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# SAUDI ARABIA FORMS ISLAMIC ALLIANCE AGAINST TERRORISM

34-NATION COALITION COULD SHARE INFO, DEPLOY TROOPS



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# GERRARD, PIRLO, XAVI WON'T PLAY IN KUWAIT

#### **IOC READY FOR TALKS**

**ZURICH/BUDAPEST:** Steven Gerrard, Andrea Pirlo and Xavi Hernandez have been stopped from playing in a friendly in Kuwait because of the nation's ban from international football. Kuwait was suspended by FIFA in October because of government interference, a case which threatens the country's place in World Cup qualifying. The ban from international competitions extends to active players registered with clubs from taking part in the Football Champions Tour friendly in Kuwait on Friday against a local all-star team.

Organizers said Pirlo and Gerrard, who play in Major League Soccer, as well as Qatar-based Xavi are no longer able to participate. "Such principle is, of course, also to be followed at all sporting levels involving football in the territory of the state of Kuwait," FIFA acting secretary general Markus Kattner wrote to member associations last week. Yesterday, the FIFA disciplinary committee will consider sanctions for Kuwait for failing to fulfill a World Cup qualifier against Myanmar last month after it was banned. The ruling is not expected this week.

The International Olympic Committee has also sus-

pended Kuwait, risking its athletes' chances of qualifying and competing at the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro. IOC president Thomas Bach said yesterday the Kuwaiti government must "come to the table" and resolve the sports law which has caused the country to be banned. Kuwait was suspended in October for the second time in five years over government interference in the country's Olympic Committee. The sports ministry has also ordered the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) to vacate its headquarters in Kuwait by April 2016.

Bach, attending a meeting to celebrate the 120th anniversary of the Hungarian Olympic Committee, said the law which led to Kuwait's ban needed to be changed. "We will insist on our worry that the sports law is not in compliance. I think this is also in the interest of the Kuwait authorities and the Kuwaiti athletes to ensure this compliance and not forcing their other federations to escalate the issue. They have to come to the table," Bach said. "The IOC has always made it clear it is ready to address the various stipulations of the law that need to be changed." — Agenices



RIYADH: Saudi Defense Minister and Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman holds a press conference on Monday at the King Salman airbase. — AFP

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia announced yesterday the formation of a military coalition of 34 countries to fight "terrorism" in the Islamic world, in the latest sign of a more assertive foreign policy by the kingdom. The regional Sunni power said the alliance would share intelligence, combat violent ideology and deploy troops if necessary. "Nothing is off the table. A number of countries are in desperate need of assistance," Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir said. "Terrorism has hit Islamic countries. It is time that the Islamic world takes a stand," he told reporters in

The alliance was announced by Saudi Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who is also defense minister, on the same day that peace talks between the Yemeni government and Iran-backed rebels began in Switzerland, accompanied by a ceasefire. Adam Baron, a visiting fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations, said the coalition fits into "the larger, more assertive policy" of Saudi King Salman and Mohammed, his powerful son.

**Continued on Page 15** 

#### **COALITION MEMBERS**

Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Jordan, Tunisia, Yemen, Palestine, Egypt, Morocco, Turkey, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Benin, Chad, Togo, Djibouti, Senegal, Sudan, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Gabon, Guinea, Comoros, Ivory Coast, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Nigeria.

State Bank of India



KUWAIT: Social Affairs and Labor and Planning Minister Hind Al-Subaih speaks to MP Khaleel Al-Saleh as MP Rawdan Al-Rawdan looks on during a parliament session at the Assembly yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

#### JOINT PANEL TO STUDY GOVT REQUEST FOR DEFENSE FUNDS

#### MPS SLAM FAILURE TO DIVERSIFY ECONOMY

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** The National Assembly agreed yesterday to form a joint panel to study a request by the government for a special additional defense budget worth KD 6.2 billion over the next 10 years. The panel is comprised of members from the financial affairs, defense and interior, budgets and foreign affairs committees and will review whether to approve the government request or not. According to the government bill, the allocations will be divided over the next 10 years to purchase arms and

equipment. The Assembly will debate the panel's report. The Assembly also agreed to discuss today proposed amendments to the law of the Anti-Corruption Authority in anticipation of a crucial constitutional court ruling on the law today. The decree forming the Anti-Corruption Authority, established a year ago, was challenged as unconstitutional before the top court, amid expectations the court may annul the authority. Several MPs called for delaying the amendments until after the court ruling is issued and studied carefully.

