nine Asian nationals who ran several fake domestic helpers' recruitment offices. They were charged with trading in domestic helpers as they were found to harbor a number of runaway maids. The arrest was made after concerned authorities received information about the gang's activities, and found out that all those arrested are wanted on absconding cases.

Traffic violations

The Traffic Department issued 3,896 citations for emergency lane violations during last week, including 3,772 for over-speeding on the left side emergency lane during the period where driving there is allowed between 6 am and 10 pm. Meanwhile, 15 citations were issued for driving on emergency lanes after the allowed hours; from 10 pm to 6 am. Also, 109 citations were issued for driving on the right emergency lane, where driving is banned at all times.

KUWAIT DENOUNCES ADEN GOVERNOR'S ASSASSINATION

KUWAIT: The State of Kuwait condemns in the strongest terms the murder of Major General Jaafar Mohammad Saad, the governor of Aden, south Yemen, and a number of his companions on Sunday. This despicable terrorist crime, which aimed to destabilize Yemen further, can only strengthen the resolve of the coalition to support the legitimate authority in Yemen and help the country restore security, an official of the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs said tonight. The official expressed condolences to, and solidarity with, the families of the victims as well as the government and people of sisterly Yemen.

Meanwhile, the Kuwaiti Army Sunday brushed aside social media reports that one of Air Force pilots taking part in Saudi-led operation Restoration of Hope in Yemen had refused orders. The reports about the pilot's refusal of orders "are completely unfounded, undermine national unity of the Kuwaiti people, and negatively affect morale of Kuwait Air Force personnel taking part in Operation Restoration of Hope in Yemen," the Moral Guidance and Public Relations Department said in a statement. It urged all media means not to publish any news related to the Kuwaiti army in other sources than the army itself. —KUNA

JUSTICE MINISTRY SETS UP FAMILY INSURANCE FUND

KUWAIT: Minister of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane has issued a ministerial decision to establish a family insurance fund in the Ministry of Justice. The ministry in a press release Monday said the setting of the fund aims at securing implementation of the judgments and decisions issued by the Family Court to pay alimony for wives, divorced women, children or relatives of Kuwaitis according to regulations, in cases where the convict is absent, or where his address is unknown or due to failure of paying the alimony.

The Minister added that the fund will be run by the ministry Board of Directors, chaired by the Minister of Justice and Vice-President of the Court of Appeal, with membership of both the President of the General Administration for implementation and Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice and the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Justice Assistant for Administrative and Financial Affairs and adviser to the technical office of the Minister and Director of family counseling. He said the Fund's management will be also in coordination with the competent authorities. —KUNA

AUTHORITY TO SUPERVISE GCC RAILWAY PROJECT

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary General Abdullah Al-Zayani said the council is preparing a study on establishing a specialized authority to supervise executing the GCC railway project. Zayani also stressed that the project, whose blueprint phase is about to be finished, was going according to plan and would be concluded in 2018.

KPC meeting

Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's (KPC) Board of Directors is scheduled to meet today to discuss the corporate and subsidiary companies' budgets for the fiscal year 2016-2017. Notably, KPC's net profits hit KD 500 million, its operational cost is about KD 1 billion while its new projects cost KD 27 billion.

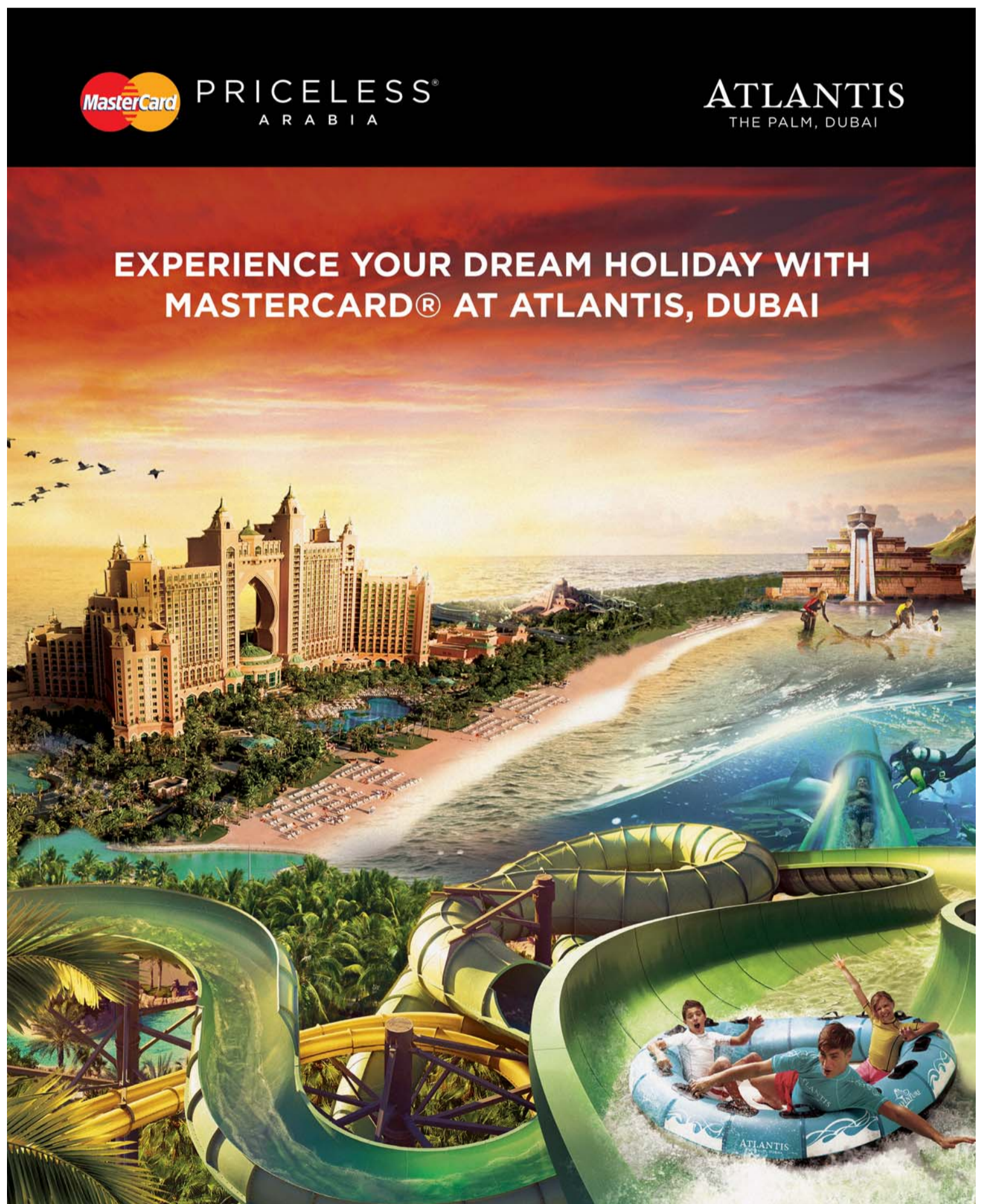
Asphalt

The Ministry of Public Works (MPW) announced contracting a British institute specialized in preparing asphalt mixes in order to select the most suitable ones for the ministry's future road projects. The ministry explained that the institute had already prepared three different mixes and specimens to use in paving three sample one kilometer-long stretches of roads, pointing out that assessing the specimens would take at least two years, so that the sample layers can be exposed to various effects of heat, cold, wind, rain and friction in order to eventually decide on the best mix to be used in future projects.

Oil prices

Chairman of the parliamentary priorities committee MP Yousef Al-Zalzal said that the record fall in oil prices to around \$40 per barrel

necessitates taking a number of measures concerning the state's economic, financial and commercial strategies in order to contain negative effects on the state's budget. "According to international reports, there are no signs of oil price increases within the next two years," he underlined, pointing out that the world is currently in quest of alternative energies other than fossil fuel (oil), and that considerable sums were being invested in renewable energy. "Kuwait is part of this quest," Zalzal said, noting that KISR was building a project to produce solar energy in Al-Shqaya oilfield and that a new strategy ought to be set to deal with economic and financial variables. Zalzal criticized the government, noting that it was incapable of setting a new feasible economic and financial strategy. "Stock markets reflect the economy, therefore KSE's deterioration without having a clear governmental vision to undo it is unacceptable," he stressed.



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التبليغ

Al-Anbaa

IS 'ON WHICH SUN NEVER SETS'

By Sami Abdullatif Al-Nisf

The British Empire was once known as the one 'on which the sun never sets', because it dominated so many lands from the far east to the far west. In fact, that old name can be used nowadays to describe IS, that mighty power, the 21st century miracle that is becoming active in the far east and west and the sun of its news never sets in various newspapers and satellite TV channels in addition to major leaders' speeches.

In such a short time, IS has attacked the Russian tsars by bombing one of their civilian planes, killing all innocent women and children on board to have Slavic people and Orthodox antagonize Muslims. The funny thing is that IS was confused on declaring how it managed to destroy the plane. They once claimed shooting it down, then they showed a bomb that can never cause such destruction, claiming to have placed it in the luggage compartment. The only thing they were sure of is that they got the bomb passed onboard through Sharm el-Sheikh airport and the entire world immediately believed it and declared boycotting tourism in Egypt.

A few days later, IS struck in the heart of Europe and the capital of light - Paris - that comes second after Russia in accommodating Muslims. Accordingly, all Catholics and French are provoked against Islam and Muslims represented in an organization hoisting the Muslim flag. Radical extreme parties worldwide started showing more hate towards Muslims. IS seems not be having enough by chasing Muslims out of their countries - it is also chasing them in countries they migrated to, as if insisting on terminating all Arabs and Muslims.

From East Africa to central Europe and finally to the West Coast of the US. Criminal aimless strikes take place with no clear objective but to defame Muslims and make the most of Anglo Saxon and Protestant peoples antagonize them following several terrorist attacks committed by its twin sister - Al-Qaeda in Mumbai and in Africa. Well, let us wait for the next strikes expected in Latin America very soon!

Hitler led a major industrial nation, conquered major European countries like France, Austria, Holland and Norway, made alliances with Japan, Italy and some of the Balkan countries, and yet collapsed before the Russian-American-British coalition and eventually committed suicide.

On the other hand, Al-Baghdadi still defies the international alliance after five years of war and he is still expanding in Mosul and Raqqa that did not fall like Berlin, Rome and Tokyo. He recently took control over Sirte in Libya to control the Libyan oil crescent. His troops are advancing in southern Yemen, making the entire world laugh its heart out because of our stupidity and ignorance.

I presume that if life is discovered on Mars, IS will send its space 'vehicles' to commit terrorist attacks against them in the name of Arabs and Muslims!

— Translated by Kuwait Times

Al-Jarida



القابض

Al-Qabas

CRY OF SADNESS

By Ahmad Al-Sarraf

Kuwait had known one form or another of corruption all along its history, and there is nothing strange in this, as this is the nature of people and it happens in all countries, even if at varying degrees.

The development that took place in Kuwait is that the thief in the past was mostly an individual, and was satisfied with little, and was keen on carrying out his theft in total secrecy, and if he was discovered, he stayed home or left the country to avoid scandal. But now, the issue has left individualism and the theft became a group action and more professional, where large mafias participate, and most of those concerned may know about the thefts and who carry them out and profit from them.

Also, the "noble thief" is not ashamed to visit diwanias or public gatherings and participate in weddings, while being fully confident that he will be highly respected. Also, the bigger the theft is, the more the appetite of the thieves grows, and they have "strong" and influential partners among citizens from the country's elite, or expats who know where to bite. There are weapons mafias, public works mafias, and arrangements on how to win major tenders at the highest prices. There are mafias in health, municipality and others, in addition to small mafias in social affairs, interior and several government departments.

All this may be acceptable, even if grudgingly, if projects are executed and materials are supplied on time according to the conditions of delivery, and services are done without delay, but things are generally different from that, which is something that leads to the feeling of frustration. So how can all thefts be accepted with all that comes with it in the form of halting projects, incomplete transactions and deteriorating level of services?

If we look at the ministry of communications for example, and the ports in particular, we will find that its situation is in continued deterioration for 40 years, although it is the oldest port in the region, and it was possible to become the largest after liberation, and the reason is the mafia's control of it, and the government's silence towards it, despite the openness of theft in it and the discovery of the largest theft and the most cause for shame.

The problem of ports is not in the pileup of ships in Shuaiba port as mentioned in the latest Qabas report, and not in the rise of the number of ships waiting to unload for months, and all what that means in the form of increased cost for the importer, and transferring them later to the citizen. These problems were known to the ports administration for months but they did not do anything to avoid them, rather the problem is in what seems to be the government insistence on making the ports a "gift" for those it is satisfied with, who are usually unable to face the mafias for one reason or another, and things get worse day after day.

The solution is in committing the ports' work to international companies to manage them, as the issue is technical and the government must admit its failure, even in recovering what was stolen from its lands and sold to several parties, so things got lost and it is hard to recover them.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

التبليغ

Al-Anbaa

PATRIOTISM 'PRINTS'

By Saad Al-Motesh

The famous saying 'there is no accounting for taste' really applies for everything in this life, starting with food, clothes and all the way to groups or individual political tendencies. Well, what matters to me right now is taste related to favorite movies. Tastes of movie viewers differ according to age category, gender and even peoples. Some people like comedies, while others like action or war movies. However, the vast majority agrees on the fact that movies telling true-life stories of success and detectives' achievements are the most effective, especially those showing how intelligent those detectives are.

In those movies, we see CSI teams meticulously studying crime scenes in search of clues and 'prints' of certain serial killers, which means how a certain criminal commits crimes using certain techniques over and over again. Knowing the technique used and comparing it to previous crimes, detectives can easily identify the culprit or culprits.

This 'print' is the main thing, then, be it a fingerprint or a typical technique to tell one person from another, just the way some people may use certain words or accent in saying them, writers use a certain

lexicon in their articles, actors use certain performances or kids can tell when a father is angry by a certain move, look or word he uses.

Politically speaking, all public fund thieves have some common traits or 'prints', that is claiming to defend and protect them. They all rob their own nations under the pretext of being patriotic. You will always hear them mentioning the word 'nation' in their statements or speeches. You can almost feel they are about to cry because of their excessive 'patriotism'!

— Translated by Kuwait Times

All public fund thieves have some common traits or 'prints', that is claiming to defend and protect them

BURGAN BANK CONCLUDES SPONSORSHIP OF INT'L DAY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank recently concluded its sponsorship of the "International Day of People with Disabilities," which took place at the Ideal Education School.

The aim of this event was to assist those in the community who have special needs and who want to overcome their disabilities. It also focused on increasing their self-confidence and encouraging them to become productive members of the society.

The event took place on December 3rd, 2015 where students & their parents took part in the event, while the bank was there to show its solidarity and support for people with special needs in Kuwait. The event included theatrical performances, as well as other recreational activities. At the end of the event, the participants and their families were offered several prizes and souvenirs.

One of Burgan Bank's corporate priorities is to support programs and activities that empower people with special needs and help their integration into society. In addition we're committed to such causes and show the people with disabilities our support and we truly believe it encourages sincere feelings for disabled people.

Burgan Bank will continue to welcome similar initiatives that have similar positive impact on the society as a whole.



Crime

Report

UNIFORMED POLICEMAN ROBS EXPATS

KUWAIT: Kheitan police station chief Lieutenant Colonel Majid Khalaf ordered the detention of a policeman from the Najda sector for committing robberies while in uniform. A security source said that several expatriates complained that a uniformed policeman and a man in plain clothes entered a building in Kheitan and took KD 250 from an Egyptian and four Asian expats then escaped. The identity of the policeman was determined following the questioning of the victims, then Director General of Najda Lt Gen Zuhair Al-Nasrallah, who ordered the arrest of the policeman asked the victims to identify him from a line up. The suspect was interrogated by Farwaniya detectives after identification. The police officer asked not to be sent for interrogation and said he will return the money he stole but his request was rejected and he was sent to the public prosecution.

Three arrested in car chase

Policemen arrested three citizens following a marathon chase from Farwaniya to Jahra Governorates and the chase ended on Salmiy Road. The three were charged with theft, fleeing police and damaging a police car, meanwhile detectives are investigating the case to find out how the suspects got rid of one or more fire arms that were used during the chase.

Citizen arrested over fire arms

A citizen was detained in Hadiya police station in preparation for sending him to the criminal detectives for questioning over having an unlicensed fire arm and using it in an inhabited area and endangering others' lives, that besides using drugs. Police received a call about a man firing shots in the air and that he was intoxicated. Police went to the site then the suspect came out of his house. Eight rounds were found in his pocket, then when asked where was the weapon he said it was in the trash dumpster, where it was found.

Roommate steals KD 500 gold

A Filipina woman accused a compatriot of hers of stealing gold worth KD500. She told Fahheel police that the accused used to be her roommate before disappearing.

Care worker insulted

Meanwhile, an Egyptian man who works in a cafe said that a customer insulted and beat him inside his place of work. The man said the customer became angry when his order was late.

CUSTOMS COLLECTS 5% HANDLING FEES

KUWAIT: The Customs General Department began collecting five percent of the handling fees starting from November 10, 2015, equaling to around KD 500,000 per year, after the company investing in customs services has not been paying for a while. Director General of Customs Khalid Al-Saif said the administration succeeded in reaching an agreement with the investing company, Global, to pay five percent of what it collects for handling. Saif said it

was agreed to upgrade all inspection systems of trucks and containers, and there will be six systems established at a total value of KD 18 million, in addition to upgrading other systems to check persons, luggage, radioactive, biological and chemical material, and other systems to discover banned substances and drugs. The customs department will collect nearly KD 250 million during this year as customs' fees on imported and exported goods, he said. —Al-Rai

FEMALE AWQAF OFFICIAL SOON?

KUWAIT: Minister of Justice and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane is expected to approve the appointment of female senior officials at the Awqaf Ministry, sources said, noting that several 'competent women' are nominated for the job. Sane had ordered ministry officials to avoid depriving

women from official posts in the ministry, said the sources. Meanwhile, the Awqaf Ministry sent nine women who head women's department to a foreign course to prepare them for a specialized program within the "preparing leaders of the second line" project, currently being held in UAE.—Al-Qabas

MINISTRY DISSOLVES FIVE NGOS

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor dissolved five nongovernmental organizations for failure to hold their general assemblies for a long time, some for more than 10 years. It also issued citations for two NGOs for failure to complying with their founding statutes. Informed sources said the decision was made after receiving a green light from minister Hind Al-Subaih to implement the law in full.

The sources said the ministry is current-

ly examining all NGOs in the country and "will dissolve any society that insists on violating the law and being ineffective and uncooperative, especially that the number of NGOs reached 117." The sources added that there are 14 charity societies in Kuwait, while there are 45 NGOs currently being established. Meanwhile, the sources said that the Retired Officers Society received approval for establishment. —Al-Jarida

NO ARTICLE 17 PASSPORTS; BEDOONS TO RECEIVE COMOROS' INSTEAD

KUWAIT: Interior Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Nationality, Passports and Residency Affairs Major General Sheikh Mazen Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah said that the issuance of article 17 passports that are given to bedoons (stateless) will be stopped permanently as soon as the new e-passports are received. Old passports will be phased out gradually, he said. Stopping of issuing article 17 passports

comes according to the international treaty that allows issuing smart passports to citizens of the country only, he said, adding that the department is studying several alternatives to article 17 passports. "There will be a meeting with the central agency for remedying of illegal residents status to speed up the procedures of issuing Comoros passports for them," he explained. —Al-Jarida



California shooter attended a female Pakistani madrassa

POLITICAL KNIVES OUT AFTER CALIFORNIA ATTACK

‘YOU AIN’T NO MUSLIM, BRUV’

BRITONS DEFIANT OVER ‘TERRORIST’ KNIFE ATTACK



LONDON: Photo shows the the sketch of Muhaydin Mire appearing at Westminster Magistrates’ Court, London yesterday. — AP

LONDON: The stabbing of a man in the London metro in what police described as a terrorist attack provoked a defiant riposte from a bystander that has struck a chord in Britain: “You ain’t no Muslim, bruv”. The 29-year-old assailant shouted “This is for Syria” as he attacked a 56-year-old man and threatened others before being detained by police who used a stun gun, witnesses said. Video footage posted on Twitter showed police officers closing in on the knife-wielding man and eventually pinning him down after the attack, in which two people were wounded at the Leytonstone underground station.

An onlooker standing near a pool of blood shouted the colloquial phrase that has swiftly become a popular Twitter hashtag #YouAintNoMuslimBruv and is intended to deny that such an attack could have anything to do with Islam. Some Twitter users quoted Islamic scripture to contradict militant Islamists who try to use Islam to justify attacks on unarmed civilians and to recruit followers in the West and Middle East. “#YouAintNoMuslimBruv, just another psychopath attempting to use religion as an excuse to justify your barbaric actions!!” said one Twitter user, Natasha.

British warplanes joined air strikes against Islamic State in Syria for the first time on Thursday, a few hours after parliament gave its approval. Prime Minister David Cameron has said the air strikes will not increase the likelihood of an attack on Britain, which he says militants already view as a top target, with seven plots foiled over the past year. Britain is on its second-highest security alert level of “severe”, meaning a militant attack is considered highly likely, though not imminent. This is mainly because of the threat posed by Islamic State.

Suspect in court

Meanwhile, the 29-year-old man appeared in an English court - charged with attempted murder following a knife attack in a London Underground train station. Muhaydin Mire, who lives in Leytonstone in east London, is accused of attempting to kill a 56-year-old man at Leytonstone station on Saturday. The victim suffered “serious” stab wounds but is in a stable condition in an east London hospital, police said. A second man sustained a minor injury but did not require medical assistance. Police fired Taser electric stun guns at a suspect during the incident.

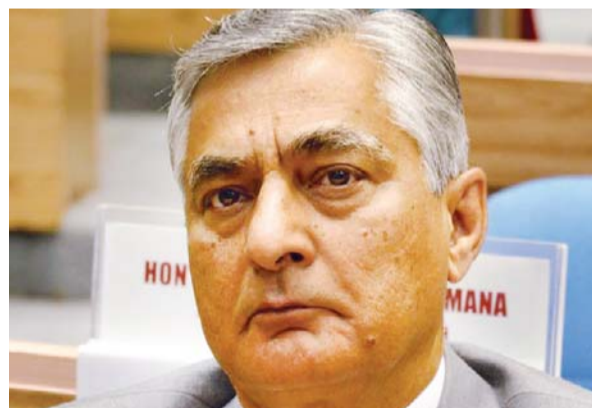
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Increased police patrols

Police have increased uniformed and plain-clothes patrols at transport hubs following the incident at the suburban station on the Central Line. “The safety of the travelling public remains our top priority,” said Assistant Chief Constable Mark Newton of the British Transport Police force. “In addition to our usual specialist response teams, last week we launched Project Servator, deploying even more highly-visible police patrols designed to identify and deter terrorism. “Following Saturday’s incident, we are now deploying still more officers in this role. “They involve both uniformed and plain-clothed officers, supported by other resources, such as armed officers, police dogs, a network of CCTV cameras, and the thousands of rail staff we work alongside. “We ask the public to remain calm and carry on using public transport as normal.”

General levels of security are influenced by the national terror threat level. It was raised in August 2014 to severe, the second highest of five levels, meaning an attack is considered highly likely. The Central Line runs on an east-west axis through the British capital. First opened in 1900, it is the longest of London’s Tube lines, serving 49 stations-only 20 of which are below ground-along 46 miles of track. Coloured red on the famous London Tube map, it is one of only two lines that go beyond the administrative boundary of London. — Agencies

INDIA’S TOP JUDGE TAKES A BUS TO CUT AIR POLLUTION



India’s chief justice TS Thakur

NEW DELHI: India’s chief justice has backed a plan to restrict cars on Delhi’s roads and said he would be prepared to take the bus to work, calling on other judges to join, as the world’s most polluted capital tries to clean up its filthy air. The Delhi government announced last week it would allow cars on the roads only on alternate days from January 1, as it tries to reduce the choking smog, which worsens during winter months as the colder air traps pollutants.

Justice TS Thakur said everyone had to do their bit to tackle the crisis, caused partly by millions of cars piling onto the city’s congested roads every day.

“There is no difficulty in this. I think this is the bare minimum which we can do,” Thakur said of the scheme, which would allow private cars on the roads only on alternate days according to their licence plate numbers. “People call it sacrifice. This (is) not a sacrifice, this is symbolic to show that judges are doing it,” he said on Sunday, according to the Press Trust of India.

India’s top judges live in spacious, state-owned bungalows surrounded by gardens in a small upmarket leafy area of central New Delhi. Asked whether judges could therefore car pool to work Thakur, who was sworn in as chief justice earlier this month, replied: “If a judge can pool cars, it sends a message to the people that we have no problem. We can walk or even take a bus,” he was quoted by The Hindu newspaper saying. Environmental groups have welcomed the Delhi government’s plan for private vehicles but have said it will be tough to implement.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said Saturday the measure would initially be introduced for only a few weeks, and could be withdrawn altogether if it proved problematic. Successive Delhi governments have faced flak for failing to clean up the filthy air, ranked as the worst in the world in a World Health Organization survey of more than 1,600 cities. Several Chinese cities have slapped limits on car numbers because of congestion and pollution, but it is the first time the Indian capital has implemented such a measure. The issue has been in the spotlight this week as negotiators from 195 nations haggle in Paris over a planned universal accord to slash the greenhouse-gas emissions that trap the sun’s heat. — AFP

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Dr. Elaine Cheesman
Elaine Cheesman, Ph. D.
Associate Professor / Teaching and Learning
College of Education Colorado University

Delivers a lecture at CCET entitled:
Effective Vocabulary Instruction

- Elaine Cheesman received her Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut in 2004. She received her training as a Qualified Instructor of Academic Language Therapy at Teacher’s College, Columbia University.
- Her primary research interests are the preparation of teachers in evidence-based reading and writing instruction and using technology to improve student learning.
- She is a member of the Board of the International Dyslexia Association, Rocky Mountain Branch, and the Professional Development Committee of the International Dyslexia Association.
- Dr. Cheesman has written scientific books and articles on education and interactive learning of reading and writing.
- She was awarded and honored due to her various achievements in education.

•The lecture will be delivered on Tuesday 8th of December 2015 at 7:00 PM
The lecture will be delivered in English accompanied by Arabic translation

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SUDAN'S REBELS, GOVT ARMY BRACE FOR FIGHTING SEASON

PEACE TALKS COLLAPSE

KHARTOUM: Government forces and rebels in Sudan's war-torn border regions say they are preparing for another bout of fighting after the latest talks in Addis Ababa failed to reach a deal. The African Union-mediated talks ended last month without a temporary ceasefire being agreed in Darfur, mired in conflict since 2003, and South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, where rebels have been battling since 2011.

Now the rainy season that leaves roads in the regions impassable has ended, both sides are braced for more fighting. "We are preparing to defend ourselves," said Arnu Lodi of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North, which is based in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. "Our troops are in high morale, well trained and prepared," Lodi said. Sudan's military also says it is on high alert in Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile. "We know that they are preparing and we are preparing too," said spokesman Colonel Ahmed Khalifa al-Shami.

The military had been tracking the rebels' movements during the talks, Shami said, declining to give further details. The latest negotiations came during a period of calm in Sudan's conflict-hit peripheries. President Omar Al-Bashir announced a two-month ceasefire in September to persuade rebels to join a national dialogue in Khartoum. The period coincided with the wet season, when torrential rains usually halt fighting, but the SPLM-N accused Khartoum of carrying out air raids. "Despite the military's commitment to the ceasefire announced by the president,

it hasn't abandoned its duty to train, mobilise and protect the country," Shami said.

No end in sight

Bashir has been battling ethnic insurgents in Darfur for 12 years, after they rebelled against Khartoum, complaining of marginalisation. The SPLM-N rose up in 2011 for similar reasons. Khartoum unleashed troops, bomber jets, helicopter gunships and militia to try to crush the insurgencies, with the International Criminal Court indicting Bashir for alleged war crimes in the Darfur conflict. The talks in Addis Ababa were the 10th round between the SPLM-N and Khartoum, and Darfuri rebels held simultaneous talks with a second government delegation. The negotiations ended with the SPLM-N and government accusing each other of plotting to reinforce their positions in South Kordofan and Blue Nile under cover of a humanitarian ceasefire. For the past two years, the government has mounted offensives in the dry season, which starts in November.

The talks' failure means another is likely but a decisive victory still seems far off. "It's going to inflict a lot of human suffering but it will not end the insurgency," said Magdi al-Gizouli, an independent political analyst. In April, government-allied militia ambushed the Justice and Equality Movement's forces in Darfur, capturing and destroying dozens of their vehicles in a major defeat. Sudan's military says Darfuri rebels now occupy just pock-

ets of land, notably the hilly Jebel Marra area in the centre of the region. "The Sudanese Armed Forces will try to contain the SPLM-N as far as possible just like the situation in Darfur, where you have pockets in Jebel Marra that don't threaten anything," Gizouli said.

Difficult terrain

In previous offensives, the military has pounded rebels in South Kordofan and Blue Nile with artillery, jet bombers as well as ground attacks with militia and troops. But the hilly Nuba Mountains area of South Kordofan is still a major obstacle for the Khartoum regime. "The terrain is difficult. It doesn't lend itself to fighting, it's very mountainous," said a source in Khartoum familiar with the conflict. "I think the SPLM-N has taken advantage of the rainy season to reinforce its positions," the source said on condition of anonymity.

For civilians in rebel-controlled areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile that the government denies aid organisations access to, renewed fighting will inflict further misery. Nearly 150,000 children in South Kordofan and Blue Nile have not been received vaccinations because of a lack of access, with 500,000 people displaced in the two states, the United Nations says. Fighting in Darfur has left another 2.5 million displaced in the western region, with at least 300,000 dead, according to the UN. "The civilian population is captive to the fighting armies," Gizouli said. —AFP

News

in brief



RAFAH: Palestinians wait for permission to enter Egypt at the Rafah border crossing in the southern Gaza Strip. —AFP

Egyptian army destroys 20 tunnels along border

CAIRO: The Egyptian military says it's destroyed 20 recently discovered underground tunnels along the border with the Gaza Strip. The army says the tunnels were found and destroyed in November. The announcement came on its official Facebook page yesterday. There were no further details. Israel and Egypt have maintained a blockade of the Palestinian coastal territory since the Islamic militant group Hamas seized Gaza in 2007. For years, Egypt tolerated a smuggling industry that allowed hundreds of tunnels to bring in goods like cigarettes and spare parts, as well as weapons, into the strip. After a major attack last year, the military began clearing a buffer zone along the border in an attempt to stamp out the cross-border network of tunnels that Hamas considers a lifeline.

TURKEY SAYS HAS DUTY TO PROTECT SOLDIERS IN IRAQ

ISTANBUL: Turkey said yesterday it had a duty to protect its soldiers around the Islamic State-controlled city of Mosul in Iraq and that they were there simply on a training mission, after Baghdad ordered the immediate withdrawal of its latest deployment. Turkey sent hundreds of forces to a camp in the Bashiqa region of northern Iraq on Thursday. It described it as a routine rotation in an existing training programme to help Iraqis retake Mosul from Islamic State, and said the troops were there to ensure the safety of the Turkish military trainers.

But the Iraqi government said the latest deployment had been made without informing or coordinating with Baghdad, and should be withdrawn. Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said on Sunday that Iraq might turn to the UN Security Council if the troops were not withdrawn within 48 hours, describing their deployment as a violation of national sovereignty.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, however, said Abadi had repeatedly requested more active Turkish support against Islamic State, and said he believed other countries had played a role in Iraq's reaction. He did not elaborate. "It is our duty to provide security for our soldiers providing training there," Cavusoglu said in an interview on Turkey's Kanal 24 television. "Everybody is present in Iraq ... The goal of all of them is clear. Train-and-equip advisory support is being provided. Our presence there is not a secret," he added.

Turkey, embroiled in a row with Moscow after it shot down a Russian warplane near the Syrian border almost two weeks ago, is eager to show it is playing its part in the fight against Islamic State. It has come under pressure from the United States to play a more active role, particularly in Syria. Moscow has accused Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan and his family of benefiting from the illegal smuggling of oil from Islamic State-held territory in Syria and Iraq, a charge Ankara vehemently denies. Islamic State militants overran Iraq's second-largest city Mosul, home to more than 1 million people, in June 2014. An expected counter-offensive by Iraqi forces has been repeatedly postponed because they are involved in fighting elsewhere.

Tanks and armoured vehicles

Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said on Sunday the new deployment was a troop rotation to support a camp that Turkish forces had previously set up at the Mosul governor's request and in coordination with the Iraqi Defence Ministry. Iraqi Kurdish regional President Massoud Barzani would visit Turkey this week, Cavusoglu said, adding that Iraq's defence minister was also expected to visit the country soon in a previously-arranged trip. Kurdistan Regional Government spokesman Safeneh Dizayee denied a Turkish media report that a deal had been reached between Turkey and Iraq for Turkey to have a permanent military base in Nineveh province, of which Mosul is the capital.

He backed up Ankara's version of events, saying Thursday's deployment aimed "to expand the capacity" of the training base near Bashiqa and included armoured personnel carriers and tanks. "The increase of personnel requires some protection," he said. A senior Kurdish military official based on the Bashiqa front line, north of Mosul, said last week that additional Turkish trainers had arrived at a camp in the area on Thursday, escorted by a Turkish protection force. The camp is used by a force called Hashid Watani (national mobilisation), which is made up of mainly Sunni Arab former Iraqi police and volunteers from Mosul. It was formed by former Nineveh governor Atheel al-Nujaifi, who had close relations with Turkey. There was already a small number of Turkish trainers there before this latest deployment. —Reuters



BAGHDAD: German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier (left) meets with his Iraqi counterpart Ibrahim Al-Jaafari yesterday in Baghdad. —AFP



ANBAR: Security forces prepare to destroy collected bombs and explosives being planted by Islamic State militants outside Ramadi, the capital of Iraq's Anbar province, 70 miles west of Baghdad, Iraq. —AP

ISLAMIC STATE EARNS \$80 MILLION A MONTH

BEIRUT: The Islamic State group is pulling in some \$80 million a month, mainly from levies and confiscations, but is struggling financially as strikes hit its oil infrastructure, analysis firm IHS said yesterday. In a new report, IHS Conflict Monitor said that IS, unlike other jihadist groups such as Al-Qaeda, does not need to rely on foreign funding as it can count on revenues from the large parts of Syria and Iraq under its control. Using open source intelligence including social media and sources inside the countries, IHS said it estimates the group's overall monthly income to be around \$80 million (75 million euros) as of late 2015.

About half the revenues come from levies and confiscations, with IS slapping a 20 percent charge on all services, IHS said. Some 43 percent comes from oil sales and the rest from drug smuggling, electricity sales and donations. "IS controls the state so

they tax the population, confiscate property, can produce income from state-run businesses and from oil and gas. Other terrorist groups don't have that," said Columb Strack, senior analyst at the London-based IHS. But other groups also do not have significant territory to rule, so "it's not like they are making \$80 million and spending all of that on weapons and building bombs," he said.

IS seized control of significant parts of Syria and Iraq last year, declaring a self-styled Islamic "caliphate" and committing widespread atrocities. A US-led coalition launched air strikes against the group in Iraq in August 2014 and in Syria a month later, and Moscow launched its own strikes in Syria in September this year. The group has not followed its sweeping offensive of 2014 with other major gains and IHS said it is now having trouble making ends meet. "There are early indications that the group is

struggling to balance its budget, with reports of cuts to fighters' salaries, price hikes on electricity and other basic services, and the introduction of new agricultural taxes," IHS said.

It said the increasing targeting of oil infrastructure, including wells and tanker trucks, by US-led coalition and Russian warplanes was starting to have effect. "Air strikes have significantly degraded the group's refining capacity and ability to transport oil via tanker convoys," IHS said. Strack said IS was already starting to systematically charge residents for leaving its territory and, as it faces continued pressure, will be looking for other ways to raise funds. "They can also try to raise the price of electricity, mobile phone networks, Internet and all kind of public services they are expected to provide," he said. "But people are already struggling to pay. It's going to be a lot harder on the populations living within IS territories." —AFP

'9/11 FIVE' HEADING BACK TO COURT - TRIAL STILL DISTANT

GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE: The five men accused of plotting the September 11, 2001 attacks—including the alleged mastermind—are due back in military court this week, though their prospects for an actual trial remain elusive. More than 14 years after Al-Qaeda hijackers seized four passenger jets and killed about 3,000 people in New York, at the Pentagon and in Pennsylvania, the "9/11 Five" who allegedly helped hatch the plot remain holed up in the US military's prison at Guantanamo Bay in southeastern Cuba. Their case is moving at a snail's pace, slowed by countless defense motions and allegations of government misconduct, coupled with the sheer logistical headache of flying the judge, lawyers and other staff into and out of America's remote penal colony every time the men appear in court.

At the center of the case is Pakistan-born Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who was arrested there in 2003 and subjected to "enhanced interrogation" by the Central Intelligence Agency, including numerous waterboarding sessions and "rectal rehydration." He was transferred to Guantanamo in 2006 and has publicly admitted to being the principal planner behind the 9/11 attacks. All five men face the death penalty, but any verdicts are likely years away. They are due in court for a series of pre-trial hearings in which judge Colonel

James Pohl will try to sift through a slew of defense motions, including one seeking to depose a former CIA interpreter who was working on one of the defense teams.

Further complicating matters is a workplace dispute, in which women prison guards complained after Pohl ordered them to stop escorting the detainees. The defense had argued that Mohammed experienced sexual humiliation while being tortured by the CIA. "He's a torture victim," Mohammed's lead attorney David Nevin said. "Having to be handled by female guards recapitulates the torture that he experienced." Pohl in January ordered the women guards to stop touching the detainees, prompting outrage from senior defense officials including Pentagon chief Ashton Carter.

Brigadier General Mark Martins, the lead prosecutor, acknowledged that frustration among relatives of those killed on 9/11 is palpable, but the process is moving as fast as possible. "That's the system we set up, and it is not driven by a timeline," he told reporters over the weekend. "I understand peoples' frustrations. I hear it all the time, I've got to deal with it. I've got to do our duty in the law." The other four accused are: Walid bin Attash and Ramzi Binalshibh of Yemen, Ali Abd Al-Aziz Ali-Mohammed's nephew and Mustapha al-Hawsawi of Saudi Arabia. —AFP



Chinese President Xi Jinping

That's what Xi said? - Chinese state media scolded for typo

BEIJING: A Chinese state news agency has suspended four employees, a report said, following a typographical slip that suggested President Xi Jinping was resigning. The error came in a Friday story about a speech Xi gave during a China-Africa summit in Johannesburg last week. Staff at the state-run China News Service switched two Chinese characters with similar sounds, accidentally changing the word in question to write that Xi's remarks were a "resignation" not a "speech," Hong Kong's South China Morning Post reported Sunday. Some news sites published the report in its original form before later retracting it, the paper said. Since Xi's ascension to the head of the Communist Party in 2012, he has increasingly become the focus of fawning adulation by state media, leading some experts to say that a nascent cult of personality may be developing around him. Last Friday, during his Africa trip, Xi's name appeared in 11 out of 12 headlines on the front page of the Communist Party's official newspaper, the People's Daily.

Lanka pleads for housemaid sentenced to death in Saudi

COLOMBO: Colombo has expressed concern to Saudi Arabia after a Sri Lankan housemaid working in the country was sentenced to death by stoning for adultery, an official said yesterday. Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera met the Saudi envoy to Colombo last week and raised the case of the woman and a man convicted alongside her, and asked to speak to his Saudi counterpart Adel Al-Jubeir. "We are still awaiting a response to have that conversation," said a foreign ministry official. The woman, a 45-year-old married mother of two who has not been named, was convicted of adultery in August. She was sentenced to death by stoning, while an unmarried Sri Lankan man convicted alongside her was sentenced to 100 lashes. Sri Lankan lawmakers from all parties have united in urging the government to secure clemency for the woman and a pardon for the man. Sri Lanka's Muslim minority on Monday appealed to the Saudi King Salman on Monday to intervene and pardon the couple. "Your Majesty's kind intervention in pardoning these unfortunate victims would enhance the high esteem in which Sri Lankans hold Islam, the people and the kingdom of Saudi Arabia," said the Muslim Council of Sri Lanka.

Protests as Armenians vote to curb presidential powers

YEREVAN: Armenians voted to curb presidential powers in a disputed referendum, official results showed yesterday, sparking calls for protests from the opposition which says the reforms are aimed at keeping the ruling elite in power. Around two-thirds (63 percent) backed the constitutional changes in Sunday's referendum, with 32 percent voting against, according to preliminary results from the election commission. Turnout stood at 51 percent. The reforms will make the president a ceremonial figure, elected by parliament for a term of seven years instead of the current five. The government said the changes were needed to shake up the political system and strengthen democracy in the former Soviet state. But the opposition cried foul, claiming that the real aim is to keep President Serzh Sarkisian, in power after his second term ends in 2018. "What happened today is state treason," a top opposition leader, Raffi Hovannisyan, told supporters at a rally early Monday, calling on the president and prime minister to resign and vowing mass protests.

POLITICAL KNIVES OUT AFTER CALIFORNIA ATTACK

WASHINGTON: With dust from the California massacre barely settled, the killings are sharpening the US political divide over gun control and spurring attacks on President Barack Obama's counter-terrorism strategy. As Obama prepared to address the nation on his plans to keep Americans safe and defeat IS, Republican foes lined up on the Sunday talk shows to attack his leadership. In the wake of Wednesday's attacks by a young Muslim couple believed to have embraced radical ideology, Republican presidential contenders slammed the president for pushing stricter gun laws while failing to tackle the threat from Islamic extremism head-on.

Republican presidential frontrunner Donald Trump said Obama's refusal to designate "radical Islam" as the enemy was a roadblock. "We are having a tremendous

problem with radical Islamic terrorism," Trump said on CBS's "Face the Nation" program which aired Sunday. "And we have a president that won't issue the term. He won't talk about it." "Until he admits that this is a problem, we're never gonna solve the problem." The billionaire presidential hopeful stands accused of whipping up xenophobia in the wake of the Paris attacks, including by calling for the creation of a Muslim registry, and insisting "thousands" of Muslims in New Jersey cheered on 9/11, a claim that has been widely debunked.

Tashfeen Malik, 29, and Syed Farook, 28 — a married Muslim couple with a baby girl and no known history of radicalism-gunned down 14 people at a social services center in San Bernardino, before dying in a shootout with police. While it has not

claimed the assault, the Islamic State group hailed the couple as "soldiers" of its self-proclaimed caliphate. In his CBS interview Trump said that political correctness should not prevent the "profiling" of Muslims perceived as a threat. "If you have people coming out of mosques with hatred and with death in their eyes and on their minds, we're going to have to do something," Trump said.

'Fight for Western civilization'

Asked about Obama's avoidance of the term "radical Islam," Democratic presidential frontrunner Hillary Clinton cast her support strongly behind the president. "The problem is, that sounds like we're declaring a war against religion. That's number one, wrong" she told ABC's "This Week." But Clinton distanced herself

from the Obama administration's strategy on IS, saying that "clearly we have to have a much more robust air campaign against ISIS targets."

In the Republican camp, meanwhile, presidential candidates painted the administration's strategy on IS as deeply flawed. "The left has a hard time recognizing what this is, this is a fight for Western civilization" said establishment candidate Jeb Bush, whose campaign has struggled to get off the ground. "The president has created directives from the White House that create all sort of bureaucratic challenges for air strikes," Bush told ABC's "This Week." He criticized what he said was a large percentage of sorties that "came back without dropping their ordnances because there was such a concern about making sure there were not civilian casualties." —AFP



CARACAS: Opposition leaders celebrate after knowing the results of the legislative election at the Democratic Unity Movement (MUD) party headquarters early yesterday. — AFP

SHIFT IN VENEZUELA AS OPPOSITION WINS VOTE

CARACAS: Venezuela's jubilant opposition vowed yesterday to drag the oil-rich country out of its economic crisis and free political prisoners after winning control of congress from socialist President Nicolas Maduro. But analysts warned political uncertainty and possible struggles lie ahead as the MUD coalition, with its moral figurehead Lillian Tintori, seeks to push its advantage against the mustachioed president whose side has been in power for 16 years.