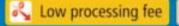
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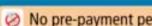
From clicks to home keys...

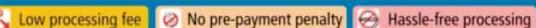
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# KEJRIWAL SLAMS 'PSYCHO' MODI AFTER HQ RAID

NEW DELHI: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal yesterday accused his arch-rival Narendra Modi of waging a political vendetta, branding the Indian premier a "psychopath" after federal investigators raided his city administration's headquarters. The firebrand chief minister, who founded and leads the anti-corruption Aam Aadmi party, is a bitter opponent of Modi and they have clashed repeatedly in recent months.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) confirmed officers had raided the Delhi city government headquarters and 13 other locations in connection with a corruption case involving Kejriwal's principal secretary Rajendra Kumar. Civil servant Kumar, in a previous role, "abused his official position" by awarding government contracts to a favored private firm over



**NEW DELHI: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal** addresses the media yesterday. — AFP

seven years, along with six others, CBI spokeswoman Devpreet Singh told reporters. Another official told AFP on condition of anonymity that cash and property deeds had been recovered from Kumar's home.

News of the raid was broken by Kejriwal himself, who posted on Twitter that "CBI raids my office" and

**Continued on Page 15** 

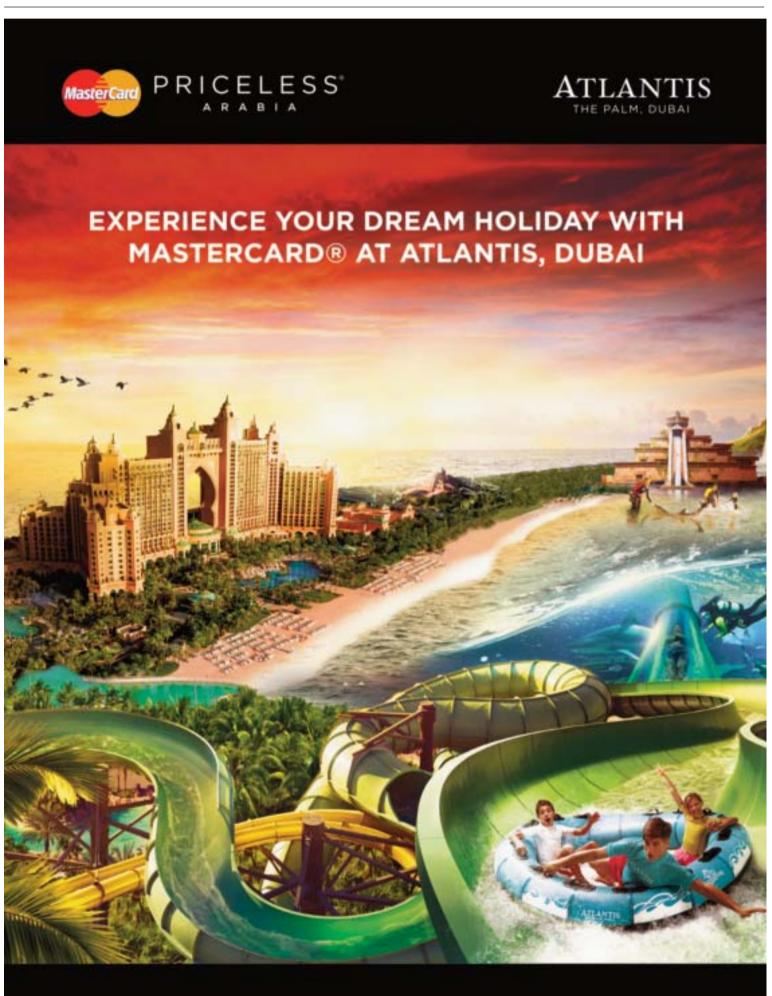


KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah meets Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Kuwait Capital Market Authority (CMA) Nayef Al-Hajraf and board members. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah receives a memorial from members of the faculty for the association of applied education colleges.

#### AMIR RECEIVES CHAIRMAN OF CAPITAL MARKETS AUTHORITY



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**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Kuwait Capital Markets Authority (CMA) Nayef Al-Hajraf and board members at Bayan Palace yester-

The members presented to His Highness CMA's fourth annual report for the fiscal year 2014-2015, while also providing thorough details on the authority's plan for the upcoming years, Hajraf. He further noted that they also explained to His Highness CMA's measures to turn

Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) into one of the top emerging markets in the region.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received at Bayan Palace members of the faculty for the association of applied education colleges. The meeting was attended by head of Protocols at the Crown Prince Dwian Sheikh Mubarak Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah. In other news, His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince separately received His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. —KUNA

#### KUWAIT, JAPANESE TIES EXTRAORDINARY: DEPUTY FM

**KUWAIT:** Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah hailed the extraordinary bilateral ties with Japan on Monday, while participating in a national day celebration at the Japanese embassy. In a statement to journalists, Jarallah reminisced on Japanese efforts of liberating Kuwait during the 1990 Iraqi invasion. He also recounted Kuwaiti aid efforts to Japan including the donation of five million barrels of crude oil in the wake of a massive earthquake that struck the country.

Jarallah also extolled Japanese environmental contributions to Kuwait, saying these efforts are appreciated by the people of Kuwait. Moreover, Japanese ambassador to Kuwait Ishii Takeshi expressed admiration of his Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, calling him an 'exemplary leader.' He asserted that Japan would never times of calamity, underscoring long-standing Kuwaiti and Japanese ties. —KUNA



forget Kuwaiti's persistent aid in KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah (right) and Japanese ambassador to Kuwait Ishii Takeshi are pictured during the event. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



SAINT PETERSBURG: Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah meets Russian Minister of Culture Vladimir Medinsky. — KUNA

#### SHEIKH SALMAN HOLDS 'FRUITFUL' TALKS IN RUSSIA

SAINT PETERSBURG: Minister of Hermitage Museum Mikhail Borisovich Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah on yesterday described his talks with Russian officials as "important and fruitful."

Sheikh Salman, who is also Chairman of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), told KUNA and Kuwait TV in an exclusive statement before his departure from Russia that his talks with the Russian Minister of Culture Vladimir Medinsky focused on means of promoting bilateral cultural ties, and exchange of expertise and experts' visits, in addition to benefiting from the experience of the Russian cultural centers.

He said that the Russian side highly appreciated Kuwait's role and the significant outcome of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's visit to Russia in September. A bilateral cultural agreement was signed then. Sheikh Salman said he had invited Medinsky to visit Kuwait for further discussions on means to boost bilateral cultural cooperation, reiterating Russia's cul-

tural status globally. As for the talks with Director of the Piotrovsky, Sheikh Salman said they addressed means of enhancing cooperation for enhancing exchange of historical books, developing museums, caring for national heritage and heritage restoration training. Offering Kuwaiti youth the opportunity to benefit from the long expertise of the Hermitage Museum, which was founded in 1764, featured high on the agenda of the talks, he said. Touring the Hermitage, Sheikh Salman expressed his deep admiration of the historical items on display.

The minister thanked Kuwait's Ambassador to Russia Abdulaziz Al-Adwani for his efforts, and appreciated KUNA and the Kuwait TV for coverage of the visit. He also voiced thanks to the Russian government for hospitality and warm welcome during the visit.