Despite his fiery campaign rhetoric, Maduro promptly conceded defeat in Sunday's legislative election and called for "coexistence" between the opposition and his PSUV party, which lost control of the National Assembly for the first time since 1999. That seemed aimed at calming tensions after warnings of a repeat of

last year's deadly riots that left 43 people dead. The boiling tension of the past weeks of campaigning subsided into caution as Tintori and senior MUD leader Jesus Torrealba vowed their side did not want "revenge" or violence. "We have an immense responsibility," Torrealba said in an interview broadcast online.

His mostly center-right coalition won at least 99 of the 167 seats in the assembly, the state electoral authority said, with 46 for the PSUV. "What happened yesterday was an electoral tsunami, but a vote of confidence is one thing and a blank cheque is something else," Torrealba added. He said the MUD now had to "reinvent" itself to "deal with the crisis". Tintori, the activist and wife of jailed opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez, appeared smiling in world newspapers Monday as she celebrated with supporters. "I will not rest until all political prisoners are freed," she said. "This is a historic day for Venezuela."

International powers who have lobbied for change in Venezuela hailed the result. US Secretary of State John Kerry said it showed an "overwhelming desire for a change" in Venezuela. EU foreign affairs chief Federica Mogherini called it a "vote for change" and a call for "constructive political efforts to address together the challenges ahead." Cuban President Raul Castro consoled Maduro, the successor of Cuba's old ally Hugo Chavez who launched Venezuela's socialist "revolution" in 1998 in the spirit of independence hero Simon Bolivar.

"I am certain that new victories will come to the Bolivarian Revolution," Castro wrote in Cuban state newspaper Granma. Some political analysts wonder whether Sunday's result could be part of a broader rightward political shift in Latin America. Argentines last month voted out their leftist president Cristina Kirchner and Brazilian leader Dilma Rousseff's leadership is in crisis. Reassured by Sunday's peaceful election, Argentina's conservative president-elect Mauricio Macri dropped his earlier threat to try to have Venezuela suspended from the Mercosur trade bloc.

Hit by falling prices for the oil exports on which it relies, the country of 30 million is in an economic crisis, with shortages of basic foods and supplies. Analyst Luis Vicente Leon, president of pollster Datanalisis, called the vote result "a big punishment vote" for Maduro's economic management. It was unclear, however, how far the MUD will be able to push its advantage in the National Assembly to force a change of course or even to get rid of Maduro, who vowed to push on with his socialist programs. —AFP

OBAMA'S TERRORISM SPEECH - KEY QUOTES

WASHINGTON: President Barack Obama sought on Sunday to calm a nation put on edge by the California shootings, in a rare address to the nation on the threat posed by the Islamic State group. Here are the most memorable quotes from Obama's address from the Oval Office, his third since coming to power:

We will destroy IS

"I know that after so much war, many Americans are asking whether we are confronted by a cancer that has no immediate cure." "The threat from terrorism is real, but we will overcome it." "We will destroy ISIL and any other organization that tries to harm us.... Our military will continue to hunt down terrorist plotters in any country where it is necessary."

Act of terror

The young Muslim couple who mounted the California attack "had gone down the dark path of radicalization, embracing a perverted interpretation of Islam that calls for war against America and the West." "They had stockpiled assault weapons, ammunition, and pipe bombs. So this was an act of terrorism."

No broader conspiracy

"So far, we have no evidence that the killers were directed by a terrorist organization overseas or that they were part of a broader conspiracy here at home."

No war with Islam

"ISIL does not speak for Islam. They are thugs and killers. Part of a cult of death." "We cannot turn against one another by letting this fight be defined as a war between America and Islam. That, too, is what groups like ISIL want. "If we're to succeed in defeating terrorism, we must enlist Muslim communities as some of our strongest allies rather than push them away through suspicion and hate."

Muslims must tackle extremism

"An extremist ideology has spread within some Muslim communities. It's a real problem that Muslims must confront without excuse. "Muslim leaders here and around the globe have to continue working with us to decisively and unequivocally reject the hateful ideology that groups like ISIL and Al-Qaeda promote; to speak out against not just acts of violence, but also those interpretations of Islam that are incompatible with the values of religious tolerance, mutual respect, and human dignity."

Fight discrimination

"Just as it is the responsibility of Muslims around the world to root out misguided ideas that lead to radicalization, it is the responsibility of all Americans, of every faith, to reject discrimination. "It is our responsibility to reject religious tests on who we admit into this country. It's our responsibility to reject proposals that Muslim-Americans should somehow be treated differently.... That kind of divisiveness, that betrayal of our values plays into the hands of groups like ISIL."

Urges gun control

"Congress should act to make sure no one on a no-fly list is able to buy a gun. What could possibly be the argument for allowing a terrorist suspect to buy a semiautomatic weapon? This is a matter of national security. "We also need to make it harder for people to buy powerful assault weapons like the ones that were used in San Bernardino."

Enlists high-tech

The strategy against IS "is designed and supported by our military commanders and counterterrorism experts together with 65 countries that have joined an American-led coalition." "We constantly examine our strategy to determine within additional steps are needed to get the job done... And that's why I will urge high-tech and law enforcement leaders to make it harder for terrorists to use technology to escape from justice."

Rules out ground war

"We should not be drawn once more into a long and costly ground in Iraq and Syria. That's what groups like ISIL want. "They know they can't defeat us on the battlefield ... but they also know that if we occupy foreign lands, they can maintain insurgencies for years, killing thousands of our troops and draining our resources, and using our presence to draw new recruits." — AFP

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GERMANY REFUGEE INFLUX SPARKS SURGE IN RACIST HATE CRIMES

BERLIN: Arson attacks on refugee shelters, assaults, swastikas sprayed on walls-as Germany has taken in record numbers of asylum seekers, it has been rocked by a xenophobic backlash which authorities have appeared unable to stop. With one million arrivals expected in the EU's most populous nation this year, about half of them from Syria, Chancellor Angela Merkel has rallied Germans to welcome the newcomers and vowed to crack down on hate-mongers. While vast numbers of Germans have volunteered to help refugees, there has also been a rise in anti-foreigner sentiment that has buoyed the populist and anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD) party. Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere once again warned last week that the rise in hate crimes, ranging from property destruction to attempted murder, was "shocking and unacceptable".

In September, Merkel-who herself had endured xenophobic protesters' ugly verbal slurs during a visit to a migrant shelter-vowed that attacks targeting asylum seekers would be punished "with the full force of the law". Yet, according to a survey by news weekly Die Zeit, of the 222 most serious attacks on shelters reported this year, only four cases have resulted in convictions

so far. "If the state really wants to 'act with the full force of the law', it should do considerably more," the newspaper asserted. Die Zeit pointed to insufficient resources dedicated to investigations but also a frequent lack of solid evidence, as many shelters are located in thinly populated areas.

No deaths yet

"The fact that there have been no deaths yet is plain luck," said Timo Reinfrank of the Amadeu Antonio Foundation, which works to counter neo-Nazism, right-wing extremism and anti-Semitism. Racist attacks in Germany have multiplied especially since the summer, which saw a massive surge of hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers arrive via the Balkans and Austria in just a few weeks.

From June to September, Germany recorded an average of three xenophobic acts a day against asylum seekers' facilities, according to government figures provided to lawmakers.

"This violence is not only committed by neo-Nazis," said Reinfrank. "It is perpetrated increasingly by supposedly 'concerned citizens' who give vent to their racism."

At Crimmitschau in the former communist East Germany, three people were



BERLIN: A supporter of the right-wing populist Alternative for Germany (AfD) party displays a placard showing German Chancellor Angela Merkel dressed in a Burqa during a demonstration against the German government's asylum policy organized by the AfD party in Berlin. — AFP

detained last week for throwing Molotov cocktails in November at the walls of a shelter where 45 people were sleeping, including 20 children. In Eggesin, another town in the east, two Afghans were assaulted in the past week. These crimes are but the latest

in a long list collated by two organisations helping refugees, Pro Asyl and the Amadeu Antonio Foundation. Every day, they say, somewhere in Germany a hate crime has been committed, ranging from insults hurled at migrants, to swastikas daubed on

a shelter, to street protesters trying to block a bus carrying refugees.

Fears after Paris attacks

Fanning the flames, and raging against Muslims, has been the far-right street movement PEGIDA-short for "Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the Occident"-which has drawn thousands to weekly rallies in the eastern city of Dresden. In parliamentary politics, senior members of the AfD have openly voiced sympathy for PEGIDA's goals and seen support rise above 10 percent in many polls. Authorities and non-government groups fear that things may get worse in the wake of the November 13 attacks in Paris, despite their pleas not to confuse Syrian refugees and jihadists. The extreme right "feels very comforted," said the head of German domestic intelligence, Hans-Georg Maassen, in the Tagesspiegel daily.

He said "it blames the policies and the chancellor and even the media" and argues that "the open borders policy is the cause of what is happening". With several regional elections on the calendar in 2016, including two in eastern states, some fear a right-wing populist breakthrough at the ballot box, a year before national parliamentary elections. — AFP

AFTER PARIS BLOODBATH, GREEK MIGRANT TESTS REMAIN CURSORY

MYTILENE: Greece is under growing pressure over its handling of the migrant crisis-but on Lesbos island, swift registration procedures are still seeing thousands of new arrivals packed off promptly to elsewhere in Europe. After revelations that two jihadists involved in the Paris terror attacks slipped into Europe through another Greek island, posing as refugees, Athens has faced heavy scrutiny over its screening of more than 750,000 people who have landed on its shores this year.

This week Yiannis Mouzalas, the minister in charge of migration, admitted "delays and failings" in Greece's handling of the influx and called on the European Union to activate a crisis mechanism that will allow it to claim emergency aid. Athens has faced growing criticism on border security from other European countries including Hungary and Slovakia, and has been forced to refute a report that its place in Europe's passport-free Schengen zone is in jeopardy.

On Lesbos, the main European gateway for refugees and other migrants from the Middle East and elsewhere, officials systematically register and test arrivals to judge whether they are really from where they say they are-but the process is quick and not especially detailed. "The first day, the coast-guard asks your name, your nationality and your age," said Hamidullah, an Afghan. "The following day, you register at Moria (a refugee camp). The police take your fingerprints, photographs and ask some questions. This took no longer than five minutes."

'The accent can't fool you'

Hamidullah has no passport, merely a piece of paper stating his identity. Many others turn up with no papers at all. At the Moria camp, one of five "hotspots" set up on Greek Aegean islands to register migrants, one police officer said the lack of identity documents was a major obstacle to testing the veracity of people's claims. "In many cases, the refugees say they lost their passport en route," said the officer, speaking on condition of anonymity. "The only way to verify their nationality is by interviewing them with the help of interpreters." An Afghan interviewer

working at Moria, however, insisted the five-minute "nationality test" is effective. "The accent can't fool you," he said. "Precise questions are asked, like the name of politicians, or food delicacies of certain regions of the countries they declare as their countries of origin."

"Stricter tests since Paris" Officials struggling to cope with the situation on the ground on Lesbos are frustrated by the criticism being levied at Greece from abroad after the Paris attacks. "They blamed us for not managing to track down the two terrorists among the 776,000 people that have passed through Greece from the beginning of the year," said one police lieutenant, speaking on condition of anonymity. "How is it possible to track down a terrorist in the making, if he isn't being tracked by Interpol, if other European countries don't share their information, and if he's using a passport that is real but stolen?"

Another policeman said, however, that "the tests have been more strict" since the Paris attacks, admitting: "Until the end of the summer, the order was to let the refugees pass through as quickly as possible." Greece has accepted the deployment of extra border guards from EU border agency Frontex, while it is seeking aid from the EU including 100,000 first aid kits, raincoats and sleeping bags, 1,500 tents and 100 portable toilets. For the mayor of Lesbos's main town Mytilene, Spyros Galinos, the migrant crisis is a Europe-wide problem and the EU as a whole has a responsibility to improve the situation.

"Greece is a country in crisis," he said, pointing to "budget cuts, shortages of policemen and coastguards." "I have written several times to the European commissioners in order to ask for financial and logistical aid, and now they accuse us of not asking for help in time," he added. Migration minister Mouzalas has said Greece's request for emergency migrant aid was not made sooner because the government's exact requirements had not been assessed. But he, too, has said the EU is not blameless in the situation, saying the bloc failed to respond to a previous Greek request for an additional 1,600 police officers. — AFP



MYTILENE: Migrants from Syria wait in the port of Mytilene on the Greek island of Lesbos. — AFP



CALAIS: Migrant men walk past electoral posters of French far-right National Front (FN) party President Marine Le Pen in Calais yesterday. — AFP

FAR-RIGHT ON THE BRINK OF POWER IN FRENCH REGIONS
MARINE LE PEN'S PARTY FINISHES TOP IN 6 OF 13 REGIONS

PARIS: France's far-right National Front (FN) yesterday stood at the gates of power in several regions after record scores in the first round of elections, held just three weeks after the Paris attacks. Marine Le Pen's party finished top in six of 13 regions on Sunday, from the economically depressed north where she is standing, to the sun-drenched south where her 25-year-old niece is in poll position. Le Pen yesterday hailed a "magnificent" result and blasted the traditional political elite "at a time when dark clouds are gathering over France, from the economy and from the risk of being submerged by migrants".

After the anti-immigration party's strong showing, the main parties on the right and left must now decide whether to come to an agreement to try to stop the FN from winning control at regional level in next Sunday's second-round run-offs. The Socialists of President Francois Hollande have already begun withdrawing candidates, but former president Nicolas Sarkozy, leader of the centre-right Republicans, ruled out any tactical alliance.

The far-right has been steadily gaining traction in France over the past few years as Le Pen has continued its strident nationalism, while purging some of the party's least savoury elements. Le Pen, 47, and her telegenic 25-year-old niece Marion Marechal-Le Pen broke the symbol-

ic 40-percent mark in their respective regions of Nord-Pas-de-Calais-Picardie and Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur. But the FN also scored big in the eastern region including Alsace on the border of Germany and Belgium.

The showing shattered previous records for the party as they tapped into voter anger over a stagnant economy and fears linked to the influx of migrants into Europe. The attacks by jihadist gunmen on Paris last month in which 130 people died have also played into the hands of the FN, which has long claimed that extremists could be slipping into Europe among the migrants. The right-wing grouping including Sarkozy's party took 27 percent of the vote, while the ruling Socialist Party and its allies gained 23.5 percent. Around half the 45 million registered voters took part. Any party which secures 10 percent backing in the first round can field candidates next Sunday.

Springboard to president

Victories would not only hand control of a regional government to the FN for the first time, but would also give Le Pen a springboard for her presidential bid in 2017. Her father and co-founder of the FN, Jean-Marie Le Pen, once made it to the second round of presidential elections in 2002, but was trounced as voters rallied behind

Jacques Chirac to keep the far right out of power. The FN's success on Sunday has triggered an immediate debate on whether the traditional parties should urge voters to back any candidate opposing the far-right in the second round.

Jean-Christophe Cambadellis, a top Socialist Party official, said his party would withdraw from the second round in the regions that Le Pen and her niece were leading in order "to block" the FN. Le Pen said she was "not worried", but acknowledged the second round "will obviously be a bit less straightforward". Right-wing daily Le Figaro and the communist L'Humanite both went with "Le Choc" ("Shock") on their front pages yesterday, while the left-wing Liberation warned: "It's coming".

President Hollande has seen his personal ratings surge on the back of his hardline approach since the Paris carnage, but his party is being punished for a jobless total of around three million. The FN's anti-EU and anti-immigrant narrative has been a lightning rod for many voters who have lost faith in mainstream parties. Its repeated linking of immigration with terrorism has also helped it climb in the polls since the gun and suicide bombing assaults in Paris. When it emerged that at least two of the attackers had entered Europe posing as migrants, the party aggressively pushed a message of "we told you so". — AFP

CARTELS FIGHT OVER MEXICO'S CONFLICT-FREE GOLD REVENUES

CARRIZALILLO: Heroin traffickers linked to the abduction and disappearance of 43 students a year ago are battling over millions of dollars paid by Canadian mining giant Goldcorp to a village in Mexico's southern gold belt, leading to a wave of murders. As a signatory to a Conflict-Free Gold Standard drawn up by the World Gold Council industry group, Goldcorp commits to extracting the precious metal in a manner that "does not fuel unlawful armed conflict or contribute to serious human rights abuses." But residents of Carrizalillo in the impoverished state of Guerrero say the some \$3 million a year in rent paid by Goldcorp for their land, which the mine is built on, is fuelling a bloody feud between two rival cartels.

Village authorities say the company is not doing all it can to protect them. The violence highlights an ethical quagmire for industries operating in Mexico's drug badlands and raises questions of whether companies could do more to ensure safety for people connected to their operations. In response to Reuters' questions, Goldcorp said it has held numerous meetings with authorities to seek better security outside the mine's perimeters, in line with obligations under the standard.

'Guerreros Unidos' "Even though we can and do advocate with local authorities for the respect of human rights in the vicinity of our operations, we cannot take on the role of government," said Michael Harvey, Goldcorp's Latin America director for corporate affairs and security. Authorities describe a struggle between two gangs - "Guerreros Unidos" and "Los Rojos" - over the mineral wealth that has split Carrizalillo into two factions, fanning chaos. Each side accuses the other of supporting a rival cartel with the alleged backing of different state and federal security forces. At least 26 people have been killed since the feud escalated in mid-2014.

Last month, within sight of Goldcorp's Los Filos pit in the green hills and scrub around Carrizalillo, the remains of at least eight alleged cartel victims were found in clandestine graves. Some homes in Carrizalillo are scarred with bullet holes and broken windows after a series of assaults in the past year, some involving dozens of masked men firing automatic weapons. "The wealth Carrizalillo generates is fought over by these two groups," Federal Police Commissioner Enrique Galindo told Reuters, adding that the mine's riches have

exacerbated a struggle for control of drug trafficking routes. Villagers describe systematic extortion by both cartels.

Initially, Los Rojos were dominant, "taxing" mine workers, contractors and the landowners that Goldcorp pays rent to, as well as exerting influence over mine unions, the village council and a landowners' cooperative paid by the mine, former residents say. Last year, Guerreros Unidos gunmen blasted into the village, killing four and terrorizing residents for months. That cartel's rule was ended by a crackdown in October 2014 and since then the factions have fought with a series of tit-for-tat killings. "They want to take advantage of the fact there is money in Carrizalillo. They want money that is ours," said Nelson Figueroa, who heads the village council since July.

His faction blames Guerreros Unidos and villagers aligned with the gang for the blood-letting, with the backing of members of federal security forces.

Other sources say a member of Figueroa's faction, Ricardo Lopez, the head of a cooperative that manages land revenues paid by Goldcorp, is aligned with Los Rojos. Lopez and Figueroa deny the claim. Members of the gangs - both former subsidiaries of Joaquin "El

Chapo" Guzman's powerful Sinaloa cartel - face US charges of trafficking heroin from Guerrero, where poppy gum has replaced the famed "Acapulco Gold" marijuana as a top export.

The Guerreros Unidos gang is the primary suspect in the disappearance and apparent murder of 43 students last year, although international experts differ with Mexican officials on the degree of involvement of state and federal authorities. The case drew international attention and fierce criticism of President Enrique Pena Nieto's government. It is less well-known than an hour's drive south from the city of Iguala, where the students were abducted, the cartels have turned their attention to gold.

Conflict-free?

Villagers welcome the wealth generated by the mine and have negotiated to maximize their benefits. Protests closed the mine for a month last year until Goldcorp agreed to more generous terms. Landholders say that under that May 2014 deal, Goldcorp pays the equivalent of 4 ounces of gold per hectare in rent to 175 landholders and a communal land fund - an estimated \$3 million a year at today's prices. That is a small fortune in a village of around 1,000 people. Goldcorp declined to comment on pay-

ments. Under the conflict standard, drawn up in 2012 to help members comply with UN guidance on human rights, signatories commit to not making payments that fuel unlawful armed conflict or serious rights abuses.

Goldcorp recognizes that Los Filos is operating in a "conflict-affected or high-risk" area. "The violence carries both a terrible human cost to the communities, and a financial cost to Goldcorp as we are obliged to invest in additional security for our operations and personnel," said Goldcorp's Harvey. "It is essential to protect the jobs provided by legitimate investment so as to give community members economic opportunities other than crime." Goldcorp's gold mining activities have been certified as conflict-free. Under the standard, companies operating in conflict zones must use their influence to avoid abuses by security forces and make them protect local populations.

"It is not enough for a company to simply say 'there are risks but they are not our problem,'" said Michael Gibb, who leads advocacy group Global Witness' conflict-minerals campaign. He said the standard was positive globally but some miners in conflict-zones are not transparent about risks and corrective actions. — Reuters

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PYONGYANG: North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un attends the 4th Conference of Korean People's Army (KPA) Artillery Personnel at the April 25 House of Culture in Pyongyang. — AFP

CALIFORNIA SHOOTER ATTENDED FEMALE MADRASSA IN PAKISTAN

MULTAN: The woman who along with her husband shot dead 14 people in California last week attended one of Pakistan's most high-profile religious seminaries for women, the madrassa confirmed to AFP yesterday. Tashfeen Malik, 29, was enrolled in 2013 at the Al-Huda Institute in Multan, which targets middle-class women seeking to come closer to Islam and also has offices in the US, the UAE, India and the UK, said Imran Amir, an administration official at the seminary. The institute has no known extremist links, though it has come under fire in the past from critics who say its ideology echoes that of the Taliban.

But her attendance offers fresh insight into Malik's journey towards Islamic extremism. This likely began with her upbringing in Saudi Arabia, continued during her time as a student in Pakistan and culminated with her swearing allegiance to the Islamic State group shortly before embarking on her killing spree. Malik and her husband Syed Farook, 28, were hailed as "soldiers" of the self-proclaimed caliphate following the massacre on Wednesday at a social services centre in San Bernardino.

Investigators suspect that Malik, who went to the United States on a fiancée's visa and spent extended periods of time in both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, may have radicalised her husband. The probe is trying to establish if she had contact with Islamic radicals in either country. Malik was enrolled in classes including translation of the Koran in 2013, said Amir, the administration official. "But she did not complete her course and was here only for a short time," he added. A teacher who gave her name only as Muqadas also confirmed to AFP that Malik did not finish the two-year course. "She was a good girl. I don't know why she left and what happened to her," Muqadas said.

Malik did not travel to the US with her husband until 2014. Fellow classmates at the Bahauddin Zakariya University in Multan, where Malik studied pharmacology from 2007-2012, said she also went to the madrassa after classes during her final two years at the university, though her attendance at that time may have been informal. Farrukh Saleem, a Karachi-based spokeswoman for Al-Huda, told AFP the organisation preaches "the peaceful teachings of Islam and the prophet of Islam", adding that government and law enforcement agencies have "never suspected us of spreading extremism".

'More susceptible'

Al-Huda, founded in 1994 by Farhat Hashmi, is one of the best-known female

madrassas in the country, where religious seminaries are thought to teach hundreds of thousands of students each year. Unlike other such seminaries, it mainly targets Pakistan's influential middle and upper classes, often holding religious study circles inside members' houses. One of Malik's former classmates at the Bahauddin Zakariya University said she drastically changed during her time there. "Gradually she became more serious and strict," the student said, requesting anonymity.

Malik became withdrawn and stopped participating in classes, the student said, adding that while she had been religious previously, during her time at Al-Huda she "became hardline and different". Arif Rafiq, an analyst at the Washington-based Middle East Institute, said her attendance "suggests that she had embraced a more modern yet austere variant of Islam". "It may have made her more susceptible to the ideology of a transnational terrorist group like IS," he added. But he cautioned that Al-Huda's graduates rarely become militants. "Al-Huda attendance alone doesn't answer the question of how she may have made the leap from being a conservative or even Salafi Muslim into a jihadist."

Educated and radical

Badar Alam, editor of the prestigious Herald magazine, said Malik appeared to have become radicalised gradually. "She was raised in Saudi Arabia so she became a Salafi. She joined Al-Huda. She married a US Muslim who was influenced by events in the Middle East—this is the making of an international terrorist in today's world." Malik is the latest in a string of high-profile college-educated militants of Pakistani origin, including would-be Times Square bomber Faisal Shahzad, 9/11 planner Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, and "Lady Al-Qaeda"-neuroscientist Aafia Siddiqui, who is currently serving an 86-year prison sentence in the US for attacking American soldiers in Afghanistan.

Pakistan has pledged to crack down on religious seminaries suspected of being breeding grounds for intolerance or even fostering extremism, with the country's information minister Pervez Rashid terming them "universities of illiteracy and ignorance". However the government's efforts to rein in madrassas have prompted anger from many clerics who accuse the authorities of maligning religious leaders in a bid to build an "anti-Islamic narrative". — AFP

WATCHDOG WARNS TERRORISTS MAY SEEK NUCLEAR MATERIALS

NORTH KOREA TEST SITE ACTIVITY COULD BE A BLUFF

MANILA: The head of the UN nuclear watchdog agency warned yesterday of the threat of terrorists getting their hands on radioactive material to make "dirty" bombs. Yukiya Amano, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said all countries should secure material which extremists could use to make such a device. "Nuclear security is a longstanding and real issue. This is a real threat in all countries where nuclear material is available to terrorists," he said during a visit to the Philippines for an atomic energy conference. "If nuclear material falls into the hands of terrorists, that can be used for dirty bombs," he said, referring to devices that use explosives to spread radioactive material over a wide area to poison people. Amano said such devices, which are much easier to make than an atomic bomb, could cause widespread panic if unleashed in a city.

While governments have the main responsibility to secure these materials, the IAEA can help establish guidelines to guard them, he told reporters. This could include training customs and border guards on how to detect such materials and even helping governments procure detectors and similar equipment. Amano said the Vienna-based IAEA was already maintaining a database to "analyse and

establish a trend" that might identify possible threats. Despite the danger, Amano said nuclear energy had many benefits beyond even power generation, such as use in medicine, water management and even agriculture. Concern about possible terror attacks has risen sharply worldwide recently following a spate of bombings and mass shootings by supporters of the Islamic State group.

N Korea test site activity

Meanwhile, heightened activity at a North Korea nuclear test site could be a bluff rather than preparations to set off an atomic device soon, the head of an international body set up to monitor a ban on nuclear testing said yesterday. A report by 38 North, a North Korea project at Johns Hopkins University in Washington, said satellite images showed construction of a test tunnel at Punggye-ri, on North Korea's east coast where it conducted its three previous nuclear tests. "I'm tempted to believe that the fourth tunnel is just a bluff to put pressure on the international community to resume discussion with them," Lassina Zerbo, head of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO) said.

North Korea has conducted three underground

nuclear tests since 2006. The last, in 2013, drew international condemnation including from China, its main diplomatic ally. Isolated North Korea is under UN sanctions that prohibit trade that can fund its arms programme. Diplomatic talks amongst six countries including the United States and North Korea aimed at ending its nuclear programme produced a deal in 2005 from which the North has since walked away. North Korea has been steadily working on its nuclear programme, but a fourth test is not seen as imminent.

While a new tunnel at the site could well indicate North Korea was preparing a test, the timing would "probably depend on political factors more than technical ones," said Jeffrey Lewis, author of the 38 North report. The North's agreement with South Korea in August to work towards easing tension and improving ties also meant a test was less likely, said Zerbo. "One would not anticipate that North Korea would go for new testing at a time when they are engaged in discussions with their brothers from the South," Zerbo said. "In the 21st century, they are the only country to have conducted a nuclear test explosion. In the 21st century, the world is too civilised for anyone to resume testing." — Agencies



MUMBAI: Indian dwellers pick through the charred remains of their homes for belongings following a fire at a slum in the east of Kandivali, an area in the north of Mumbai yesterday. — AFP

FIRE DESTROYS 1,000 SLUM HOMES IN MUMBAI

MUMBAI: A massive fire sparked by a series of gas cylinder explosions swept through a packed slum in India's Mumbai yesterday, killing one person and destroying around 1,000 homes, officials said. Dramatic video footage and pictures posted on Twitter showed thick black smoke billowing above Kandivali slum after more than a dozen liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders exploded in quick succession.

"About 1,000 homes have been destroyed," Dhananjay Kulkarni, a deputy commissioner

with the Mumbai police said. "There's been one death. The body was completely charred so we can't identify the gender. The death toll may rise," he said. Prabhakar Rahangdale, chief fire officer of the Mumbai fire brigade, said between "15 to 20 LPG cylinder blasts occurred" in the east of Kandivali, an area in the north of the teeming city.

"Two females sustained burn injuries of 40 and 42 percent and four males sustained minor injuries," he added, saying they had been taken

to hospital for treatment. Rahangdale said the fire brigade had sent 16 fire engines to the area after it received a call alerting them to the blaze shortly after 12:30 pm (0700 GMT). Yesterday's accident was the latest deadly fire-related disaster to have occurred in Mumbai this year. In June, a fire in a high-rise apartment block killed seven people after they became trapped in a lift on the upper floors. A month earlier four senior officers from a Mumbai fire brigade died in a blaze at another building. — AFP



MULTAN: Pakistani students arrive at Al-Huda Institute, one of the most high-profile female seminaries (Islamic religious school), in Multan yesterday, where female US shooter Tashfeen Malik studied. — AFP

AFGHAN PRESIDENT, INDIAN FM IN HIGH-LEVEL VISIT TO PAKISTAN

ISLAMABAD: Afghan President Ashraf Ghani is set to visit Pakistan this week for a regional conference in a high-level visit that boosts hopes for the revival of Taliban peace talks, officials confirmed yesterday. The Indian foreign minister will also attend the two-day Heart of Asia conference in Islamabad, the highest-level visit from Delhi in years, which comes amid hopes that Pakistan can mend relations with its neighbours. A spokesman for Abdullah Abdullah, Afghanistan's chief executive, said yesterday that Ghani will attend the conference, set to be jointly inaugurated by him and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Ghani's last visit to Pakistan was in November 2014.

Indian foreign minister Sushma Swaraj will also attend, a ministry spokesman tweeted. The last visit by any top Indian diplomat was in September 2012 when SM Krishna, a former foreign minister, came to Islamabad. Tensions have been unusually high between Islamabad, Delhi

and Kabul, but Sharif held brief meetings with Ghani and Indian counterpart Narendra Modi in Paris last week that seem to have broken the ice. The meeting with Ghani, on the sidelines of a climate change conference in Paris, came amid Kabul's accusations that Islamabad supported the Taliban most recently in the northern city of Kunduz, briefly captured in September by militants as part of a nationwide surge in attacks.

Pakistan, which has historically supported the Afghan Taliban and wields considerable influence over the insurgents, hosted a milestone first round of peace negotiations in July. But the talks soon stalled when the Taliban belatedly confirmed the death of their longtime leader Mullah Omar. Separately, doubts about a visit by Indian foreign minister Swaraj disappeared yesterday after her visit was confirmed by the Indian foreign ministry. The announcement came following talks between Indian and

Pakistani national security advisers in Bangkok on Sunday on militancy and Kashmir, a joint statement said, as the two countries seek a thaw in frosty relations.

Diplomacy between the two nuclear-armed countries worsened significantly in 2014 following the election of Hindu nationalist Modi as prime minister in India, with shelling across their border in Kashmir claiming dozens of lives. India and Pakistan have been arch-rivals since gaining independence from Britain in 1947 and have fought three wars against each other. Speaking at the UN General Assembly last week, Sharif outlined a four-point initiative to ease tensions between the two countries. The conference will provide opportunity for Pakistan to further mend its relations with neighbouring Afghanistan and India, observers said. Foreign ministers of China, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Iran have also confirmed their participation, according to Pakistan's foreign ministry. — AFP

FAMILIAR LAWYER, ISSUES LOOM OVER COLORADO RAMPAGE CASE

COLORADO SPRINGS: The suited lawyer whispered in the ear of the hulking suspect in the mass shooting at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado, then Robert Lewis Dear answered "no questions" after briefly shaking his big, bearded head. It was the most the public has heard from Dear, who was trussed in handcuffs, leg irons and strapped into a thick, padded smock while speaking last week to the judge by video from jail, and that is exactly how Daniel King wants it.

The public defender for Dear, 57, who police say surrendered after killing three people and wounding nine in the Nov 27 clinic rampage, King most recently represented Colorado movie massacre gunman James Holmes. Within hours of taking on Dear's case, King's team had filed motions seeking to seal evidence, visit the crime scene, have defense experts observe forensic tests, and the imposition of a gag order to prevent anyone in law enforcement from disclosing details of the crime.

Colorado's public defenders have successfully had several death sentences overturned on appeal, and are widely viewed as among the nation's most effective death penalty

litigators. Dear is being held without bond on suspicion of first-degree murder pending the filing of formal charges on Wednesday. That will set in motion months, if not years, of legal maneuvering in Colorado's latest high-profile murder case, with the state public defender's office again at the forefront.

Death penalty case?

In addition to Holmes, who was convicted this summer of multiple murders but spared capital punishment after jurors could not agree unanimously that he should be executed, King also defended one of Colorado's current three death-row inmates, whose case is under appeal. His early appearance alongside Dear seems to indicate that the defense anticipates El Paso County District Attorney Dan May will seek the death penalty, legal analysts said. "Given that there were three victims, including a police officer, and an experienced lawyer like King was there, it appears the public defenders are bracing for a death penalty case," said Colorado criminal defense lawyer Zak Malkinson.

Since there is no doubt Dear was the shooter in Colorado Springs, another insanity defense like the one raised in the Holmes trial is a possibility, said Malkinson, who served for seven years as a California public defender before entering private practice. While some may view the clinic rampage as an obvious contender for a death penalty case, the decision to seek a defendant's execution is not so clear-cut, said Arapahoe County District Attorney George Brauchler, who prosecuted Holmes.

"The size and scope of the crime, the aggravators, but also the mitigating factors such as mental health, are all things to be considered," Brauchler said. Before deciding to seek execution in the Holmes case, Brauchler said he consulted several other prosecutors, including May. The other prosecutors also sat in on a meeting at which King tried unsuccessfully to persuade Brauchler to take the death penalty off the table.

Conservative jury pool

May said he has not decided if he will seek Dear's execu-

tion, and has 63 days after Dear ultimately enters a plea, which is likely months away, to announce his intentions. Whether or not May seeks capital punishment, a jury pool will be drawn from one of the most conservative areas of the state, should the case go to trial. Colorado Springs and the surrounding El Paso County are Republican strongholds with a large Evangelical Christian presence. They are also home to six military installations, including the US Air Force Academy and the US Army's mountain post, Fort Carson.

Colorado's longest-serving death-row inmate, Nathan Dunlap, was convicted and sentenced to death by an El Paso County jury after his trial was moved there from the Denver area. But Colorado has executed just one inmate in nearly 50 years, largely due to the efforts of its public defenders. The same month Holmes' life was spared, public defenders persuaded a Denver jury not to condemn Dexter Lewis to death after he was convicted of multiple murders for stabbing to death five people inside a bar during a botched robbery. — Reuters



People gather on the dock near the battleship New Jersey during a commemoration of the 74th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor yesterday in Camden, New Jersey. In Pearl Harbor, the US Navy and National Park Service hosted a ceremony in remembrance of those killed on Dec 7, 1941. — AP

SYRIA ACCUSES COALITION OF KILLING...

Continued from Page 1

aggression and take appropriate measures to prevent its recurrence". It said three Syrian soldiers were killed and 13 wounded in strikes by four coalition planes on an army camp in the eastern province of Deir Ezzor.

A Syrian military source and the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based monitor, said four soldiers had been killed and 13 wounded in the strike, near the town of Ayyash. The military source said the attack happened Sunday night and hit several buildings used as weapons depots and an army training camp, damaging two tanks.

The Observatory said it was the first time a US-led coalition strike had killed Syrian government troops. Much of Deir Ezzor is under the control of the Islamic State group, which the US-led coalition regularly targets in the province. However, the regime remains present in small areas, including in the provincial capital. The province's oil resources have been a major source of IS funding, but on Monday analysis firm IHS said the group was having trouble making ends meet due to air strikes on its oil infrastructure. IHS estimated the extremist group's overall monthly income to be about \$80 million as of late 2015, around half of it from levies and confiscations. But it noted the group also had significant costs because it administers large swathes of

territory. The US-led coalition began strikes in Syria in Sept 2014, expanding a campaign against IS that began in neighboring Iraq. A coalition spokesman Monday denied it was behind the alleged strikes, saying its warplanes carried out no raids in the area Sunday. "We've seen those Syrian reports but we did not conduct any strikes in that part of Deir Ezzor yesterday. So we see no evidence," Colonel Steve Warren told AFP. "We struck 55 kilometres away from the area that the Syrians say was struck. That was the only area in Deir Ezzor we struck yesterday," he added. "There were no human beings in the area that we struck yesterday, all we struck was a wellhead."

The Syrian government has regularly criticized the US-led strikes as ineffective and illegal because they are not coordinated with regime forces, and the foreign ministry said the Deir Ezzor incident was further evidence of the coalition's failings. "The US coalition lacks the seriousness and credibility to effectively combat terrorism," the ministry said. Staunch regime ally Moscow began its own aerial campaign in Syria on September 30 and coordinates its air strikes with government troops.

On Sunday, US President Barack Obama vowed to destroy IS and hunt down its followers at home and abroad in a rare address from the Oval Office. The speech followed a shooting rampage in California last week that saw an apparently radicalized couple kill 14 people. — AFP

KUWAIT KEEN TO PUSH REFORMS: IMF

Continued from Page 1

They may cut fuel subsidies first, as no legal changes are required, but electricity and water require legislation and may be introduced later, he said. The Kuwaiti government is studying whether to raise fees for its services as part of a wider project that aims to rationalize spending, review subsidies and diversify sources of revenue, Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh told the local Al-Rai newspaper in a report published on Nov 22. The Kuwaiti dinar fell sharply against the US dollar in the forward market at the end of November, bankers told Reuters on Nov 24, reflecting a shortage of dinars in the cash market amid low oil prices.

"There has been slightly slower growth in profit and credit, but the Kuwaiti banking system is still flush with liquidity sitting in the Central Bank," Ananthakrishnan said. "At this point in time, there is no issue, but definitely as oil prices go down and there's no adjustment in the fiscal system, there should be some tightening," he added. Given the structure of the Kuwaiti currency peg, which is tied to a basket of currencies including the US dollar, it is doing well in delivering monetary stability and enough reserves, he said. In the longer term, however, given potential trade shocks, fiscal consolidation will be needed to support the currency, Ananthakrishnan added.

Meanwhile, an official from the United Arab Emirates finance ministry said yesterday Gulf states have agreed on key issues for implementing value-added tax in the region, moving the six nations closer to introducing direct taxation for the first time. The agreement was reached at a meeting of representa-

tives from Gulf ministries a few days ago, Younis Haji Al-Khouri, undersecretary at the UAE ministry of finance, told reporters on the sidelines of a media event.

Introducing VAT would be a major economic reform in the Gulf Cooperation Council states, which have minimal tax systems and no tax on income, although some levy fees such as road tolls. The plunge of oil prices since last year has slashed government incomes, making it more urgent for them to find new revenue. The UAE - one of the six GCC countries, which also include Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia - is expected this year to post its first budget deficit since 2009.

Khouri said the target for introducing the tax was three years, and that it would take 18 to 24 months to implement once a final agreement has been reached. "We agreed on key issues to apply zero tax on healthcare, education, social services sectors and exempt 94 food items," Khouri said. In a couple of areas - including financial services - agreement was still lacking, he said. To limit smuggling and damage to competitiveness, analysts say, the Gulf countries should introduce VAT regionally rather than individually, at different times. The six states have been discussing the tax for years, but political and economic issues have delayed the project.

VAT cannot be implemented unilaterally but has to be part of a Gulf-wide decision, Khouri told Reuters in August, adding that if all GCC states agree on a deadline, then some could implement ahead of the others. No indication of the rate at which VAT will be levied has been given by governments, although the International Monetary Fund has suggested the UAE consider imposing VAT at a 5 percent rate. — Agencies

TANA READIES NEW GRILLING OF SUBAIIH

Continued from Page 1

In another development, MP Abdullah Al-Turajji yesterday questioned Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane over the reported deportation of 10 expatriate preachers at the request of the minister. In his questions, Turajji said that the interior ministry has refused to

renew the residency of 10 preachers at the request of the ministry and demanded an explanation for the action and if the preachers had committed any violation. The lawmaker demanded the names and CVs of the preachers and copies of the violations they committed. He also demanded the name of the ministry official who took the decision and copies of the official letter sent to the interior ministry.

OBAMA TELLS FEARFUL US THAT IS WILL BE ...

Continued from Page 1

and pipe bombs. So this was an act of terrorism." But he added that there was "no evidence that the killers were directed by a terrorist organization overseas or that they were part of a broader conspiracy here at home". Both shooters died in a hail of police bullets, leaving questions about how, when and why they may have become radicalized.

The Islamic State has praised the attackers as "soldiers" of its self-proclaimed caliphate, while stopping short of claiming outright credit. In an interview with Italian newspaper La Stampa, Farook's father suggested his son approved of the group's ideas and was fixated with Israel. But several reports, citing unnamed officials, say investigators are looking into whether Malik radicalized her husband. In Pakistan, she attended one of the country's most high-profile religious seminars for women, according to a teacher.

Woven throughout Obama's address was a plea for unity. "We cannot turn against one another by letting this fight be defined as a war between America and Islam," he said, facing down some of his shrillest critics who have called for a registry of Muslim-Americans. "ISIL does not speak for Islam. They are thugs and killers. Part of a cult of death" he said. "If we're to succeed in defeating terrorism, we must enlist Muslim communities as some of our strongest allies rather than push them away through suspicion and hate."

After two decades battling jihadism, Americans appear

increasingly divided on the nature of the problem and how to respond. According to a new CNN/ORC poll, 68 percent of Americans say the US military response to the Islamic State group has not been aggressive enough. Conducted before the shootings, the poll also found that 60 percent disapprove of Obama's handling of terrorism.

Republicans have demanded that Obama back a full-scale deployment of NATO ground forces to Syria and resume controversial interrogations at the Guantanamo Bay camp, which the president wants to close. Conservatives have also taken issue with Obama's refusal to use the phrase "radical Islam" which the White House says would confer on terrorists the legitimacy of a faith they have betrayed. "Well, Obama refused to say (he just can't say it), that we are at war with radical Islamic terrorists," Republican presidential frontrunner Donald Trump tweeted after the address.

Obama, elected on an anti-war platform, showed little sign of meeting his political foes in the middle as he reiterated calls for gun control and ruled out a ground intervention. "Our success won't depend on tough talk or abandoning our values or giving into fear," he said. "We should not be drawn once more into a long and costly ground war in Iraq and Syria. That's what groups like ISIL want. They know they can't defeat us on the battlefield... but they also know that if we occupy foreign lands, they can maintain insurgencies for years, killing thousands of our troops and draining our resources, and using our presence to draw new recruits." — AFP

GATES 'VERY IMPRESSED' WITH GENEROSITY...

Continued from Page 1

We need passion." "All lives have equal value," Gates said when explaining his unbridled passion for philanthropy. "I believe that the world has enough tools and resources to eradicate poverty and hunger ... we need the world not to starve but thrive."

At the onset of the Syrian crisis, Gates illustrated the fact that Kuwait was among the first nations to take action by distributing humanitarian aid that helped alleviate the suffering of millions of Syrian refugees displaced by war in their country. The world's richest man disclosed that he had met the late Kuwaiti philanthropist Abdulrahman Al-Sumait's son earlier yesterday, saying that he highly admired the legacy that Sumait had forged in a lifetime dedicated to serving the needy and less fortunate. Gates also underscored the fact that, "lifting the poor out of poverty starts with the fundamentals and starting out young is key in having humanitarian contributions come to fruition. There's only one human race and we should help each other," he noted.

On her part, Undersecretary of the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs Sheikhha Al-Zain Al-Sabah said in her speech that giving is not a state of mind but a conscious decision, describing Kuwait as the "land of youth and youth giving". "I am speaking on behalf of the risk-takers and dreamers," Sheikhha Al-Zain asserted, acknowledging the honoring of Kuwait by the United Nations as a "Humanitarian Center" by saying that "giving is in Kuwait's DNA". Taking a stroll down memory lane, Sheikhha Al-Zain noted that a few months after liberation from Iraqi occupation in 1991, Kuwait increased its giving capacity significantly. "Volunteerism is an integral part of our identity," she said.

Underscoring Kuwait's growing contributions to humanitarian efforts around the globe, Sheikhha Al-Zain noted that the country broke the Guinness world record of international donations on two different occasions: Collecting toys and clothes in one day.