The high-profile Kuwaiti delegation that participated in the IV St. Petersburg International Cultural Forum, led by Sheikh Salman, included Ambassador Al-Adwani and NCCAL Assistant Secretary General for the Culture Sector, Mohammed Al-Zoabi, and officials from the Ministry of Information. — KUNA



# ANJARI: HASN'T THE TIME COME TO FOCUS ON TOURISM AS A SOURCE OF INCOME FOR KUWAIT?

#### CONTINUED DROP IN OIL PRICES AND DECREASE OF SURPLUS

Consulting and Development, the representative of the World Tourism Organization in Kuwait, issued its monthly report on recent developments in the tourism sector in Kuwait.

Leaders Group General Manager, Nabila Al-Anjari, said: "Factors affecting the drop in oil prices and the



Nabila Al-Anjari

impact on budget surplus as well as income overall are an indicator today that Kuwait should look to generate income from other sectors to cover losses to its budget."

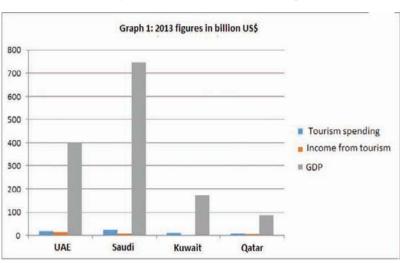
oil prices dropped, Kuwait has securi-

KUWAIT: Leaders Group for ty and social stability and maintains a the region facing turmoil. This was the \$43,250 per capita, while the UAE has capable of enhancing its infrastructure its Gulf counterparts. The need for strong financial center, one of the strongest in the Gulf. This alone is an incentive to focus on the development of the tourism sector, which is one of the fastest growing sectors and would allow covering income lost from oil. The International Monetary Fund had said in a report that the

case of Dubai which saw a boom in tourism despite of regional crises.

#### **Tourism performance**

Leaders Group's report called to increase efforts in the development of the tourism industry. Kuwait's tourism falls last among Gulf countries in



Source: World Tourism Organization, October 2015 - Leaders Group

drop in oil prices has made it necessary for Kuwait to diversify its economy and create jobs away from the dependence on oil and foreign work-

The report added that Kuwait's sta-The report said that even though bility will allow it to become a tourist destination instead of other areas in

terms of infrastructure, number of tourists and income generated from tourism, despite a government large expenditure exceeding \$11 billion.

In comparison, Kuwait's gross domestic product (GDP) is second in the GCC after Qatar, reaching \$173 billion annually, the equivalent of

a GDP per capita of only \$42,940. With that said, Kuwait's tourism sector performance is moderate compared to the UAE's tourism sector. Reasons behind the slow performance in Kuwait have become well known.

Income generated from tourism in the GCC in 2013 clears the picture even more. Kuwait trails last in the list with one \$369 million generated, followed by Bahrain with \$1.17 billion, then Oman with \$1.36 billion, Qatar with \$4.6 billion, Saudi with \$8.24 billion and the UAE at the top with \$13.97.

#### **Development plan**

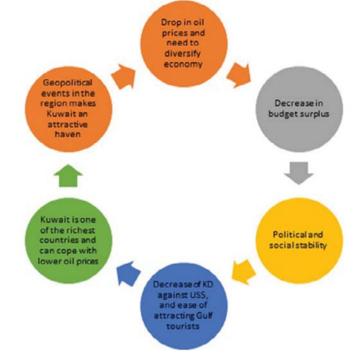
The report showed that tourism would play a significant role in the development plan of 2015-2020, particularly thanks to the current agreement between the parliament and government, and the ambitious plans to diversify the economy away from the dependence on oil.

The report also added that there are many factors that would support the local tourism sector and attracted Gulf tourists. An example is the high spending power of the Gulf tourist in comparison to the global average. This is an opportunity for Kuwait seeing unstable conditions in other parts of the tourism world such as Paris and Tunis, and the assumptions that these would spread to other cities in Europe and the US. In addition, Kuwait is one of the richest oil-producing countries,

and establishing a tourism hub worthy of world standards.

In conclusion, the report said that while Kuwait spends \$11 billion on tourism, there is lack of sufficient governing bodies to manage touristic development. Spending therefore does not translate into income such as

transparency, openness and loosening regulations will attract more tourists, accompanied by a marketing campaign. Without these steps, Kuwait would miss on an opportunity to make tourism an income-generating sector in light of the drop in oil



Six reasons to make tourism a priority in Kuwait (Source: Leaders Group)

#### SAUDI MULLS RECRUITING MAIDS THROUGH KUWAIT

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** In a bid to control the prohibitively high cost of hiring domestic workers in Saudi Arabia, the Saudi Shura council urged the Saudi ministry of labor to coordinate with relevant authorities to hire domestic laborers through special offices in Kuwait and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states.

#### **Investor charged**

The Capital Markets Authority (CMA) yesterday filed a complaint with the public prosecutor against an investor, accusing him of taking part in Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) activities without obtaining an official license to do so, which is a violation of law 7/2010.

#### SYNDICATE ACCUSES INTERIOR MINISTRY OFFICIALS OF ABUSE

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Chairman of the Interior Ministry's civilian employees syndicate Bader Al-Enezi said that the syndicate had officially submitted a complaint against two officials at the citizen service directorate to Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah. Enezi explained that the two officials had abused their powers, committed administrative violations that might see some employees referred to prosecution for crimes they never committed and had been sexually harassing female employees. "They think they are above accountability," he said, pointing out one of the officials had been threatening employees. Enezi added that another complaint was filed against the ministry's legal affairs department accusing its officials of impartiality and refusing to investigate complaints filed against one of the two officials.

#### Wrongful taxation

The court of appeals yesterday ordered the finance ministry to refund the sum of

KD 1,980,000 that had been unlawfully collected from a citizen as taxes.

#### **Jaber Al-Ahmad City**

The Ministry of Public Works (MPW) stressed that 46 percent of the works included in a contract to build and maintain roads and six intersections along main roads to serve Jaber Al-Ahmad City have been completed. The ministry added that the project's total cost is KD 28.9 million.

#### **Complications**

Following lengthy debates about the municipal council's technical committee formation and reducing its members from 14 to nine, then to seven, then back to nine again, informed sources said that the committee chairman Fahd Al-Sane's tenure was extended for two more years for the first time, as the committee chairmanship used to be limited to two years only. Member Mane Al-Ajmi was appointed committee rapporteur. The sources also expected further complications after unconfirmed news about the resignation of four of the committee members.

### **EDUCATION MINISTRY TO PROBE** NON-ACCREDITED CERTIFICATES

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Education will form a committee to investigate non-accredited certificates of some teaching members in the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) and Kuwait University, said a top ministry's official.

The ministry will not accept such violations, and the committee is expected to come out with final results within three to four months, said Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Bader Al-Essa during the National Assembly's ordinary session yesterday. Meanwhile, the minister noted that the accused members will not be suspended until the committee has concluded the investigation, adding that the final report will be presented to the government to take action.

#### **Government's performance**

Lawmakers meanwhile gave their stamp of approval to a report by the National Assembly's Priorities Committee on the performance of the government. Consisting of three major parts, the report notes in the first part the government's abidance by the letter and spirit of the constitution and its willingness to work in close partnership with the parliament to achieve all that is needed for the benefit of the nation.

Moreover, the report drives the point home that the government is earnest about turning the country into a financial and commercial hub, able to attract investments through the combined efforts of the public and private sectors.



KUWAIT: Education minister Dr Bader Al-Essa (left) appears with a number of MPs during yesterday's parliament session. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

In the report's second part, it alludes to the government's commitment to promote national unity while providing the citizenry with the necessities of housing, education, health care, and programs for the youth.

It further underscores the imperatives for diversification of the nation's income, buttressing the private sector, creating job opportunities for young Kuwaitis, protecting the environment, and seeking lasting solutions for the issue of illegal residents. The report's third part deals primarily with streamlining the process of monitoring the performance of the government by adopting national and international indices. —KUNA

# CRACKDOWN ON **WEAPONS IN KABD**

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Weapons detectives launched an expanded search campaign in Kabd farms yesterday morning. The department formed a team to collect the weapons in several stages.