Sheikhha Al-Zain revealed that Kuwaiti youth have raised \$185,000 in donations, announcing the formation of a national database to help coordinate humanitarian contributions. Named, "KaFu", the database is expected to be up and running soon. The event concluded with an interaction between Gates and school and college youths who attended the session. Many of the questions focused on how innovation and technology assist all aspects of humanitarianism.

Gates stressed the importance of technology and in solving health problems. He said that in the case of child mortality, the rate was down by five percent due to innovation in medicine and medical tools. In order to make a break through and lower death rates even further, more than \$4 million a year should be generated towards scientific tools and research. Nonetheless, between innovation and delivery systems "magic happens" in solving humanitarian problems, Gates stressed.

On social media, Gates pointed out that it has played a positive role in making humanitarian problems well known to the public by taking a picture or writing a blog online. He further said that online payments made it easier to disperse money to and from governments, NGOs and even people. Even though Gates' foundation has deep expertise in disease, agriculture, water and vaccination to alleviating the current crises of the refugees worldwide, it was also providing healthcare, education, nutrition and shelter for the displaced, he said. — KUNA

MAID ALLEGES POLICE OFFICER BEAT HER BADLY

Continued from Page 1

Before the fall, I was still very groggy and could hardly see and stand, because I was very scared. I was begging God and praying not to take my life because I have five small children to feed and I know they need me," she cried. "Thank God I am alive - He listens to prayers." According to the woman, she suffered physical, emotional and mental abuse for the past several months. The final attack took place on Friday over her use of a telephone to make calls. "My sponsor found out that I was using the phone to call my family. He took the phone

away from me and smashed it in front of me so I could not communicate with my family. Then he started beating me and cursing me. He said he's going to kill me," she said.

Norlita, who hails from Sto Tomas, Davao, transferred to her new employer only four months ago. "I finished my two-year contract with my previous employer and went back to my family in Davao. I decided to apply again, and this police officer was my employer when I came back. He has a wife who only watched, but could not do anything," she said. Dado said the embassy will exert all legal remedies to help Norlita.

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P.O. Box 1301 Safat, 13014 Kuwait.
E MAIL: info@kuwaittimes.net
Website: www.kuwaittimes.net



RIVALRY SETS SCENE FOR OPEC SHOWDOWN

By Alex Lawler, Vladimir Soldatkin and Shadia Nasralla

It used to be said of OPEC that it was like a teabag - it only worked in hot water. If that is so, conditions on world oil markets could hardly be more difficult as prices languish at almost seven-year lows near \$40 a barrel. Yet, rather than closing ranks, OPEC is finding that an intensifying battle for market share, worsened by deep regional differences between Saudi Arabia and Iran, is driving it further apart.

Halfway through last Friday's six-hour meeting, an unexpected dispute erupted over the defining feature of the cartel. In a move sources say was masterminded by Saudi Arabia, ministers finally agreed for the first time in decades to drop any reference to the 13-member group's output ceiling. The pivot, which surprised not only markets but also some OPEC officials, appeared to be a direct response to Saudi Arabia's arch-rival Iran, which has made clear it intends to make a rapid return to global oil markets next year as nuclear-related sanctions are lifted.

With Tehran looking to pump as much as 1 million barrels per day (bpd) more crude into a market already saturated with excess supply, an increase of about 1 percent in world supply, maintaining or legitimizing any pretense of OPEC limits - no matter how notional - was not an option for Riyadh. "The ceiling issue was very controversial and they could not decide on it," said an OPEC source briefed on the discussion inside the room. "Nobody was happy." Earlier, another source said there was a "huge disagreement among members, even bigger now, as oversupply is no longer mainly coming from Gulf delegates, but from Iran."

In the near-term, the outcome of Friday's meeting probably makes little difference in global markets. Ever since last year, most members have been pumping flat-out to defend their market from fast-growing upstart rivals like US shale drillers. And anyway the group's 30 million bpd ceiling has largely been symbolic and, in practical terms, ignored. Yet abandoning the pretense of production restraint threatens to intensify price wars between OPEC members, leaving them

even less likely to agree on any market measures down the road, analysts said, and piling more pressure on prices.

In a note following the meeting, Goldman Sachs said it saw a rising probability that the markets may need to adjust through "operational stress" when the world runs out of storage capacity, reiterating its "lower for even longer" thesis.

OPEC's purpose

Since OPEC, which produces a third of global oil, was set up 55 years ago, the purpose of its existence was to set production targets to try to influence global prices. It has weathered internal strife and conflict before, including wars between its own members - Iran and Iraq in the 1980s, and Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in the 1990s. But the present Sunni-Shia conflicts setting Saudi Arabia and Iran at each other's throats, particularly in Syria and Yemen, make the relationship between the two OPEC powers even more fraught.

"The fact that Iranian-backed Houthis militants are squaring off against Saudi-led troops in Yemen is not helpful, as increased Iranian oil revenues are likely to find their way to Iranian military interests in Yemen, Iraq and Syria," said Aberdeen Asset Management's investment strategist Robert Minter. Hence OPEC is setting up for a showdown at the coral, he added, as Iran wants its pre-sanction market share back, and the Gulf states are not inclined to cede volume when they are already feeling the budgetary pain of reduced prices.

Confusion Emerges

Unlike OPEC's previous meeting six months ago, when oil prices showed signs of stabilizing near a tolerable \$65 a barrel, last week's meeting was bound to be more tense as an unexpectedly deep and prolonged slump has sapped their economies. All the same, on Friday morning, most delegates and experts anticipated a relatively straightforward meeting that would bless the free-market policy and rubber-stamp a production ceiling. The only likely change, so it seemed, might be raising the figure to 31.5 million bpd to reflect current output rates, rather than the long-exceeded 30 million

bpd last reset four years ago.

After all, despite the price pain, there were signs that the dramatic strategy masterminded a year ago by Saudi oil minister Ali Al-Naimi was working, albeit more slowly than hoped. Booming US oil production has shifted into reverse, while the world's demand for oil has revved into a higher gear. The first sign of confusion emerged more than 3 hours into the meeting as ministers broke for lunch.

Word leaked that the group had indeed agreed to raise its ceiling to 31.5 million bpd - but it was unclear whether the figure included Indonesia, which was rejoining the group after a hiatus, leaving a 0.9 million bpd margin of error. Although the ceiling increase would have no material effect on actual production, the news sent oil prices tumbling by as much as \$1 a barrel, pushing US crude back below \$40 a barrel, a response that was unlikely to have heartened ministers.

About Face

At this point many expected the meeting to adjourn quickly, as it had six months earlier. Instead, behind closed doors, officials continued to talk. More than 2 hours passed before stoney-faced ministers emerged, many heading quickly, and without comment, to the airport. What fully transpired during that afternoon remains unclear. But several OPEC sources said ultimately a decision was reached that having no ceiling at all would be less negative for oil prices than having a higher ceiling.

There appears to have been little if any debate about Iran's production, although it has been clear for months that it will likely be the biggest challenge they face in 2016. "We spent two minutes on that issue. You can't stop a sovereign country from coming back to the market. So, debating it is irrelevant," said Nigerian oil minister Emmanuel Ibe Kachikwu. "As a matter of fact, our position is that Iran would displace somebody who is not an OPEC member." "From Saudi perspective, they have no allies. So staying the course makes sense for the Saudis," said veteran OPEC watcher Gary Ross, founder of Pira Energy thinktank. —Reuters

OBAMA OFFERS REASSURANCE, LITTLE POLICY

By Kathleen Hennessey

There were no new policy prescriptions, no fresh military strategies and no timeliness. When President Barack Obama seized the spotlight for a rare prime time address Sunday night, he came with one major message: It's going to be OK. Standing in the Oval Office, Obama sought to calm nerves and quiet a chorus of critics who charge the president has been too slow to acknowledge the threat posed by Islamic radicalism and too tepid in his response. "The threat from terrorism is real, but we will overcome it. We will destroy ISIL and any other organization that tries to harm us," he said, using an alternative acronym for the Islamic State group. "... We will prevail by being strong and smart, resilient and relentless. And by drawing upon every aspect of American power."

Obama's short address - just 13 minutes - underscored the simple message, one that seemed to conflict with the iconic, high-profile setting. Obama has used the Oval Office as a backdrop, a favorite of past presidents, just three times since taking office seven years ago. But the lack of new policies underscores the White House's confidence in the current approach and a paucity of good alternatives. Obama is disinclined to make dramatic changes in reaction to current climate of fear. One senior administration official, who asked for anonymity to discuss strategy, said the speech was primarily aimed at explaining the president's current plan to ordinary Americans who've been rattled by the rash of attacks in Paris, the Sinai Peninsula and, most recently, San Bernardino.

Obama spoke four days after that deadly massacre - and 48 hours after the FBI first described the case as a terrorism investigation. The delay led Republicans to charge him with failing to acknowledge the attack

on his watch, a criticism Obama answered clearly on Sunday. "This was an act of terrorism designed to kill innocent people," he said. Despite the rash of violence, Obama argued his strategy is appropriate for what he dubbed a "new phase" of terrorism. He argued the US is successfully targeting IS leaders, infrastructure and financing, while

told MSNBC's "Morning Joe" that the president should have outlined a "strategy that was much more comprehensive" and been more persuasive "that we're at war with Islamic radical terrorism". The president's most specific policy announcement was to order a review of the fiancee visa program that the female shooter in California used to

underway against IS in Iraq and Syria and to approve legislation to keep people on the "no-fly list" from buying guns. "What we can do, and must do, is make it harder for them to kill," he said. Obama's gun push has no chance of passing a Republican-led Congress. The Senate last week rejected legislation barring people suspected by the government of being violent extremists from purchasing firearms. Gun-rights advocates say such a ban would violate the rights of people who haven't been convicted of crimes.

Sen Marco Rubio dismissed Obama's remarks as "silliness". "I think not only did the president not make things better tonight, I fear he may have made things worse in the minds of many Americans," Rubio said. "This is not a time for ideological silliness, this is a time for serious action because the future security of our country is at stake."

But Congress and the presidential candidates haven't coalesced behind an alternative. Lawmakers have refused to formally authorize use of force against IS. Obama repeated his long-standing opposition to an American-led ground war in the Middle East and made no mention of the more aggressive action others have suggested, including enforcing a no-fly zone and safe corridors in Syria. He notably called on Muslim leaders to confront extremist ideology "without excuse."

But Obama's speech was not intended as a policy debate. Instead, it sought to draw the nation's eyes to the problem of terror and reassure Americans he has a plan for addressing the chief foreign policy crisis of his presidency - however briefly. He dashed from the Oval Office to change from his suit to a tuxedo. Just 18 minutes after his address, Obama slipped into the rear seat of his armored limousine and he was off to a night of festivities at the Kennedy Center. —AP



US President Barack Obama addresses the nation from the Oval Office at the White House in Washington on Sunday. —AFP

Western allies are contributing more to the fight. The effort to train and equip Iraqi and Syrian forces will continue, he said. Meanwhile, diplomatic efforts to forge a cease-fire in the Syrian civil war are making slow progress, Obama said.

Critics

But Obama's address failed to quiet his critics. GOP presidential candidate Jeb Bush

enter the US Obama said he would urge private companies and law enforcement leaders to work together to ensure potential attackers can't use technology to evade detection. But he did not call for legislation to curb the use of encryption, a tool some law enforcement authorities have long sought.

The president also called on Congress to pass new authorization for military actions

Focus

AUNT-AND-NIECE PAIR LEAD FN INTO DOMINANT TERRITORY

By Bertrand Pinon

One is a pragmatist: A 47-year-old lawyer by training who has steered France's far-right National Front (FN) from pariah status to mainstream. The other is an ideologue: Her 25-year-old niece, a photogenic Roman Catholic traditionalist with a stance on abortion, homosexuality and Islam that critics say is dangerous or sectarian. On Sunday, Marine Le Pen and Marion Marechal-Le Pen - respectively the daughter and grand-daughter of the FN's firebrand founder, Jean-Marie Le Pen - established themselves as major players in France's political landscape.

The first round of regional elections placed the FN on track to break the grip of Socialists and conservatives, cementing the party's grassroots' rise across the country. In the Nord-Pas-de-Calais, a rustbelt bastion of the Socialists who rule at national level, final estimates gave Le Pen more than 40 percent of the first-round vote. Victory in the second round on Dec 13 would give her a springboard for her bid to be president in 2017.

Marechal-Le Pen, meanwhile, also scored above 40 percent in final estimates for the vast Provence-Alpes-Cote-d'Azur (PACA) region in the south, placing her on course for a landmark win next week. Both women, however, face an uphill battle to clinch the run-off vote after the Socialist Party withdrew candidates in the key regions and called on its supporters to back conservative rivals. But Marechal-Le Pen seemed unfazed, taking to Twitter to thank voters. "Merci!" she wrote, before adding: "We're ready!"

Thrust Into Limelight

Marine Le Pen was never supposed to inherit the party from father, who rocked the establishment by reaching the second round of the presidential election in 2002 at the expense of Socialist Lionel Jospin. It was Marine's older sister, Marie-Caroline, who had been groomed to take over the helm. But the FN's brutal internal politics and family splits saw Marine propelled into the limelight instead. She took over the reins in 2011 and swiftly set about giving the FN "a different image to the stereotype" that opponents painted as visceral and xenophobic.

She sought to purge the worst of the anti-Semitic elements as well as the fundamentalist Catholics who for three decades had been one of the main strands of the party leadership. Her makeover was hit by a very public rebellion within her own family. Her father, now 87, was clearly unhappy with the direction in which she was taking the party and sought to undermine her with a string of anti-Semitic diatribes. It led to Le Pen senior being thrown out of the party he founded in the middle of 2015. He and his daughter are said not to have spoken since.

But with the Nov 13 attacks in Paris, his daughter was able to turn attention away from the family soap opera and declare that the Western world had "no choice but to win the war" against the attackers from the Islamic State group. "If we fail, Islamist totalitarianism will take power in our country," she said.

Young Mother

Many observers believe it is her niece Marion who is the real ideological heir of Jean-Marie Le Pen, and better placed at a time of crisis to woo electors worried about the nation's future. She stood - unsuccessfully - for regional elections in 2010 and famously cracked when a reporter asked her to outline policy areas she wanted to address, unable to provide a single example. But since becoming an MP, and a mother for the first time, Marion has gone through an astonishing transformation, building a growing following among young radicals and older party supporters disgruntled with her aunt's apparent moderation.

She had no qualms in standing up in the lower house, the National Assembly, and accusing a visibly furious Prime Minister Manuel Valls of "moronic contempt" towards the FN. She also joined the ranks of anti-gay marriage protesters in 2013 when Marine decided to stay away. Last month, she also demanded an end to state subsidies for family-planning associations, "which today are peddling abortion as something that's run-of-the-mill."

And last week, she raised a storm when, in Toulon, a Mediterranean city with a large number of citizens of Arab descent, she said Muslims could only be French "if they follow customs and a lifestyle that has been shaped by Greek and Roman influence and 16 centuries of Christianity". "We are not a land of Islam," she said. "In our country, we don't wear djellaba clothing, we don't wear a veil and we don't impose cathedral-sized mosques." —AFP

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TUILAGI EXTENDS LEICESTER CONTRACT

LONDON: England centre Manu Tuilagi has ended speculation about his future by becoming the latest of their players to sign a new contract with Leicester, the club said yesterday. The 24-year-old could have become a free agent at the end of this campaign, but after spending his whole career at the club said he was "very happy" to remain at Welford Road, although details of the contract have yet to be revealed. "The Tigers has been a big part of my life and following my brothers into the team here was a very proud moment for me," Tuilagi told the Tigers website. "It is a great club and I'm very settled here. The club and the supporters have been very good to me." The way the team has been playing this season is very exciting with Aaron Mauger as head coach and that is another reason I'm looking forward to getting back out on the pitch in Tigers colours." Leicester's director of rugby Richard Cockerill was relieved his star player had resisted chances to join rivals Wasps and Saracens. "Manu is a world-class talent and we are delighted that he sees his future with us. We always wanted him to stay," Cockerill told the club website.

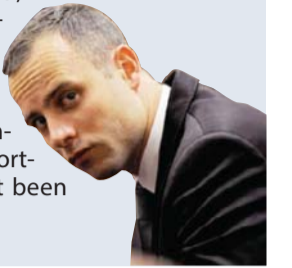


NISSAN, INFINITI, RED BULL DISCONTINUE PARTNERSHIP

DUBAI: Nissan, Infiniti and the Red Bull Racing Formula One team have reached mutual agreements to discontinue the partnership between the two automotive brands and the Formula One team at the end of December this year. In particular, the agreements entail the following two key components: * Infiniti and Red Bull Racing will discontinue their commercial partnership at the end of the 2015 season, one year earlier than originally stipulated. * Nissan will not provide light commercial vans to Red Bull Racing anymore. The partnership between Infiniti, Nissan and Red Bull Racing has been one of the most successful ones in recent years. The team won four consecutive Formula One constructor and driver world championship titles between 2010 and 2013. Infiniti and Red Bull Racing started their commercial partnership in 2011 before Infiniti became the title sponsor of the team in 2013.

PISTORIUS BACK IN COURT FOR HEARING

PRETORIA: Oscar Pistorius is set to appear in court today for a bail hearing that could send him back to jail after he was convicted of murder on appeal for shooting dead his girlfriend, South African officials said. The Supreme Court of Appeal last week threw out his earlier conviction on the lesser charge of culpable homicide for killing Reeva Steenkamp in the early hours of Valentine's Day, 2013. Pistorius, 29, is under house arrest in Pretoria after serving one year of his five-year prison sentence for culpable homicide—the equivalent of manslaughter. "It's a bail application. His (earlier) conviction has been overturned, so his sentence from before has been scrapped," Lusanda Ntuli, spokeswoman for the justice ministry, told AFP yesterday. "The defence and prosecution will present their arguments." The double-amputee athlete known as the "Blade Runner" now faces a minimum 15-year jail sentence for murder, although the term could be shorter if he is released on parole. No date has yet been announced for his sentencing. —AFP



RENAULT TO PAY LOTUS DEBTS BY END OF YEAR

LONDON: French carmaker Renault aims to complete its takeover of the Lotus Formula One team on Dec. 16 and pay creditors, including Britain's tax authorities, by the end of the year, the High Court heard yesterday. All parties in a protracted case brought against struggling Lotus by the Revenue and Customs authority over unpaid tax, with other creditors also represented, agreed to a further adjournment to Dec. 21. "We are in a different territory now," a lawyer for the team told the court. "You got away with it...or rather, it has been got away with," commented the judge, Mr Justice Birss, after hearing none of the creditors objected to the adjournment that he said was clearly in the best interests of all parties. The alternative would have been to put Lotus into administration.

Renault, currently an engine supplier to former world champions Red Bull, announced last week they would be returning to Formula One as a full constructor by taking a controlling stake in Lotus.

Lotus, formerly owned by Renault before a race-fixing scandal broke in 2009, have limped to the finish line this season with current owners, Luxembourg-based Genii,

injecting only enough cash to keep the team alive. Bailiffs impounded their cars after the Belgian Grand Prix in August and the team were denied access to the paddock hospitality in Japan due to unpaid bills.

Lotus chief executive Matthew Carter, who attended the hearing, said the remaining matters were merely procedural. "It's the 16th for the SPA (share purchase agreement) and they (Renault) are agreeing to pay all the creditors by the 31st," he told Reuters outside the courtroom. "So I guess when we come back on the 21st it will be to ensure that the SPA has been signed. "It's been an interesting process all the way through but we are where we are," said Carter who said his own future with the team had yet to be decided.

Genii Capital chairman and current Lotus principal Gerard Lopez told Reuters at the season-ending race in Abu Dhabi last month that he would retain a shareholding in the team. "Everyone's time and effort has been focused on getting this across the line and now I guess we take stock of the situation and decide which way Renault want to jump," said Carter. "We'll see how Renault want to run things and what their plans are." —Reuters



Andrea Pirlo



Jens Lehmann

KUWAIT CHAMPIONS CHALLENGE ANNOUNCES MORE SOCCER STARS

KUWAIT: Kuwait Champions Challenge yesterday announced Jamie Carragher, Andrea Pirlo and Jens Lehmann as part of the Football Champions Tour team to play against a Kuwaiti all-star team on Friday, December 18 at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium in Kuwait.

Ronaldinho, Scholes, Pires, Puyol, Zambrotta, Del Piero, Figo, Salgado, Shevchenko, Nesta Deco, James, Gerrard and Aboutrika were already announced as part of the Football Champions Tour team.

The Football Champions Tour team will be managed by Carlo Ancelotti, the only manager to have won the UEFA Champions League three times and reached four finals, regarded as one of the best most successful managers of all time.

The Football Champions Tour team will play against a team of Kuwaiti all-star players who will be chosen by the people in Kuwait themselves. Votes for players joining the Kuwaiti all-star team opened on December 1, 2015 and will continue until December 7. The Kuwaiti all-star team will be announced today. The team will be managed by renowned Kuwaiti coach, Mohammed Ibrahim.

The referee of the Kuwait Champions Challenge will be Pierluigi Collina, the Italian football referee widely considered the best referee of his generation, having been named FIFA's "Best Referee of the Year" six consecutive times.

Meanwhile, Deputy Director General for Sports Affairs at Public Sports Authority Dr Humoud Fulaiteh said we are looking forward to a distinguished celebration for Jaber Stadium, that will attract the attention of the world through the presence of elite group of world stars in Kuwait the land of friendship and peace.

Dr Fulaiteh said 40 satellite channels will carry this unique and historical event to be held at Jaber Stadium. He said the stadium is now ready



Dr Humoud Fulaiteh

to host the various soccer tournament be it continental, Arab, Gulf or local. He said the stadium is approved by FIFA since 2010.

He said Kuwaiti fans have the right to be proud of this sports monument which is considered a piece of art designed according to the best world specifications. He added that the stadium is considered a sports facility for the state, as its maintenance and technical management is that of the Sports Public Authority, and an annual budget has been allocated for that purpose.

He said the stadium faced some obstacles in past years, but those have been resolved com-

pletely, and thank all areas and government institutions and companies that contributed in supporting the situation and organization of the celebration, including the Amiri Diwan, Council of Ministers, Interior Ministry, National Guard, Information, Health and Public Works in addition to the media and local press.

The football challenge will be preceded by an opening ceremony, including a concert bringing Kuwaiti and Arab singers together to perform for over 60 thousand spectators at the Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium. The ceremony will also include a fireworks show.



CBK SPONSORS GOLF TOURNEY FOR SECOND YEAR

KUWAIT: Within its activities in community service and those designed to boost sports awareness amongst various communal sects, The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) recently sponsored the golf championship organized by the Sahara Resort and Courts.

In this regard, CBK's CEO, Elham Yusry Mahfouz honored the winners distributing special awards presented by CBK.

She also pointed out that this championship was a substantial addition to local golf competitions and that it would help promote the game in Kuwait. On her part, CBK's assistant general manager, for PR and media affairs, Amani Al-Wer' said that CBK was keen on sponsoring the championship out of its keenness on supporting various sports and social activities.

BULGARIA HOPING GAMES BAN ON LIFTERS IS OVERTURNED

SOBIA: The Bulgarian weightlifting federation's lawyer is optimistic a doping ban will be overturned in time for its lifters to compete at next year's Olympics. "Bulgaria's chances of participating in the Olympics are very good because this punishment contradicts existing International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) regulations," lawyer Boris Kolev told Reuters on Monday. Last month the IWF said Bulgaria's lifters would not be eligible for the 2016 Olympics following a string of doping cases.

The Balkan country appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) and Kolev said the final decision from the Swiss organisation was expected in January. Eight male lifters, including three European champions, and three female lifters, tested positive for the banned anabolic steroid stanozolol during a training camp in Tbilisi, Georgia in March.

Asen Muradov, Ferdi Nazif, Vladimir Urmov, Stoyan Enev, Deyan Minchev plus female lifters Nadezhda-Mey Tuy Nguen and Maya Ivanova were suspended for nine

months. Former European champion Demir Demirev, 2014 European champions Ivan Markov and Ivaylo Filev, and female lifter Milka Maneva were banned for 18 months as they had already been suspended for doping.

Bulgaria found it tough to find suitable replacements for the banned lifters but still competed at the world championship in Houston last month and finished 21st in the team standings. The country will have three spots for the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro if the ban is overturned. "We have three quota places and we expect to be there," Kolev said. Bulgarian weightlifting has suffered repeated embarrassment due to doping cases and the national organisation was temporarily stripped of its licence in 2009. A year earlier the country withdrew its team for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing because of 11 failed doping checks. Bulgaria's reputation was also tarnished at the 2000 Olympics in Sydney where the team were stripped of three gold medals and sent home in shame following positive drug tests. —Reuters



SUKABUMI: Teams from Brazil (L), New Zealand (C front), the Czech Republic (R) and Argentina (back) compete during the men's open World Rafting Championship in the Citarik river in Sukabumi, western Java island yesterday. — AFP

WESTWOOD, POULTER PICKED FOR EURASIA CUP

KUALA LUMPUR: European captain Darren Clarke added some formidable match-play experience to his EurAsia Cup line-up yesterday when he named Ryder Cup veterans Ian Poulter and Lee Westwood as his captain's picks. The announcement rounds out the 12-man European squad for the January 15-17 team event in Malaysia that already had seen young guns such as England's Danny Willett and Frenchman Victor

Dubuisson qualify on merit. "We have a very young and exciting team heading to Malaysia in January, and to add the vast experience of Ian and Lee into the mix gives us a very strong and balanced side as we look to take the EurAsia Cup trophy back to Europe," Clarke said. The European side also includes Englishmen Ross Fisher, Chris Wood, Matthew Fitzpatrick and Andy Sullivan,

Ireland's Shane Lowry, Bernd Wiesberger of Austria, Denmark's Soren Kjeldsen and Swede Kristoffer Broberg. None of them, however, have the match-play experience of Poulter and Westwood, who have a combined 14 Ryder Cup appearances. Poulter, in particular, is noted for his ability to deliver in the Ryder Cup, sparking the stirring "Miracle at Medinah" European comeback in the 2012 edition. Clarke, who also will lead Europe in

next year's Ryder Cup, called Poulter and Westwood "two of the most fearsome match players in the game." The two Englishmen both said they were relishing the opportunity. "Playing for my teammates, captain and the continent of Europe brings a different level of intensity to golf for me and I can't wait to feel that buzz again," Poulter said. Westwood, who plays well in Kuala Lumpur's heat and humidity, winning the

Malaysian Open twice, said he and Poulter "will definitely bring a lot of experience to the team room." The Europeans will face an Asian team captained by Jeev Milkha Singh of India, which will be unveiled on December 15. Europe and Asia will both be trying to win the EurAsia Cup for the first time after the inaugural edition in 2014, also at Glenmarie Golf and Country Club, ended in a 10-10 draw. — AFP

AFTER SUPER BOWLS ELSEWHERE, GOLDSON, VETS LEAD REDSKINS

ASHBURN: After seeing their team unravel following a disputed penalty call in a 28-point loss, a couple of veterans on the Washington Redskins - safety Dashon Goldson, nose tackle Terrace "Pot Roast" Knighton - decided that a players-only meeting would be a good idea. On the night before their next game, Goldson told all of his teammates to stick around after the coaches cleared out of the room. He spoke up. So did Knighton. Another defensive lineman, Ricky Jean Francois, did, too. The message? "To believe in what we've got," Goldson said. "We've got the talent here. It's just the mindset." Heading into tonight against the visiting Dallas Cowboys, the Redskins were only 5-6, but they were alone in first place and full of confident talk about how they can win the NFC East to make the playoffs. That players in their first season with the Redskins would take charge of trying to put them on the right path speaks to the way new general manager Scot McCloughan set about rebuilding the team.

"Those guys are leaders. And you just look at what they've done - there's a reason the team brought them in. Obviously they can play football, too. But if there are older guys still around in the NFL, it's usually because of their leadership and what they can show by example. And they can talk about it, too, and back up what they say," full-back Darrel Young said. "Those guys are our leaders and we're going to follow them."

That's not to say other recent editions of the Redskins did not have folks with leadership abilities. Young pointed out, mentioning former players such as London Fletcher and Santana Moss. The current crop just has "different voices," Young explained. And none is shy about expressing himself. "If we feel that guys are being cancers ... we're definitely going to expose them and get them out of here," Knighton said.

Huge difference

Goldson (acquired in a trade) is in his ninth NFL season. Knighton (free agent) and Jean Francois (free agent)

are both in their seventh season. All three were with winning clubs in the past. All three played in a Super Bowl (Goldson and Jean Francois with the San Francisco 49ers; Knighton with the Denver Broncos).

So they know what it's like to have success, something the Redskins are not familiar with lately: six last-place finishes in the past seven years.

"It's made a huge difference, just as far as the young guys being able to turn to veteran guys," 12th-year cornerback DeAngelo Hall said. "These guys ... have come from places that have had a lot of success," Hall said. "Anytime you get a guy who's come from somewhere with some success, it kind of resonates a little more than just a guy who's just talking and hadn't had that much success or hadn't played in big games." The Redskins' new leaders decided something needed to be done after seeing the way Washington fell apart in a 44-16 loss at Carolina in Week 11, a game that was tied when Redskins cornerback Chris Culliver's apparent interception return for a touchdown was wiped out by a penalty.

That reversal "deflated the team," Knighton said. "Those type of teams don't make the playoffs and those type of teams don't win, so we had to decide what type of team we're going to be. The good teams would have responded after that play."

Goldson, in particular, earns praise around the locker room for being a key addition off the field. He was voted captain of the defense, and takes that role seriously.

He doesn't limit himself to trying to lead his unit, either. Goldson prodded quarterback Kirk Cousins to be more of a visible and vocal leader - the point being that a team's QB needs to play that sort of prominent role. "When something needs to be said and everyone is kind of saying 'Oh, gosh, should I say something?' he is that guy that says it and it's always the right thing," defensive coordinator Joe Barry said. "Whether it's something encouraging, whether it's something motivational, whether it's something that he has to put an arm around a guy or get in a guy's face ... he does a phenomenal job." — AP



NASSAU: Bubba Watson, right, stands next to Hero Motorcycle Co. executive Pawan Munjal, center, and Tiger Woods, left, as they pose behind the Hero World Challenge trophy in Nassau, Bahamas, Sunday. Watson, the winner of the Hero World Challenge by 3 shots, was never seriously challenged at Albany Golf Club and sailed home to a 6-under 66 for a three-shot victory over Patrick Reed. — AP

WATSON WINS WORLD CHALLENGE BY 3 SHOTS

NASSAU: A few years after Bubba Watson made it onto the PGA Tour, he started waking up early to play practice rounds with Tiger Woods. He didn't ask a lot of questions of the world's No. 1 player who already had 14 majors when he was 32.

"I learn by watching and listening," Watson said. "So I just watched. How would you not want to learn from the best player of our generation?" Woods, the tournament host, was watching Sunday as Watson delivered a performance that looked familiar in its efficiency. Staked to a two-shot lead going into the final round, Watson made four birdies in seven holes and was never seriously challenged. He sailed home to a 6-under 66 and a three-shot victory over Patrick Reed at Albany Golf Club in the Hero World Challenge. Watson wasn't even planning to play this week. He turned down his invitation a few months ago because he didn't have a passport for his newly adopted daughter, Dakota. But when PGA champion Jason Day backed out to stay home with his newborn daughter, Watson's wife was able to expedite all the right documents for the family to come over to the Bahamas. He left with a \$1 million payoff and a firm grasp on No. 4 in the world the rest of the year. "I guess I've got to thank Jason Day for backing out. I have to thank the US government and passport office for getting Dakota a passport so we could be here," Watson said. "For us, it's a good ride, a fun ride." Even if it didn't feel easy to him, it sure looked that

way. Watson didn't make a bogey all weekend until the final hole, when he jokingly asked NBC field reporter Notah Begay how many shots he needed to win. He played it safe and made bogey, and all that cost him was the tournament record. Watson finished at 25-under 263, one shot from Jordan Spieth's record last year at Isleworth.

Team effort

Reed also had a 66 to finish alone in second, moving him to No. 10 in the world for the first time. Rickie Fowler had a 64 to finish third. Spieth tried to stay in range and was three shots behind until he missed a 4-foot birdie putt on the ninth hole and never converted many chances after that. He ended his year with a 67, and walking up the 18th, he and caddie Michael Greller allowed for a quick reflection.

"Michael said, 'Hey, man, it's been an honor to be in the passenger seat, sitting shotgun for this ride. Thanks for everything,'" Spieth said. "I obviously thanked him. It's been a team effort this year, just as we always stress. But yeah, there was certainly a sigh of relief." The Masters and US Open champion strengthened his grip on No. 1 in the world, and headed off to a three-week vacation before going out to Maui for the first tournament of what figures to be a tough encore. First up: A trip to Augusta National this weekend to play with his father. Watson's year is not finished. He was headed to

New York on Sunday night to catch a flight to Asia for the Thailand Open. The two-time Masters champion already had a two-week trip away from his family, and he didn't want to do that again. So when there was uncertainty about getting his daughter a passport for the Bahamas, he decided he would stay home this week and asked the tournament to let him know if anyone pulled out.

Day withdrew, Watson's wife spent eight hours in an Arizona office trying to get all the paperwork and they were on their way. Watson seized control with seven birdies and an eagle on Saturday in ideal weather for a two-shot lead over Paul Casey, and he started fast with birdies on the second and third holes to keep his distance. No one got closer than two shots all day, and as Fowler made a move with a 30 on the front nine, Watson answered with two straight birdies to start the back nine, and then it was a matter of finishing. Justin Rose, who lives at Albany and has lingered at the bottom of the leaderboard all week, set the course record with a 62. For Watson, the next step is to be a more consistent winner. This was the ninth victory worldwide in his career, and the second straight year he has won multiple times. "I want my name to be close to that leaderboard every tournament, every year, so people are always talking about Bubba Watson, about how consistent he is and good he is," Watson said. "That's my whole focus right now, every year getting better and better." — AP

BLACKHAWKS BEAT JETS 3-1, KANE EXTENDS POINT STREAK

CHICAGO: Teuvo Teravainen scored from a sharp angle 21 seconds into the third period to snap a tie, and Marian Hossa had a goal and an assist as the Chicago Blackhawks defeated the Winnipeg Jets 3-1 on Sunday to end a three-game losing streak. Chicago right wing Patrick Kane assisted on Artemi Panarin's empty-net goal with 1:46 left to extend his point streak to 22 games, breaking Bobby Hull's team record. Kane has a goal or assist in 25 of the Blackhawks' 27 games this season. Teravainen broke a 10-game goal drought when he fooled Michael Hutchinson with a quick shot from the right circle. Winnipeg's Chris Thorburn had a goal that was awarded after a delayed video review. Chicago's Corey Crawford made 30 saves. Hutchinson blocked 29 shots but lost for the first time in regulation to the Blackhawks (4-1-1).

KINGS 3, LIGHTNING 1

Andy Andreoff, Brayden McNabb and Milan Lucic scored to lead Los Angeles past Tampa Bay. Jonathan Quick stopped 24 shots to help the Kings win their sixth consecutive home game. They have won 11 of their last 13 at Staples Center. Brian Boyle scored for Tampa Bay, which got eight saves from Andrei Vasilevskiy and 17 from Ben Bishop off the bench. Vasilevskiy started in place of Bishop, who left Saturday night's game at San Jose after accidentally being poked in the eye by an errant stick. After Boyle tied the game 27 seconds into the second period, McNabb put the Kings back in front 12 seconds later on a soft goal, prompting Lightning coach Jon Cooper to turn to Bishop.

DUCKS 2, PENGUINS 1

Chris Stewart had the go-ahead goal in the second period. Corey Perry also scored and Anaheim overcame a disallowed goal to beat Pittsburgh. John Gibson made 23 saves in his sixth straight start, a stretch that included shutouts against Vancouver and San Jose. The Ducks are 10-5-2 after a 1-7-2 start. The three-time defending Pacific Division champions have won consecutive games for the first time since beating San Jose on Nov. 7 for their fourth straight victory. Olli Maatta scored for Pittsburgh, and Marc-Andre Fleury stopped 23 shots. The Penguins are 5-5-2 following a 9-1 stretch.

RANGERS 4, SENATORS 1

Derick Brassard scored twice and Henrik

Lundqvist stopped 23 shots to lead New York over Ottawa. Ryan McDonagh and Jesper Fast also scored to help the Rangers snap a two-game skid and win for the second time in seven games (2-4-1). Marc Methot scored for Ottawa, and Craig Anderson finished with 27 saves. The Senators snapped a two-game win streak and lost for the third time in five games.

HURRICANES 5, COYOTES 4

Justin Faulk scored a power-play goal with 17 seconds left to give Carolina a victory over Arizona. Faulk, tied for the NHL lead with nine goals on the man advantage, sent a shot from near the blue line past Coyotes goalie Anders Lindback after Martin Hanzal took a penalty with 2:15 left. Antoine Vermette's power-play goal with 6 1/2 minutes remaining gave the Coyotes a 4-3 lead, but Ron Hainsey scored 1:57 later for Carolina. Eric Staal had a goal and an assist, and Kris Versteeg and Jay McClement also scored for the Hurricanes. Cam Ward made 19 saves. Stefan Elliott had a goal and an assist for the Coyotes, and Tobias Rieder and Nicklas Grossmann also scored. Lindback finished with 13 saves as Arizona lost its fourth straight.

Each time Arizona scored, the Hurricanes came back with a goal less than 2 minutes later.

OILERS 4, SABRES 2

Taylor Hall and Teddy Purcell each had a goal and an assist to help Edmonton beat Buffalo for its third straight win. Jordan Eberle and Luke Gazdic also scored for the Oilers, who have won four of five. Anders Nilsson had 32 saves. Jack Eichel and Ryan O'Reilly scored for the Sabres. Chad Johnson stopped 24 shots.

DEVILS 4, PANTHERS 2

Lee Stempniak and Kyle Palmieri scored first-period goals, and Cory Schneider made 34 saves as New Jersey cooled off Florida. Adam Henrique and Mike Cammalleri also scored to help the Devils win for the first time in their last five home games (1-2-2). Schneider stopped Jonathan Huberdeau's penalty shot. Aaron Ekblad and Huberdeau scored for the Panthers, who had won five straight overall and a club record-tying five in a row on the road. Jaromir Jagr had two assists in his first game at the Prudential Center since the February trade that sent him from New Jersey to Florida. — AP



NEW YORK: Erik Karlsson #65 of the Ottawa Senators and Rick Nash #61 of the New York Rangers hit the ice during the first period at Madison Square Garden on Sunday in New York City. The Rangers defeated the Senators 4-1. — AFP

NHL results/standings

Carolina 5, Arizona 4; Chicago 3, Winnipeg 1; New Jersey 4, Florida 2; NY Rangers 4, Ottawa 1; Edmonton 4, Buffalo 2; Anaheim 2, Pittsburgh 1; Los Angeles 3, Tampa Bay 1.

Western Conference					Eastern Conference						
Central Division					Atlantic Division						
W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS	W	L	OTL	PTS		
Dallas	20	5	2	93	70	42	Montreal	19	6	3	94
St. Louis	15	8	4	68	67	34					
Minnesota	14	7	4	69	62	32					
Chicago	14	9	4	74	69	32					
Nashville	13	8	5	69	69	31					
Winnipeg	13	13	2	76	85	28					
Colorado	11	15	1	75	80	23					
Los Angeles	17	8	1	68	55	35					
San Jose	14	12	0	70	68	28					
Arizona	13	13	1	74	85	27					
Anaheim	11	12	5	55	68	27					
Vancouver	9	11	8	72	79	26					
Edmonton	11	15	2	71	82	24					
Calgary	10	14	2	65	94	22					
Detroit	15	8	4	71	69	34					
Ottawa	14	8	5	86	81	33					
Boston	14	8	3	83	72	31					
Florida	13	10	4	69	66	30					
Tampa Bay	13	12	3	66	65	29					
Buffalo	11	13	3	65	73	25					
Toronto	9	13	5	61	74	23					
Metropolitan Division											
NY Rangers	18	7	3	80	58	39					
Washington	18	5	2	79	55	38					
NY Islanders	15	8	5	78	67	35					
New Jersey	14	10	3	69	66	31					
Pittsburgh	14	10	2	61	62	30					
Philadelphia	11	11	5	54	74	27					
Carolina	10	13	4	59	81	24					
Columbus	11	16	1	66	81	23					

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



NEW DELHI: Indian test cricket team members pose with the Freedom Trophy after India won their third Test match against South Africa on the fifth day of the fourth test match in New Delhi, India, yesterday. India won the Test series 3-0 after the second Test match was drawn. — AP

INDIA OVERCOME DEFIANT S AFRICA FOR CRUSHING WIN

NEW DELHI: India overcame gritty resistance from South Africa's batsmen to win the fourth and final Test by a massive 337 runs in New Delhi yesterday and seal the series 3-0. India had to work hard for victory after the world number one side resorted to hours of

stubborn defensive batting, scoring at barely a run an over, in the hope of salvaging a draw. But their plans were dashed by the equally determined Indian bowlers led by off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, whose 5-61 in the second innings saw him finish the series with a

total of 31 wickets. Paceman Umesh Yadav chipped in with three wickets as South Africa were bowled out for 143 soon after tea, after being set a massive target of 481. "All wins are special but this one more so because we had to work harder for it," said Indian captain Virat Kohli. "The South African batsmen put their heads down and were playing for a draw. "We were surprised by how they were defending (but) our bowlers did not lose patience. They can be really proud of their effort today." India went into the final Test with a 2-0 lead, having already won the first and third matches. The rain-hit second game ended in a draw. India declared on 267-5 after making 334 in their first outing, thanks to man of the match Ajinkya Rahane who hit centuries in each innings. South Africa had folded for 121 in their first knock.

The Proteas fought bravely in the first two sessions Monday but their innings unravelled soon after tea, as they lost their last five wickets inside 5.1 overs. The win helped India climb two places to second in the world Test rankings.

ULTRA-DEFENSIVE BATTING

AB de Villiers (43 off 297 balls) and skipper Hashim Amla (25) stonewalled the attack during their marathon innings but some of the other batsmen caved in without making much effort.

"You got to do what is best for the team," said Amla. "It is easy to go out there and get some runs but we tried to take it as deep as possible and get something out from this

SCOREBOARD

NEW DELHI: Scoreboard yesterday at stumps on the fifth day of the fourth and final test between India and South Africa:

India 1st Innings: 334	South Africa 1st Innings: 121	Imran Tahir not out	0
India 2nd Innings: 267-5 declared		Extras: (8b, 3lb)	11
South Africa 2nd Innings (Overnight 72-2)		TOTAL: (all out)	143
Dean Elgar c Rahane b Ashwin	4	Overs: 143.1	
Temba Bavuma b Ashwin	34	Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-49, 3-76, 4-111, 5-112, 6-136, 7-136, 8-140, 9-143, 10-143.	
Hashim Amla b Jadeja	25	Bowling: Ishant Sharma 20-12-23-0, Ravichandran Ashwin 49.1-26-61-5, Ravindra Jadeja 46-33-26-2, Umesh Yadav 21-16-9-3, Shikhar Dhawan 3-1-9-0, Murali Vijay 2-0-2-0, Virat Kohli 1-1-0-0, Cheteshwar Pujara 1-0-2-0.	
A.B. de Villiers c Jadeja b Ashwin	43	Result: India won by 337 runs.	
Faf du Plessis lbw b Jadeja	10		
Jean-Paul Duminy lbw b Ashwin	0		
Dane Vilas b Yadav	13		
Kyle Abbott b Yadav	0		
Dane Piedt c Saha b Yadav	1		
Morne Morkel b Ashwin	2		

game. "Unfortunately we were outplayed by India throughout the whole series: they batted and bowled better than us."

The series defeat was South Africa's first in nine years away from home. De Villiers, who holds the record for the fastest half-century and century in one-day cricket, anchored one end and showed remarkable resolve on a slow track that offered occasional bounce.

The batsman appeared undeterred despite taking three painful blows on his thumb against Yadav.

De Villiers was finally removed by Ashwin who had him caught at leg slip. Ravindra Jadeja (2-26) trapped Faf du Plessis (10) leg before wicket in the post-lunch session but not before he had played out 97 balls. Amla

and de Villiers had begun the day with the same dogged resolution that they showed on Sunday. Their ultra-defensive batting clearly frustrated Kohli, who even brought himself on to bowl one over.

But it was Jadeja who gave his team the key breakthrough with the new ball. The left-arm spinner made the ball drift into the right-handed Amla. He tried to defend but the ball sneaked past to hit the top of his off-stump. Amla's nearly five-hour stay at the wicket yielded just 25 runs off 244 balls, the slowest scoring rate in Tests by a batsman who has played 200 balls or more. The 27-run stand that Amla shared with de Villiers off 253 balls was the lowest among all Test partnerships involving 200 or more balls. —AFP



NEW DELHI: South Africa's AB de Villiers (R) plays a shot as India's wicketkeeper Wriddhiman Saha (L) and India's Murali Vijay (C) looks on during the fifth day of the fourth Test cricket match between India and South Africa at the Feroz Shah Kotla stadium in New Delhi yesterday. — AFP

WARRIORS ROLL OVER NETS TO REACH 22-0

NEW YORK: Stephen Curry scored 16 of his 28 points in the third quarter and the Golden State Warriors ran their NBA-record start to 22-0 by beating the Brooklyn Nets 114-98 on Sunday night. Draymond Green added 22 points, nine rebounds and seven assists. Klay Thompson scored 21 for the Warriors, who won their 26th in a row overall in the regular season, one behind the 2012-13 Miami Heat for the second-longest streak in NBA history. Coming off consecutive 40-point games, Curry was having a relatively quiet and even puzzling night - he missed his first three free throws - before helping the Warriors regain control against a team that nearly beat them this season and looked capable of finishing the job this time.

THUNDER 98, KINGS 95

Russell Westbrook had his third triple-double of the season with 19 points, 10 assists and 11 rebounds and Oklahoma City rallied late to beat Sacramento. Kevin Durant committed 10 turnovers but hit the go-ahead jumper with 23 seconds left and two free throws with 4.4 seconds left to cap a 20-point, nine-rebound outing for Oklahoma City. The Thunder won their fourth straight home game. Since the franchise moved to Oklahoma City, it is 14-0 against Sacramento in Chesapeake Energy Arena and 23-4 overall. NBA assists leader Rajon Rondo had 10 to go with

seven points for the Kings. Rudy Gay scored 20 points for Sacramento, and the Kings missed a chance to force overtime when Marco Belinelli air balled on a 3-point attempt from the corner in the final seconds.

GRIZZLIES 95, SUNS 93

Jeff Green's dunk on an alley-oop inbound pass from Courtney Lee with 0.5 seconds left gave Memphis a victory over Phoenix. The Suns' last chance to tie the game came on Eric Bledsoe's shot from the right corner. The two-point attempt was long, sending Phoenix to its fourth straight loss despite a late rally that pulled the Suns even. Marc Gasol led Memphis with 22 points. The inbound pass from Lee capped a fourth quarter in which he scored 13 of his 18 points. Mike Conley had 12 points and Mario Chalmers finished with 11. Green and Zach Randolph scored 10 points apiece. Bledsoe led the Suns with 23 points and six assists and also had seven rebounds. Brandon Knight scored 17 points and Mirza Teletovic had 14. Alex Len had 12, while Jon Leuer finished with 10 points and 11 rebounds.

MAVERICKS 116, WIZARDS 104

Wesley Matthews scored 28 of his season-high 36 points in the second half and Dallas beat Washington. He hit 10 3-pointers overall and eight in the second half. The Mavericks took

the lead early in the third quarter and pulled away in the fourth. John Wall led Washington with 28 points but injured his right leg colliding with Dallas' Jeremy Evans and was helped off the court with 1:14 left. Dirk Nowitzki had 19 points and Raymond Felton added 11 points and 10 rebounds. Deron Williams helped with 11 points, nine assists and seven rebounds. The injury-plagued Wizards dressed just 10 players for the third time in eight days.

PISTONS 111, LAKERS 91

Kentavious Caldwell-Pope scored 22 points, Andre Drummond added 18 points and 15 rebounds and Detroit beat Los Angeles in Kobe Bryant's last visit to Detroit. Reggie Jackson added 20 points as the Pistons won their fourth straight. Lou Williams scored 21 points and Julius Randle added 15 points and 11 rebounds as Los Angeles lost for the ninth time in 10 games. Bryant received a standing ovation before the game, when the arena went dark while Pistons public address announcer John Mason read off his long list of achievements, graciously skipping the loss to Detroit in the 2004 Finals. Bryant missed his first nine shots, and when he finally made one - a 3-pointer midway through the third quarter - the fans gave him his second ovation of the night and a brief "KOBÉ" chant broke out. — AP



NEW YORK: Andre Iguodala #9 of the Golden State Warriors is guarded by Bojan Bogdanovic #44 the Brooklyn Nets during the fourth quarter in an NBA basketball game at the Barclays Center in the Brooklyn borough of New York City. The Warriors defeated the Nets 114-98. — AP

NBA Results/Standings

Memphis 95, Phoenix 93; Golden State 114, Brooklyn 98; Detroit 111, LA Lakers 91; Dallas 116, Washington 104; Oklahoma City 98, Sacramento 95.

Eastern Conference				Western Conference					
Atlantic Division				Northwest Division					
W	L	PCT	GB						
Toronto	12	9	.571		Oklahoma City	12	8	.600	-
Boston	11	9	.550	0.5	Utah	9	9	.500	2
NY Knicks	10	11	.476	2	Portland	9	12	.429	3.5
Brooklyn	5	15	.250	6.5	Minnesota	8	11	.421	3.5
Philadelphia	1	20	.048	11	Denver	8	13	.381	4.5
Central Division				Pacific Division					
Cleveland	13	7	.650	-	Golden State	22	0	1.000	-
Chicago	11	6	.647	0.5	LA Clippers	11	9	.550	10
Indiana	12	7	.632	0.5	Phoenix	8	13	.381	13.5
Detroit	12	9	.571	1.5	Sacramento	7	15	.318	15
Milwaukee	8	13	.381	5.5	LA Lakers	3	17	.150	18
Southeast Division				Southwest Division					
Miami	12	6	.667	-	San Antonio	17	4	.810	-
Atlanta	13	9	.591	1	Memphis	12	9	.571	5
Charlotte	11	8	.579	1.5	Dallas	12	9	.571	5
Orlando	11	9	.550	2	Houston	10	11	.476	7
Washington	8	10	.444	4	New Orleans	5	15	.250	11.5

WARNER WANTS TO CASH IN AGAINST OUT-OF-FORM WINDIES

MELBOURNE: Australia batsman David Warner has a score to settle with the West Indies. The ultra-aggressive opener has dominated every opposition he has faced since making his Test debut four years ago, with one exception, the West Indies.

In five tests against the Caribbean side, Warner has managed just 269 runs at an average of 26.90, almost half his overall career average of 50.48. The 29-year-old now wants to make amends and cash in when the first test starts in Hobart on Thursday. "We have to come out and execute our skills as well as we can," Warner told Sky Sports when asked about his strategy. "As a batting unit we know they are going to come real hard in the first session."

Warner has been in great form in recent weeks, smash-

ing 592 runs at 98.66 in the recent three-test series against New Zealand, and Australia will go into the series as heavy favourites. The West Indies were thrashed in their lone warm-up match against a youthful and inexperienced make-up side but Warner remains wary of their pace bowlers. "We will have to be on top of our game," he said. "Don't take that as gospel how they got beat comprehensively because we know what they are like." Paceman Kemar Roach, who has long tormented Australian sides, said the tourists were unfazed that many people were dismissing their chances of winning.

"I love being the underdogs," Roach said. "If we can come out on top then it's going to be a whole different story-they will change their mouths." — Reuters

RUSSIA, QATAR SHOULD STILL HOST WORLD CUPS: BECKHAM

LONDON: Russia and Qatar should still host the 2018 and 2022 World Cups, according to David Beckham, despite being tainted by FIFA's corruption scandals he branded as "disgusting". FIFA has been in crisis since May when 14 executives were indicted as part an FBI investigation into corruption and last week 16 more officials were charged by US authorities.

FIFA president Sepp Blatter and UEFA president Michel Platini are each serving a 90-day suspension while a Swiss criminal investigation into the bids for the 2018

and 2022 World Cups in Russia and Qatar was launched earlier this year.

Beckham, who was part of the FA delegation aiming to win the 2018 bid for England, was asked whether the arrests and the prospect of a new president in 2016 meant FIFA was turning a corner.

"No - they are just hitting the bend," Beckham told the Radio Times. "There's a lot still to be done. It's such a mess that it's going to take a while to sort out. "For me to see the game, the way it's been treated and looked after, is

devastating. It's disgusting."

There have been repeated calls for the 2018 and 2022 elections to be re-run, with 16 of the 24 committee members serving at the time of the bids either already punished for misconduct or currently under investigation. The Qatar tournament in 2022 has come under particular scrutiny, given the tournament will need to be played in the winter months due to the high risk to players and fans from temperatures that can reach 50 degrees Celsius in summer.

It has been proposed that the competition will instead start in November and despite the difficulties, Beckham insists "they'll make it work". "Whether it's corrupt or not, those countries have been chosen," Beckham said. "People need to get behind that. It's all about bringing football to new countries. I think they should stick with it"

Former Manchester United and Real Madrid midfielder Beckham, an ex-England skipper and one of the best known footballers in the world, also

revealed that he "loves rugby".

"I love watching it and I love the whole thing. I have enjoyed going to Twickenham more than I have enjoyed watching football," he said. Tellingly, Beckham said he was both "devastated and relieved" when his 13-year-old son Romeo no longer wanted to play football. "The other day Romeo turned round to me and said he didn't want to play football any more. Part of me was devastated but part of me was relieved, too," he said. "He's got other passions and I like that." —AFP

JUVENTUS AIMS FOR TOP SPOT AT SEVILLA

MADRID: Italian champions Juventus are aiming to avoid Europe's elite in the Champions League last 16 by sealing top spot in Group D at Sevilla today.

Last season's finalists lead Manchester City by two points and need just a draw at the Sanchez Pizjuan to avoid the likes of Barcelona, Real Madrid and Bayern Munich in the knockout phase thanks to their better head-to-head record against the English side.

"Finishing top of the standings could give us a favourable draw in the first knockout round and for that reason we have to come back with a positive result on Tuesday night," defender Leonardo Bonucci told the club's website. "In Europe, we're perhaps not quite at the level of Barcelona, Bayern Munich and Real Madrid but, with a touch of luck, our usual discipline and a few moments of magic from our younger players, we can make our mark on the Champions League again this season."

Juventus have also surged back into form in Serie A with five consecutive wins to move back to within six points of leaders Inter Milan. Injuries to the likes of Sami Khedira forced coach Massimiliano Allegri into a 3-5-2 formation with some success in recent weeks. And the visitors will be boosted by the return of Paul Pogba from suspension in the 2-0 win over Lazio on Friday.

Allegri's toughest decision will be

whether to start Spanish international Alvaro Morata up front on his return to his homeland or stick with Argentine wonderkid Paulo Dybala after his sensational strike against Lazio. Four consecutive European defeats mean Sevilla are already out of the Champions League, but they can salvage the chance to win the Europa League for the third consecutive season with a victory allied to City beating Borussia Moenchengladbach.

Unai Emery's men have been dogged by inconsistency this season as they sit 10th in La Liga with just five wins in their first 14 games. However, two of those victories came against Real Madrid and Barcelona at home.

And Emery believes his side are capable of pulling off another upset today. "We are still lacking in many aspects even against strong teams at home," he said. "That is our job and we need to improve, but I continue to be optimistic. In what we have left (of the Champions League) there is still room for improvement."

Sevilla have injury problems of their own, particularly in defence with Benoit Tremoulinas, Marco Andreolli, Nico Pareja and Daniel Carrico set to miss out. Fernando Llorente and Vicente Iborra could be in line for a return to the starting lineup, though, as they came off the bench to combine for Sevilla's equaliser in a 1-1 draw at Deportivo la Coruna on Saturday. —AFP



PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain's Brazilian defender David Luiz (R) and Paris Saint-Germain's French head coach Laurent Blanc give a press conference on the eve of the team's UEFA Champions League football match against Shakhtar Donetsk, yesterday at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris. — AFP

UNITED, WOLFSBURG, PSV TO PLAY FOR GROUP B FINALE

PARIS: Fans look ahead to today's action in the Champions League when most of the focus is on Group B, where nothing has yet been decided going into the final round of games.

GROUP A

At Paris

Paris Saint-Germain (FRA) v Shakhtar Donetsk (UKR)

There is nothing riding on this game for PSG, who have already qualified for the last 16 and are certain to finish second in Group A behind Real Madrid. However, Shakhtar need to match or better Malmö's result in Madrid if they are to take third place and the consolation of a berth in the Europa League last 32. PSG coach Laurent Blanc, who is without Javier Pastore and has had Marco Verratti on the sidelines in recent weeks, will rotate his squad with the focus on maintaining their unbeaten start to the domestic season through to Christmas. Beaten 3-0 by Paris in Ukraine in September, Shakhtar defeated Karpaty Lviv by the same score on Thursday to top their domestic table going into the long winter break. Coach Mircea Lucescu is without injured striker Olexandr Gladkiy.

At Madrid

Real Madrid (ESP) v Malmö (SWE)

Real Madrid have already sealed qualification for the last 16 as group winners but Rafa Benitez's team need a convincing performance to appease fans left disgruntled by the recent 4-0 mauling at the hands of Barcelona and the club's disqualification from the Copa del Rey for fielding an ineligible player. Marcelo is close to full fitness again for the 10-time European champions. Malmö, meanwhile, need to better Shakhtar's result in the other game if they are to snatch third spot and a Europa League berth. With the Swedish domestic season now finished, Age Hareide's side have only played once in the last month, when they went down 5-0 at home to Paris Saint-Germain.

GROUP B

At Wolfsburg, Germany

Wolfsburg (GER) v Manchester United (ENG)

This is a huge match at the Volkswagen Arena, with all still to play for in Group B. Wolfsburg are top of the section so need only draw to go through, while a win will guarantee them top spot. United, in contrast, have to win to be sure of qualifying. Anything less and they will be relying on PSV Eindhoven slipping up in their game. Failing to reach the last 16 is unthinkable for United, who continue to receive criticism for their style of football under Louis van Gaal-five of their last nine matches have finished goalless. "We have not made it easy for ourselves, but we know that victory in Germany will not only guarantee qualification, but also ensure we finish top of our group," Van Gaal, who is without the injured Wayne Rooney, told the United Review. Wolfsburg, who slipped to fifth in the Bundesliga after a 2-1 home loss to Borussia Dortmund at the weekend, are bidding to reach the knockout rounds for the first time.

At Eindhoven, Netherlands

PSV Eindhoven (NED) v CSKA Moscow (RUS)

Dutch champions PSV come into their final game in third spot but with the two sides above them meeting one another, Philip Cocu's side know a win against CSKA at the Philips Stadion will take them through. A draw would

also be good enough if Manchester United were to lose in Germany. And yet a CSKA win would see the Russians, who cannot reach the last 16, move above PSV and snatch the Europa League berth that comes with finishing third. PSV are four points behind Dutch league leaders Ajax after a late Jorrit Hendrix goal gave them a 1-0 win at Vitesse Arnhem on Saturday. That left them nine games unbeaten, while CSKA are on a wretched run of six without a win. A 2-0 loss at Amkar Perm last Thursday was not enough to stop them going into the Russian winter break on top of their domestic league, but their form is a real worry. In addition, goalkeeper Igor Akinfeev has not kept a clean sheet in any of his last 36 Champions League appearances going back to 2006.

GROUP C

At Istanbul

Galatasaray (TUR) v Astana (KAZ)

Neither club can reach the last 16 but third place and a Europa League spot will be decided in Istanbul. Galatasaray, who drew 2-2 in Kazakhstan when the sides met in September, need only draw again this time around, while Astana must record a first win in the Champions League proper if they are to prolong their European adventure into 2016. The Turkish giants beat Bursaspor 3-0 on Friday for a first win in six games and a first win since Mustafa Denizli returned for a third spell as coach in place of the sacked Hamza Hamzaoglu. With their domestic season now over, the Kazakh champions have been in Turkey for 10 days preparing for this game.

At Lisbon

Benfica (POR) v Atletico Madrid (ESP)

These two clubs are already through, but the important prize of first place in Group C is still up for grabs when Benfica welcome Atletico to Lisbon.

Having won 2-1 in Madrid in September, the Portuguese champions need only draw, while Atletico require any win that is not 1-0. Diego Simeone's side return to the Estadio da Luz, where they lost to Real Madrid in the 2014 final, on a run of 12 games unbeaten since they last

met Benfica. However, injured duo Jackson Martinez and Tiago Mendes are missing for this game. Third in the Portuguese top flight, Benfica are without injured defender Luisao.

GROUP D

**At Manchester, England
Manchester City (ENG) v Borussia Moenchengladbach (GER)**

Manchester City are already through from Group D, but must beat Gladbach and hope leaders Juventus lose in Spain if they are to finish on top of the section. Such a combination of results seems unlikely given the recent form of these sides. City lost 2-0 at Stoke City at the weekend, their third defeat in their last five matches coming at a time when manager Manuel Pellegrini is having to deal with a long list of injuries. Centre-back and captain Vincent Kompany, midfielder Yaya Toure and attacking figurehead Sergio Aguero are all expected to miss the game at the Etihad Stadium. "We are supposing that if we finish second we will have a bad draw, but maybe this year we can have a bad draw if we finish top of the group. There are a lot of things in the future we are not thinking about," reasoned Pellegrini. Gladbach have been in sensational form under Andre Schubert and beat Bayern Munich 3-1 on Saturday. They will go into the Europa League if they match or better Sevilla's result against Juventus.

At Seville, Spain

Sevilla (ESP) v Juventus (ITA)

Juve are already through to the last 16 and a draw in Spain will ensure last season's beaten finalists go through as group winners. Sevilla, meanwhile, are out but can still finish third if they win and Borussia Moenchengladbach do not win at Manchester City. That will allow Unai Emery's team to go into the Europa League and try to win that competition for the third year running. Juve will be better rested after beating Lazio 2-0 on Friday to go seven games unbeaten. Sevilla are having an inconsistent campaign and a 1-1 draw at Deportivo on Saturday left them firmly in mid-table in La Liga. —AFP



TURIN: Juventus' Paulo Dybala warms up during a training session ahead of today's Champions League, Group D soccer match against Sevilla, at the Vinovo center in Turin, Italy, yesterday. — AP

BLATTER IN FBI SPOTLIGHT OVER \$100MN BRIBERY CASE

LONDON: US authorities are investigating evidence indicating FIFA's suspended president Sepp Blatter knew about \$100 million (92 million euros) in bribes paid to former members of the football body, a BBC report said Sunday.

The BBC investigation alleges that sports marketing company ISL paid a total of \$100 million to officials including ex-FIFA president Joao Havelange and former FIFA executive Ricardo Teixeira.

In return, the company received television and marketing rights during the 1990s, the report said.

Blatter has maintained he was unaware of the payments, but the BBC said it had seen a letter obtained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the United States that casts doubt on his denial.

The letter refers to the ISL payments and is alleged to have been written by Havelange, who notes that Blatter had "full knowledge of all activities" and was "always apprised" of them.

Blatter was Havelange's top deputy before taking over from Havelange as FIFA president in 1998.

The BBC said Blatter had declined to respond to their allegations. Blatter, who was suspended in October for 90 days by FIFA's ethics committee, is due to stand down in February.

Separate from the reported US probe, Blatter has also become the target of a Swiss criminal investigation over possible mismanagement at FIFA and a \$2 million payment made in 2011 to his would-be

successor, UEFA boss Michel Platini.

The Swiss criminal probe spurred FIFA's internal ethics watchdog to launch a further inquiry. FIFA investigators finalised their probe in November, turning evidence over to the ethics committee's judges, who will issue a verdict this month. Platini is implicated in the same probe and investigators have called for a lifetime ban against him, but the requested punishment against Blatter is not yet known.

US prosecutors are investigating several top football officials in a quest to root out graft at FIFA. Late last week, 16 officials were charged over corruption in what the US justice department called an "outrageous" betrayal of trust by those who govern the world's most beloved sport.

The most recent charges included the pre-dawn arrests of two FIFA vice presidents at a luxury Zurich hotel. While eight people implicated in US investigations have already pleaded guilty, Attorney General Loretta Lynch has said there remain 27 defendants from within global football alleged to have taken more than \$200 million (183 million euros) in bribes and kickbacks over decades.

Fallen Trinidad and Tobago honcho Jack Warner has accused the US of trying to "take over" FIFA with its anti-corruption investigations, alleging that the country is seeking to strip Qatar and Russia of their upcoming World Cups. — AFP

VIEIRA EARMARKED AS FUTURE CITY MANAGER

LONDON: Former Arsenal and Manchester City midfielder Patrick Vieira is being groomed as a future City manager, the club's football administration officer Brian Marwood said yesterday.

Vieira, 39, took up his first managerial appointment in November, signing a three-year contract in the United States with sister club New York City. Before that he had been working with Manchester City's development squad in his two years since retiring as a player in 2011.

"It was important that we could find the next development stage for Patrick and it was still part of the group," Marwood told Sky Sports News. "That opportunity came about in New York. We are really excited, he is really excited by it and I think it is exactly the next step he needs."

"Hopefully, at some point, he'll come back and manage Manchester City, that's the ambition for him and that's the ambition for us."

"But he has to go through this learning curve." Vieira won the 1998 World Cup with France as well as four Serie A titles (one of which was revoked) and three in the Premier League.

He returned to England from Italy in 2010 and played for City for a season and a half. "We always felt from day one that he could make a major contribution to the club," Marwood said. "He had lived as a footballer for many years, but probably had not quite grasped or understood the importance of communications, marketing, commercial, legal and all those areas."

"He immersed himself fully and I think he came away with a different perception of what a football club was about." Current City manager Manuel Pellegrini has a contract until the end of next season and there has been regular speculation in the media that Pep Guardiola could replace him at some stage if he decides to leave Bayern Munich. — Reuters

COURT TO RULE ON PLATINI APPEAL AGAINST FIFA BY FRIDAY

LAUSANNE: Michel Platini's lawyers will appear at the Court of Arbitration for Sport today as part of an appeal against his suspension from FIFA, with a decision due by December 11, a CAS statement said. Platini, the head of European football governing body UEFA and a FIFA vice president, was suspended from all football activities in October for 90 days. The ban by FIFA's ethics committee came after Platini was linked to a criminal probe by Swiss prosecutors.

The sports court's statement said representatives of FIFA and Platini were invited to a preliminary hearing on Tuesday afternoon. The hearing will be "limited to the issue as to whether or not the provisional 90-day suspension imposed on Mr Platini should be temporarily lifted," the statement said.

"A decision on such a request for a stay is likely to be issued on Friday 11 December 2015, at the latest," it continued. But the 90-day suspension may

prove to be the least of Platini's problems. FIFA's ethics investigators have asked the in-house court at world football's governing body to suspend the Juventus star for life. Platini is due to give evidence in that case later this month, with a verdict due in the coming weeks.

While suspended, Platini has been unable to press ahead with his campaign to replace Sepp Blatter as FIFA's president, while the other five confirmed con-

tenders have been free to lobby for votes. In the Swiss criminal case, Platini has been questioned in a category that falls between a witness and an accused over a 1.8 million euros (\$2 million) payment he received from FIFA in 2011, reportedly for work done a decade earlier. The Frenchman denies all wrongdoing and his camp insists there is ample evidence to clear his name. Blatter, who is the target of the Swiss criminal probe, has also been suspended for 90 days,

with stiffer punishment from FIFA's ethics committee also pending.

Platini had been the favourite to succeed Blatter as FIFA's president at an election scheduled for February 26, but his chances have grown increasingly remote.

While the CAS appeal is focused narrowly on the validity of Platini's 90-day suspension, some believe that in calling for a lifetime ban, FIFA investigators may have uncovered further evidence against the UEFA boss. —AFP



PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain's players take part in a training session in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, west of Paris, yesterday on the eve of the UEFA Champions League group A football match between PSG and Shakhtar Donetsk. — AFP

GOAL-SHY MAN UTD DESPERATE FOR WIN

BERLIN: Manchester United will be looking for the goals that have been so hard to come by this season when they travel to VfL Wolfsburg today with their hopes of sealing qualification for the Champions League knockout stage still hanging in the balance.

All the talk among United supporters-raised on a tradition of exciting, uninhibited attacking football-is of the team's lack of goals under what they believe to be manager Louis van Gaal's sterile conservative approach.

Since winning 2-1 at home to Wolfsburg in September, United have scored only twice in three Champions League games. In the Premier League the record is five goals in the last six games.

United captain Wayne Rooney, who missed Saturday's goalless draw at home to West Ham with an ankle injury, will again be absent, but like Memphis Depay he has scored only two

league goals this season. Anthony Martial, the young French prodigy has three and midfielder Juan Mata is top scorer with five.

United supporters have taken to chanting "attack, attack, attack" in almost every game and they will need goals today with the team second in Group B on eight points, one behind leaders Wolfsburg with PSV Eindhoven, playing CSKA Moscow, on seven.

But manager Van Gaal is insistent the problem will not last. "The goals are coming, that is my strong belief," he said after two points dropped against West Ham United left them fourth in the table.

"We created a lot of chances but to score you need not only composure but a lot of luck. So I'm not worried." He did admit, however, that winning the Champions League is not realistic this season, adding: "Maybe next year, when we strengthen our selection again."

Even with injuries to a number of other players, Van Gaal believes he can rely on his defence in Germany. With England's Chris Smalling in outstanding form, they have kept seven clean sheets in nine games.

For Wolfsburg, even a draw will be enough to secure a spot in the next round. While their rocky domestic form has seen last season's Bundesliga runners-up slip to fifth after a 2-1 last-gasp defeat by Borussia Dortmund on Saturday, Dieter Hecking's team are top of Group B after a 2-0 win at CSKA Moscow.

They are now looking to continue their fine home form, having won twice without conceding.

For attacking midfielder Julian Draxler, beating United is not impossible. "If we play against them as we did in the second half against Dortmund then I am certain we can beat United," he said. — Reuters

MAN CITY LOOKS TO AVOID SECOND PLACE IN LEAGUE

MANCHESTER: Manchester City knows all about the pitfalls of finishing in second place in a Champions League group. The only two times the English club has been runner-up in its group, it has been drawn to play Barcelona in the next round - and was eliminated both occasions.

City is heading the same way this season, too. Going into the last round of matches in Group D today, City has already qualified for the knockout stage but is two points behind Juventus in second. With Juve wrapping up group play against already-eliminated Sevilla, the Italian team - which reached the Champions League final last season - is favored to top the group and therefore be more likely to avoid a top team in the last 16.

Even more so, because City is struggling for form ahead of its home game against Borussia Moenchengladbach after losing three of its last five games in all competitions. A lengthy injury list is also hampering City manager Manuel Pellegrini.

The players making up the spine of the team - Vincent Kompany, Yaya Toure and Sergio Aguero - were among those missing in the 2-0 loss to Stoke on Saturday and none of the trio is sure of playing at Etihad Stadium against a German side that is buoyant after beating Bayern Munich 3-1.

Pellegrini grumbled after the Stoke game that City, one of the world's richest clubs, has been left to play "with the same 13 or 14 players" in recent matches because of injuries. "Maybe it's the reason we didn't play with the energy that we need to win," Pellegrini said.

Wherever City finishes in the group, Pellegrini said his team will go into the knockout stage with confidence. "We are supposing that if we finish second, we will have a bad draw," Pellegrini said. "But maybe this year we can have a bad draw if we finish top of the group. There are a lot of things in the future we are not thinking about."

The other issue to tie up on Tuesday is which of Moenchengladbach and Sevilla finishes third and qualifies for the Europa League. Sevilla - the reigning Europa League champion - is two points adrift in last place. Here are some things to know about today's games:

CITY INJURIES

The most important player most likely to return to City's team today is Aguero, who was missing against Stoke because of a heel injury. Kompany is set to miss out again, though, and it is the absence of the captain and central defender that is hitting City the hardest. City's defense lacks lead-

ership without Kompany and has been torn apart by Liverpool and Stoke in recent weeks. Defensive midfielder Fernando is the latest player to join the injury list.

TALK OF THE TOWN

Borussia Moenchengladbach is the talk of the town after becoming the first team to beat Bayern Munich in the Bundesliga. The emphatic 3-1 win on Saturday also extended coach Andre Schubert's unbeaten league run to 10 matches since taking over. Schubert has proven himself to be a flexible tactician. He used a three-man backline, with five midfielders and two strikers against Bayern for the first time and it worked very well. Moenchengladbach cannot qualify for the knockout stage, but the aim is to secure third place and go into the Europa League. By drawing two matches with Juventus, Gladbach has shown that it can compete with the top teams and the win over Bayern is further proof.

TEVEZ WHO?

No more Tevez? No problem for Juventus. Carlos Tevez has been replaced by another Argentine forward, Paulo Dybala, who was signed from Palermo in the offseason for 32 million euros (then \$36 million) and is already living up to the hype. Dybala, who turned 22 last month, scored a goal and set up the opener in Friday's 2-0 win at Lazio. He has scored seven goals in 14 Serie A matches - as well as assisting on a further three - but has yet to score in the Champions League. Many have started comparing him to Tevez, but Juventus teammate Leonardo Bonucci warned against heaping too much expectation on the youngster's shoulders.

"They are different actually," Bonucci said. "Carlos was and still is a leader and a reference point for the group. Paulo is young and should be allowed to grow slowly. I am sure he will become a key player for this Juve team."

FOR PRIDE

Even though Sevilla's away form has been poor, the team has beaten Real Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia at home. On Tuesday against Juventus, the Spanish team will be able to salvage some pride while Fernando Llorente - who moved to Sevilla from Juventus in the last transfer window - will be looking for his first Champions League goal after scoring three in the league. Sevilla will be without defenders Marco Andreolli and Daniel Carrico, goalkeeper Beto and midfielder Gael Kakuta, who are all injured. — AP



MADRID: Malmö's Vladimir Rodic, left, plays the ball with teammate Nikola Djurdjic during a training session at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, yesterday. Malmö will play against Real Madrid a Champions league group A soccer match today. — AP

BALE BELIEVES MALMO VISIT KEY TO MADRID RESURGENCE

MADRID: Gareth Bale has urged Real Madrid to maintain their recovery from the shock of the club's problems on and off the field when they host Malmö in their final Champions League group game today.

Madrid were thrashed 4-0 at home by eternal rivals Barcelona last month and thrown out of the Spanish Cup last week for fielding an ineligible player. However, Rafael Benitez's men have at least strung together four consecutive victories since their humiliation against Barca with Bale also getting back on the scoresheet in La Liga wins over Eibar and Getafe.

Saturday's 4-1 win over Getafe saw Bale, Karim Benzema and Cristiano Ronaldo all score in the same game for the first time this season. And Bale denied there is any problem between Madrid's star-studded squad and Benitez.

"The relationship with Benitez is good," said the Welshman. "We showed (against Getafe) we are in good form. It is important that the team are united, that we win every game and try to get better every day."

Benitez was quick to highlight the importance of having Bale, Benzema and Ronaldo on the field together as they started in the league for just the fourth time this season at the weekend.

However, with a tough visit to Villarreal to come on Sunday and Madrid having already sealed their place in the last 16 as group winners, Benitez is likely to rest a number of his star names.

Isco is expected to return after serving a two-game La Liga ban, whilst Benitez may hand minutes to a number of youngsters who will miss out on their chance in the first team if Real's appeal against their expulsion from the Copa del Rey fails.

Malmö may already be eliminated from the Champions League, but they still have Europa League football to play for in 2016. The Swedish champions need to better Shakhtar Donetsk's result away to Paris Saint-Germain to seal third place in the group.

Veteran Norwegian coach Age Hareide will be taking charge of Malmö for the last time in the Champions League after announcing his decision to step down at the end of the year.

And he has taken his side on a warm-weather training camp in Malaga to prepare for the trip to the Bernabeu after their domestic season finished at the end of October.

"The guys need this. Warmth, good plans and a different environment can only make it good for us when we are directing the focus towards Madrid match," Hareide told the club's website. —AFP



MANCHESTER: Manchester City soccer manager Manuel Pellegrini speaks during a press conference at the City Football Academy, in Manchester, England, yesterday. — AP



Matches on TV
(Local Timings)

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

PSG v Shakhtar Donetsk	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Real Madrid v Malmö	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Wolfsburg v Man United	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Eindhoven v CSKA Moskva	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Galatasaray v FC Astana	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Benfica v Atletico	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Man City v Monchengladbach	22:45
beIN SPORTS	
Sevilla v Juventus	22:45
beIN SPORTS	

Sports

Kuwait Champions Challenge announces more soccer stars

15



India overcome defiant S Africa for crushing win

17



CHAMPION

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2015

BLATTER IN FBI SPOTLIGHT OVER \$100MN BRIBERY CASE



NEW ORLEANS: New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees (9) tries to avoid the sack by Carolina Panthers defensive end Jared Allen (69) in the second half of an NFL football game in New Orleans, Sunday. — AP

PANTHERS STAY UNBEATEN, PATRIOTS SUFFER LOSS

NEW ORLEANS: Cam Newton passed for five touchdowns, capped by a 15-yard scoring strike to Jericho Cotchery with 1:05 to go, and the unbeaten Carolina Panthers wrapped up the NFC South title with a 41-38 victory over the New Orleans Saints on Sunday. Carolina, the only remaining unbeaten team in the NFL, has the ninth 12-0 start in league history. Newton, who was 28 of 41 for 331 yards, twice had to lead the Panthers back from fourth-quarter deficits as the Saints (4-8) tried desperately to avoid a four-game losing streak. Jonathan Stewart had a 5-yard scoring run on a pitch from Newton. Drew Brees passed for 282 yards and three touchdowns. Saints linebacker Stephone Anthony returned a fumble 31 yards for a score and also became the first NFL player to return a blocked extra-point kick for 2 points in NFL history.

EAGLES 35, PATRIOTS 28

Najee Goode scored on a blocked punt, Malcolm Jenkins returned an interception 99 yards for another touchdown and Philadelphia held on for an improbable victory over New England. Darren Sproles returned a punt 83 yards for the Eagles' second special teams touchdown, giving Philadelphia a 21-point lead before the Patriots came charging back. Tom Brady threw for a touchdown to make it a two-score game and then, after an onside kick, ran it in from the 1 yard-line to cut it to seven points with 3 minutes left.

New England's second onside kick failed, but the Patriots (10-2) forced a third-down fumble to give Brady one more chance. The comeback fell short when Brady's passes bounced out of his receivers' hands.

Losers of three in a row, the Eagles (5-7) had given up 45 points apiece in consecutive weeks heading into the game against the defending NFL champions and their Super Bowl MVP quarterback. Now it's the Patriots on a losing streak - their first back-to-back regular-season losses since 2012.

CARDINALS 27, RAMS 3

Running backs David Johnson and Kerwyn Williams scored a touchdown apiece and Arizona stuffed St. Louis. Johnson, a rookie, had 99 yards on 22 carries in his first start and caught one of two TD passes by Carson Palmer, who led an offense that rolled up 524 yards. Williams scored his first career TD on a 35-yard run. The Cardinals (10-2) have won six in a row, and seven of eight since losing 24-22 at home to St. Louis in Week 4. The Rams (4-8) have lost five in a row and have been outscored 58-10 the past two.

STEELERS 45, COLTS 10

Ben Roethlisberger threw for 364 yards and four touchdowns and Pittsburgh overwhelmed

Indianapolis. Antonio Brown caught eight passes for 118 yards and two scores and also returned a punt 71 yards for a touchdown for the Steelers (7-5). Martavis Bryant hauled in four passes for 114 yards and a score, and DeAngelo Williams added 134 yards rushing as Pittsburgh shook off a slow start to dominate the Colts (6-6) over the final three quarters. Roethlisberger has 886 yards passing and 10 touchdowns in his last two starts against Indianapolis. Matt Hasselbeck threw for 169 yards with a touchdown and two interceptions before leaving in the fourth quarter because of neck and shoulder pain. The Colts remain tied with Houston for the lead in the AFC North.

CHIEFS 34, RAIDERS 20

Jeremy Maclin had two touchdowns catches after fourth-quarter interceptions and Tyvon Branch returned a third interception from Derek Carr for a game-clinching score against his former team and Kansas City rallied for its sixth straight win. The Raiders (5-7) were leading by six points and driving for more when Carr's mistakes changed the tide of the game and helped keep the Chiefs (7-5) in the lead in the AFC wild-card race. Alex Smith threw two touchdown passes and ran for a third score and Maclin had 95 yards on nine catches to lead the Chiefs. Carr threw for 283 yards and two touchdowns, but his three fourth-quarter interceptions sent Oakland to its fourth loss in five games.

BRONCOS 17, CHARGERS 3

Brock Osweiler threw for one touchdown and Danny Trevathan intercepted Phillip Rivers and returned it 25 yards for a score, leading the Denver Broncos to a victory against hapless San Diego. Osweiler improved to 3-0 since taking over for the injured Peyton Manning. The AFC West-leading Broncos are 10-2. San Diego fell to 3-9. Thousands of orange-clad Broncos fans cheered the visitors in what might have been the penultimate Chargers game in San Diego. Chairman Dean Spanos wants to move to an industrial suburb of Los Angeles, and NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell last week warned San Diego that it had until the end of the month to come up with an acceptable plan for a new stadium. The Chargers walked away from stadium talks in mid-June.

49ERS 26, BEARS 20, OT

Blaine Gabbert threw a 71-yard touchdown pass to Torrey Smith in overtime after running for the tying TD late in regulation, lifting struggling San Francisco to a victory over Chicago. The Bears (5-7) had just gone three-and-out after forcing a punt by San Francisco to start the extra period. On the first play of the 49ers' second possession, Gabbert found a wide-open Smith along the left sideline, giving San Francisco (4-8) a surprising win over a team that had jumped into playoff contention.

JETS 23, GIANTS 20, OT

Randy Bullock kicked a 31-yard field goal on the first possession of overtime to give the Jets a stunning win that sent the reeling Giants to their third straight loss. The Jets (7-5) didn't seal the win until Josh Brown missed a 48-yard field goal with 6:33 left in the extra session, his first miss in 26 attempts this season. That left many questioning Coughlin and wondering whether the Giants (5-7) are headed for a fourth straight season out of the playoffs. Coughlin elected to go on a fourth-and-2 from the Jets 4 with his team ahead 20-10 with under nine minutes to play. The play failed. Ryan Fitzpatrick rallied the Jets from a 10-point deficit in the final 4:24 of regulation. Fitzpatrick hit Brandon Marshall for a 9-yard touchdown with 27 seconds remaining to tie it and went 36 for 50 for 390 yards.

SEAHAWKS 38, VIKINGS 7

Russell Wilson threw for three touchdowns and rushed for another, Seattle's defense didn't allow a score, and the surging Seahawks won their third straight game with a romp over Minnesota. Doug Baldwin had two touchdowns and 94 yards receiving and Thomas Rawls rushed for 101 yards and a score as the Seahawks (7-5) did whatever they wanted with the ball against an injury-depleted Vikings defense. NFL rushing leader Adrian Peterson was limited to 18 yards on eight carries, and the Vikings (8-4) needed a 101-yard kickoff return by Cordarrelle Peterson in the third quarter to keep from being blanked.

BILLS 30, TEXANS 21

Tyrod Taylor threw a 40-yard touchdown pass to Charles Clay with 1:53 left to lead Buffalo over Houston. Taylor finished 11 of 21 for 211 yards and three TDs and also scored on an 8-yard run. Buffalo (6-6) snapped a two-game skid and gained ground on the Texans (6-6) in the AFC playoff race.

Sammy Watkins had three catches for 109 yards and a touchdown. The Texans had a four-game winning streak snapped. Houston's Brian Hoyer finished 26 of 44 for 293 yards with three touchdowns but was unable to deliver in the clutch. Hoyer threw four consecutive incompletions on the Texans' drive after Clay's touchdown. The Bills took over and Dan Carpenter secured the win with a 36-yard field goal with 33 seconds remaining. Carpenter otherwise struggled, missing a 50-yard field goal attempt and an extra point.

TITANS 42, JAGUARS 39

Marcus Mariota scored the go-ahead touchdown on an 87-yard run midway through a wild fourth quarter, and Tennessee edged Jacksonville to snap its 11-game home losing streak. The Titans (3-9) had not won on their own field since Oct. 12, 2014, when they needed a blocked field goal to beat these very same Jaguars 16-14. The teams combined for much more than that Sunday, scoring six touchdowns in the fourth quarter alone. Mariota finished with 112 yards rushing, becoming the first Tennessee player to run for at least 100 yards since Chris Johnson on Dec. 29, 2013. The

Heisman Trophy winner also threw for three touchdowns and 268 yards. The Jaguars (4-8) failed at the chance to sweep Tennessee for the first time since 2005. Blake Bortles threw for 322 yards and five touchdowns.

BENGALS 37, BROWNS 3

Andy Dalton threw two touchdown passes and ran for a score and the Cincinnati Bengals moved closer to a playoff berth and the AFC North title with a win over woeful Cleveland, which dropped its seventh straight. Dalton connected with A.J. Green for a 23-yard TD pass in the second quarter and the Bengals moved to 10-2 for just the second time in team history. Cincinnati needed a complex scenario to clinch a playoff spot this week, and even if that doesn't happen, the Bengals are still poised to make the postseason for the fifth season in a row. Green finished with 128 yards on five catches. The Browns (2-10) lost for the second time in six days and had two more starters go down with injuries in a season that can't end soon enough. Cleveland QB Austin Davis passed for 231 yards in his first start this season.

BUCCANEERS 23, FALCONS 19

Jameis Winston threw a 6-yard touchdown pass to Mike Evans with 1:39 remaining to give Tampa Bay a victory over Atlanta. The No. 1 overall pick in this year's draft also scored on a 5-yard run and scrambled up the middle of the field 20 yards on third-and-19 to prolong the third game-winning drive of his young career. Lavonte David sealed the fourth win in six games for the Bucs (6-6), intercepting Matt Ryan's pass intended for Julio Jones on Atlanta's final possession. The Falcons (6-6) have lost five straight, six of seven overall, after beginning the season 5-0. Winston completed 18 of 27 passes for 227 yards, one touchdown and one interception. But it was the rookie's timely run and ability to gain another 10 yards after appearing to be stopped at the Atlanta 33 that typified what the 2013 Heisman Trophy winner has meant to Tampa Bay, which has overcome a slow start to contend for a playoff berth.

DOLPHINS 15, RAVENS 13

Miami intercepted a pair of deflected passes from Matt Schaub to score two touchdowns 20 seconds apart late in the first half, and held on to beat Baltimore. The score was 0-0 when Reshad Jones intercepted a pass batted by defensive tackle Jordan Phillips to set up the game's first score. On the next play, Ryan Tannehill hit a leaping DeVante Parker at the goal line for a 38-yard touchdown. Three plays later, defensive end Derrick Shelby slapped a pass in the air, caught it and ran 22 yards to the end zone, with Schaub giving chase in vain. The Dolphins (5-7) improved to 4-4 under interim coach Dan Campbell and ended a streak of five consecutive losses to the Ravens (4-8). — AP

NFL results/standings

Seattle 38, Minnesota 7; Buffalo 30, Houston 21; Miami 15, Baltimore 13; Cincinnati 37, Cleveland 3; Tennessee 42, Jacksonville 39; San Francisco 26, Chicago 20 (OT); NY Jets 23, NY Giants 20 (OT); Arizona 27, St. Louis 3; Tampa Bay 23, Atlanta 19; Denver 17, San Diego 3; Kansas City 34, Oakland 20; Philadelphia 35, New England 28; Carolina 41, New Orleans 38.