An officer using the help of a police dog in search for weapons in Kabd.

#### **Violators arrested**

Residency affairs detectives arrested seven women and a man, all Asian nation-

als, in violation of the residency law. They were all found wanted on security grounds and reported absconding. They were sent to concerned authorities.

#### Youth suicide

A young Egyptian man committed suicide by throwing himself from the sixth floor of a Nugra building, under mysterious circumstances. The man was found on the ground with blood on his head. A Jordanian man told police that he jumped from the sixth floor.

#### **Municipality statistics**

A Kuwait Municipality statistics report about the achievements of public cleanliness, road occupancy and the roaming vendors team of Farwaniya municipality branch during the second half of October showed that 104 warnings were issued, 116 undertakings were collected, 847 stickers were removed, 204 abandoned cars were impounded, 69 were released, KD 3,894 was collected, 21 road occupancy citations were issued and 103 tickets were issued to violating vendors.

#### Road accidents

A multiple vehicle collision took place on Fahaheel Road, and several persons were trapped. Four vehicles were involved, and firemen used heavy equipment to cut the vehicles and free the trapped people, who were taken to hospital.





KUWAIT: Kuwait National Guard carried out the 'Steadfast Knights 3' exercise in Adaire'a, as part of its 'Safety First' strategy for 2020. The exercise, which featured use of live ammunition, was described as a success in term of achieving the highest level of preparation. It took place under the patronage of Lieutenant General Hashim Al-Refa'ie, Undersecretary of the Kuwait **National Guard.** 

#### News

#### Amiri Diwan protocols chief's Twitter accounts hacked

KUWAIT: Chief of the Amiri Diwan Protocols Sheikh Khaled Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah Al-Nasser Al-Sabah said yesterday that his personal Twitter account has been hacked. He stressed in a statement that procedures to retrieve the account are underway, adding that legal action will be undertaken against the perpetrators. —KUNA

#### KD 9.9 million aid to illegal residents

KUWAIT: Kuwait Zakat House (KZH) offered aid worth KD 9.9 million to illegal residents during the first 10 months of the year, according to a statement on yesterday. KZH gives illegal residents' families in-kind assistance that includes clothes and household appliances, KZH Director General Dr Ibrahim Ahmad Al-Saleh added in a press statement. This totaled KD 1.183 million offered to 3,799 beneficiary families. —KUNA

#### **US Embassy message**

**KUWAIT:** The United States Embassy in Kuwait sent the following message to US citizens in the country, with regards to the anticipated friendly soccer match at Jaber Stadium next Friday: "On the evening of Friday, December 18, Kuwait is hosting an international soccer match at Jaber Al-Ahmad International Stadium. This is the first time an event of this magnitude has been held at this location and Kuwaiti officials are expecting 60,000 spectators, most of whom will be driving their own vehicles to the event. The Embassy is advising its personnel to avoid the area surrounding the stadium during the event due to anticipated heavy traffic congestion."

#### Jarallah meets ILO official

**KUWAIT:** Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah met the regional director of the International Labor Organization (ILO) yesterday. During the meeting, they discussed the ILO's activities, mainly in Syria, Yemen and Iraq. The ILO official, who lauded Kuwait's support to the organization, delivered Al-Jarallah a message from the ILO Director-General to First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. The meeting was attended by several senior officials of the Foreign Ministry. —KUNA



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KUWAIT: His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah is pictured with a number of people awarded during the conference. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah is pictured with another group of awardees.

# 'FROM KUWAIT WE START' **CONFERENCE KICKS OFF**

**KUWAIT:** A conference titled 'From Kuwait We that His Highness the Amir underlined the Start and in Kuwait We End' commenced yesterday under the auspices of His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. In an opening ceremony on Monday night at the Al-Babtain Central Library for Arabic Poetry, Youssef Al-Yassin, head of conference, said: "The threeday event aims to promote values of loyalty towards our homeland, disseminate the meaning of moderation and patriotism inside the society as well as enhance the concept of a positive dialogue".