American Football Conference						National Football Conference									
AFC East						NFC East									
W	L	T	OTL	PF	PCT	W	L	T	OTL	PF	PCT				
New England	10	2	0	1	.375	247	.833	Washington	5	6	0	1	241	267	.455
NY Jets	7	5	0	0	.295	248	.583	Philadelphia	5	7	0	0	278	302	.417
Buffalo	6	6	0	0	.296	278	.500	NY Giants	5	7	0	1	307	296	.417
Miami	5	7	0	0	.240	300	.417	Dallas	3	8	0	2	204	261	.273
AFC North						NFC North									
Cincinnati	10	2	0	0	.334	196	.833	Green Bay	8	4	0	0	289	238	.667
Pittsburgh	7	5	0	1	.311	240	.583	Minnesota	8	4	0	0	238	232	.667
Baltimore	4	8	0	1	.272	291	.333	Chicago	5	7	0	2	251	290	.417
Cleveland	2	10	0	1	.216	347	.167	Detroit	4	8	0	0	253	315	.333
AFC South						NFC South									
Indianapolis	6	6	0	1	.259	305	.500	Carolina	12	0	0	0	373	243	1.000
Houston	6	6	0	0	.253	264	.500	Tampa Bay	6	6	0	0	271	298	.500
Jacksonville	4	8	0	1	.275	341	.333	Atlanta	6	6	0	1	279	257	.500
Tennessee	3	9	0	0	.245	296	.250	New Orleans	4	8	0	1	299	380	.333
AFC West						NFC West									
Denver	10	2	0	0	.269	210	.833	Arizona	10	2	0	0	382	232	.833
Kansas City	7	5	0	0	.321	240	.583	Seattle	7	5	0	2	305	229	.583
Oakland	5	7	0	0	.284	314	.417	St. Louis	4	8	0	1	189	257	.333
San Diego	3	9	0	0	.247	324	.250	San Francisco	4	8	0	0	178	291	.333

Kuwait Times BUSINESS

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ECONOMISTS TRIM FORECAST ON US ECONOMY

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Spending pace holding despite oil price drop

Jazeera Airways finalizes voluntary capital reduction

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Fifth Industries & Building exhibition opens

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MIAMI: Job applicants fill out forms during a job fair at Dolphin Mall in Miami. Business economists are slightly less bullish about prospects for economic growth in 2016, according to a survey published yesterday by the National Association for Business Economics. — AP (See Page 23)

OIL PLUNGES TO \$41 AFTER OPEC INACTION

CARTEL'S OMISSION OF OUTPUT TARGET REFERENCE EXPOSES RIFT

LONDON: Oil prices fell to their lowest in nearly seven years yesterday after OPEC's meeting ended in disagreement over production cuts and without a reference to its output ceiling, while a stronger dollar made it more expensive to hold crude positions.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) failed to agree in its policy meeting on Friday to lower production in an attempt to stem prices that have dropped more than 60 percent since June 2014. For the first time in decades, oil ministers dropped any reference to the group's output ceiling, highlighting disagreement among members about how to accommodate Iranian barrels once Western sanctions are lifted.

"A stronger dollar and the aftershock of Friday's OPEC meeting are weighing on the oil market," said Tamas Varga, oil analyst at brokerage PVM Oil Associates in London.

Brent crude prices, the globally traded benchmark, traded down 92 cents at \$42.08 a barrel at 1439 GMT and touched a low of \$41.77, the lowest since March 12, 2009. US crude was down \$1.20 at \$38.77 a barrel, a drop of 3 percent on Friday's close. The dollar was up against a basket of currencies after jobs data published on Friday bolstered the case for a rise in US interest rates this month.

Analysts at Barclays said the lack of an OPEC production target in its written announcement was a sign of discord. "Past

communiqués have at least included statements to adhere, strictly adhere, or maintain output in line with the production target. This one glaringly did not," they said.

OPEC's output of more than 30 million barrels per day (bpd) has compounded an oil glut, pushing production 0.5 million to 2 million bpd beyond demand and putting many producers under pressure, especially small-sized US shale drillers that have piled up large amounts of debt.

Analysts at Commerzbank said any recovery in prices would be dictated not by OPEC but by rising demand and a fall in production outside of the group. "Rising oil prices next year will not depend on OPEC reaching im-

mediate agreement or on a return to price control, as we expect prices to increase primarily on the back of continued robust demand growth and a decline in non-OPEC oil production," they said in a report. Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter, is banking on producers of unconventional oil buckling for output to fall.

Aramco reasoning

Saudi Aramco Chief Executive Amin Nasser said at a conference in Doha yesterday that he hoped to see oil prices adjust at the beginning of next year as unconventional oil supplies start to decline.

In a sign that US production could dip,

Baker Hughes' November data showed US rig count numbers were down by 31 month on month to 760 rigs. Others disagreed. Patrick Pouyanne, CEO of French oil company Total, said at the same event that he did not expect prices to recover next year as production growth was set to outstrip a rise in demand.

"It is not unreasonable to assume that downward pressure on prices will remain for the foreseeable future, as it will take time for low prices to materially scale back production," Cenkos Securities analysts said. In a sign that investors expect prices to remain weak for years to come, WTI forward contracts out to 2024 have dropped below \$60 a barrel. — Reuters

KENYA, ETHIOPIA VOW TO TURN CONFLICT-RIDDEN BORDER INTO TRADE HUB

MOYALE, Kenya: The leaders of Kenya and Ethiopia promised yesterday to create jobs, reduce poverty and foster trade in their restive borderlands, where conflict has intensified in recent years.

The \$200 million project aims to create a trade and investment hub along the remote 860 km (530 mile) border where human, arms and drug trafficking are rife, the head of the United Nations in Kenya, Nardos Bekele-Thomas, said. "The problem here is poverty," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "It's just hopelessness that creates insecurity."

Clashes between herding communities over grazing land, water and cattle have become increasingly deadly due to an influx of guns, as well as political power struggles and fast-growing populations. Kenya's army was sent to restore order to the border town of Moyale, 800km (500 miles) north of the capital Nairobi, in 2013 after dozens were killed and villages were burned to the ground in a jostle for power between rival clan militias. Around two-thirds of the population of Kenya's Marsabit County - more than 70,000 people - fled, mostly to Ethiopia's Borana Zone where many have relatives, the UN said.

"We can exchange conflict and insecurity for peace and prosperity," Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta told dignitaries seated in a white tent decorated with the two countries' national colors. "We shall work together to

ensure that Moyale becomes the Dubai of the Horn of Africa," he added, referring to the Middle Eastern trade hub. A tarmac road linking Nairobi and the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa is due to be completed by September 2016, he said.

Restoring peace will be a challenge. The arid region is awash with guns due to its proximity to unstable Somalia where Al-Qaeda-linked militants have been fighting to topple the government.

Ethiopian soldiers also make sporadic incursions into Kenya in pursuit of Oromo Liberation Front rebels. Many homesteads have guns to deter invaders, while herders often carry firearms to protect their animals because there is little police presence.

With the support of Western donors and the World Bank, the government's plan to diversify the livestock-dominated local economies and improve access to water, education and healthcare. Eight in ten residents of Marsabit County live below the poverty line, government data shows. Security officials held back large crowds who lined the road to watch the lengthy convoy of officials speed through the town.

Among them, 18-year-old Abdi Aden Adow said governments should boost cross-border trade as frequent droughts have pushed his family, who keep goats and camels, into poverty. "There is no rain," he said. "Life is very hard." — Reuters



DOHA: President and Chief Executive Officer of Qatar Petroleum, Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi (left) and French oil giant Total Chief Executive Officer, Patrick Pouyanne listen during the 9th International Petroleum Technology Conference (IPTC) in the Qatari capital Doha yesterday. — AFP

TOTAL BOSS RULES OUT OIL PRICE RECOVERY IN 2016

DOHA: Oil prices are not expected to rise next year, the head of French energy giant Total told reporters in Qatar yesterday. "We don't anticipate a recovery in 2016," Total CEO Patrick Pouyanne said on the sidelines of the International Petroleum Technology Conference (IPTC) in Doha. "Having said that I don't know if the price will be at 40, 45, 50, 60" dollars per barrel, he added. "In 2016 the growth of capacity will still be larger than the growth of demand."

"I am not very optimistic for 2016, beyond that it is difficult to know." Oil prices have nosedived by more than 60 percent in the last 18 months, with the world's largest oil producing nations defying calls to reduce output. Crude prices fell heavily on Friday as West Texas Intermediate sank 1.0 percent and Brent lost 1.9. However, Pouyanne added that Total had budgeted to meet the continued lower oil prices and ruled out any

job losses in the near future.

"My job is to be sure that we can make profits whatever the price is," he told AFP. "The good answer which we are working on in Total is to lower the break-even," he said, adding that the objective is to break even at \$60 per barrel in 2017.

Pouyanne added that he was not surprised by OPEC's decision last week against slashing high output levels. He added that he expected "non-OPEC supply" to contract next year.

"Non-OPEC supply will contract because US supply will contract from the middle of next year. From mid-2016 we should begin to see a contraction of US production," he said. Pouyanne is one of several big names from the oil industry attending the conference, including the CEO of Shell, Ben Van Beurden and Amin Nasser, the president and CEO of Saudi Aramco. — AFP

REGIONAL INVESTORS DUMP STOCKS; NO BUYING IMPETUS

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Most Middle East markets fell yesterday as oil prices sank to their lowest in nearly seven years, spurring stock selling on the bourses of the region's energy producers.

Dubai's index dropped 2.2 percent to its lowest close since December last year, although property and telecom stocks helped Abu Dhabi's bourse edge up 0.3 percent. "Local sellers led the market lower today," said Julian Bruce, head of institutional trading at Dubai-based EFG Hermes, adding there were no market catalysts to generate buying demand. The divergence between the neighboring Emirati benchmarks was because retail investors dumped stocks in Dubai's bourse, while foreign institutions bought shares in Abu Dhabi. Dubai's Emaar Properties and Drake and Scull two favorite stocks of retail traders - declined 4 and 3 percent respectively. Abu Dhabi's Aldar Properties climbed 1.7 percent on net foreign buying, according to Bruce. Brent crude prices, the globally traded oil benchmark, slumped to its lowest since March 2009 after OPEC's meeting ended in disagreement over production cuts and without a reference to its output ceiling.

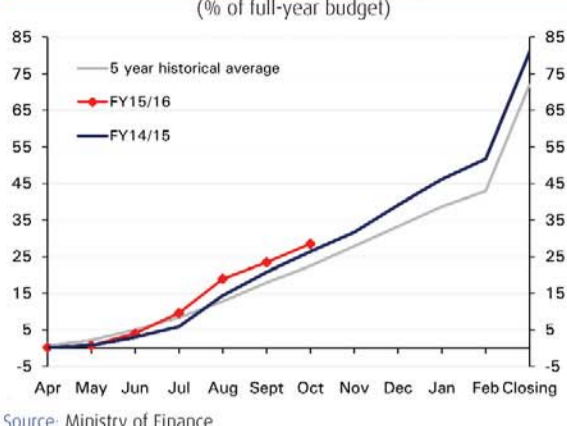
Such turmoil seemed to weigh heavy on Saudi Arabia investor sentiment. Riyadh's benchmark fell 1.3 percent to 7,167 points. But it remains above the psychologically important level of 7,000 points, having rallied from a 35-month closing low of 6,881 in mid-November.

Al-Tayyar Travel Group rose 0.3 percent to 74.25 riyals, although this was 2 riyals below its mid-session peak. The company announced before trading that it had bought 60 percent of local online hotel-booking company Almosafer for 22.5 million riyals (\$6 million). Qatar's index fell 0.8 percent and Kuwait's benchmark dipped 0.1 percent.

EGYPT SAGS

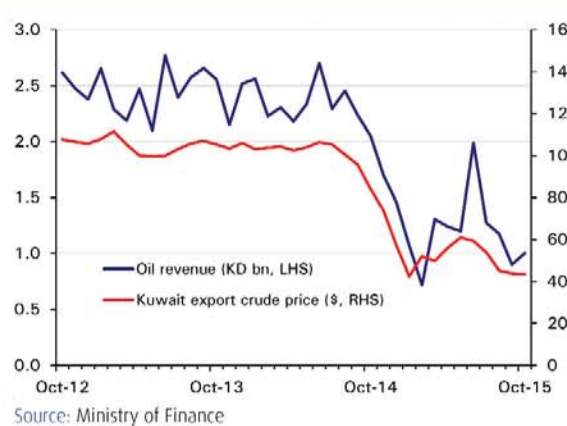
Cairo's benchmark slid 0.9 percent to 6,778 points, ending a four-session rally. A break above 7,000 could spur buyers to enter the market more aggressively, according to a Cairo-based trader. "There was some profit-taking by local institutions after recent gains," said Simon Kitchen, director of regional research at Cairo-based EFG Hermes. Commercial International Bank, a foreign investor favorite, slumped 3.5 percent, as international funds sold. — Reuters

Chart 1: Capital spending



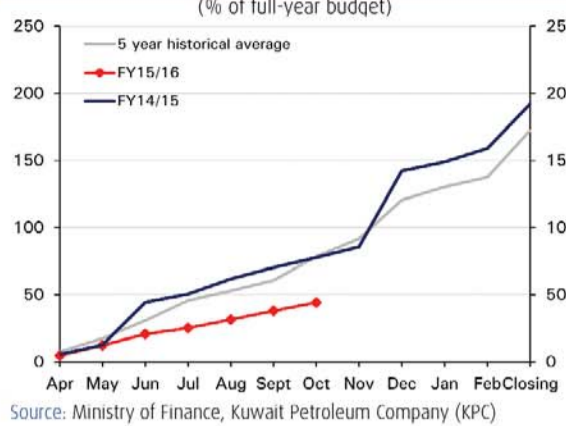
Source: Ministry of Finance

Chart 2: Monthly oil revenues and prices



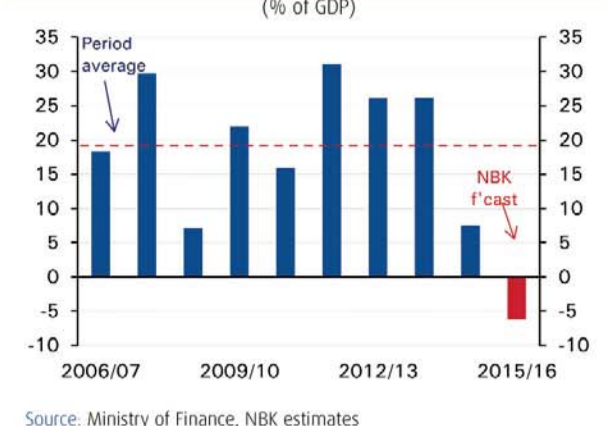
Source: Ministry of Finance

Chart 3: Non-oil revenues



Source: Ministry of Finance, Kuwait Petroleum Company (KPC)

Chart 4: Budget balance



Source: Ministry of Finance, NBK estimates

SPENDING PACE HOLDING DESPITE OIL PRICE DROP

NBK REPORT ON PUBLIC FINANCE

KUWAIT: The interim public finance figures for the first seven months of fiscal year 2015/16 (FY15/16) point to rising government spending as the oil price fell below the budgeted price of \$45 per barrel. Capital spending continues at a better pace than the five-year average, while revenues remain pressured due to the drop in oil prices from a year ago. The government recorded a preliminary deficit of KD 1.8 billion during the period before the transfer to the Reserve Fund for Future Generations (RFFG). We estimate FY15/16 will close with a deficit of KD 2.5 billion or 6.2 percent of GDP.

As of October, reported government spending stood at KD 5.7 billion fiscal-year-to-date (fytd); this is 24 percent lower than during the same period last year. However, at 30 percent of the FY15/16 budget, the spending rate is in line with the five-year October average. Actual spending was even higher at KD 10.0 billion according to new data being published by the Ministry of Finance on actual withdrawals made from the government accounts at the Central Bank of Kuwait. This accounting difference is related to delays in reporting expenditures by some ministries. Adding to that, the government has deferred payments in favor of the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) and the Public Institute for Social Security (PIFSS) amounting to KD 1.16 billion.

Current spending

Current spending, which constitutes the bulk of total spending, came in at KD 5.1 billion fytd, down 27 percent y/y. Current spending is driven mainly by the 'miscellaneous expenditures & transfers' chapter, which includes military salaries and transfers to PIFSS. Miscellaneous expenditures & transfers came in at KD 2.8 billion fytd, down 27 percent year-on-year (y/y) due to a significant KD 917 million drop in support to refined products and LNG. Goods & services stood at KD 0.3 billion fytd, down by 71 percent y/y as the

MEW spending on Chapter 2 declined by KD 822 million or 87 percent y/y. Wages & salaries stood at KD 1.9 billion fytd, down 1 percent y/y mostly due to basis effects.

Capital spending was KD 0.7 billion fytd in October, up 11 percent y/y. It currently stands at 29 percent of the full-year budget, compared to the five-year average of 22 percent. This reflects the government's commitment to the strategic

in 20 percent of budget for the first six months of FY15/16. The development plan for FY15/16 includes 531 projects and a budget of KD 6.3 billion. So far, KD 1.3 billion is disbursed on 172 projects. Spending on oil projects reached KD 654 million, or 17 percent of planned expenditures; spending on electricity projects reached KD 167.3 million, almost half of its budget.

the remaining of the fiscal year; still, we expect oil revenues to reach KD 13.0 billion by the end of the fiscal year, surpassing the government's official projections by 21 percent.

Similarly, non-oil revenues were down 35 percent on lower miscellaneous revenues & fees, which make up a bulk of non-oil revenues. The main reason was the absence of any payments from the UN Compensation Commission (UNCC) this fiscal year; the UNCC payments, which are paid by Iraq in compensation for damages from the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990, were postponed according to a UN decision in December 2014 supported by Kuwait. In October 2015, the UN granted Iraq a further one year postponement. Outstanding claims stands at \$4.6 billion representing a claim in favor of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation. Excluding the UNCC payment received in June 2014 of around KD 290 million, non-oil revenues this year are down by 7 percent.

The government recorded a preliminary deficit of KD 1.8 billion during the period before the transfer to the RFFG. The interim 7-month expenditures, which are under-reported, stood at KD 5.7 billion. However, the actual withdrawals from government accounts at the Central Bank of Kuwait, as reported by the Ministry of Finance, stood at KD 10 billion as of October. The monthly follow up report indicates that the ministry has deferred payments of around KD 690 million and KD 467 million in favor of the MEW and PIFSS, respectively. As a result, a reported preliminary surplus of KD 3.7 billion becomes an actual deficit of 1.8 billion after including the deferred payments and before the transfer to the RFFG. We estimate FY15/16 will close with a deficit of KD 2.5 billion or 6.2 percent of GDP. Total government spending is projected to decline by 15 percent in FY15/16 while revenues are seen declining by 37 percent.

Table 1: Government revenues and expenditures

	Actual (7 months)		7 months: actual to full-year budget		Average ³	
	FY15/16	FY14/15	FY15/16	FY14/15	%	%
	KD bn	KD bn	% y/y			
Revenues	9.4	17.2	-45.3	77.2	112.9	
Oil	8.8	16.3	-46.0	81.6	116.5	
Non-oil	0.6	1.0	-34.7	44.1	78.3	
Expenditures	5.7	7.5	-24.0	29.9	30.0	
Wages	1.9	1.9	-0.6	35.9	28.5	
Goods & services	0.3	1.1	-71.3	12.5	28.4	
Vehicles & equipment	0.05	0.04	30.4	18.9	13.7	
Projects, maint. & land	0.6	0.6	9.7	29.9	23.9	
Miscellaneous & transfers	2.8	3.9	-27.3	31.8	33.5	
Balance	3.7	9.7				
After RFFG	2.7	5.4				
Actual expenditures*	10.0					
Unclassified expenditures	4.3					
Deferred payments to MEW	0.7					
Deferred payments to PIFSS	0.5					
Actual balance	-1.8					
Note:						
Capital expenditures ²	5.1	6.9	-27.1	30.1	29.8	
Capital expenditures	0.7	0.6	11.1	28.5	22.5	
Oil production (mbpd)	2.69	2.76	-2.5			
Oil prices (\$/bbl, KEC)	43.1	84.0	-48.1			

Source: Ministry of Finance, NBK estimates

Oil revenues

developmental projects. Spending on projects, maintenance & land purchases reached KD 620 million, up by 10 percent y/y. Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) and Ministry of Public Work recorded the highest spending to budget in Chapter 4, at 35 percent and 38 percent, respectively.

Project follow-up reports show that project implementation is on schedule. The half-year follow up report by the Senior Committee for Planning and Development shows investment spend-

Total government revenues were KD 9.4 billion in the seven months to October, down 45 percent y/y. Both oil and non-oil revenues witnessed significant declines, recording drops of 46 percent and 35 percent y/y, respectively.

Oil revenues remain low as oil prices linger below the budgeted oil price and below last year's average. The Kuwait export crude (KEC) price averaged \$43.5 per barrel in October 2015. Oil prices are likely to remain relatively subdued for

TURKEY NEEDS 'MORE ORTHODOX' MONETARY POLICY: ECONOMY CHIEF

ISTANBUL: Turkey needs a "more orthodox" and predictable monetary policy, the country's newly appointed economy czar said yesterday, throwing his weight behind a central bank drive to simplify its intricate system of multiple rates.

In some of his first public comments since being appointed deputy prime minister in charge of the economy late last month, Mehmet Simsek sought to reassure investors he was committed to fiscal discipline and central bank independence.

He also said a worst case of "zero relations" with Russia would cost Turkey about \$9 billion, underscoring the economic fallout of tensions with Moscow after Turkey shot down a Russian jet last month. Speaking to broadcaster NTV, Simsek said that predictability in monetary and fiscal policy should increase, adding that he planned to announce a roadmap for reforms this week.

"We should present a more orthodox monetary policy," he said.

Central Bank Governor Erdem Basci said he will look to simplify Turkey's system of multiple interest rates once the US Federal Reserve begins raising rates. That could come as early as this month; the Fed is widely expected to raise rates for the first time in almost a decade at its Dec. 16 meeting. Basci has also hinted that Turkey may raise rates once the Fed moves.

Investors have longed complained about the complexity of the corridor system, which comprises three different rates,

including the benchmark repo rate. More welcome still would be a rate increase, to allay persistent investor concern about central bank independence. The bank has kept the repo rate at 7.5 percent since February, even though economists think it needs to rise to put a floor under the tumbling lira.

But President Tayyip Erdogan has repeatedly railed against high rates, breeding concern about political meddling in policy and sending the lira to a series of record lows. —Reuters

News

in brief

Kuwaiti dinar holds steady against dollar

KUWAIT: The US dollar was stable against the Kuwaiti dinar exchanging at 0.303 while the euro moved down to KD 0.329 yesterday as compared to Sunday's trades, the Central Bank of Kuwait said. The CBK said the sterling pound was stable at KD 0.458, as well as the Swiss franc to KD 0.304 while the Japanese yen firmed at KD 0.002.

Aramco CEO sees oil prices adjusting in 2016

DOHA: Saudi Arabian Oil Co (Saudi Aramco) Chief Executive Officer Amin Nasser said yesterday he hoped to see prices adjust beginning in 2016 as non-conventional oil supplies start to decline. "This year you see a decline, there is no additional unconventional oil coming to the market, actually there is a decline," Nasser told an energy conference in Qatar's capital Doha. "The supply and demand imbalance in the market will adjust and stabilize and the gap will be closing, and we will be seeing, hopefully, an adjustment in the prices going forward starting from 2016," he said.

Saudi to stop cultivating green fodder in 3 years

ABU DHABI: Saudi Arabia will stop the cultivation of all kinds of green fodder in the next three years in order to save water, a cabinet statement said yesterday. The statement, published on the official news agency SPA, also said the cabinet agreed that the agriculture ministry should present a study to detail the phasing out of the crops and alternatives to sourcing animal feed at suitable prices. Saudi Arabia has been steadily reducing wheat cultivation and aims to be completely reliant on imports by 2016, also to save water.

Egypt treasury bond yields slightly lower

CAIRO: Yields on five-year and 10-year Egyptian treasury bonds fell marginally at an auction yesterday. The average yield at a sale of five-year bonds declined to 13.172 percent from 13.173 percent at the previous auction on Nov 23, while the 10-year bond yield fell to 15.373 from 15.378 percent last month. The central bank had offered 3 billion Egyptian pounds of the five-year bonds and 2.25 billion pounds of the 10-year issue and sold them all.

Khodari withdraws capital increase application

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's Abdullah Abdul Mohsin Al-Khodari Sons has withdrawn its application with the Capital Market Authority for a capital increase due to current market conditions, it said in a statement yesterday. The builder in November last year appointed GIB Capital to manage its proposed 500 million riyal (\$133.3 million) capital hike. In yesterday's bourse filing, the company said it expected to resubmit its capital increase application to the regulator during 2016.

UAE's Jenaan exiting Egypt wheat investment in remote region

ABU DHABI: United Arab Emirates agricultural firm Jenaan Investments said yesterday it was looking to exit its wheat investments in Egypt's remote East Oweinat region. "The infrastructure is poor and it is very far away from Cairo, it is 1,300 kilometres (807.78 miles), so management wise it is difficult," Chairman Mohamed Al-Otaiba told Reuters on the sidelines of the SIAL Abu Dhabi food exhibition yesterday.

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.479
Indian Rupees	4.567
Pakistani Rupees	2.891
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.138
Nepali Rupees	2.873
Singapore Dollar	219.600
Hongkong Dollar	39.387
Bangladesh Taka	3.862
Philippine Peso	6.484
Thai Baht	8.520
Malaysian Ringgit	72.852

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	153.010
Jordanian Dinar	430.260
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.035
Syrian Lira	2.177
Morocco Dirham	31.131

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	305.250
Euro	335.780
Sterling Pound	464.900
Canadian dollar	230.200
Turkish Lira	105.530
Swiss Franc	309.110
US Dollar Buying	304.050

GOLD	
20 Gram	222.220
10 Gram	113.805
5 Gram	57.97

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	
Japanese Yen	461.91	
Sterling Pound	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	

DOLLAR 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	0.452647	0.461647
Czech Korune	0.004210	0.016210
Danish Krone	0.040235	0.045235
Euro	0.325018	0.333018
Norwegian Krone	0.031567	0.036767
Romanian Leu	0.073575	0.073575
Slovakia	0.009104	0.019104
Swedish Krona	0.031753	0.036753
Swiss Franc	0.298226	0.308426
Turkish Lira	0.100424	0.110724

Australasia	
Australian Dollar	0.214655
New Zealand Dollar	0.197364

America		
Canadian Dollar	0.221700	0.230200
US Dollars	0.300400	0.304900
US Dollars Mint	0.300900	0.304900

Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003510	0.004110
Chinese Yuan	0.046192	0.049692
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037198	0.039948
Indian Rupee	0.004325	0.004715
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002384	0.002564
Kenyan Shilling	0.002973	0.002973
Korean Won	0.000250	0.000265
Malaysian Ringgit	0.068766	0.074766
Nepalese Rupee	0.002917	0.003087
Pakistan Rupee	0.002702	0.002982
Philippine Peso	0.006423	0.006703
Sierra Leone	0.000071	0.000077
Singapore Dollar	0.213923	0.219923
South African Rand	0.015158	0.023658
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001767	0.002347
Taiwan	0.009185	0.009365
Thai Baht	0.008182	0.008732

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.800802	0.808802
Egyptian Pound	0.037152	0.040278
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000086
Iraqi Dinar	0.000201	0.000261
Jordanian Dinar	0.425485	0.432985
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.000251
Moroccan Dirhams	0.022135	0.046135
Nigerian Naira	0.001259	0.001894
Omani Riyal	0.784488	0.780168
Qatar Riyal	0.082927	0.084110
Saudi Riyal	0.800563	0.801263
Syrian Pound	0.001291	0.001511
Tunisian Dinar	0.147663	0.155663
Turkish Lira	0.100424	0.110724
UAE Dirhams	0.081923	0.083072
Yemeni Riyal	0.001376	0.001456

TAIWANTRADE LAUNCHES ARABIC ICT AND AUTOMOBILE PORTALS

The Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) recently announced two Arabic-language online portals, the Taiwantrade Arabic ICT Zone and the Taiwantrade Arabic Automobile Zone, on the Taiwantrade website, Taiwan's leading B2B platform.

Featuring over 900 Taiwanese ICT companies, 600 Auto parts companies, and a total of 10,000 selected product catalogs, the Arabic webpages offer a wide range of online services and provide an excellent way for enterprises in

the Middle East to explore and find Taiwanese suppliers.

Kuwait is currently Taiwan's 17th largest trading partner. Taiwan and the State Kuwait registered US\$6.8 billion in bilateral trade in 2014. Globally recognized as an economy of innovation, Taiwan not only supplies 85 percent of the world's Windows-based PCs but also provides around 80 percent of the world's data communications equipment. The ICT products and electronic components made by Taiwanese companies are consistently ranked among

the best in the world, and Taiwanese chip makers TSMC and UMC are behind nearly 50 percent of the world's semiconductor manufacturing business.

In addition to playing a vital role in the global IT supply chain, Taiwan is also one of the world's most important suppliers of aftermarket auto parts. Taiwan is the home of more than 2,800 auto parts and accessories makers with high production flexibility, low manufacturing costs, and extensive range of products.

To find out more about the

Taiwantrade Arabic ICT Zone and the Arabic Automobile Zone, visit <http://ict.ar.taiwantrade.com.tw> and <http://auto.ar.taiwantrade.com.tw/>.

About Taiwantrade

The Taiwantrade Arabic ICT Zone and the Taiwantrade Arabic Automobile Zone are part of the Taiwantrade website, Taiwan's leading B2B platform. Taiwantrade has 70,000 Taiwanese supplier members and 390,000 online product catalogs, and provides a wide range of online services to facilitate the trade

and exchange between Taiwanese and worldwide companies.

About TAITRA

Founded in 1970, the Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) is the foremost non-profit trade promotion organization in Taiwan. Jointly sponsored by the government, industry associations, and several commercial organizations, TAITRA assists Taiwan businesses and manufacturers in developing their brands and export businesses in overseas markets.

US ECONOMISTS TRIM FORECAST ON ECONOMY

NEW YORK: Business economists are slightly less bullish about prospects for economic growth next year, according to a survey published yesterday. The National Association for Business Economics says the average forecast is for growth of 2.6 percent next year, down slightly from 2.7 percent in its previous survey conducted in September. But they expect the jobs market to continue strengthening, with the unemployment rate dropping to 4.7 percent by the end of 2016. The rate now stands at 5 percent.

The survey conducted Nov. 6-18 among a panel of 49 business economists struck a slightly downbeat note as experts lowered earlier forecasts on a variety of measures of economic health, including housing starts and industrial production. Further out, two-thirds of those surveyed expect potential economic growth between 2 and 2.5 percent over the next five years.

Highlights of the association's survey:
Lower growth: In addition to the lowered forecast for gross domestic product next year, economists cut their expectation for

this year. GDP is now expected to grow 2.4 percent in 2015. A year ago, economists expected robust growth of 3.1 percent this year, which would have been the strongest since 2005. More hiring: Employers are expected to continue hiring more than 200,000 workers each month through next year. Pay for workers is expected to pick up, too. The average forecast is for hourly compensation to rise 2.8 percent next year, up from 2.2 percent expected this year.

Fed hike: Most of the economists in the survey believe the Federal Reserve will begin raising short-term rates from record lows at its next two-day meeting starting Dec. 15. They expect steady, but modest increases next year.

Higher borrowing rates: The yield on a key government bond that impacts rates on car loans, mortgages and other types of loans is expected to rise sharply, but not as fast as earlier forecasts. Economists expect the yield on the 10-year Treasury note to rise to 2.88 percent by the end of next year versus 2.27 percent on Friday. They had earlier forecast the yield to rise to 3 percent. —AP

OIL TORN BETWEEN FUNDAMENTALS AND HEDGE FUND POSITIONS: EXPERT

LONDON: Successful trading rule No. 1: do not enter any significant position until you have worked out an eventual exit strategy. Rule No. 1 is especially important if the position is large relative to the overall market or a large number of traders are all trying to put on the same position at the same time because the position could strain available liquidity.

The question of an exit strategy has become pressing in the oil market because of the enormous short positions accumulated by investors in the expectation oil prices are about to fall further.

Hedge funds and other money managers had amassed short positions amounting to 172 million barrels of crude oil in the main futures and options contract on the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX) by Dec. 1.

It was the third-largest short position ever recorded, after the 178 million barrel short positions reported earlier this year on March 24 and 31 (<http://tmsnrt.rs/1S1ArX4>). Short positions on NYMEX have almost doubled over the last seven weeks from a recent low of just 90 million barrels on Oct. 13.

If short positions in Brent are included, hedge funds have a combined short position of around 300 million barrels.

CARRY ON PUMPING

Oil ministers from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) ended their meeting on Friday without any agreement on production. The meeting had not been expected to agree on output cuts but failure to agree on any production target at all, even a fictional one, took the cartel to new levels of disarray.

Saudi Arabia, Iran and Iraq are all now set to produce as much as they can in a bid to defend their market share and maximize revenues. Russia has already increased its output to a record level and is expected to continue pumping as much as it can during 2016.

US shale producers have seen output

decline, but only modestly, while production from the Gulf of Mexico is actually increasing. OPEC is relying on strong consumption growth in 2016 to absorb the resumption of Iran's oil exports and all the other sources of extra supply.

OPEC's economic projections show global economic growth accelerating from 3.1 percent in 2015 to 3.4 percent in 2016. In the meantime, however, the market remains oversupplied, with rising stockpiles of both crude oil and refined products.

Most market analysts believe oil prices will now head even lower until U.S. oil producers stop drilling, stripper wells are shut in, or there is a change of heart in Riyadh, Tehran and Moscow.

WHAT NOW FOR PRICES?

The critical question is how that bearish outlook interacts with the enormous short position amassed by the hedge funds. The simple answer is oil prices will fall and the hedge funds will gradually be able to close out their positions in a falling market.

Prices have already slipped modestly by 50 cents on both WTI and Brent since the OPEC meeting ended without agreement. But the large number of short positions to be bought back and closed out could provide some support for prices in the near term.

If prices do not fall as the hedge funds expect, at least some of them will probably try to trim their positions and book profits. In both March and August this year the establishment of large short positions preceded sharp short-covering rallies.

In both cases, the initial short covering was relatively small scale and had little impact on prices; the main short covering rally arrived two to three weeks later, and saw prices leap by more than \$10 per barrel. Uncertainty about what happens next explains why implied volatility in oil options has soared: fundamentals point to a further drop in oil prices while market positioning points to a sharp rally. —Reuters



PUDON: Window cleaners work in a high-rise building in the Lujiazui Financial District in Pudong in Shanghai yesterday. —AFP

CHINA FX RESERVES PLUNGE TO LOWEST LEVEL SINCE FEB 2013

FUND OUTFLOWS PUT PRESSURE ON CB TO SUPPORT YUAN

BEIJING: China's foreign exchange reserves, the world's largest, fell by \$87.2 billion in November to \$3.44 trillion, central bank data showed yesterday, the lowest level since February 2013 and the third largest monthly drop on record.

Analysts blamed the fall partly the dollar's rally during November, which reduced the value of non-dollar reserves, and partly on China's central bank selling dollars to support the yuan.

The onshore yuan is down over 3 percent so far this year, and remains under pressure as investors expect US interest rates to be increased for the first time in around a decade later this month.

The fall in foreign exchange reserves was the biggest since a record monthly drop of \$93.9 billion in August. China's FX reserves have declined for the last five quarters and posted a record quarterly fall in the third quarter. "The pick-up in capital outflows appears to have been predominantly driven by increased expectations for renminbi (yuan) depreciation," Julian Evans-Pritchard at Capital Economics said in a note.

"A rise in offshore interest rates due to the increased likelihood of a December Fed rate hike will also have added to outflow pressures."

China's surprise devaluation of the yuan on

Aug. 11 fueled a wave of capital outflows on fears the world's second-largest economy might be slowing more sharply than thought, and on worries of a possible interest rate rise by the US Federal Reserve. The yuan's depreciation has been even more marked in the offshore market, where it has lost over 4 percent this year.

Trading at 6.47 per yuan dollar, the offshore rate is at its widest discount to the onshore closing rate since September, indicating enduring bearishness. Zhou Hao, economist at Commerzbank in Singapore, wrote in a research note that the Peoples Bank of China has switched strategies to manage a softening to the yuan-dollar rate instead of trying to halt it completely.

"It seems that China's central bank has changed its strategy in market intervention," wrote Zhou. "Recall what happened in August and September: USD-CNY was stable despite soaring trading volumes, as the central bank sold USD aggressively to safeguard its currency."

Downward trend

"Afterwards, USD-CNY trading volume illustrates a clear downward trend since September, and CNY gradually weakens in tandem. The dif-

ference shows that a 'managed depreciation' in CNY is acceptable from Chinese authorities' perspective." For its part the central bank has repeatedly said it sees no reason for the currency to depreciate further.

The value of China's gold reserves stood at \$59.52 billion at the end of November, down from \$63.26 billion at the end of October, the People's Bank of China (PBOC) said on its website.

China's International Monetary Fund (IMF) reserve position was at \$4.60 billion, down from \$4.64 billion the previous month. It held \$10.18 billion of IMF Special Drawing Rights at the end of last month, compared with \$10.36 billion at the end of October.

The central bank in July shifted to reporting its foreign exchange reserves on a monthly basis after adopting the IMF's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). The bank had previously released the data on a quarterly basis. On Nov. 30, the IMF admitted China's yuan into its benchmark currency basket, in a victory for Beijing's campaign for recognition as a global economic power, and the PBOC's vice governor Yi Gang said he expected the inclusion would make the yuan more stable. —Reuters

CUBA NEARS DEAL WITH PARIS CLUB ON DEBT FORGIVENESS

HAVANA: Cuba is near a deal with 15 rich creditor nations of the Paris Club to restructure \$16 billion in debt stemming from a 1986 default, with creditors expected to forgive most of the amount owed, diplomats close to the talks said. The parties will meet in Paris later this week and, after two years of informal discussions, are close to a multilateral deal, the diplomats said.

"Cuba has agreed to pay the principal of around \$5 billion owed since its 1986 default in exchange for forgiving \$11 billion in service charges, interest and penalties," said one diplomat from a major creditor nation. "Negotiations are now more about how much time they need to pay it and how much of the money will be reinvested in Cuba."

Cuba has secured investment agreements from creditors in previous debt negotiations and is seeking similar commitments from the Paris Club nations, the diplomats said.

The Paris Club is an informal group of creditor governments from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

It has a 15-member working group on Cuba that excludes those countries - the United States among them - that do not hold the debt under negotiation. Most of the creditors are willing to show flexibility due to their increased interest in doing business in Cuba following the Communist-run island's detente with the United States and continuing domestic reforms.

US President Barack Obama and Cuban President Raul Castro announced a year ago their governments would work toward a normalization of relations after decades of confrontation, although a US trade embargo of Cuba remains in place. Castro, who replaced his ailing brother Fidel as president in 2008, has made restoring Cuba's international financial credibility a priority. He has reined in imports and cut state payrolls and subsidies while insisting the near-bankrupt government

get its financial house in order. Cuba has had a trade and current account surplus since 2011 and has improved its payments record to creditors and suppliers. In the past four years, Cuba has restructured its debt with Japanese commercial creditors, Mexico and Russia, each time obtaining reductions of 70 percent to 90 percent in what was owed and extended payment plans it could meet in exchange for greater investment opportunities on the island. Cuba also has restructured its debt with China, estimated by local economists at more than \$6 billion. "Our companies want this out of the way so they can obtain financing for investments," one European diplomat said. "They want to get here before the Americans lift the embargo." Cuba is not a member of the World Bank nor any other multilateral lending institution.

"A comprehensive deal would go a long way toward normalizing Cuba's international financial relations and gaining access to official trade credits," said Richard Feinberg, a non-resident senior fellow of the Washington-based Brookings Institution and the author of several studies on Cuba's need to join the international financial community. "However, a deal with the Paris Club will not get Cuba a good international credit rating. That can only come from more robust export earnings and a healthier sustainable balance of payments," Feinberg said. Cuba does not comment on debt negotiations. The government last reported its "active" foreign debt, accumulated after it defaulted in 1986, at \$12.5 billion in 2012. It no longer reports its "passive" debt from before the default, the principal of which local economists estimate at \$8 billion. —Reuters



BRUSSELS: (From L) Managing director of the Treasury Bruno Brezard, Dutch Finance Minister and president of Eurogroup Jeroen Dijsselbloem, French Economy, Finance Trade Minister Michel Sapin talk with Spanish Economy minister Cristobal Romero and Greek Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos during a Eurogroup meeting at the EU headquarters in Brussels yesterday. —AFP



AMSTERDAM: Fluor COO Peter Oosterveer (right) and Stork CEO Arnold Steenbakker speak during a press conference on the acquisition of Stork by US industrial group Fluor yesterday in Amsterdam. The Dutch service provider of the oil, gas, chemical and energy will be acquired for 695 million euros. The Dutch service provider of the oil, gas, chemical and energy will be acquired for 695 million euros. —AFP

EUROPE SHARES RISE, ASIA STOCKS RALLY

LONDON: European shares started the week strongly yesterday, buoyed by gains on Wall Street and a weaker euro, while the dollar rose after upbeat jobs data on Friday bolstered investor confidence in the strength of the US economy.

late this week which is expected to show the world's second-largest economy is still sluggish.

Crude oil prices held near their lowest levels of the year after OPEC failed to agree on output targets that could cut a global glut of supply. Market moves this week may be muted as investors digest the European Central

Bank's moves last week to stimulate growth and inflation, which disappointed many, and look ahead to next week's US Federal Reserve policy meeting, at which rates are expected to rise for the first time since 2006.

The pan-European FTSEurofirst 300 stocks index rose 1.3 percent as a weaker euro lifted exporters. Germany's DAX added 1.6 percent.

European shares closed at three-week lows on Friday after the euro soared in reaction to Thursday's ECB decision.

"The euro dropping away is supportive for the equity markets," said Hantec Markets analyst Richard Perry. A notable faller yesterday was Sweden's Electrolux, down 11 percent after its \$3.3 billion deal to buy General Electric's appliance business fell through.

A 2 percent gain on Wall Street on Friday lifted European equity investors' spirits. That followed data showing 211,000 new US jobs were created in November, which cemented already firm expectations the Fed would raise interest rates on Dec 16 and was perceived as a sign of the US economy's strength.

ECB President Mario Draghi, in a speech in New York on Friday, said more stimulus could be deployed if necessary.

Dealers tracked a surge on Wall Street to return to buying, following Friday's sharp sell-off in Asia that was fuelled by disappointment with the European Central Bank's (ECB) revised stimulus program.

The US Labor Department said Friday that 211,000 jobs were created in November and the unemployment rate held at five percent. Wall Street's three main indexes jumped more than two percent Friday on the report.

"The post-payrolls rally in US equities was notable," Kimberly Martin, a markets strategist in Wellington at Bank of New Zealand, said in an e-mail to clients.

"The market appears to have read the data as reason for confidence in the economic outlook, rather than taking flight at the prospect of imminent reduction in US Fed stimulus."

While a lift in US borrowing costs would usually be expected to cause selling, analysts said dealers have been soothed by indications from the Fed that any increases would be small and gradual.

With a US rate increase almost certain, the dollar pushed higher against the yen and euro. The single currency was also weighed down by comments from ECB chief Mario Draghi that he could strengthen its stimulus. — Agencies

Asia markets rally

Asian stock markets mostly climbed yesterday after another strong US jobs reading provided fresh evidence the economy is recovering and reinforced expectations of a December interest rate rise. In China, the CSI300 index of the largest listed companies in Shanghai and Shenzhen rose 0.3 percent, as did the Shanghai Composite. In currency markets, the dollar index, which measures the greenback against a basket of currencies, rose 0.2 percent.

The euro, which saw its biggest daily gain in seven years on Thursday on disapproval at the ECB's easing package, fell 0.4 percent to \$1.0844.

Table with multiple sections: Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report, Sunday 06 December 2015, Index, Trades, Basic Materials, Industrials, Consumer Goods, Health Care, Consumer Services, Telecom, Real Estate, Financial Services, Investment Instruments, Technology, Parallel Market.

Table with multiple sections: National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets, Daily Report, Global Stock Indices, MENA Stock Indices, Global Currencies Exchange Rate, MENA Currencies Exchange Rate, Global Interest Rates, Global Bond Yields, Commodities.

For more information, call Global Investment House on 1 80 42 42, www.globalinv.net



Rolls-Royce Phantom Series



Rolls-Royce Wraith

ROLLS-ROYCE MOTOR CARS' UNCOMPROMISING PROVENANCE PROGRAM AVAILABLE AT ALI ALGHANIM & SONS AUTOMOTIVE

KUWAIT: Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive, the sole authorized dealer of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars and the official importer of BMW and MINI in Kuwait, has revealed the latest details of its Provenance program, the globally recognized program for pre-owned Rolls-Royce Motor Cars.

All pre-owned Rolls-Royce vehicles must meet the exact criteria set by Rolls-Royce Motor Cars to attain the Provenance title,

offering uncompromising standards, quality and excellence.

Detailed inspection procedures are carried out by factory-trained technicians, including a full road test to ensure that each car reaches the highest standards prior to delivery. Additionally, all Provenance Rolls-Royce vehicles must have been maintained in strict adherence to Rolls-Royce servicing requirements and are only sold through the interna-

tional network of authorized Rolls-Royce Motor Cars dealers. "The Rolls-Royce Provenance Program offers a wider range of models for our customers to enjoy the unique Rolls-Royce automotive experience. This exceptional privilege comes without compromising any of the luxury and quality elements where Rolls-Royce will always represent the pinnacle," said Yousuf Al-Qatami, the General Manager of Ali Alghanim & Sons

Automotive. Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive provides an unparalleled peace of mind to their customers when purchasing a Rolls-Royce Provenance. In addition to receiving a rigorous pre-delivery inspection and preparation, each Provenance Rolls-Royce offers the reassurance of an independently obtained vehicle history and unlimited mileage verification, together with a minimum 24 month warranty, fully inclusive servicing and 24-

hour roadside assistance.

A combination of visionary engineering and hand-crafted build, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars are timeless, ultra-luxury vehicles, regardless of their age. The Provenance Program stays true to the marque's strive for excellence in every aspect of the brand and Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive ensures that Provenance Rolls-Royce vehicles are no exception.

2016 AND INVESTORS' DILEMMA

Hayder Tawfik

Historical market valuations tell us that equities and bonds at present are expensive. This is obviously a problem for short-term investors and not investors with a long-term horizon. Equities and bonds could remain expensive for much longer than investors' expectations.



This kind of problem appears from time to time. So what should investors do? The simple answer is that investors may look for some new or unfamiliar assets that may carry unnecessary risks. Both equities and bonds look expensive compared with their own history more so in the case of fixed income bonds. Unfortunately, for some investors the combination of the two assets classes does not give enough income to live on.

However, the historical fact is that at times of extreme low real interest rates and low inflation, equities and bonds delivered low returns. The high returns that achieved in the past decades in some ways were related to big international events, such as World Wars, Cold War, the fall of Berlin wall and recently the massive Quantitative Easing measures taken by most central banks around the world. The Quantitative Easing measures were taken to stop a world economic depression from occurring after the financial market crash of 2007. These events caused high volatility in the world financial markets but for sure they delivered returns way above the norm.

Over the past few years, global bond yields were kept artificially down. Most central banks managed to force savers to lend them at very low rates. This had made savers, investors and institutions

to take on more risks just to achieve higher returns. Higher returns can be achieved but investors have to apply some other measures rather than the traditional ones. Some of these measures are leverage, shorting and derivatives. These measures will force investors into unconventional asset allocation.

The most popular new asset class is property, being residential or commercial. The retreat of banks from the property market post 2007 crisis, has added interest from all sort of investors as these assets become available to them on more favorable terms. Real estate investments have low correlation with traditional equities and bonds.

I believe that the old way of investing is no longer an option. It is a bit risky to assume that savers and investors can easily expect large wealth increases from investing over the long term in the stock market. This is in no longer possible. Top rated governments bond yields have been falling for a long time and they cannot fall for much longer without nominal yields becoming negative - meaning that investors would in effect be paying the government to look after their money. Some government bond yields have entered the negative territories but this is abnormal and investors should be careful of not getting hurt.

In recent weeks some of these yields have risen which may indicate that the extreme low yields environment may be over. However, rising bond yields are a healthy development because they show that the economy is returning to normal. Lets hope so!

I personally believe that we have entered the age of very low interest rates environment. Where it requires investors to look to generate income away from equities and bonds. Again high quality real estate investments that generate real income are very much a desired option and for sure it should be added to most investors' portfolios.

— Rasameel Structured Finance Co.

CALIFORNIA'S NEWEST AIRPORT TERMINAL EXTENDS TO MEXICO

SAN DIEGO: The US-Mexico border is one of the world's most fortified international divides. Starting Wednesday, it will also be one of the only that has an airport straddling two countries. An investor group that includes Chicago billionaire Sam Zell built a sleek terminal in San Diego with a bridge that crosses a razor-wire border fence to Tijuana's decades-old airport. Passengers pay \$18 to walk a 390-foot overpass to Tijuana International Airport, a springboard about 30 Mexican destinations. Target customers are the estimated 60 percent of Tijuana airport passengers who come to the United States, about 2.6 million last year. Now they drive about 15 minutes to a congested land crossing, where they wait up to several hours to enter San Diego by car or on foot. The airport bridge is a five-minute walk to a US border inspector.

"It seems so much easier, so liberating," said Daniela Calderon, who flies from Tijuana four times a year to visit family in the central Mexican city of Morelia and has a friend drive her across the border from Riverside, California. The only other cross-border airport known to industry experts is in the European Union - between Basel, Switzerland, and France's Upper Rhine region - but it carries none of the political freight of San Diego and Tijuana. Mexicans who ran across the border illegally overwhelmed the Border Patrol until the mid-1990s, when new fences and additional agents heralded a massive surge in US enforcement on the 1,954-mile line with Mexico.

Modernism

Cross Border Xpress, one of the largest privately-operated US air terminals, wouldn't have happened if Tijuana didn't build its airport a few steps from the international line in the 1950s or if it wasn't surrounded by undeveloped land in a barren, industrial part of San Diego. "It's an amazing accident of geography," said Stanis Smith of Stantec Inc., the terminal's architect. "It could never happen again." The terminal is one of the last works by the late Ricardo Legorreta, whose bold colors helped bring Mexican modernism to a world stage and attracted a strong following in the American Southwest. The stone exterior mixes purple stucco and red limestone that takes on a deep, inky hue when it rains.

Stone gardens sprout agave and other desert plants. Passengers enter a courtyard with a reflecting pool to an airy building with ticket counters and kiosks. High, white ceilings have large orange circles of recessed lighting. Sparse decorative touches are onyx, including high-hanging black slabs near ticket counters and white spheres atop the escalators. Aesthetics are more dated in the Tijuana airport but passenger flow is the same. Ticketed passengers must carry luggage across a bridge with frosted glass windows to border inspectors in the receiving country and a wall in the middle to separate the two directions. —AP

JAZEERA AIRWAYS FINALIZES VOLUNTARY CAPITAL REDUCTION

AIRLINE TO START CASH PAYOUTS OF KD32.7 MILLION ON DEC 13

KUWAIT: Jazeera Airways yesterday announced it has finalized its voluntary capital reduction process to bring down its capital from KD42 million to KD20 million to match the size of its current operations after it exited the aircraft leasing business. As part of the process, the company will issue cash payouts worth a total KD32.7 million starting Sunday, December 13, 2015.

The KD32.7 million cash payouts include:

- KD22 million for a share buyback program for 220 million shares at a nominal price of 100 fils
- KD10.7 million in accumulated profits and other reserves that are required by law to be distributed as part of the capital reduction

With the last tranche of payments concluding next week, total payouts to Jazeera Airways shareholders in 2015 come to KD 52.7 million, after including the KD20 million in special cash dividends distributed June 2015.

Jazeera Airways capital reduction payouts will commence on Sunday December 13, 2015, via the Kuwait Clearing Company (KCC). Accordingly, trading on the Jazeera Airways stock will be suspended on the Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) on Wednesday December 9, 2015 while shareholder records are readjusted at KCC to take the capital reduction into consideration. Trading will resume on Thursday December 10, 2015 at a new opening price to be determined by the KSE.



FOR COFFEE ENTREPRENEUR, TROUBLED BRAZIL STILL WORTH THE GRIND

RIO DE JANEIRO: Opening a gourmet cafe in a country deep in economic and political hot water might seem risky, but like many foreigners, Australian entrepreneur Duncan Hay still thinks Brazil is a tasty investment. The 44-year-old went through the grinder getting ready for this month's planned opening of Kraft Cafe, specializing in high-end cappuccinos and the like, in Rio's swanky Ipanema neighborhood.

After a spell a few years back as Latin America's economic poster child, Brazil has slid from gentle decline to nosedive, with a biting recession, gaping budget deficit, a massive corruption scandal and the start of impeachment proceedings against President Dilma Rousseff.

Hay's worries are more down to earth. Unscrupulous suppliers, officials needing months for paperwork that in some countries would take only a week, and constant, alarming cost overruns the headaches have been continuous. "It has cost me two times more than I thought it would," Hay told AFP, as a crew put finishing touches to the cafe. "People tell me that's normal in Brazil: that you take a figure and double it."

Hay's experience will be familiar to anyone who has faced the overregulation, graft, high taxes and other self-inflicted damage in the world's seventh biggest economy. It's the bitter brew, known as the "custo Brasil," or Brazil cost, that has pushed Brazil down to 116 on the World Bank's ranking of business-friendly countries.

A good deal?

But a surprising number of foreign investors, Hay among them, have kept faith. In fact by some measurements, foreigners now believe more in Brazil than Brazilians themselves. Data from PricewaterhouseCoopers shows mergers and acquisition deals signed by Brazilians plummeting 23 percent in the first nine months of this year, compared to the same period in 2014.

Foreigner-signed deals, by contrast, rose three percent and now outnumber domestic signings. With a population of 204 million, an emerging middle class and diversified economy, Brazil is just too full of potential to ignore, despite the crisis. Even if total foreign direct investment is down — \$62.4 billion last year against \$65.3 billion in 2012 — Brazil is still the main target for FDI in Latin America and the fifth

biggest in the world, says Santander bank.

Andre Perfeito, chief economist at Gradual Investimentos, said the crumbling economy presents "a real opportunity in a key market," especially for foreigners buying into the national currency, which is down a third against the dollar this year. "It's very cheap to buy any assets here now," Perfeito said.

PricewaterhouseCoopers's Rogerio Gollo also says that for "strategic buyers," it's the right time to take advantage of the weak real and buy Brazilian. Strong coffee, strong business - Hay's start-up investment of 700,000 reais, or \$187,000, is a tiny drop in a \$2.3 trillion national economy, but his Kraft Cafe adventure says a lot about why foreigners fear-and still love-doing business in Brazil.

Hay was laid off by oilfield services giant Schlumberger in February as the oil industry downturn rippled through Brazil. But not wanting to leave the country, he looked about and

saw what seemed like an ideal niche.

Although Brazil is the world's biggest coffee grower, it's hard to get a really good espresso in Rio, let alone one of those fancy lattes with decorative leaves poured into the milk.

"All the coffee here tastes like charcoal and water," Hay said. So he found a rental space, studied the art of roasting and brewing, and came up with a menu that, in contrast to most Rio cafes, will focus on fresh, health-conscious sandwiches, raw food and light meals. But putting that simple idea for a 15-seat cafe into practice meant suffering the full Brazilian experience.

'Mafia' and beach life

Paperwork took three to four months, only concluding in October, a process that in the United States would take a mere four days, according to World Bank data. Even in more comparable China, which ranks 84th in the business-friendly rankings, it takes only 30 days. —AFP

RUSSIAN BAN ON TURKISH FRUIT AND VEG MAY REDUCE INFLATION

ISTANBUL: Russia's import ban on Turkish fresh fruit and vegetables is likely to leave Turkey with a supply glut that could push down prices and, economists say, shave half a percentage point off the inflation rate. Moscow has approved a raft of sanctions in retaliation for Turkey's downing of one of its warplanes over Syria late last month, banning imports of everything from tomatoes and apricots to chicken products and salt.

Turkey's agricultural exports to Russia amount to \$1.27 billion annually, with food accounting for \$764 million of that, Agriculture Minister Faruk Celik said on Wednesday.

Companies are looking for alternative markets but representatives in the sector don't expect to find any soon. Already there are reports of falling tomato prices at wholesalers. At a Friday market in the working-class neighborhood of Gultepe in Istanbul, some sellers said they were starting to see an impact even though Russia's food sanctions don't take

effect until Jan. 1.

"Prices have decreased a little bit," said 42-year-old Hasan as he sliced off pieces of tomato to offer to passers-by. "It will be good because we have so many poor people and they need cheaper prices."

Most of the sellers in the market were selling tomatoes for around 4 lira (\$1.38) a kilogram. One, 31-year-old Vedat Mut, said he believed tomato prices could fall back to where they were earlier this year around 1.5 lira a kilogram.

Turkish shoppers are used to steady price hikes, thanks to an inflation rate that is running at about 8 percent year-on-year. Price falls are far rarer.

Economists say a lasting fall in prices could reduce the inflation rate by as much as 0.5 percentage point on an annual basis in the coming months. That may be welcome news for the central bank, which has been fighting to rein in the inflationary effect of the chronic slide in the currency.



KUWAIT: Bader Al-Weqayan, accompanied by the Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of National Industries Company, Dr Adel Al-Subeih, and the Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors and Director General of Kuwait Credit Bank, Salah Al-Mudhaf, in addition to representatives of the Ministry of Public Works, Ministry of Electricity & Water and Kuwait Municipality, attend the inauguration of the exhibition. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



FIFTH INDUSTRIES & BUILDING EXHIBITION OPENS

MORE THAN 70 GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES AND PRIVATE ENTITIES PARTICIPATE

KUWAIT: The activities of the Fifth Session of Industries & Building Exhibition commenced yesterday under the auspices and presence of His Excellency Minister of State for Housing Affairs Yasir Abul, which is organized by "Expo-Tag" for Exhibitions & Conferences and in Collaboration with National Industries Company, at Jumeirah Kuwait Hotel. The activities of this Exhibition will continue until December 10 by the participation of many governmental authorities and more than 70 specialized companies in finishing, decoration and contracting world related to construction and building fields.

The Director General of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare, Eng. Bader Al-Weqayan, accompanied by the Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of National Industries Company, Dr Adel Al-Subeih, and the Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors and Director General of Kuwait Credit Bank, Salah Al-Mudhaf, in addition to representatives of the Ministry of Public Works, Ministry of Electricity & Water and Kuwait Municipality, has

participated in the Exhibition's opening ceremony.

On this occasion, Dalia Wafai, the Executive Director of "Expo-Tag" Company for Exhibitions and Conferences and the organizer of the exhibition, said that the Exhibition is privileged with a number of platinum and golden sponsorships by a number of companies and, this particular session, is distinguished by the participation of many governmental authorities, namely: the Public Authority for Housing Welfare, the Public Authority for Industry, Housing Welfare, Kuwait Municipality, the Ministry of Public Works, Ministry of Electricity & Water and Kuwait Credit Bank.

Wafai added that the success achieved by Industries & Building Exhibition during its four previous sessions reassures to what extent the competent companies and authorities are confident in this large industrial gathering which serves and supports the construction and rehabilitation sector in the State of Kuwait.

Wafai further added that the Fifth Session of

Industries & Building Exhibition endeavors to meet all needs of the local market with regard to the construction and building sector that concern the private housing projects or development projects in various sectors, by offering the most recent developments in this industry worldwide.

She also indicated that the participating governmental authorities in this Exhibition will be ready to answer all inquiries which may be raised by the citizens in relation to the building, construction and housing sector process as well as working for facilitating the issuance of licenses, solving any pending problems which may be dealt with through the Exhibition in addition to the offering of huge discounts to be agreed upon with the participating companies.

Wafai clarified that the Exhibition has become an annual national demonstration by focusing on the national industry and the national products in the building, construction, designing and decoration fields as well all the requirements needed by the building phases and their relevant products through the invitation and participation of many of the operating companies in this field, the thing which will enable the Kuwaiti citizen to obtain all his needs in this connection under one ceiling.

Wafai further indicated that the participating companies in this Exhibition will provide all the building, finishing & decoration needs by offering different products of thermal insulation, all types of cooling & refrigeration systems, water heaters, suspended ceilings, indoor partitions, doors & windows, shutters, ceramics, all types of marble, paints, cement products, metal structures, reinforcement iron, wooden doors, all types of lifts, pre-cast concrete slabs, aluminum products, walls & skylights, electrical doors, electrical boards, all types of stones & granites, sets of toilets & glassware, kitchens & specialty materials, pipes, pipe coating & flooring, all decoration & wall materials, landscaping, wooden cabinets and all types of furniture.

Finally, Wafai extended her sincere thanks to all the sponsors and participants in the Exhibition for their confidence and keenness to be present in this construction gathering in Kuwait whose number of participants are increasing year after year.

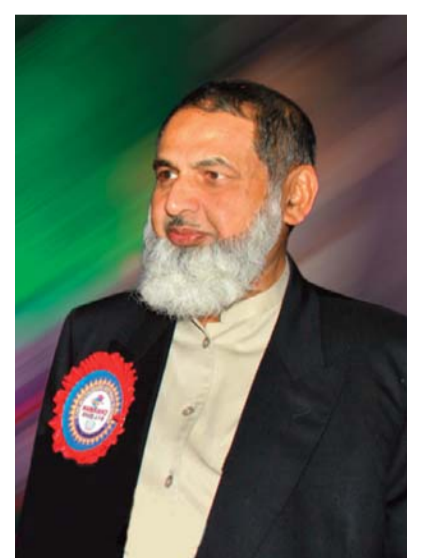


IISM CHAIRMAN NOMINATED TO THE GOVERNING BODY OF DR. APJ ABDULKALAM TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

Dr. P.A Ibrahim Haji, the chairman of India International School Mangaf, is nominated by Kerala Governor, Mr. P Sathasivam to the four-member board of governors of Kerala's newly set up technological university. The university which was established in 2014 and renamed in 2015 as Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Technological University has been set up for the promotion of technical education in Kerala.

Dr. P.A Ibrahim Haji, the co-Chairman of Malabar Group of Industries is better known as an educationalist than a businessman and an industrialist. The honour bestowed upon Dr. P.A Ibrahim Haji, is indeed a recognition of his mighty contribution in the field of education. PACE (Perfect Academic Center of Excellence) Group of Institutions formed with a long-term plan to expand the network of schools, colleges and other educational institutions in the UAE, other GCC countries and India, have been extending exemplary service to the student community for the past few years in India as well as abroad, under the honourable chairmanship of Dr. Ibrahim Haji.

P.A College of Engineering, Mangalore, India is a vast complex of various branches of engineering



Dr.P.A.Ibrahim

and other centres of higher studies such as; Bachelor of Engineering (BE), Post Graduate Department of Business Management (MBA), P.A First Grade College (PAFGC), P.A Polytechnic and P.A Pre-University College. The schools run by Pace Group are India International School Kuwait, India International School Sharjah, Gulf Asian School Sharjah, Creative English School Abudhabi and RIMS International School Kannur, Kerala.

The staff and management of India International School congratulated Dr. P.A Ibrahim Haji on his magnificent achievement.

KASPERSKY LAB ADDS NEW LAYER TO ENTERPRISE PROTECTION

DUBAI: Kaspersky Lab releases a new solution - Kaspersky Private Security Network. Using the network, Kaspersky Lab's products can receive real-time data about program and website reputations, and provide companies with the fastest possible protection from new threats, without exchanging data with outside servers.

The majority of information security solution providers use cloud technologies to enhance the level of protection from cyberthreats. The high performance of the cloud helps to quickly and more accurately analyze new specimens of malicious programs or websites detected on client devices. When security applications encounter an unknown threat, they

contact remote servers for a resolution, and receive an instantaneous answer. While the conventional way typically takes a few hours to update databases, the cloud helps to provide clients with faster protection from a new threat, delivered within a matter of minutes. This approach helps to save device or server computing resources, since the resource-intensive analysis is done within the cloud.

Specifically, Kaspersky Security Network (KSN), Kaspersky Lab's distributed cloud infrastructure, has long been an effective tool with which to address the latest cyberthreats. The servers, which are strategically located in different countries, process on-the-fly

requests arriving from Kaspersky Lab solutions installed on corporate and home user computers. KSN currently helps to protect over 80,000,000 users each year.

Before a security solution receives the confirmation that a tested file or a website is dangerous or innocuous, it first needs to send information into the cloud. However, this is not a viable choice for some business areas or in certain countries, even if cyberthreat statistics need to be updated. To accommodate these clients, Kaspersky Lab has developed Kaspersky Private Security Network, a private cloud which contains an internal copy of KSN, incorporating all of its advantages. Databases are installed

on servers located within the corporate information infrastructure. Up-to-date information about threats arrives to these databases from KSN thanks to regular one-way synchronization, meaning that no data whatsoever is sent from the corporate network to the cloud.

"In large companies and in state organizations there are typically very strict information security policies in place, regulating inbound and outgoing data traffic. However, in light of an ever-growing number of cyberthreats, security solutions work most efficiently only when they maintain a continuous data exchange with a cloud, which contains the most recent threat data. A private security cloud allows the client to take

advantage of the opportunities provided by the distributed Kaspersky Security Network within its IT infrastructure, in full compliance with the requirements and specific needs of enterprises," comments Nikita Shvetsov, Chief Technology Officer at Kaspersky Lab. Kaspersky Private Security Network, alongside with Kaspersky Endpoint Security for Business, Kaspersky Security for Virtualization, Kaspersky DDoS Protection etc., is part of Kaspersky Lab's package of solutions designed to provide large businesses with information security. These products enable the client to create a comprehensive, multi-layered protection system even in an environment of limited access to external resources.



SYDNEY: Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull speaking to the media prior to a school visit in Sydney. Australia will introduce a new entrepreneur visa and offer tax breaks for start-ups, the government said yesterday.—AFP

AUSTRALIA SEEKS 'IDEAS BOOM' WITH TAX BREAKS, VISA BOOSTS

SYDNEY: Australia will introduce an entrepreneur visa and offer tax breaks for start-ups, the government said yesterday as it tries to unleash an "ideas boom" to move the economy away from dependence on mining.

Launching a signature Aus\$1.1 billion (\$806 million) four-year innovation agenda, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said Australia needed a "dynamic, 21st century economy" underpinned by creativity.

"This is all about unleashing the ideas boom," he told reporters in Canberra. "Unlike a mining boom, it is a boom that can continue forever. It is limited only by our imagination." Australia has enjoyed more than 20 years of economic growth, but an unprecedented mining investment boom is now fading, commodity prices are dropping and government revenues are falling.

Turnbull, a tech-savvy former businessman who became prime minister in September after beating his conservative Liberal Party colleague Tony Abbott in an internal ballot, said innovation was crucial to the next wave of prosperity. Australia lagged in terms of commercialising ideas, consistently ranking last or second last among OECD countries for business-research collaboration, he said, meaning a big cultural change was needed to turn things around.

"Our appetite for risk is lower than in comparable countries, which means Australian start-ups and early-stage businesses often fail to attract capital to grow," Turnbull said.

To help fix this, new tax breaks for early-stage investors in start-ups will be offered, giving them a 20 percent non-refundable tax offset based on the size of their investment, as well as a capital gains tax exemption.

Insolvency laws, which currently focus on penalising and stigmatising business failure, will also be reformed, said Treasurer Scott Morrison. "We understand that sometimes entrepreneurs will fail several times

before they succeed and will usually learn more from failure than from success," Morrison said.

Turnbull said there would be no cap placed on the number of new entrepreneur visas designed to attract innovative talent, while changes would also be made to retain high-achieving foreign students. "The more high-quality, effective, productive enterprising entrepreneurs we can attract, the better. Because they drive jobs," he said.

School students will be encouraged to learn coding and computing while the government will also establish a Aus\$200 million innovation fund at national science body CSIRO to co-invest in new spin-off firms.

'Turning point'

The science community welcomed the news, particularly the decision to create an innovation and science committee within cabinet. "This elevates science and innovation to the very highest levels of government consideration, alongside the National Security Committee," said Science and Technology Australia chief executive Catriona Jackson. The Australian Academy of Science's Les Field said the innovation agenda represented a "turning point".

"It means we can grow an economy based on our outstanding science, and which makes the best use of our significant scientific capital," he said. Turnbull said there were no guarantees the various policies would work, but committed to changing them if they failed.

The millionaire former barrister and investment banker said he wanted to change the paradigm under which "politicians felt they had to guarantee that every policy would work".

"If some of these policies are not as successful as we like, we will change them," he said. "We will learn from them. Because that is what a 21st century government has got to be. It has got to be as agile as the start-up businesses it seeks to inspire."—AFP

WATCHDOG CALLS FOR RECORD \$60M FINE IN TOSHIBA PROFIT-PADDING SCANDAL

TOKYO: Japan's market watchdog said yesterday that scandal-hit Toshiba should be slapped with a record \$60 million fine over a profit-padding scheme that hammered the reputation of one of Japan's best-known firms. The Securities and Exchange Surveillance Commission said it was calling for the 7.37 billion yen penalty—its biggest ever—as it reportedly looks into possible criminal charges against former Toshiba executives.

The country's Financial Services Agency must now approve the recommended fine over allegations that Toshiba lied about its finances in earlier stock exchange filings.

"This recommendation is based on the findings of investigations that focused on false statements" made by Toshiba, it said. Earlier this year, the huge 140-year-old company was hit by the embarrassing revelations that executives systematically pres-

sured underlings to inflate profits in a years-long scheme to hide poor results.

One of the most damaging accounting scandals to hit Japan in recent years, the case forced an incumbent president and seven other top executives to resign.

Toshiba, which sells everything from rice cookers to nuclear reactors, has admitted it had inflated profits by about \$1.2 billion since the 2008 global financial crisis. Now, the securities regulator is also studying whether former Toshiba executives should be pursued on criminal charges, public broadcaster NHK and other local media reported Monday.

Toshiba is also facing lawsuits from hundreds of angry investors over the scandal, which sent its Tokyo-listed shares into a nosedive. The firm itself is suing several former executives for damages over their alleged role in the affair.—AFP

GE PULLS PLUG ON APPLIANCE AGREEMENT WITH ELECTROLUX

SWEDISH FIRM REGRETS US FIRM'S DECISION

STOCKHOLM: General Electric has terminated the planned acquisition of its appliance business by the Swedish manufacturer Electrolux, which US authorities opposed, both companies announced yesterday.

Electrolux had sought to snap up GE appliances for some \$3.3 billion (about 3 billion euros), which would have lifted it into the orbit of market leader Whirlpool. But the US Department of Justice was suing Electrolux and GE over concerns the deal would create a duopoly and hand Electrolux a US market share of some 40 percent.

Electrolux said it had made extensive efforts to obtain regulatory approval, and regretted that GE terminated the agreement while the court procedure was still pending. The Swedish company said the settlement proposals that were offered to the Justice Department were reasonable and that it would have addressed the US government's competition concerns. These proposals were rejected.

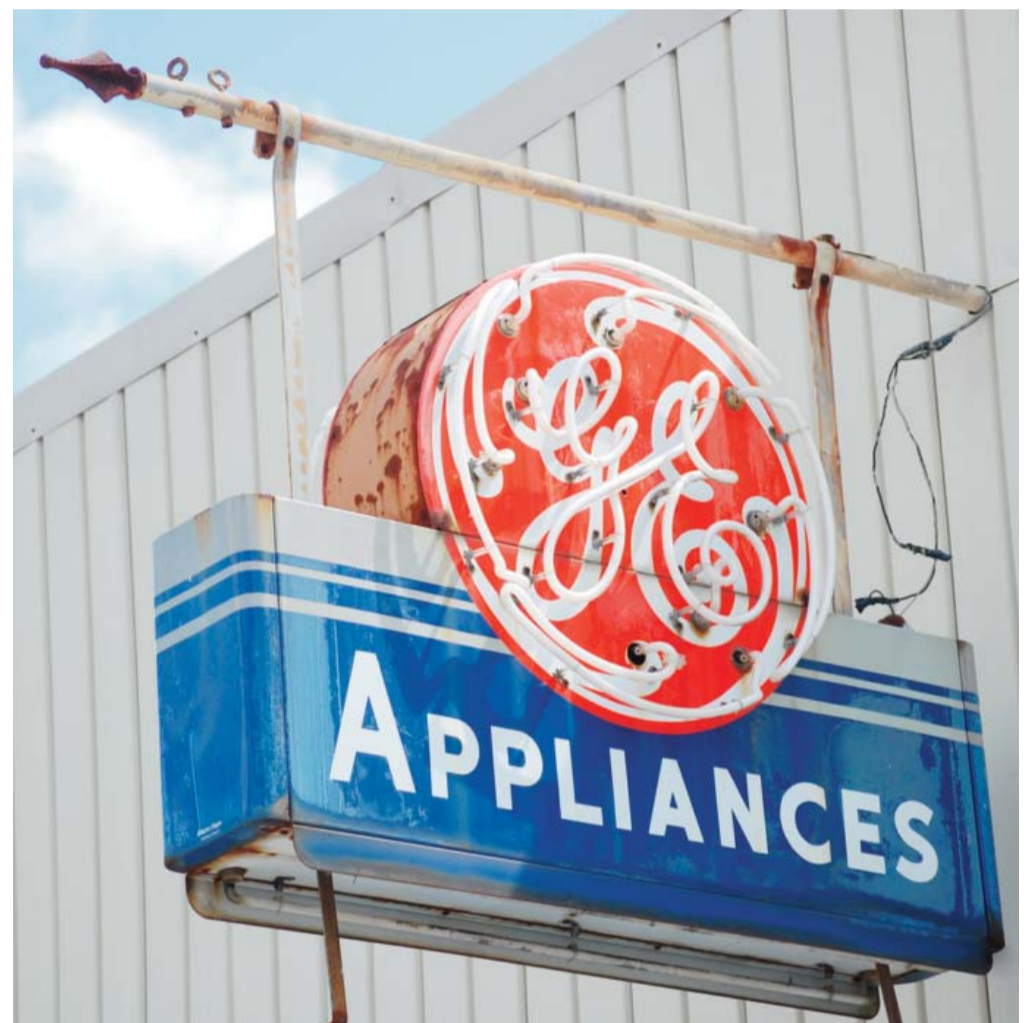
"Although we are disappointed that the acquisition will not be completed, Electrolux is confident that the group has strong capabilities to continue to grow and develop its position as a global appliances manufacturer," said Electrolux President and Chief Executive Keith McLoughlin.

Yesterday's announcement took some analysts by surprise. "I was surprised this deal was contested by the Justice Department, but then when we saw what their concern, which was the creation of duopoly in a part of the appliance market, it began not to look so good," said Karri Rinta, an analyst with Handelsbanken Capital Markets.

"It's back to square one for Electrolux in North America. This is a deal that would have made them much stronger in the US especially against Samsung and LG," he said.

Under the transaction agreement, Electrolux is required to pay GE a termination fee of \$175 million. GE has requested pay-out of the amount. "It's not going to have much effect on a company of this size. But its embarrassing and it underscores the steep and unfortunate price of a failed deal," said Rinta.

McLoughlin said Electrolux was still committed to the American market. "Major



Appliances North America has a strong presence in the US under the brands Frigidaire and Electrolux, and we are confident that this position will be maintained and strengthened," he said.

"The strategy to grow profitably in promising segments, product categories and emerging markets remains. The Group's operations in North America have proved to be strong on its own merits, with good organic growth and a recovery in earnings during 2015," he said in a press release.

For the period from January to September 2015, transaction costs related to the acquisition of 266 million kronor (29 million euros,

\$31 million) and cost for preparatory integration work of 136 million kronor have been charged, the company reported. For the fourth quarter 2015, transaction costs and integration costs are expected to amount to approximately 175 million kronor. The results for the fourth quarter 2015 will also be impacted by costs arising from a bridging facility of approximately 225 million kronor, Electrolux said in its press release. Electrolux shares plunged on the Stockholm stock exchange in reaction to the announcement, trading down over 12 percent at 209.60 kronor around 1000 GMT, having initially dropped by 14 percent.—AFP

FACEBOOK EXPANDS SHARING OPTIONS TO INCLUDE LIVE VIDEO

THE LARGEST SOCIAL NETWORK TESTING A NEW FEATURE

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 row 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



AS WORLD DEBATES CLIMATE, CZECHS EMBRACE HEAVY POLLUTANT

CSA MINE: While world leaders try to reach a deal to limit climate change, one of the most polluting fossil fuels, brown coal, is enjoying a revival in the Czech

Republic, where entire villages are threatened by new plans for mining. The Czech Republic is one of a group of countries that is turning to coal, a cheap but dirty

energy source, as its economy slows. Neighboring Poland, which has big deposits, is doing so, as is China, the world's biggest energy consumer.

The Czech variety of the coal, called brown coal or lignite, is a particularly bad source of greenhouse gases and pollutants. With support from the president, labor unions and regional leaders and against the protests of environmentalists and local citizens, the Czech government approved in October an increase to mining limits of brown coal in the northwest of the country. The government is eager to access up to 120 million metric tons of brown coal, which it says is needed to secure the country's energy supply. Last year, the Czech Republic mined 38.8 million metric tons, down 5.5 percent from the previous year. "We will need this coal for the heating industry, power plants and households," Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka said.

It is the first time the country has eased the limits on brown coal mining that it put in place in 1991, two years after the collapse of the communist regime, which relied heavily on industry and mining. The

limits were meant to prevent environmental damage and protect local communities. Under communism, dozens of towns and villages had been eradicated to make space for coal mining. Although the government's latest decision still prohibits mining that might affect populated areas, it has the option of lifting those limits, too. The government said it will reassess the country's need of brown coal every year until 2020.

Open-pit mining

The majority of the deposits, which contain about 750 million metric tons more coal than the mining limits allow to be extracted, are located right under the towns of Horni Jiretin and Cernice and go as far as the city of Litvinov about 4 kilometers away. A part of those deposits are tapped by the open pit mine called CSA, a giant hole in the ground just next to the villages. "Open-pit mining is devastating. It destroys everything," said Vladimir Burt, the mayor of Horni Jiretin, a 750-year old town with more than 2,200 residents. He noted that even if tapping the deposits does not require the relocation of the village, the mine's proximity had "very nega-

tive health and psychological effects on people."

Because it is close to the villages, the CSA mine is not allowed to increase production. Some, however, say it is only a matter of time. "It's likely that we will face further efforts (to expand mining). The miners have a strong ally in the president," Burt said. President Milos Zeman said through his spokesman that he believes mining will increase at the CSA mine "sooner or later." Severni Energeticka, the company that operates CSA, estimates that without an increase in production, the CSA mine will be phased out by 2022-'25, said spokeswoman Gabriela Sarickova Benesova.

She notes the mining company is the biggest taxpayer in a region that suffers from higher than average unemployment, provides 1,400 jobs and is ready to invest \$1.2 billion in the mine's potential expansion. Environmental activists say the ecological damage would outweigh any economic benefits. "To lift the limits makes no sense," said Jan Rovensky of Greenpeace. "What is really at stake is the profit of mining companies." —AP



CERNICE: In this picture taken near the village of Cernice, Czech Republic, a giant open pit lignite CSA mine is seen behind the Jezeri castle. —AP

'CLOCK TICKING TO CATASTROPHE', BAN URGES STRONG CLIMATE DEAL

BIGGEST ISSUES UNRESOLVED; A 'WEEK OF COMPROMISE' AHEAD

PARIS: Warning that the "clock is ticking toward climate catastrophe", UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged governments yesterday to agree a strong deal to limit global warming and transform the economy to greener energy. "Outside these negotiating halls, there is a rising global tide of support for a strong, universal agreement," Ban told envi-

bind both rich and poor to curb greenhouse gas emissions. "The world is expecting more from you than half-measures and incremental approaches," Ban told the negotiators, calling for "a transformative agreement."

Ban said a final deal should include a review of national pledges at five year intervals starting before

2020 to help them tackle climate change. US Secretary of State John Kerry, dispatched to secure a deal meant to cement President Barack Obama's legacy as a guardian of the environment, will work alongside ministers from almost 200 nations this week to try to secure a deal.

Negotiators approved a pared-

brief speeches this week outlining national policies and hopes. They are due to reach a final accord on Friday, but the talks are widely expected to run into overtime, as previous summits have.

Crossroads

While officials have been pleased with progress halfway through the two-week summit, Indian Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar cautioned that "substance-wise, we are not midway but ... at a crossroads". He reiterated New Delhi's demand that richer nations must shoulder the biggest curbs to "pay back their debt for the overdraft that they have drawn on the carbon space", highlighting one of the most difficult obstacles to a deal. To speed things along, the host, French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius, has formed working committees headed by ministers to tackle the biggest themes, which include "differentiation" (the distinction between rich and poor nations, critical for questions of financing) and "ambition" (how to improve on national efforts in future).

Some form of agreement seems all but certain, with major powers eager to avoid the failure of the last summit in Copenhagen, six years ago. Still, all sides say the deal will not be enough to prevent global temperatures rising past a dangerous threshold of 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) over pre-industrial times. Just how strong the accord will be remains to be seen. Some nations want a commitment to phase out fossil fuels by the middle of the century; others see that as unrealistic. Some of the most vulnerable countries, such as low-lying islands, want firm language on how rich nations who have emitted the most will pay for the future damage caused by rising seas. —Reuters



PARIS: UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon delivers a speech during the COP21 climate change conference in Le Bourget, north of Paris yesterday. —AFP

ronment and foreign ministers at the start of an intense home stretch of the talks, due to end on Friday.

He urged delegates from almost 200 nations not to duck the hard choices they face as four years of often glacial-paced negotiations peak. The talks are aimed at producing the strongest agreement yet to

2020. Some developing nations are reluctant to commit to such an early timetable. He also said the private sector needed a clear signal that a shift to low emissions was "inevitable" and told rich nations to lead in cutting emissions. Ban said emerging nations also needed access to \$100 billion a year prom-

down draft text on Saturday, and handed over the toughest questions to their bosses, who will spend the week hammering out thorny issues including a system for funding developing nations and the mechanisms for monitoring national pledges to reduce emissions.

Almost every nation will make

CLIMATE PACT: BATTLE LINES REDRAWN IN THE BLUEPRINT

LE BOURGET: Diplomats crafting the blueprint for a worldwide climate rescue deal have tendered their 48-page offering at the half-way point of UN talks, concluding a bitter four-year haggle that seemed often to teeter on the brink of collapse. While the Draft Paris Agreement has been welcomed as a crucial step in the right direction, it remains littered with clashing proposals from countries at odds on how to divvy up responsibility for curbing Earth-warming greenhouse gases, and forking out the cash. Environment ministers face a considerable task when they gather to translate the template into a 195-nation plan to preserve our planet's hospitable climate and the future of humankind. These are the crunch issues:

Money, money, money

In 2009, rich countries pledged to mobilise \$100 billion (92 billion euros) a year in climate finance for developing nations from 2020. The money must ease the shift from cheap and abundant coal to renewable energy sources ("mitigation", in climate jargon), and shore up defences ("adaptation") against climate change impacts such as freak storms, drought and sea-level rise. But does private money count? And loans? What about money from richer, fellow developing nations, multilateral agencies and development aid? Who qualifies for funding? How much of the money will go to mitigation, and how much to adaptation? These are the questions still dividing develop-

ing nations and rich ones, many of which resist attempts to write any obligation or liability into the text. More recently, the world's poorest nations are demanding additional money to cover climate change-induced losses.

Blame game

The talks are taking place under the auspices of a 1992 climate treaty which enshrined the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities". It assumed that rich countries have polluted for longer, and bear a bigger responsibility for addressing the resulting problem—a distinction developing nations wish to retain. They also demand some leeway on coal use as millions of people rise out of poverty. Wealthy countries argue much has changed in 20 years, and nations once tagged "developing" have become big polluters in their own right. China is now the world's number one greenhouse gas emitter, and India is number four after the United States and European Union.

How hot is too hot?

In 2010, UN countries adopted a goal of limiting average global warming to two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) over pre-Industrial Revolution levels. But small island states and many poor nations—which will be hit first and hardest by the impact of climate change—are pushing for a lower ceiling of 1.5 C. The draft agreement lists both temperature tar-

gets as options under the caption "Purpose". It will now be up to ministers to take the political decision which one they retain, or perhaps both.

Slashing emissions

The agreement's very "long-term goal" is still in dispute. Will it set a deadline for emissions to peak and a rate for their decline thereafter? Will it set a target date for reaching zero emissions? Will it call for carbon to be removed in its entirety from the energy economy? All the options are still in there.

Ratcheting

A pillar of the Paris agreement is a list of voluntary national pledges for reducing emissions from burning coal, oil and gas. But commitments received so far, even if fully honoured, place the world on course for warming far beyond the targeted safe level, scientists say. Many countries want a mechanism to periodically review, and ramp up, the pledges. But how often will assessments take place? From when? Will there be an obligation on nations to automatically improve on their earlier pledges, and how frequently?

Legal questions

Falling under the UN climate forum, the agreement will be considered "binding" under international law—though there is no penalty for non-compliance, merely a loss of face. —AFP



KUTUBDIA: Bangladeshi fishermen prepare their fishing nets on Kutubdia Island some 330 kms from Dhaka. —AFP

BANGLADESH'S ISLAND LOSING BATTLE TO STEM CLIMATE TIDE

KUTUBDIA: Hamida Begum has fled her home on Bangladesh's Kutubdia island more times than she can remember while her neighbours have already given up the battle to prevent theirs being swallowed by the sea. "I am scared our house will be washed away as well some day and during the monsoon season we can't live here at all," says the mother-of-four, standing outside the only one of a row of mud-brick shacks still intact. "But this is our land and besides, we don't have money to go elsewhere."

Although around 100,000 people still reside on Kutubdia, few have any illusions they are living on borrowed time, with Coast-a Bangladeshi NGO warning the whole island could disappear underwater within 50 years. Tens of thousands have already left for good, mainly heading to the teeming capital Dhaka or a slum area of Cox's Bazaar, a resort town some 80 kilometers (50 miles) away. In the build-up to the climate conference in Paris, there has been focus on low-lying island nations such as the Seychelles or those in the South Pacific which face obliteration if sea levels continue rising at current rates.

But their populations are dwarfed by the numbers living on the dozens of Bangladeshi islands and vulnerable coastal areas in what is one of the world's flattest and poorest nations. "We have a long coastline, where about 39 million people live," Bangladesh's environment secretary Kamal Uddin Ahmed said. "If we have to shift those people to other areas it will be a big task for us because ours is a very densely populated country and we cannot really take all those people to other areas." Bangladesh, along with the Philippines, Myanmar, and Haiti, is among the 10 nations most affected by the consequences of extreme weather events, according to a new climate survey released by advocacy group Germanwatch.

Losing battle

In 2009 the government set up a climate change trust fund, earmarking around six percent of the annual budget on adaptation measures. On Kutubdia, authorities have erected a network of flood defences and stilted cyclone shelters where residents retreat during monsoons which turn what is a slice of paradise in the Bay of Bengal into a near warzone. But they are fighting a losing battle, with Kutubdia's surface area having shrunk by around a quarter in the last three decades.

Many of the concrete blocks erected to stem the tide have collapsed or become buried under sand as water laps further inland. "We have to move each time the waves come over and go and stay with a landlord who we have to pay rent to further inland. It's very painful for

us," said Begum. At least she still has a home, unlike Lutfun Nahar who has been living with her father since hers disintegrated during a storm three months ago. "We often have to take shelter during the rainy season but this time it completely washed away my house," said the 43-year-old as she returned to view the remaining foundations.

"If there was a proper sea wall then perhaps I would rebuild but I am worried that if it happened again, I would have wasted all my money. "I can't stay with my father forever as his home is not big and I have five children. But I don't know where we can go." Around 40,000 islanders have relocated to Cox's Bazaar, eking out a living in corrugated shacks down rubbish-strewn alleyways. Many still earn a living from fishing or boat-building. Others work in a dry fish processing centre where everything from baby sharks to pomfrets are hung out in their thousands. The stench is overwhelming.

'Nowhere to go'

Nur Hussain made the move in 2012 and runs a cafe where fellow former islanders hang out. "People now go fishing where my village used to be," said the 28-year-old. "We used to have mosques, schools, madrassas, markets, many houses, - all of that has been completely submerged... It is very painful for us." Hussain shudders at the thought of moving again to make way for developers building a bewildering number of hotels serving one of the world's longest beaches. "We are people of the sea. Everything we do is related to the sea... We have nowhere else to go." That sense of dread at displacement is shared by small island nations whose populations may also have no option but to relocate. Tuvalu Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga told AFP on a recent visit to India that his Pacific island nation might have to buy land in Australia and New Zealand to resettle its people.

Some of the atoll nations have teamed up with larger countries such as Bangladesh most vulnerable to climate change, forming a so-called V20 as a counterpoint to the better known G20. The last major climate summit in Copenhagen in 2009 left a bitter taste with the V20's leaders after rich counterparts balked at making radical commitments to limit the rise in global temperatures to two degrees. Moqbul Ahmed of Coast, who works with locals impacted by climate change, said Dhaka's government had a duty to look after those forced to flee but added that wealthy nations had a moral responsibility to cushion the blow. "The richer countries should come forward to help our climate refugees," he said. —AFP

CROATIA HELPS MIGRANTS SETTLE BY COOKING 'TASTE OF HOME'

ZAGREB: In a family kitchen on the hilly outskirts of Zagreb, a group of chefs from Nigeria, Ethiopia and Croatia sprinkle salt into flour and grate orange zest as they whip up a range of breads from their home countries. The bakers belong to "Okus Doma" or "Taste of Home", a project that helps migrants and refugees to start new lives and make friends in Croatia through cooking together and sharing recipes. "Settling down in a new country is very difficult," said 34-year-old David Ajobi, a medical student from Abuja, as he kneaded dough for Nigeria's popular "agege" bread, a recipe taught to him by his mother. "Okus Doma wants to bring people together, they can come out and show their skills and show what they can contribute," he told AFP over a table scattered with mixing bowls, rolling pins and jars of ingredients.

Croatia, where memories of a brutal 1990s war are still vivid, is currently known as a quick transit point for refugees and migrants. The Western Balkan nation has seen hundreds of thousands from the Middle East, Asia and Africa cross its borders since mid-September on their way to start new lives in more prosperous northern Europe. But Okus Doma was set up to welcome newcomers who end up staying longer, whether they are fleeing war or persecution, coming for work or study, or moving for family reasons. Since it began in 2006, initially to document refugees' memories, the project has brought together people and dishes from around the world, including Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Libya, Zimbabwe and Algeria.

Culinary dreams

Those in the collective, including Croatian volunteers, share food and stories in home kitchens around the city, take part in workshops and festivals and prepare dishes on informal catering requests. They now have big plans to expand their culinary activities with the eventual goal of opening a restaurant, serving favourites such as Afghan

pilau, Kurdish falafel and North African couscous. The partly EU-funded project also tries to raise awareness and understanding among Croatians, whose homogeneous society of 4.3 million people is predominantly white and Roman Catholic. "Institutions are very traditional and not very open... people aren't used to seeing different skin colours," said Emina Buzinkic, a local activist involved in the initiative since its early days.

She said that preparing food with refugees and other newcomers helped Croatians to feel "much closer" to them. "They realise these are people with fears and needs and lives. It's an exchange, it's very important." The recipe sharing began after Croatian activists and asylum seekers they worked with began meeting up, often in cafes, to discuss their lives and experiences. "We are also people who have gone through war and we also had a lot of refugees. We wanted to show we understand that," said 31-year-old Buzinkic, referring to Croatia's four-year independence war that began in 1991.

'Losing roots'

Buzinkic recalled a Palestinian woman, Sara, who told her about a pie that her grandmother used to make, one of her strongest childhood memories. "She never ate it again, and she felt like she had lost her roots," Buzinkic said. Sara eventually moved from Croatia to Western Europe, but her story was one of the inspirations for Okus Doma.

Participation in the project varies because many of those seeking refuge end up leaving Croatia-obtaining asylum here is a lengthy, difficult and often unsuccessful process, while other European countries offer better opportunities for education and jobs.

Some Syrians involved recently took the chance to move to Germany with the huge wave of people currently passing through the Balkans, Buzinkic said. But the chefs who remain have been fundraising to expand the project, with plans to develop a catering business, cookbooks and various language

courses ahead of the end goal of a restaurant.

Among the budding restaurateurs is Sadou Diagne, a Senegalese 25-year-old who has been in Croatia for more than a year. A registered refugee, he prefers not to talk about why he had to leave home, saying only that "it's something I really want to forget". But he fondly recalls cooking with his mother and aunt as a child, and he now shares

Senegalese classics such as "thiebou dieune", a spicy fish and rice dish in tomato sauce, with friends at Okus Doma. He said the chance to learn new recipes from different countries had been a "big pleasure", and one that also helped him to build a new life in Zagreb many miles from his relatives. "It's about a new family and a new experience for me," he said. —AFP



ZAGREB: Chichi Amare from Ethiopia (left) and David Ajobi, 34-year-old medical student from Nigeria prepare breads for the "Okus Doma" project, that helps migrants and refugees to start new lives and make friends in Croatia through cooking together and sharing recipes. —AFP

'GIVE VULTURES A LITTLE LOVE'

MAGADI: These are tough times for African vultures. Already perceived as ugly and saddled with being a symbol of death and decay in many cultures, their numbers are dropping because of poaching, poisonings and collisions with electricity pylons and wind turbines. Four of Africa's 11 vulture species were listed as critically endangered this year on an international "red list" of species under threat. The population of seven of those species declined by at least 80 percent in the past 50 years, according to a study published this year in the journal Conservation Letters.

But how many people really care about such a creature? Mark Twain saw one and described it as having a "bald, red, queer-shaped head, featherless red places here and there on his body, intense great black eyes set in featherless rims of inflamed flesh." Vultures are overshadowed by threatened "sexy, charismatic species" like the lion, rhinoceros and elephant, said Masumi Gudka, Kenya-based vulture conservation manager for BirdLife International, a group with branches in 120 countries. "You have to be creative" in the hunt for an "innovative way to sell the species that people think are ugly," Gudka said.

Vultures, for example, get positive spin from Birdorable, a website that sells clothing and other items with soft, rounded images of birds, she said. On a recent day, Gudka was walking with an Associated Press reporter toward a 1.2-mile-wide cliff in Kenya's Rift Valley that is home to the critically

endangered Rueppell's species of vulture. About 200 Rueppell's vultures were in the sky or in the cliff overlooking the dry bed of Lake Kwena in southern Kenya. Researchers believe the species may have been there for centuries, ranging widely on foraging expeditions. The birds, circling high overhead, were black dots.



Photo shows a Rueppell's vulture. Already perceived as ugly and saddled with being a symbol of death and decay in many cultures, their numbers are dropping because of poaching, poisonings and collisions with electricity pylons and wind turbines. —AP

A protective eye

There is hope for this species, named for a 19th-century German naturalist. While the refuge is on private land, conservationists want to raise funds to buy it and create a conservancy backed by Maasai livestock herders who could benefit from any ecotourism while keeping a protective eye on the vultures in their midst. "This area has so much

potential beyond just vultures," said Darcy Ogada of The Peregrine Fund, a group based in Boise, Idaho, that seeks to protect birds of prey. Birds in this stark landscape include the eastern pale chanting goshawk, the brown snake eagle, the laughing dove, the African mourning dove, the augur buzzard, the lesser kestrel

and the blue-naped mousebird, according to Ben Mugambi, a Kenyan tour company operator. Vultures get a bad rap because they gather around the dead and the dying. In the poem "Vultures," Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe describes the seeming contradiction between a vulture nesting affectionately with its mate in a tree and their ghastly feeding on the

eyes and bowels of a swollen corpse in a trench filled with water.

Vulture body parts are precious in traditional medicine in parts of Africa. Some people believe they cure disease, increase children's intelligence and guarantee success in business and gambling, making the birds a target for poachers. Threats also include poison laid to kill wild dogs or other mammals that attack livestock. Additionally, rhino and elephant poachers sometimes poison vultures because they circle above carcasses, possibly giving away their location to rangers. At least 1,500 vultures died in 10 such poisoning incidents between 2011 and 2014 in southern Africa, according to bird conservationists.

South Asian vulture populations are also a small fraction of what they were, largely because of feeding on carcasses of livestock treated with diclofenac, a veterinary drug that is toxic to vultures. Government bans on the drug, however, have helped level those declines and small increases in vulture populations have been recorded in some areas. Mark Twain seemed to understand the misunderstood bird. In the passage that he wrote after a sea voyage in the late 19th century, he noted that the vulture that landed on his vessel had "a business-like style, a selfish, conscienceless, murderous aspect - the very look of a professional assassin, and yet a bird which does no murder." —AP

BEIJING ISSUES FIRST EVER 'RED ALERT' ON POLLUTION

BEIJING: China's capital yesterday issued its first ever "red alert" for pollution, as the city government warned that Beijing would be shrouded in heavy smog from today until Thursday. China's leadership has vowed to crack down on environmental degradation, including the air pollution that blankets many major cities, following decades of unbridled economic growth. The move comes as UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned a Paris summit of nearly 200 nations against a "climate catastrophe", urging governments to reach a strong deal to limit global warming.

In an online statement, the Beijing city government ordered all outdoor construction work to stop on red alert days, besides urging schools to close. The notice, issued after days of heavy smog last week, also puts traffic restrictions on certain types of vehicles in the city of 22.5 million people. "Construction waste, excavation transport vehicles, cement trucks, gravel transport vehicles and other large-scale vehicles are prohib-

ited from driving on roads," authorities said in the notice. The warning was an upgrade from an orange alert issued over the weekend, part of China's four-colour warning system that includes yellow and blue levels for less polluted conditions.

Beijing residents took to the Internet to criticise authorities for not issuing a red alert during last week's episode of heavy smog, which exceeded hazardous levels on pollution indices. Environmental Protection Minister Chen Jining on Sunday vowed to punish agencies and officials for any failure to quickly implement a pollution emergency response plan, the state-run Global Times tabloid said. Chinese researchers have identified pollution as a major source of unrest around the country. The looming smog underscores the challenge facing the government as it battles pollution caused by the coal-burning power industry, and will raise questions at the Paris talks about its ability to clean up its economy and environment. —Reuters

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

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Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم

إستشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



LULU EXCHANGE OPENS 18TH BRANCH IN KUWAIT

LuLu Exchange, one of the leading global remittance and foreign exchange brand, commenced operations of its 18th outlet in Kuwait on Saturday, 5 December in Mahaboula.

The new branch, which is also the organization's 3rd in the Mahaboula region of the Ahmadi Governorate, was inaugurated by Adeb Ahmed, Director, LuLu Exchange in the presence of other senior management and dignitaries.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahmed said, "We are extremely proud to open our third branch in Mahaboula.

The new branch is in line with our continued efforts to bring convenience to our customers. It has been an exciting journey during the past five years and we are proud to have 18 branches in Kuwait in such a short span. We dedicate the new branch to the service of our esteemed customers, who have always supported us to deliver them the best."

LuLu Exchange has over the years emerged as a preferred exchange house providing top-quality worldwide remittance and foreign exchange services to a cross-section

of society, powered by a large network, reputed partners and high standard of customer care.

"At LuLu Exchange, we facilitate financial transaction services that are secure, instant and compliant through state-of-the-art systems. We are committed to fair business practices and are compliant with global anti-money laundering protocols," said Ahmed.

LuLu Exchange has partnered with internationally renowned and trusted money transfer service providers to guarantee that the client's hard earned money reaches its

destination in the fastest and the most secure way possible. The exchange house caters to markets across the world and has direct online remittance arrangements for India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Egypt and Indonesia, among others.

With the opening of the new branch, the exchange house currently has 18 branches across the State of Kuwait, one each in Al Rai, Mirgab, Dajeej, Mubarakiya and Khaitan; two branches each in Mangaf, Salamiya, Fahaheel, Farwaniya and Abbasiya regions and three in Mahaboula.

CENTER FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION (CCE) DEVELOPS WORKSHOP FOR NUKS-USA CONFERENCE

The Center for Continuing Education (CCE) at the American University of Kuwait has developed a workshop, "Campus to Corporate" that was facilitated in partnership with Burgan Bank at the 32nd Conference of the National Union of Kuwaiti Students - USA Branch (NUKS-USA) on 27 November, 2015. Both Burgan Bank and AUK are part of the KIPCO Group, which supported the conference for the fifth consecutive year as a Platinum Sponsor.

The workshop was designed to train potential Kuwaiti graduates from US universities to make a

smooth transition from the campus to corporate settings, while embodying interpersonal skills that are required to succeed in their careers. Students practiced adapting to a professional setting, be mindful of their body language during meetings, presentations and interviews, and how to recruit their strongest attributes in order to be productive employees.

Talah Al-Abdulaaly and Jasem Sabeeh Abul, Organizational Development Officers, Burgan Bank, presented the workshop; while Eman M Al-Awadhi, Group Communications Director, KIPCO

delivered a motivational speech to the students. The workshop concluded with a ceremony, in which participating students received a certificate of completion from CCE.

CCE was established in 2004 and, in addition to offering language courses in Arabic, English, French and Spanish, offers an array of courses and workshops aimed to assist in the personal and professional development of individuals and groups within the public and private sectors. Course offerings are specifically tailored to meet the needs of their clients, whether they are independent groups or corporations.



GERMAN STORYTELLER VISIT BSK

The British School of Kuwait was delighted to welcome Katharina Ritter, a German Story Teller, to deliver a workshop on Fairy Tales to over 40 students of German.

Ritter began her career in the film industry, eventually developing her own unique way of making cinema. That is to say, through the medium of extemporaneous

storytelling. The workshop, organized under the aegis of the Goethe Institute as part of Ritter's tour of the Gulf Region, aimed to allow students to take pleasure in the spoken language of German.

Unaided by a script or props, Ritter captivated students by vividly performing Grimm fairy tales such as The Crumbs on the Table, Rumpelstiltskin and The

Fisherman and his Wife. The workshop was rounded off in a musical fashion with students and the Story Teller chanting together snippets of the fairy tales in German.

The British School of Kuwait is privileged to be a Partner School of the German Government and looks forward to further collaborations in 2016.

X-CITE PARTNERS WITH TELLY OFFERING FREE 2 MONTHS VIDEO-ON-DEMAND SERVICE

In its continuous commitment to provide the best and latest in the tech industry, X-cite by Alghanim Industries has signed an exclusive partnership with Telly, the first video-on-demand service provider in the Middle East. X-cite will be providing a free 2 month's subscription to its customers to experience the service with the purchase of applicable devices. Telly, the first-of-its-kind service in the Middle East and North Africa is available in 23 countries including Kuwait. It's a video-on-demand service that offers the latest TV shows and movies straight from Hollywood and the Arabic cinemas. Customers will be able to watch over 1,000 TV shows and movie titles from the comfort of their homes, on their smartphone, tablet or computer screens. The service also provides convenient Arabic subtitles and exclusive titles that are dubbed in Arabic to cater to their Arabic speaking customers. The content is commercial-free, which means the customer viewing experience will never be interrupted. X-cite is the exclusive Telly service reseller in Kuwait. X-cite will offer its customers who purchase a computer, iOS/Android smartphone or a tablet above KD 50, a free 2 months subscription to Telly. X-cite will also be selling Telly subscription cards in its 18 showrooms spread across Kuwait and on its website www.xcite.com. If the customer purchases the card from X-cite's website, a code will be directly delivered by email. X-cite offers 3 types of subscriptions, 3, 6 and 12 months starting at KD 9.

WHAT'S ON - SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All photos submitted for What's On should be minimum 200dpi. Articles must be in plain text and should include name and phone numbers. Articles and photos that fail to meet these requirements will not be published.

Please send them to news@kuwaittimes.net



The Ambassador of Pakistan to Kuwait Muhamad Aslam Khan hosted a reception for a visiting delegation of the Rice Exporter Association Of Pakistan at his residence. Local businessmen and media personalities attend the event. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



The International Women's Group presents gifts to guests during the event. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

IWG CELEBRATES NEW YEAR

Faten Omar

The International Women's Group (IWG) celebrated the New Year with a dinner hosted last Sunday at Al-Hashemi Ballroom in Radisson SAS Hotel. Narjes Al-Shatti, Board Member of the International Women's Group, said to Kuwait Times that "every year since we started, the International Women's Group celebrates Christmas and the New Year in December by hosting a dinner for its members, with some entertaining events held during the event. Tonight, IWG says farewell to 2015 and welcomes 2016 with lots of praying and wishing for peace to Kuwait and all people around the world." She added "I think this celebration is very important and special because as an International Women's Group we must celebrate all occasions. So IWG is celebrating Muslim, Christian, and Chinese holidays as we strive to make all our members happy." Shatti revealed that the IWG will also have another activity this month. "The Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) will take us on a trip to an old palace in Al-Ahmadi with the Governor of Al-Ahmad, we are going to visit the Al-Sabahia Oasis," She said. The event featured a flamenco performance by Spanish dancers, then the International Women's Group presented guests with gifts.



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

- 19:05 H2O: Just Add Water
19:30 Violetta
20:20 The Next Step
20:45 Good Luck Charlie
21:10 Good Luck Charlie
21:35 Wizards Of Waverly Place
22:00 Binny And The Ghost
22:25 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
22:50 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:10 Wolfblood
23:35 Wolfblood

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

- 08:00 Chopped
08:30 Guy's Grocery Games
10:00 The Kitchen
11:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
11:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
12:00 Chopped
13:00 Guy's Big Bite
13:30 Guy's Big Bite
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
15:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
16:00 Chopped
17:00 The Kitchen
18:00 Jenny And Reza's Fabulous Food Academy
18:30 Grandma's Secret Cookbook
19:00 Chopped
20:00 Guy's Grocery Games
21:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
21:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
22:00 Man Finds Food
22:30 Man Finds Food
23:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
23:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin

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 A...
16:30 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
17:50 Come Date With Me Australia
18:20 Come Date With Me Australia
18:45 Coronation Street
19:10 Coronation Street
19:35 Seven Days With A...
20:30 I'm A Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here!
21:50 Coach Trip
22:20 Coronation Street
22:50 Coronation Street
23:15 Emmerdale
23:40 Dancing On Ice

NAT GEO WILD HD

- 03:45 The Monster Project
04:40 Ultimate Animal Countdown
05:35 World's Deadliest: Jaws & Sins
06:30 Dangerous Encounters
07:25 The Monster Project
08:20 The Incredible Dr. Pol
09:15 Unlikely Animal Friends
10:10 Expedition Wild
11:05 Swamp Men
12:00 Shark Men
12:55 Ultimate Animal Countdown
13:50 Dangerous Encounters
14:45 World's Deadliest Animal Apocalypse
15:40 The Incredible Dr. Pol
16:35 Killer Dragons
17:30 Expedition Wild
18:25 Swamp Men
19:20 World's Deadliest Animal Apocalypse
20:10 The Incredible Dr. Pol
21:00 Killer Dragons
21:50 Expedition Wild
22:40 Swamp Men
23:30 Shark Men

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
06:30 Community
06:30 My Name Is Earl
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:00 The Goldbergs
08:30 Last Man Standing
09:00 Young & Hungry
09:30 About A Boy
10:00 Last Man On Earth
10:30 My Name Is Earl
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
12:00 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
12:30 The Goldbergs
13:00 Last Man Standing
13:30 My Name Is Earl
14:00 2 Broke Girls
14:30 About A Boy
15:00 Last Man On Earth
15:30 Melissa & Joey
16:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
16:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
18:00 Young & Hungry
18:30 2 Broke Girls
19:00 Modern Family
19:30 Modern Family
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
21:00 Hot In Cleveland
21:30 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
22:00 Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll
22:30 Comedians
23:00 Getting On
23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

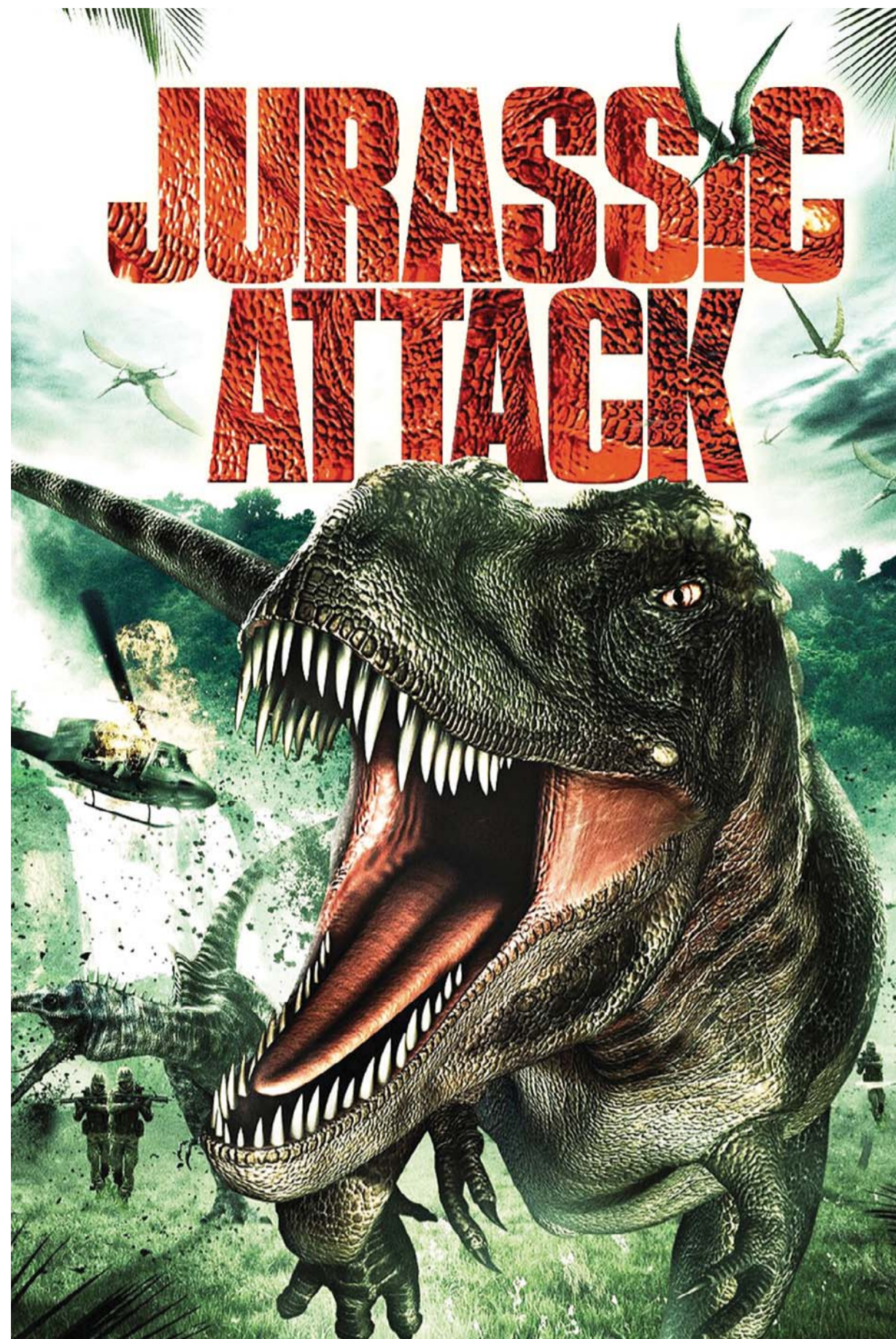
- 03:50 Explorer
04:45 Bad Trip
05:40 Apocalypse: The Second World War
06:35 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South
07:30 Monster Fish
08:25 Is It Real?
09:20 Riding Britain's Railways
10:15 Yukon River Run
11:10 Air Crash Investigation
12:05 Hard Time
13:00 Is It Real?
14:00 Monster Fish
15:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South
16:00 Yukon River Run
17:00 Air Crash Investigation
18:00 Drugs Inc: Compilations
19:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs. South
20:00 Yukon River Run
20:50 Air Crash Investigation
21:40 Drugs Inc: Compilations
22:30 Cosmos: A Spacetime Odyssey
23:20 Apocalypse: The Second World War

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

- 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



JURASSIC ATTACK ON 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 Screen Queens

OSN FIRST MORE

- 03:00 Tyrant
04:00 Better Call Saul
05:00 Good Morning America
07:00 Emmerdale
07:30 Coronation Street
08:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
09:00 Royal Pains
10:00 Emmerdale
10:30 Coronation Street
11:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
12:00 Castle
13:00 Bones
14:00 Royal Pains
15:00 Live Good Morning America
17:00 Castle
18:00 Bones
19:00 Royal Pains
20:00 Castle
21:00 Bones
22:00 Tyrant
23:00 Better Call Saul

OSN MOVIES ACTION

- 00:00 Combustion
02:00 John Wick
04:00 Android Cop
06:00 Jurassic Attack-PG15
08:00 Android Cop-PG15
10:00 Destruction: Las Vegas-PG15

- 10:00 Android Cop
12:00 Destruction: Las Vegas
14:00 Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief
16:00 The Prince
18:00 Mercenaries
20:00 Don't Look Back
22:00 The Malay Chronicles: Bloodlines

OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

- 00:00 John Wick-18
02:00 Android Cop-PG15
04:00 Jurassic Attack-PG15
06:00 The Prince-PG15
08:00 Android Cop-PG15
10:00 Destruction: Las Vegas-PG15
12:00 Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief-PG15
14:00 The Prince-PG15
16:00 Mercenaries-PG15
18:00 Don't Look Back-PG15
20:00 The Malay Chronicles: Bloodlines-PG15
22:00 Hard Target-18

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

- 00:15 Revenge For Jolly!
02:00 UHF
04:00 For Better Or For Worse
06:00 How To Lose A Guy In 10 Days
08:00 Muppets Most Wanted
10:00 For Better Or For Worse
12:00 UHF
14:00 Napoleon Dynamite
16:00 Muppets Most Wanted
18:00 The Love Punch
20:00 Life Of Crime
22:00 No Way Jose

OSN MOVIES 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 MOVIES FESTIVAL

- 03:15 Inescapable
05:00 The Butler
07:15 See Girl Run
09:00 Julie And Julia
11:00 The Butler
13:15 Diana
15:15 Next Goal Wins
17:00 Julie And Julia
19:00 Gattaca
21:00 What Dreams May Come
23:00 Gainsbourg: A Heroic Life

OSN MOVIES HD

- 03:00 Alexander And The Terrible... Very Bad Day-PG
04:45 Great Expectations-PG15
07:00 The Boxtrolls-PG
09:00 Breathe In-PG15
10:45 Guardians Of The Galaxy-PG15

- 13:00 A Christmas Wish-PG15
15:00 Automata-PG15
17:00 Breathe In-PG15
19:00 Dracula Untold-PG15
21:00 Stonehearth Asylum-PG15
23:00 The Wedding Ringer-18

OSN MOVIES KIDS

- 04:15 Back To The Sea
06:00 Daddy I'm A Zombie
08:00 Mamma Moo And Crow
09:45 Bamse And The City Of Thieves
11:15 Ghatotkach - Master Of Magic
13:00 Jelly T
14:30 Tiny Heroes
16:00 Earth To Echo
18:00 Bamse And The City Of Thieves
20:00 Columbus In The Last Journey
22:00 Tiny Heroes
23:30 Earth To Echo

OSN MOVIES PREMIERE

- 04:00 Maleficent-PG
05:45 Million Dollar Arm-PG15
08:00 Captain America: The Winter Soldier-PG15
10:30 Hellboy: Sword Of Storms-PG
12:00 Godzilla-PG15
14:15 Fatal Instinct-PG15
16:00 Captain America: The Winter Soldier-PG15
18:30 Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit-PG15
20:30 Lone Survivor-PG15
22:45 Black Rock-18

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

- 01:40 Duplex
03:15 Cannon For Cordoba
05:00 Saved!
06:30 Apache
08:00 One Summer Love
09:40 Bound For Glory
12:05 Big Screen
12:20 Brannigan
14:10 The Adventures Of Buckaroo Banzai
15:50 American Rhapsody
17:35 Apache
19:05 Death Rides A Horse
21:00 Improptu
22:45 Hurly Burly

AMC

- 04:15 Back To The Sea
06:00 Daddy I'm A Zombie
08:00 Mamma Moo And Crow
09:45 Bamse And The City Of Thieves
11:15 Ghatotkach - Master Of Magic
13:00 Jelly T
14:30 Tiny Heroes
16:00 Earth To Echo
18:00 Bamse And The City Of Thieves
20:00 Columbus In The Last Journey
22:00 Tiny Heroes
23:30 Earth To Echo

ANIMAL PLANET HD

- 00:50 Gator Boys
01:45 Call Of The Wildman
02:15 Call Of The Wildman
02:40 Bondi Vet
03:35 Tanked
04:25 Ten Deadliest Snakes
05:15 Gator Boys
06:02 Treehouse Masters
06:49 Gangland Killers
07:36 Call Of The Wildman
08:30 Call Of The Wildman
08:25 Glory Hounds
10:10 Treehouse Masters
11:05 Tanked
12:00 Dog Rescuers
12:30 Dog Rescuers
12:55 Bondi Vet
13:50 Bondi Vet
14:45 Ten Deadliest Snakes
15:40 Treehouse Masters
16:35 Tanked
17:30 Gangland Killers
18:25 Monster Croc Invasion
19:20 Biggest And Baddest
20:15 Tanked
21:10 Shamwari: A Wild Life
21:35 Shamwari: A Wild Life
22:05 Treehouse Masters
23:00 Biggest And Baddest
23:55 Whale Wars

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 Gigglebiz
06:00 Teletubbies
06:25 The Green Balloon Club
06:50 Gigglebiz
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 Eastenders
16:50 The Weakest Link
17:35 Blackadder II



ANDROID COP ON OSN MOVIES ACTION

CROSSWORD 1103

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
15			16								17			
18			19						20	21				
22		23	24						25					
		26	27	28			29	30						
31	32	33				34				35	36	37	38	
39					40			41						
42							43				44			
45					46			47			48			
49			50					51						
52					53			54					55	
								56	57	58		59		
60	61	62			63	64		65	66			67	68	69
70								72			73			
74					75						76			
77					78						79			

ACROSS

- Type genus of the family Myacidae.
- Rule against.
- Counting the number of white and red blood cells and the number of platelets in 1 cubic millimeter of blood.
- The habitation of wild animals.
- Rule against.
- 10 hao equal 1 dong.
- An adult male person (as opposed to a woman).
- East Indian annual erect herb.
- (botany) Relating to a plant of the family Araceae.
- According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
- Large genus of erect or climbing prickly shrubs including roses.
- Genus of tropical plants with creeping rootstocks and small umbellate flowers.
- Being or moving higher in position or greater in some value.
- A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
- Follower of Rastafarianism.
- Avatar of Vishnu.
- Made agreeably cold (especially by ice).
- A small zodiacal constellation in the northern hemisphere.
- A nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (trade name Feldene) used to treat arthritis and other inflammatory conditions.
- Stem of the rattan palm used for making canes and umbrella handles.
- A Spanish title of respect for a gentleman or nobleman.
- A metal-bearing mineral valuable enough to be mined.
- Sluggish tailless Australian arboreal marsupial with gray furry ears and coat.
- Wife of Balder.
- Low-growing Old World herbs with minute bright green leaves.
- King of the Huns.
- Being ten more than one hundred forty.
- Deciduous South African tree having large odd-pinnate leaves and profuse fragrant orange-yellow flowers.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- A special way of doing something.
- A small pellet fired from an air rifle or BB gun.
- A belief (or system of beliefs) accepted as authoritative by some group or school.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- Psychoactive substance present in marijuana.
- Attribute to a source or cause.
- Using speech rather than writing.
- Take in solid food.
- Apple grown chiefly in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley.
- A small cake leavened with yeast.

DOWN

- Designer drug designed to have the effects of amphetamines (it floods the brain with serotonin) but to avoid the drug laws.
- Not only so, but.
- A former copper coin of Pakistan.
- An internationally recognized distress signal in radio code.
- At any time.
- Greek author of fables (circa 620-560 BC).
- Genus of North American herbs.
- A large fleet.
- European strong-scented perennial herb with gray-green bitter-tasting leaves.
- Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
- A long noosed rope used to catch animals.
- Colloquial British abbreviation.
- The Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan.
- The closing section of a musical composition.
- Marked by excessive enthusiasm for and intense devotion to a cause or idea.
- Genus of East Indian trees or shrubs.
- Of or relating to Passover or Easter.
- A United Nations agency to promote trade by increasing the exchange stability of the major currencies.
- Conqueror of Gaul and master of Italy (100-44 BC).
- The mountain peak that Noah's ark landed on as the waters of the great flood receded.
- Marked by absence of sound.
- Any of numerous trees of the family Cupressaceae that resemble cedars.
- Of or relating to or consisting of enol.
- The act of refusing a request.
- Cook and make edible by putting in a hot oven.
- King of Saudi Arabia since 1982 (born in 1922).
- An accidental hole that allows something (fluid or light etc.) to enter or escape.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- Monotypic genus of palms of Australasia.
- Struck with fear, dread, or consternation.
- Especially fine or decorative clothing.
- Realistic Norwegian author who wrote plays on social and political themes (1828-1906).
- The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
- A crown-like jewelled headdress worn by women on formal occasions.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- Consideration in dealing with others and avoiding giving offence.
- Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
- Not to be placated or appeased or moved by entreaty.
- Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
- The arch of bone beneath the eye that forms the prominence of the cheek.
- The state of matter distinguished from the solid and liquid states by.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
- A numbered compartment in a post office where mail is put to be called for.

Yesterday's Solution

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

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Feeling in touch or in harmony with those around you helps you to enjoy open communication. It is a time when you should not be surprised at some sort of extra support or recognition, personally or regarding your work situation. Expect a little added boost. A round table discussion will give all that are present, food for ideas and thoughts. Others may find you quite charismatic or commanding in speaking. People will not have to ask you to repeat anything, what you have to say is clearly understood. Your optimism and faith will carry you through to success. The kids in your home seem to want everything they see on television-a talk is due. You have plans that include helping children to read and you might go through the curriculum plan.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Your conservative mind explodes when it has the opportunity to be free and create. You could be working in the wonderful world of computer gaming, or for a group of creative and independent young people that are toy makers, auctioneers on the internet, writers or entertainment organizers, etc. Whatever you do-change some of the ways you choose a job. An example might be that talents in math do not mean you have to be an accountant all of your life. Your profession should be something you really enjoy because this is where you will have a better opportunity to meet most people. You are the type of person that makes a positive difference, so find the best condition for meeting the most people while experiencing the most satisfaction!



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You should find this a nearly perfect time to be assertive and to move forward in your career. You have all of the drive and energy that you could possibly want-it should not be too hard to channel. Your path is open and clear for whatever you want to accomplish. This afternoon you have an opportunity to sign up for an exercise program and a friend may sign up with you. This is a good thing and will help you maintain a good health habit. They may be giving classes in how to choose healthy meals and partake in healthy dieting. It would be good to make the time for these courses. It won't be long before you and your friend will be taking some shopping trips for a new and better-fitting suit or other clothing. Harmony rules and this is a happy time.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

There are new computer backup systems that you look into so that your ideas are not lost-then you move into action. Perhaps politics, law, education, travel and religion could be some of the areas you review. You long for new and exciting challenges and experiences. Metaphysical or philosophical musings could capture your attention. This should be a super day for getting things accomplished. You should find your hand and eye coordination good, making just about any task run smoothly. This afternoon you return calls and visit with friends-perhaps making plans for get-togethers. You may even feel like exercising and getting out of doors later this afternoon. You enjoy taking care of your animals this evening.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You may be in an interesting job these days-detective or research. You can update and increase your problem-solving abilities faster than most-so you may find people requesting your help. Today moves along very fast and before you know it, this work-day has ended. Visiting more with neighbors or family this afternoon could help to take care of some unfinished personal business. Sharing your feelings with others becomes important. Being out among people and learning different opinions take on more significance for you now. In talking with others you discover a food-sampling party. You have not even been to one of these before and promise yourself to remember this so you can attend another one. You see a lot of ideas for gifts.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

There is a great deal of mental activity going on with you today. You seriously contemplate how to contain your temptation to communicate with others-there is work to accomplish. Knowledge, the exchange of ideas and the idea of being smart as a fox are usually the things that have a special appeal. Today, however, is not the time... A schedule must be met. One way to help yourself refrain from outbursts might be to keep a notepad handy for recording ideas that might come to you from time to time. When you next take a step outside your office, you will be able to chat with friends. Figuring out new ways to communicate is something you truly enjoy. New technology has you plotting about how to budget your money.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You often look for ways to be of service to others. You may have finally finished your part of a group project a little early and decide to look for ways that will help the others in this group. Your mind is quite clear and natural. Taking a different approach to things, assessing new ideas, and a breakthrough in thinking are right up your alley. You enjoy learning as well as teaching and may decide to try a few different ways of working to be of help to others. This afternoon, on the home front, you have many ideas that will be helpful to you and to family members for budgeting and gift purchasing. Ideas could be flowing from and to you. There are openings for all the family members to participate in this activity. Take on a give and take attitude.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

It is important that you think about what you are going to say before you say it today. A meeting with an authority figure will encourage you to be expressive and you will want to choose your words carefully; facts equal power. You may decide to enter your ideas in writing. This will help you gain a focus and also give you an opportunity to fine-tune any changes necessary. Concentrate now on the things you are able to improve upon at this time. Assignments this afternoon may seem challenging but not impossible. You may even find these assignments a great way to show off your talents at problem solving or creative thinking. You enjoy the home responsibilities this evening and may volunteer to help relieve someone of some chores.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Instead of the rooster or the sun, an internal alarm clock wakes you this morning. Your attitude is positive and you do not want to miss the beauty of those first glowing rays that push the darkness away. You continue to move enthusiastically forward in life. The way you take on responsibilities, as compared to your youth, may be a surprise to the person that raised you and taught you about a day's work. Compliments are easy to find and praise from a distant relative brings big smiles this afternoon. You have empathy, compassion and charity to share with others. You would do well as a humanitarian, art dealer or counselor. You find religion, metaphysics or welfare work very satisfying. You enjoy celebrating tonight.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You can figure out a puzzle on your own-make notes, ask questions-all is well. Career decisions are unwavering and easy to plan. You see your way through ideas and concepts, and you can communicate and express them to others. It should be a great time to get many things done as there are very few interruptions and progress seems to move along rather quickly. You could be tempted to write, work on a car or sew into the late hours of the night because the rhythm of your work is productive. Be sure to hug family members this evening-perhaps a dinner and a shopping trip is in order. Shopping early for gifts, decorations or that special party costume will be a wise choice. Who knows, you might discover a new shopping area.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

If you are working today, you will find that the day moves along very quickly. As the going-home time nears, you consider meeting friends for dinner. If you are in a relationship, this would be a good evening for you to do the cooking. You should find it a rather fortunate day for making plans or decisions and finding your way through just about any problem that you may encounter. You should feel quite successful and have no problems in coping. Good advice from a guide or older person may be forthcoming. Expect a good day. Anything of a domestic nature or having to do with things from the past will be on your mind today. Chasing down a rat or a mouse may bring some excitement into your life this evening-it also brings up a story-time idea.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

In just about any social circle, you will shine-others will be impressed with your knowledge of rather conceptual and spiritual ideas and your ability to present them to others. You could be working with a school system or church office as a secretary or helper. You may find yourself giving a lecture or perhaps teaching some problem-solving abilities. A question and answer period after the lecture may tempt you to invite people to some private sessions for extra help. You may want to be careful not to go too far in helping those that may need a different sort of counseling than you are able to offer, however. Hugs tend to bring a comfortable feeling of acceptance-that may be all that is needed in many cases.

WORD SEARCH

Christmas Tree

Find and circle all of the Christmas Tree words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 53 letters spell a secret message.

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

- | | | | |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| ANGEL | GARLAND | REAL | TOPPER |
| BELLS | GIFTS | SCENT | TRADITION |
| BETHEHEM | GREEN | SETTING UP | TREE FARM |
| CANDLES | LARGE | SKIRT | TREE LOT |
| CANDY CANE | LIGHTS | SMALL | TRUNK |
| CAROLS | NEEDLES | SPRUCE | WATER |
| DECORATIONS | ORNAMENTS | STAND | YEARLY |
| EGGNOG | PINE | STAR | |
| FAMILY | PRESENTS | TAKING DOWN | |
| FRANKINCENSE | PURCHASE | TINSEL | |
| FRIENDS | | | |

Yesterday Solution

Christmas

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

- | | | | |
|--------------|----------------|------------|----------------|
| ANGEL | FRUITCAKE | MANGER | SNOWFLAKES |
| BELLS | GABRIEL | MARY | SNOWMAN |
| BETHEHEM | GIFTS | MISTLETOE | STABLE |
| CANDLES | GOLD | MYRRH | STAR |
| CANDY CANE | GREETING CARDS | ORNAMENTS | STOCKING |
| CAROLS | HOLLY | POINSETTIA | THREE WISE MEN |
| DECORATIONS | ICICLES | SANTA | TOBOGGAN |
| EGGNOG | JESUS | SHEPHERDS | TOYS |
| FAMILY | JOSEPH | SKATES | TREE |
| FRANKINCENSE | LIGHTS | SLEIGH | WREATH |
| FRIENDS | | | |

The hidden sentence is: TIS THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY

Daily SuDoku

		4		6		8	9	
							1	6
6			4	2				
		9	2	8			7	
		3				5		
	6			9	5	8		
				5	2			8
	5	7						
9	3		6			4		

Yesterday's Solution

4	3	8	1	9	7	2	6	5
2	5							

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: Monday

07/12/2015

Issue Time 07:00

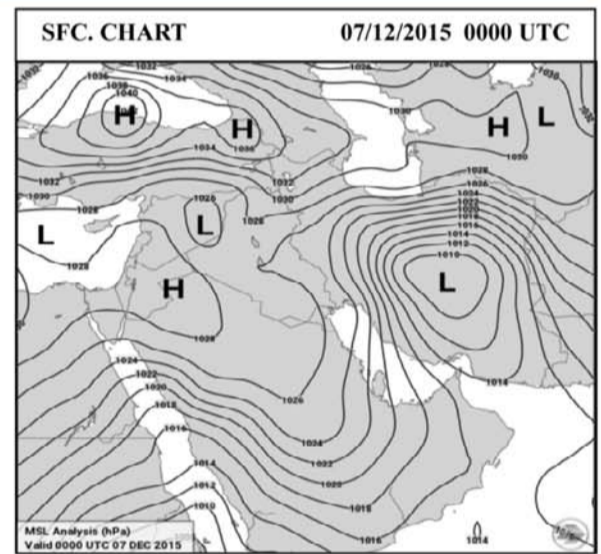
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Cold with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 38 km/h

BY NIGHT: Very cold with light to moderate freshening gradually at times north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h

WARNING	No Current Warnings
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STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.
KUWAIT CITY	14 °C	09 °C
KUWAIT AIRPORT	14 °C	03 °C
ABDALY	13 °C	01 °C
BUBYAN	12 °C	04 °C
JAHRA	14 °C	04 °C
FAILAKA ISLAND	12 °C	06 °C
SALMIYAH	13 °C	10 °C
AHMADI	13 °C	07 °C
JAL ALIYAH	12 °C	02 °C
QAROH ISLAND	16 °C	12 °C
UMM AL-MARADEM	15 °C	12 °C



4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Tuesday	12/08	Cold	15 °C	04 °C	NW	15 - 38 km/h
Wednesday	12/09	Cool	16 °C	03 °C	NW	10 - 30 km/h
Thursday	12/10	Fair	18 °C	04 °C	NW-VRB	06 - 22 km/h
Friday	12/11	Fair	19 °C	03 °C	VRB	06 - 16 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	05:05
Sunrise	06:30
Zuhr	11:39
Asr	14:31
Sunset	16:50
Isha	18:12

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	13 °C
MIN. Temp.	05 °C
MAX. RH	99 %
MIN. RH	37 %
MAX. Wind	NW 46 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	6.98mm

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 2455050 Ext 510 Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali 25644660 Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel 25646478 Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah 25311996 Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory 25731988 Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary 22620166 Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz 25651426
General Practitioners	Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi 2455050 Ext 123 Dr. Yousef Al-Omar 24719312 Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaezem 23926920 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 Abidallah Al-Awadi 22616660 Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C) 25313120 Dr. Leons Joseph 66703427

Plastic Surgeons	Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf 22547272 Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari 22617700 Dr. Abdel Quttainah 25625030/60
Family Doctor	Dr Divya Damodar 23729596/23729581
Psychiatrists	Dr. Esam Al-Ansari 22635047 Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan 22613623/0
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	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	DR. Mohammed Akkad 2455050 Ext 210
Consultant Cardiologist	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 Tome	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



Chanel accused of plagiarism

Chanel fashion house has been accused of plagiarism. The luxury brand is locked in a bitter row with a group of knitters in Fair Isle - based in northern Scotland - after the Paris-based label allegedly "copied" their patterns and featured them in its autumn collection, which was showcased at the Chanel Metiers d'Art show last week. Mati Ventrillon, who sold seven jumpers to Chanel's team of researchers when they visited the Scottish island in the summer, took to Facebook to lash out at the label. She wrote: "Endorsement or plagiarism? This summer, two Chanel staff visited Fair Isle and bought some of my stock garments with the understanding that they were for research. I specifically said that I was going to sell it to them for the reputation of Chanel house and because I would not expect them to

copy my design. Fair Isle patterns are in the public domain but I designed the garment in terms of shape, colour choice and pattern arrangement. The patterns are traditional Fair Isle patterns but the black and white design and the pattern arrangement is my design." According to the Daily Record newspaper, Chanel - whose creative director is Karl Lagerfeld - didn't pay a designer fee to any of the individuals they bought jumpers from. However, it's not known if the group of knitters will take legal action against the French fashion giants.



Katie wont forgive Kieran

Katie Price will "never forgive" Kieran Hayler's infidelity. The 37-year-old former glamour model was left devastated when she discovered her husband had cheated on her with friend Jane Pountney in May 2014 and though she'll never get over his betrayal, she insists they've now moved on. She said: "I'll never forgive, I'll never forget. You just learn to deal with it. But it's weird to talk about this because we've moved on. It's Christmas and it's been 19 months. It's a long time ago and we've come on so far. It's nearly two years." And Katie even plans to buy her husband a mystery gift to mark the two-year anniversary of his infidelity. She told Britain's OK! magazine: "I'll buy him a present when it's two years. It's something he's always wanted. I'm not saying, but he knows what it is." Although he cheated on her, Katie - who has children Harvey, 13, Junior, 10, and Princess, eight, from past relationships and Jett, two, and Bunny, 16 months, with Kieran - insists she is not as jealous or distrustful of her spouse as she used to be. She explained: "It's weird, before I caught him cheating I'd say I was more jealous. But now I'm less jealous because I think, you've been caught and if you do it again then I won't give you another chance and you know it. His whole mindset has changed." These days, the couple claim to be "obsessed" with one another and spend "unhealthy" amounts of time together. Kieran said: "Do you know what? We spend so much time together, it's ridiculous. People probably think it's unhealthy. We're always with each other and it's rare for us to go out alone. Usually it's just us at home, spending time with the kids. We're probably a bit obsessed with each other, but in a good way."



Kourtney launches her lifestyle app

Kourtney Kardashian is set to launch her lifestyle app. The 'Keeping Up With the Kardashians' beauty, 36, has decided to follow in the footsteps of her sisters Kim, 35, and Khloe, 31, and half-sisters Kendall, 20, and Kylie Jenner, 18 - who released their mobile platforms three months ago - by releasing a software which will enable her fans to keep up with her everyday life as a mother and a reality TV star. Taking to her Twitter account last night, the brunette babe wrote: "I think they saved the best for last ... MY APP is coming SO soon guys!! (sic)." The famous stars' apps focuses on different sections, with Kim's based on fashion and selfies, while Khloe's is primarily aimed at her love for health and fitness. Kendall's app documents her life as a model, while Kylie uses her platform to give her fans little tips and tricks about her home life, her passion for makeup and her pet pooch. Speaking at the launch in September, held at New York's SoHo Apple store, Kim - who released her own mobile game last year - said: "We wanted to change our digital platform and make it more than just a blog that we had before. I just felt like there was no other platform that could do it all unless we do it ourselves."



2 Chainz pays disabled mom's rent for a year

2 Chainz has paid a disabled single mother's rent for a year and bought her new furniture. The US rapper surprised former veteran Dierdre Plater by turning up at her home in Atlanta, Georgia with new equipment for her abode and he offered to take care of her lease payment for the next 12 months. The shocked mother-of-three told US news channel CBS46: "It's hard to keep gas in the car, food in the house, and do everything by myself being a single parent. I am on a fixed income. I love to see stuff like this happen for other people, but I never thought it would happen to me." 2 Chainz made the donation to Dierdre through his TRU Foundation, which helps out those in need from Atlanta, Georgia - where 2 Chainz is from - and the surrounding areas. Money to pay the single mum's rent will also come from sales of the 38-year-old star's Ugly Christmas Sweaters collection of festive jumpers. 2 Chainz - whose real name is Tauheed Epps - posted a heartfelt message on Instagram over the weekend in which he recalled standing in front of his oven to keep warm in his home during his younger years in the winter months. He wrote: "I remember when we didn't have hot water and I didn't want my friends to know, so I told them it was something wrong with that bathroom and they couldn't use my mommas, I remember using the oven to heat the house, I would stand in the kitchen for hours to stay warm. I remember waiting until the water co. Close at 5, so we could use a tool and turn the water back on until 6 am, I remember going to sleep hungry, I remember a long ass extension chord coming from the neighbors house to mine to borrow they're lights, I remember stealing cable, cars, clothes etc, no matter how much pain I endured I smiled on the outside, it was my defense mechanism. I remember (sic)"

Douglas inspired by Lennon's death

Michael Douglas became a campaigner to end gun violence after getting caught in the "fracas" surrounding John Lennon's murder. The 71-year-old actor was walking home with Rolling Stone magazine publisher Jann Wenner in December 1980 when they came across a commotion, and the subsequent killing of the Beatles legend outside The Dakota, the building where he lived, made the pair vow to try and change things. He recalled: "We were walking home one night along Central Park West on December 8 and we passed the Dakota. There was all this fracas and it was the night that John Lennon got shot. Right after that, Jann and I were involved with starting an organization called CeaseFire." Meanwhile, the 'Wall Street' star - who has 35-year-old son Cameron with ex-wife Diandra and kids Dylan, 15, and Carys, 13, with spouse Catherine Zeta-Jones - isn't worried about getting older because technology and society have changed so much, it's an "exciting" time. He told the New York Daily News newspaper's Confidential column: "There's not much I can do about it, can I? Realistically this is about as great a time for getting older. I was looking at a few articles last week about the technology that exists, education, stuff to help your memory. It's as good as time as there is. You no longer think about retirement, you think about what new career you're going into, what new things you're going to do so it's an exciting time." Michael's movie star father Kirk, who turns 99 on December 9, recently worried he couldn't remember one of his own movies - until he realised he was actually watching his son on screen. Michael said: "Almost a year ago Kirk called me and said, 'Michael I was looking at television, I saw one of my old movies and I felt so bad because I couldn't remember the movie.' I said, 'Dad, that's OK-you're 99 next week.' He said, 'No, then I realised it wasn't me, it was you.'"



Cannon doesn't understand masculinity

Nick Cannon doesn't think he'll "ever understand" manhood. The 35-year-old star - who has four-year-old twins Moroccan and Monroe with ex-wife Mariah Carey - is "growing and learning" every day but still doesn't think he, or anyone else, has the right ideas about masculinity. He said: "The ideal of manhood and masculinity is this universal theme that I feel like we've gotten wrong for generations. But ultimately, it also goes to that core of love and being able to be vulnerable. Even myself, man, growing and learning every day, I don't think I'll ever understand it fully, and understanding that is part of being a man, being able to stop and say, 'Hey, I don't know it all, I'm taking this one day at a time just like everybody else.'" Nick can next be seen in the title role of 'Chi-Raq', in which he plays a rapper deeply involved in Chicago gang life, and could identify with his character's "stubborn" nature. Asked why he thinks his alter ego was

reluctant to leave gang life, he told Vulture: "That's the bull-headed, stubborn machismo-ego stuff. We all have it as men. You know what I mean? I'ma do what I wanna do when I wanna do it. Nobody's gonna force me to do nothing, especially not some chick, especially not some preacher, especially not some other gang member. I'm my own man. It's silly." In the movie, the women of the city try to halt the violence with a sex strike, but Nick doesn't think it would ever happen in real life because it would be so "tough" to stick to. He said: "It could happen, but I think people would get over it really quickly! They'd be like, All right, we're going to try! Nah, we couldn't. There'd be a lot of people falling off the bandwagon. But the idea of it, starting a movement, mobilizing-we have that as Americans, where we like to follow, and we like to get in and say, All right, if we gather around and put whatever it is, our money, our time, our effort, we can change things."

Cavallari's brother reportedly missing

Kristin Cavallari's brother has reportedly gone missing. Michael Cavallari was believed to have been driving from California to Chicago when his car was found abandoned close to a gas station on the side of a Utah highway on November 27. The engine was still running and the airbags on the vehicle had been deployed, and though there was no trace of the driver, police found Michael's laptop and cell phone inside. It is believed the car had hit a large rock. Local police have made an appeal for information on Michael's whereabouts. Kristin or her husband Jay Cutler have not yet commented on the news. The couple recently welcomed their third child, and first daughter, into the world. Saylor James was born on November 23, just a few days before her uncle's apparent disappearance. Kristin - who also has sons Camden, three, and Jaxon, 17 months - shared the first picture of her new baby when she was just under a week old, though her face wasn't visible in the image. She wrote alongside the photo: "Really sad about missing my 10 year high school reunion last night...so many people I wanted to see...but at least I have a good excuse (sic)"





GULF AIR

The first commercial airlines established in the Middle East

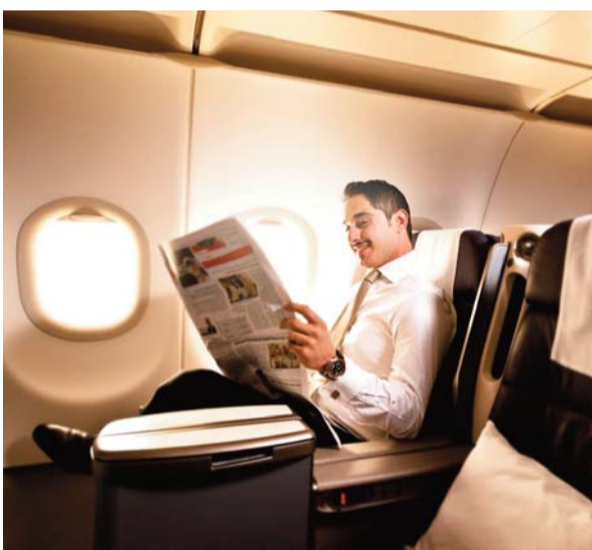


Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain, commenced operations in 1950, becoming one of the first commercial airlines established in the Middle East. Today, Gulf Air is a major international carrier serving 43 cities in 24 countries spanning three continents.

Gulf Air's network reflects a strong focus on maintaining strategic business and leisure links with key global destinations. In 2015 Gulf Air launched services to two new Saudi Arabian destinations: Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz Regional Airport - Gassim - and Taif Regional Airport - Taif - and two new Pakistani destinations of Faisalabad and Multan. This supplements the airline's network growth and development in 2014 which saw Gulf Air launch flights to Sialkot, its fifth destination in Pakistan, while resuming services to the Iranian capital city of Tehran and the Greek capital, Athens all in the first half of the year while the latter half of the year saw the airline resume flights to the capital of Fars Province in Iran, Shiraz, resume a direct service to its sixth India destination: Hyderabad and commence operations to the Russian capital city of Moscow.

That's not all: Gulf Air is focused on offering enhanced connectivity for passenger convenience. One of the key elements of Gulf Air's double and multiple daily flight strategy, and an important factor in differentiating the Kingdom of Bahrain's national carrier from its regional competitors, is the strength of its regional network. The airline boasts one of the largest networks in the Middle East, operating double daily flights or more to ten regional cities: Amman, Jeddah, Riyadh, Dammam, Kuwait, Doha, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Muscat, and Cairo - from its hub at Bahrain International Airport - in addition to select destinations in the Indian Subcontinent and Europe.

Through operating high-frequency flights, with at least a double daily service or more between Bahrain and all major regional cities, Gulf Air has created a new business proposition. Regional travelers who wish to conduct their business, whether it be shopping, visiting relatives and friends or travelling for business, and return home the same day, now can.



cialized attention and care, helping make flying with children a more pleasurable experience for parents and children alike. The Sky Nanny Service is available both on the ground and in the air delivering dedicated childcare service from check-in, to our Gulf Air Falcon Gold Lounges, to on board the flight and disembarkation.

Gulf Air was also the first Middle East airline to introduce highly qualified and accredited in-flight Chefs to serve the airline's premium class passengers with personalized service and diverse culinary expertise onboard select long-haul flights. Gulf Air's SkyChef concept has, since then, received much acclaim, providing passengers with unparalleled dining service, dedicated Sky Chefs prepare tailor-made dishes based on passengers' particular tastes and preferences. Combined with Gulf Air's hallmark Arabian hospitality, the service provides an experience akin to a five-star restaurant, integrating elements of luxury and attention to detail with a highly diverse range and choice of European and Middle Eastern dishes combined in a contemporary style.

Whether travelling for business or leisure, alone or accompanied, Gulf Air enhances the travel experience for every kind of traveler.

Gulf Air Falcon Gold Lounge

Gulf Air's Falcon Gold Lounges are distinct in many ways - specifically, their architectural designs combine the traditional Arabian theme with modern amenities giving guests a sense of space and freedom.

With dedicated Gulf Air Falcon Gold Lounges in all of Bahrain International Airport, Dubai International Airport and Heathrow Terminal 4, our passengers are well taken care of with well laid-out business, dining, lounging facilities and TV areas in addition to the added facilities of the "Quiet Lounges" which hold private sleeping rooms with comfortable beds, dimming lights and a 'do not disturb' option to rest in complete privacy. The sleeping rooms are also equipped with hi definition TVs with wireless headphones for those who want to watch their favorite programs or listen to their choice of music in private. Additional facilities include cigar lounges and shower rooms with hotel-style towels and luxury brand toiletries and amenities. There are also separate prayer rooms and secure lockers for those who want to use these facilities while the modern, self-service buffet area offers a wide variety of snacks and meals, including an Italian coffee corner offering the world famous Lavazza brand coffee varieties.

Passengers can stay connected with free Wi-Fi throughout the lounges, discreet power sockets at every seat and a business center that includes PCs, fax machines and printers. For families, the lounges offer a spacious family room with our SkyNannies in attendance as well as a gaming room equipped with Xbox and PlayStation units.

In fact the lounges are so appealing you may find yourself hoping for a flight delay. There's not much chance of that happening: Gulf Air's strong on-time-punctuality is becoming yet another trademark of the airline, with an

average annual on-time-performance of 89% in 2014, further facilitating the carrier's seamless operations across its network.

Gulf Air's Falcon Gold Lounges seamlessly integrate contemporary design and architecture with Arabian influences, creating an environment that combines peace and tranquility with extensive modern-day business and catering facilities for the Gulf Air Falcon Gold traveler.

Gulf Air Falcon Gold Lounge access

The lounges are freely accessible to all Black, Gold, Silver and Blue card-holding FFP members of Gulf Air, and Falcon Gold class ticket holders of Gulf Air and premium class ticket holders of the carrier's code-share partner airlines.

A330 aircraft

Gulf Air's aggressive and proactive re-fleet and product enhancement strategy saw it, in 2015, successfully roll out its newly retrofitted A330 aircraft.

Featuring a total of 214 seats in a two-class configuration of 30 Falcon Gold Class and 184 Economy seats, Gulf Air's retrofitted A330 aircraft were designed specifically for the national carrier, integrating features based on passenger feedback.

The airline's new Falcon Gold seat converts into a fully-flat bed measuring 1.90 meters in length guaranteeing a comfortable night's sleep. With greater personal space between seats, passengers can sit back and relax in a 22-inch wide armchair that converts easily into your desired position with fully adjustable armrests, significant storage space and a much-lauded in-seat massage facility.

For optimum onboard entertainment, the Falcon Gold seats come with complete Audio-Video on Demand (AVOD) features, an individual 15-inch touch screen in every seat and high quality noise-cancelling headphones. A suite of movies, video and audio titles in several languages are available, in addition to games. A USB port is available in every seat allowing you to easily charge electronic devices during your flight.

Beyond the airline's premium product, Gulf Air's A330 Economy Class seats have also been upgraded to offer passengers the very latest in comfort and technology. Featuring a 4-inch recline, an 18-inch seat-width and an adjustable head and foot rest allowing greater passenger comfort, the seats are fitted with 9-inch seat back TV monitors that are ideal for enjoying the airline's extensive in-flight entertainment options.

Incorporating several elements of passengers' feedback, the revamped A330 product offers enhancements across both cabins and is used primarily on the airline's London and Bangkok routes. Gulf Air flies nonstop twice daily between London Heathrow T4 and Bahrain and offers 6 weekly flights between Bangkok and Bahrain. From Bahrain, Gulf Air offers easy access to one of the largest networks within the Middle East and provides seamless onward connections to a network stretching from India to Asia and Africa.



60 years experience

Today, having amassed over 60 years of experience and expertise, Gulf Air retains a high international standing and global renown.

Renowned for its traditional Arabian hospitality, evidenced by the airline's signature family and business friendly products, Gulf Air is committed to being an industry leader and developing products and services that reflect the evolving needs and aspirations of its passengers.

Recognizing the 'family travel experience' as an important differentiation factor in its suite of service offerings, Gulf Air has combined its hallmark Arabian hospitality with a family friendly package. As a pioneering airline, known for innovative products and services, Gulf Air introduced the world's first Sky Nanny: a free service dedicated to the airline's young travellers whereby Sky Nannies provide spe-



Music & Movies



This Nov 30, 2015, file photo shows the cast of 'Spotlight', which was named best feature, screenplay and acting ensemble, pose at the 2015 IFP Gotham Independent Film Awards at Cipriani Wall Street, in New York.



This photo provided by Warner Bros Pictures shows Tom Hardy, as Max Rockatansky, in Warner Bros Pictures' and Village Roadshow Pictures' action adventure film, 'Mad Max:Fury Road'.—AP photos

LA Film Critics pick 'Spotlight' as best film

The high-octane "Mad Max: Fury Road" might have driven off with the most awards on Sunday, but the Los Angeles Film Critics Association had another in mind for its top film of the year: "Spotlight," the comparatively subdued drama about the Pulitzer Prize-winning investigation into sex abuses in the Catholic Church. LAFCAs is one of the highest-profile regional critics groups, but often strays from the mainstream in its annual awards choices. Only once in the past 20 years has the LAFCAs Best Film winner gone on to win the Best Picture Oscar.

There was no clear favorite this year, and LAFCAs honored a vast variety of some of the year's best films further reinforcing the narrative that the Oscar race is still fairly undefined. "Mad Max: Fury Road," picked up three honors -

the most for any film - including best director for George Miller, best cinematography, and best production design. But the dystopian rager, which the National Board of Review chose as their best film earlier this week, got second place to Tom McCarthy's "Spotlight," which also won for its screenplay.

Charlie Kaufman and Duke Johnson's dark animated film "Anomalisa" also got multiple awards, including best animated film and best music/score for composer Carter Burwell, who was also recognized for "Carol." Acting awards were given similarly out of the box choices. Michael Fassbender won best actor for portraying the tech titan in "Steve Jobs," while Charlotte Rampling picked up the award for best actress for her role in the marital drama "45

Years." Michael Shannon won best supporting actor for playing the predatory real estate broker in the housing bubble film "99 Homes," and Alicia Vikander won best supporting actress for her performance as the beguiling Artificial Intelligence creation in "Ex Machina."

"Amy," about the life of late pop star Amy Winehouse, won best documentary, and "Son of Saul" picked up best foreign film. Director Ryan Coogler also won the LAFCAs new generation award for "Creed," a continuation of the Rocky Balboa saga. "Carol," Todd Haynes' 1950s-set romance, which dominated the New York Film Critics Circle Awards this past week was practically shut out, aside from Burwell's co-win for score and a host of runner-up awards, including director and production design.

The awards-friendly "Joy," "The Revenant," "The Danish Girl" and "Room" were nowhere to be found in LAFCAs' choices. Quentin Tarantino's "The Hateful Eight" was recognized only for Ennio Morricone's score as the runner-up to Burwell's compositions. Ultimately, the awards race continues to be wide open in nearly every category. The competition will heat up this week though, when nominees are announced for both the Screen Actors Guild Awards and the Golden Globes. — AP



Kennedy Center President Deborah Rutter, front row from left, poses for a photo with Teresa Heinz Kerry, 2015 Kennedy Center Honorees Carole King, Cicely Tyson, Seiji Ozawa, and Producers Ricky Kirshner, back row from left, Glenn Weiss, Secretary of State John Kerry, 2015 Kennedy Center Honorees Rita Moreno and George Lucas and David Rubenstein following the State Department Dinner for the Kennedy Center Honors in Washington.



President Barack Obama, center, and first lady Michelle Obama arrive at the 2015 Kennedy Center Honors in Washington, after the president made an address to the nation. — AP photos

'Star Wars' creator Lucas get major US arts award

"Star Wars" creator George Lucas entered the pantheon of US cultural icons Sunday as he received a prestigious Kennedy Center Lifetime Artistic Achievement. The man behind the saga in a galaxy far, far away received his prize at a gala event that also honored actresses Rita Moreno and Cicely Tyson, 1970s pop singer-songwriter Carole King and Boston Symphony Orchestra conductor Seiji Ozawa.

"Star Wars" became one of the greatest successes in the history of Hollywood, even though many people—including Lucas himself—were convinced that the movie would flop. Lucas, along with director Steven Spielberg, is also a co-creator of the "Indiana Jones" series of the adventure-seeking archaeologist. Lucas's films, especially the first "Star Wars" movie that came out in 1977, "changed movies absolutely for ever," said Spielberg, who was at the event.

Movies by Lucas and Spielberg, who often worked together, marked the birth of a new genre of popular science fiction movies with high-tech special effects. Lucas receives the award just ahead of the release in movie theaters of the latest installment in the saga—"Star Wars: The Force Awakens." The film is the seventh episode in the series. "The fans are going to love it," Lucas said. "It's very much the very kind of movie they've been looking for."

Lucas however sold his company, Lucasfilm, to Disney in 2012 for \$4 billion and is no longer associated with the franchise that he created. Lucas described it as a painful breakup. Renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma, who performed on stage, said that the Kennedy Awards "keeps away the darkness of fear, of ter-



Actress and Broadway star Cicely Tyson (left), Conductor Seiji Ozawa (second left), actress and singer Rita Moreno (center), filmmaker George Lucas (second right), and singer-songwriter Carole King (right) are introduced at a 2105 Kennedy Center Honors recipients during a reception at The White House in Washington DC. — AP Photos



Film Directors Martin Scorsese (left) and Steven Spielberg (right) chat upon arriving at The White House in Washington, DC.

ror, of hate, of violence." King added: "We hope that we can, for a moment, having people think about music, and arts, and film, and dance." President Barack Obama attended the event with his wife Michelle after delivering a rare primetime address in the wake of a brutal mass shooting in California that he described as an "act of terrorism."

Obama earlier hosted the honorees at the White House,

and described them as artists "who helped tell the story of the first American century through music, theater and film." "Each of these artists was born with something special to offer their country and the world," the president said. As for Lucas, he said the filmmaker was "at the vanguard of the New Hollywood, blending genres and combining timeless themes with cutting-edge technology." It's "pretty remarkable that

nearly 40 years after the first star destroyer crawled across the screen, we are still obsessed with George's vision of a galaxy far, far away," Obama added. Missing from the event: rock band The Eagles, best known for their 1976 hit album "Hotel California." The group postponed their appearance for one year due to unspecified health problems of Glenn Frey, a member of the quartet. — AFP



Alex Garland's 'Ex Machina' wins Best Film at British Independent Film Awards

Alex Garland's "Ex Machina" won best film at the British Independent Film Awards, and Garland took the director prize for the film. The awards took place at London's Old Billingsgate Market. Tom Hardy won best actor for his dual role as Ronnie and Reggie Kray in "Legend," and Saoirse Ronan picked up the best actress prize for "Brooklyn." Ronan said: "I was very, very lucky. I was given the opportunity to honor a journey and a story that is very close to my heart." Brendan Gleeson nabbed the supporting actor award for "Suffragette," while Olivia Colman took the supporting actress prize for "The Lobster."

The Variety Award, which recognizes a director, actor, writer or producer who has made a global impact and helped to focus the international spotlight on the UK, was presented to Kate Winslet. "I absolutely love acting. I love it more and more," Winslet said. "Independent film has been my best friend for 23 years, and continues to enrich my life beyond measure. Independent film is where I have learned the most and laughed the most."

The award for international independent film was taken by "Room." Jacob Tremblay, the young star of the film, collected the award with the producers. The Raindance Discovery Award went to "Orion: The Man Who Would Be King." The documentary honor went to "Dark Horse: The

Incredible True Story of Dream Alliance" and Alex Garland took the screenplay prize for "Ex Machina." The producers of the year were Paul Katis and Andrew De Lotbiniere for "Kajaki: The True Story," and Stephen Fingleton was named best debut director for "The Survivalist."

Abigail Hardingham was named Most Promising Newcomer for her performance in "Nina Forever," while "Edmond" took the short film award. The achievement in craft award was picked up by Andrew Whitehurst for the visual effects on "Ex Machina." Among those attending are Winslet, Marion Cotillard, Alicia Vikander, Charlotte Rampling, Agyness Deyn, Colin Farrell, Helena Bonham Carter, Luke Evans, Julie Walters, Carey Mulligan and Ronan.

Full list of winner and nominees below:
Best British Independent Film
 "Ex Machina"
Best Director
 Alex Garland, "Ex Machina"
Best Actor
 Tom Hardy, "Legend"
Best Actress
 Brendan Gleeson, "Suffragette"

Best Supporting Actress
 Olivia Colman, "The Lobster"
Best Screenplay
 Alex Garland, "Ex Machina"
Best Foreign Independent Film
 "Room"
Best Debut Director (Douglas Hickox Award)
 "The Survivalist"
Best Achievement in Craft
 Andrew Whitehurst (visual effects), "Ex Machina"
Best Documentary
 "Amy" "Dark Horse: The Incredible True Story of Dream Alliance"
Most Promising Newcomer
 Hardingham, "Nina Forever"
Producer of the Year
 Paul Katis and Andrew De Lotbiniere, "Kajaki: The True Story"
 Raindance Discovery Award "Aaaaaaaah!"
 "Orion: The Man Who Would Be King"
Best Short Film
 "Edmond" — Reuters



Bono of U2 throws water on spectators during a concert in Paris. — AP photos



Irish band U2 singer Bono (right) and guitarist The Edge (left) perform on stage.

Bono joined by Patti Smith at U2's Paris Concert: 'We Are All Parisians'



Irish band U2 singer Bono (left) performs on stage.

Less than three weeks after postponing their INNOCENCE + eXPERIENCE concerts in the wake of the Paris attacks, U2 was back to rock the French capital with a powerful and fearless live performance on Sunday. The evening's surprise guest, Patti Smith, joined the band for the last song. Bono stirred vivid emotions from the crowd shouting "Vive La France" as he stepped on stage of the 20,300-seat AccorHotel Arena. "If you love liberty, Paris is your hometown," said Bono, who also talked about the grieving power of music.

"Grief is like a wound that never fully closes. I am still feeling it and I was 14 when my mother left me but she left me as an artist and this wound became an opening into another world and I found these three (pointing to his band). Rock n' roll saved me, these men saved me, you saved me." "We can't save you but our role tonight is

to serve you. We have the privilege to be your servants this evening," said Bono before dedicating a song to his mother, "Iris (Hold Me Close)." The band went on to play their greatest hits, "Where The Streets Have No Name," "Beautiful Day," "With or Without You" and "Bloody Sunday."

U2 also paid tribute to the victims of the Paris attacks, performing "In the Name of Love" while every victim's name was shown within a peace and love symbol on the giant screen of the venue. Despite previous reports, Eagles of Death Metal will not be performing with the band, but are rumored to be lined up for tomorrow's concert will be recorded for a HBO special. "So much that was taken from Paris on the tragic night of November 13th is irreplaceable. For one night, the killers took lives, took music, took peace of mind -

but they couldn't steal the spirit of that city," Bono said after rescheduling the shows.

A flurry of concerts, including The Foo Fighters and Coldplay, were scrapped in the aftermath of the attacks—the deadliest assault on French soil since WWII. The Nov. 13 terror attacks killed 130 people in Paris, including 89 people who were attending the concert of Eagles of Death Metal at the Bataclan. France's largest concert venue, the AccorHotel Arena boasted maximal security on Sunday evening. The U2 concert is exceptional amid current times, as Gaul is now under a state of emergency due to the high terrorist threat, so mass rallies are banned. — Reuters

Nominees announced for Grammy Awards

Nominees were announced yesterday in the top categories for the 58th annual Grammy Awards: Album of the year: "Sound & Color," Alabama Shakes; "To Pimp a Butterfly," Kendrick Lamar; "Traveller," Chris Stapleton; "1989," Taylor Swift; "Beauty Behind the Madness," The Weeknd. Record of the year: "Really Love," D'Angelo and The Vanguard; "Uptown Funk," Mark Ronson featuring Bruno Mars; "Thinking Out Loud," Ed Sheeran; "Blank Space," Taylor Swift; "Can't Feel My Face," The Weeknd.

Song of the year (songwriter's award): "Alright," Kendrick Duckworth, Mark Anthony Spears and Pharrell Williams; "Blank Space," Max Martin, Shellback and Taylor Swift; "Girl Crush," Hillary Lindsey, Lori McKenna and Liz Rose; "See You Again," Andrew Cedar, Justin Franks, Charles Puth and Cameron Thomaz; "Thinking Out Loud," Ed Sheeran and Amy Wadge. Best new artist: Courtney Barnett, James Bay, Sam Hunt, Tori Kelly, Meghan Trainor. Best pop vocal album: "Piece by Piece," Kelly Clarkson; "How Big, How Blue, How Beautiful," Florence + The Machine; "Uptown Special," Mark Ronson; "1989," Taylor Swift; "Before This World," James Taylor.

Best pop solo performance: "Heartbeat Song," Kelly Clarkson; "Love Me Like You Do," Ellie Goulding; "Thinking Out Loud," Ed Sheeran; "Blank Space," Taylor Swift; "Can't Feel My Face," The Weeknd. Best pop duo/group performance: "Ship to Wreck," Florence + The Machine; "Sugar," Maroon 5; "Uptown Funk," Mark Ronson featuring Bruno Mars; "Bad Blood," Taylor Swift featuring

Kendrick Lamar; "See You Again," Wiz Khalifa featuring Charlie Puth. Best rock album: "Chaos and the Calm," James Bay; "Kintsugi," Death Cab for Cutie; "Mister Asylum," Highly Suspect; "Drones," Muse; ".5: The Gray Chapter," Slipknot. Best alternative music album: "Sound & Color," Alabama Shakes; "Vulnicura," Bjork; "The Waterfall," My Morning Jacket; "Currents," Tame Impala; "Star Wars," Wilco.

Best urban contemporary album: "Ego Death," The Internet; "You Should Be Here," Kehlani; "Blood," Lianne La Havas; "Wildheart," Miguel; "Beauty Behind the Madness," The Weeknd. Best R&B album: "Coming Home," Leon Bridges; "Black Messiah," D'Angelo and The Vanguard; "Cheers to the Fall," Andra Day; "Reality Show," Jazmine Sullivan; "Forever Charlie," Charlie Wilson. Best rap album: "2014 Forest Hills Drive," J. Cole; "Compton," Dr. Dre; "If You're Reading This It's Too Late," Drake; "To Pimp a Butterfly," Kendrick Lamar; "The Pinkprint," Nicki Minaj. Best country album: "Montevallo," Sam Hunt; "Pain Killer," Little Big Town; "The Blade," Ashley Monroe; "Pageant Material," Kacey Musgraves; "Traveller," Chris Stapleton. — AP

In this Aug 30, 2015, file photo, Bruno Mars, left, and Mark Ronson accept the award for male video of the year for 'Uptown Funk' at the MTV Video Music Awards in Los Angeles.



Turks accuse Adele of 'stealing' Kurdish song

British pop star Adele has been accused of plagiarism by Turkish music lovers, who say one of the tracks on her latest album is a rip-off of a song by an iconic Kurdish musician. Adele's Turkish critics say "Million Years Ago," track number nine on her album "25," bears an unmistakable resemblance to a tune by Ahmet Kaya called "Acilara Tutunmak" ("Clinging to Pain"), which was recorded in 1985. The song's release has created a storm on social media in Turkey, with some users accusing the 27-year performer of "stealing" the melancholic tune from Kaya, who died in France in exile 15 years ago.

"Adele has stolen a song from us," one user named Esra Nur Aydogan wrote on Twitter, sharing a picture of a man hanging a Turkish flag on his balcony in protest. Kaya's wife, Gulden Kaya, also weighed in, saying it was unlikely for a global star like Adele to do such a thing. "However, if she consciously did it, then it would be theft," she told Turkish daily Posta. Adele's third studio album has sold millions of copies in both Britain and the US, smashing records on either side of the Atlantic.

Adele breaks another record

Adele's album "25" has broken another record, selling more than one million albums in the United States in its second week after a massive debut, a tracking service said Sunday. By sustaining huge success for a second week, the British singer becomes the first artist to sell more than one million albums in two separate weeks since at least 1991, when Nielsen Music began systematic data. "25" sold 1.1 million albums in the week through Thursday, bringing to 4.49 million copies the total US sales since it came out on November 20, Nielsen Music said.

Sales could still go much higher, considering the holiday shopping season and Adele's past performance. Her previous album, "21," has sold more than 11 million copies in the United States since its release in 2011, topping year-end charts for two consecutive years. "25" has also broken records in Adele's native Britain, selling more than one million copies in 10 days—the fastest album to reach that feat.

The album, led by the blockbuster single "Hello," is like much of Adele's earlier work a collection of emotionally intense ballads with themes of heartache and childhood nostalgia. Her success is all the more striking as album sales as a whole have dropped markedly since the rise of online music two decades ago. Unusually for a pop star in the current era, Adele has not made "25" available on streaming services such as Spotify and invests less time than many of her peers in social media interaction. With the record sales, Adele alone is helping boost sales for the recorded music industry.

Offering a more detailed glance at her first week, Nielsen Music said that "25" accounted for 37.7 percent of all album sales in the United States, in a month that saw new releases from other big pop names including Justin Bieber and One Direction. The sales were nearly evenly divided between physical and digital, with Adele putting "25" for purchase on iTunes despite her boycott of streaming. — AP



A picture taken on October 21, 2013 shows Rolling Stones guitarist Ronnie Wood and his wife Sally attending The Q Awards in central London. — AFP

Twins on the way for Rolling Stones' Ronnie Wood, 68

Rolling Stones guitarist Ronnie Wood, 68, is to become a father again as his wife is expecting twins, a spokesperson for the British rock band said. Wood's wife is 37-year-old wife Sally Humphries, who owns a theatre production company. "Sally and Ronnie Wood are delighted to announce that they are expecting twins in June 2016," said a spokesperson for the band. "Needless to say, they are thrilled and overjoyed with the wonderful news."

The couple dated for six months before getting married at London's Dorchester Hotel in December 2012. Wood already has four

children: Jesse Wood, with his first wife, former model Krissy Wood; daughter Leah and son Tyrone from his second marriage with Jo Wood; and Jamie, Jo's son from a previous marriage who Wood adopted. He has nine grand-children. Wood, who joined the Stones in 1975, is the youngest member of the four-piece band. The group are due to play a string of stadium dates in South America in February and March on their "America Latina Ole" tour. — AFP

Review

'School of Rock' a crowd-pleasing, upbeat musical

Hard rock's two fingered hand gesture is back on Broadway, thanks to an English lord. The crowd-pleasing, upbeat musical based on the beloved film "School of Rock" opened Sunday at the Winter Garden Theatre with a wondrously rebellious spirit and a superb cast. This sweet, well-constructed musical left a recent preview audience cheering, head-banging and flashing the hand signal known as the "devil's sign," with index and pinky fingers extended. Metal fans who mourned the passing of "Rock of Ages" have a new place to rock out. The stage version stays close to the plot of the Jack Black-led 2003 film, in which a wannabe rocker who hopes to one day "stick it to the Man" enlists his fifth-graders to form a rock group and conquer the Battle of the Bands. This time, the lesson in anarchic fun is a bunch of Men Who Should Be Having It Stuck To, namely the legendary songwriter Andrew Lloyd Webber and the "Downton Abby" creator Julian Fellowes as book writer. Both are in the House of Lords, for God's sake. It is treacherous water for a pair of lords to swim: The film was a star vehicle for Black and virtually a musical already, with riffs or songs by The Doors, AC/DC, Stevie Nicks and Led Zeppelin, among others. Webber blasted the theatrical doors down to let rock in with such shows as "Jesus Christ Superstar" and "Cats" but how could he handle this assignment?

Mocks the genre

Not too badly, it turns out. While leaning a little bit too much on his new song "Stick It to the Man," Webber, with lyricist Glenn Slater, turns in some perfectly solid mainstream rock-ish anthems in "Mount Rock" and "If Only You Would Listen." He even mocks the genre with "I'm Too Hot for You." But he also graciously allows the film's best song, "School of Rock" - with its ooh-la-la and AC/DC-like lick - to be a highlight, and bought the rights to "Edge of Seventeen" by Stevie Nicks, which is key to a plot point. That means that two of the musical's best songs have not been written by the composer.

No matter. A heartwarming story and a stage full of pre-pubescent kids who know their way around an amp prove irresistible. Alex Brightman in the Jack Black role may not have the film star's crazed menace but he shares his goofy, sweet spirit. Brightman is a ball of energy onstage and seems to be having a ball. It's infectious. Sierra Boggess, as the uptight school principal, has brilliantly been allowed to tap into her operatic background and also deliver a truly wondrous ballad in "Where Did the Rock Go?" The only other woman to rival her onstage is the pig-tailed bass player Evie Dolan, a funky burst of sunlight who is about 10. Other kid standouts are Brandon Niederauer, who melts faces off with his axe, and

Bobbi MacKenzie does it with her lungs.

Easy manipulation

Fellowes has been so faithful to the film's story that you may wonder why he even gets a credit, with whole sections of dialogue lifted word-for-word and the plot pretty much identical. True, he's added a sly romantic angle and a fun "Guitar Hero" section, plus thrown in a few jokes about gluten-free food, Facebook and the Kardashians, but it's hard to detect a whole lot of original work here. That's not the case for director Laurence Connor, who leads a crisp, snappy show that neither gets bogged down in irrelevant secondary stories or in easy manipulation, despite having a stage full of cute kids, who all play instruments.

Webber and Fellowes have nicely added a bit of focus to the frustrations faced by over-scheduled, stressed-out children, making "School of Rock" the third musical on Broadway featuring rebellious kids in school uniforms after "Matilda" and "Spring Awakening." The answer to that is simple: Bring them to the Winter Garden Theatre. They'll leave pumping their fists in the air. — AP



Lifestyle

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Turks accuse Adele of 'stealing' Kurdish song



A snowboarder and skiers dressed as Santa bring the holiday spirit to the Sunday River ski resort, Sunday in Newry, Maine. — AP

Fashion mogul Berge sells off library in sequel to art 'sale of the century'

Six years after selling off his art collection in a record-breaking "sale of the century", the French businessman and philanthropist Pierre Berge is now putting his renowned library under the hammer. The lover and business partner of the late designer Yves Saint Laurent told AFP he is putting almost his entire collection up for auction, one of the most priceless in private hands.

The sale of the couple's art collection netted 342 million euros (\$361 million) in 2009 a year after the designer's death from a brain tumour, then the highest figure ever for the sale of a private collection. In the first of six sales which could raise a total of 40 million euros (\$42 million) for the charitable foundation he founded with Saint Laurent, 180 historic manuscripts and rare first editions including Saint Augustine's "Confessions" printed in Strasbourg in 1470, and the original 1580 edition of the philosopher Montaigne's "Essays" will be auctioned at Sotheby's in Paris on Friday.

But the most valuable item in the first sale, the original manuscript of Andre Breton's surrealist masterpiece "Nadja" — worth an estimated 3.5 million euros — has already been snapped up by France's national library. Berge said that when he bought the

book in London "I felt that I had got hold of a fragment of the True Cross". "But you have to know how to get rid of things," Berge, 85, told AFP in his library on Paris' Left Bank, saying he had been planning the clear-out for years and had even stipulated it in his will.

Escaped the censor

Among the other literary treasures in the first sale is a first edition of Gustave Flaubert's "Madame Bovary" dedicated to "the master" Victor Hugo, one of William Burroughs's scrapbooks and the only pages of a lost erotic work by the notorious Marquis de Sade, "The Days of Florbelle", to have escaped the censor's flames. The young Berge, who was born on the Ile d'Oleron off western France, began collecting books at 18 after arriving in Paris and getting a job in an antiquarian bookshop.

He later befriended members of the city's literati, including Breton and Jean Cocteau, one of whose books dedicated to him he is holding back from sale. Another by Jean Giono, who was something of a father figure to him, and who is best known outside France for the film of his novel "The Horsemen on the Roof", has also been withdrawn. Berge said that he intended to

"replace all the books in the library" with identical cheaper copies. "A lot will probably be more fun to read in paperback." "I came to love these books through reading, the collector part only came later," he said.

Asked if he was worried about fears of falling auction prices, Berge said, "There is never a good time to sell. They said in 2009 (in the middle of the financial crisis) that it wasn't a good time to sell... his art collection, but it broke records. Although known as a formidable deal-maker, Berge has been a lifelong supporter of left-wing causes and an advocate of gay rights. He founded the AIDS charity Sidaction and the French gay magazine Tetu, with the vast proceeds of the sale of his and Saint Laurent's art collection going to AIDS and HIV research. He was close to former French president Francois Mitterrand and helped bankroll the failed presidential bid by Segolene Royal, the former partner of French President Francois Hollande, whose campaign for the Elysee he also supported. — AFP



This file photo taken on February 11, 2015 shows French businessman Pierre Berge poses on February 11, 2015 at his office in Paris. — AFP



In this photograph taken on October 24, 2014, Bhutanese film director Tshering Wangyel gestures as he speaks during an interview with AFP in Thimphu. — AFP

Top Bhutanese filmmaker Tshering Wangyel dies

Leading Bhutanese director Tshering Wangyel, who played a key role in developing the Himalayan kingdom's movie industry with films that blended Bollywood and Buddhism, died in hospital yesterday aged 43. "Our prolific filmmaker, Director Tshering Wangyel has passed away yesterday morning in the hospital," the Bhutan Film Association said on its Facebook page. Wangyel was shooting his latest film when he was taken to hospital in the capital Thimphu last month with pneumonia, the association said.

"It's a great shock and a huge loss to the film industry and the nation," said Yeshe Dorji, executive director of the association. "Most of our popular actors and actresses got their break because of him — every year he would make at least a couple of films, creating so many jobs in the process," Dorji told AFP in the Nepalese capital Kathmandu in a phone call from Thimphu.

An avid Bollywood fan, Wangyel was working in the ministry of agriculture when he decided to take a shot at making movies. "I was living this mundane nine to five life when I decided to make my first film: a love triangle about two college kids falling for the same girl," he told AFP in an interview last year. The Dzongkha-language film starred three of Wangyel's friends who contributed \$5,000 each towards the shoestring budget. He wrote the screenplay and handled the camera, sound and lighting.

Transgender actress, Warhol muse Holly Woodlawn dies at 69

Holly Woodlawn, the transgender actress made famous by Andy Warhol and Paul Morrissey in their 1970s films "Trash" and "Women in Revolt," has died. Woodlawn died Sunday in Los Angeles after a battle with cancer, said her former caretaker and friend Mariela Huerta. She was 69. Born Harold Danhaki, she took on the name Holly Woodlawn after running away from home at age 15 and hitchhiking to New York City, where she became one of Warhol's drag queen "superstars." Her story was immortalized in the first lines of the Lou Reed song "Walk on the Wild Side."

It began: "Holly came from Miami, F.L.A. Hitchhiked her way across the USA Plucked her eyebrows on the way. Shaved her legs and then he was a she. She says, 'Hey, babe, take a walk on the wild side.'" Woodlawn explained in a 2007 interview with the British newspaper The Guardian that she

didn't get to know Reed until after the song was released in 1972. Woodlawn received critical acclaim for her film roles, but she couldn't find mainstream success. Her cult status helped her make a comeback in such 1990s independent films as "Twin Falls Idaho" and "Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss." More recently, she appeared in the TV comedy "Transparent." Of her time as a Warhol superstar, she told the Guardian: "I felt like Elizabeth Taylor! Little did I realize that not only would there be no money, but that your star would flicker for two seconds and that was it. But it was worth it, the drugs, the parties, it was fabulous." — AP



In this 2012 photo provided by David Chick, actress Holly Woodlawn sits on Fisherman's Pier in Malibu, Calif. — AP



A diver wearing a Santa Claus outfit feeds a ray inside a tank at the Aquaria KLCC in Kuala Lumpur. The scuba-diving Santa Claus feeding fish is one of the prime attractions in conjunction with Christmas festivities at the KLCC Aquarium. — AFP