He added that the conference also seeks to change negative concepts adopted by youth and implant the concept of coexistence among all segments of the society, noting that the event honors annually some Kuwaitis who play prominent role in several fields like charitable action.

His Highness Sheikh Nasser meanwhile expressed his gratitude to all people who contributed to organizing the event, wishing Kuwait further progress and prosperity under the leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

Kawthar Al-Jawaan, a member of the conference's consultative team, stressed meanwhile the importance of supporting youth to help them present their innovations and play effective role

in society development and state building. She said that the wise leadership of the State of Kuwait depends on human wealth, adding urgency of interesting in youth and he listened to their problems, proposals, initiatives and aspirations. She called for setting up a national council for youth aiming to follow up their activities and programs which contribute to building a promising future of the homeland.

Walid Al-Khashti, a representative from Mobile Telecommunications Company (ZAIN), said: "We



Head of Al-Babtain Central Library for Arabic Poetry, Abdulaziz Al-Babtain speaks at the conference.

are keen on attending the event which has noble ideas and goals that reflect deep-rooted values engraved into the hearts of the Kuwaitis, noting that youth are able to play an effective role, but they need support and interest by the State." He called for promoting the concept of national unity and developing curricula at schools, urging family to contribute to enhancing love, cohesion and tolerance inside the society. -KUNA



Zain's Walid Al-Khashti addresses the audience.

#### MARAH LAND ANNOUNCES 3-MONTH CARNIVAL

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The Marah Land entertainment park in Sabahiya is holding a three month carnival from December 22, 2015 to March 19, 2016. The official opening of the carnival will be held on Monday, Dec 28, 2015 at 5:30 pm, and entrance will be free.

The Kuwait Carnival is held under the auspices of Sheikh Fawaz Khalid Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Ahmadi Governor, and will include over 90 different activities in 90 days. "Local and international bands and artistes will be participating in this carnival by presenting various kinds of shows, musical performances, competitions and other activities for kids and the whole family daily, with more activities on weekends," said Hussein Al-Shahin, Chairman of First Campaign Company, the organizer of the carnival, during a press conference held on Monday at Symphony Hotel.

This event aims to encourage local tourism and attract tourists from abroad. "Through this carnival we aim to provide happiness and satisfaction to all Kuwait's residents, especially since it's being held during the national celebrations. This event is listed among the official celebrations of Kuwait in the celebration calendar." he added.

The official opening of the carnival will be on December 28, where Kuwaiti folk bands will present the Ardha dance and national songs.

On January 29, a huge traditional celebration will be held on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the rule of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.

On February 19, a traditional celebration will be held on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad's assumption to the post of Crown Prince. Feb 25 and 26 we see celebrations to mark the 55th Independence Day and 25th Liberation Day, in which local and Arab artistes will participate. The closing ceremony will be held on Friday,



**KUWAIT: Hussein Al-Shahin, Chairman** of First Campaign Company speaks during the press conference.

—Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat March 18, 2016 with shows and gifts.

"Apart of the above mentioned activities, there will be many other activities held daily, including plays, musical performances, circus acts and many others. And as part of the Kuwait Carnival, young entrepreneurs will have the chance to display their small businesses during a special exhibition held at the park. This activity is a kind of support to encourage them," concluded Al-Shahin. For daily activities,

check their account on Instagram:



#### **GULF INSURANCE GROUP SPONSORS** CHILDREN'S CULTURAL FESTIVAL

**KUWAIT:** Gulf Insurance Group, the leading insurance services provider in Kuwait and the Middle East, sponsored Dhuwa Al-Yaddah Center's children's cultural festival, 2015 Bloom Expo.

Staying in line with gig's vision of supporting youth, the group sponsored the event attended by professionals offering advice on childcare and talent encourage-

Group Corporate Communications and Investor Relations Manager, Khaled Mishari

Al-Sanousi said, "Gulf Insurance supports Dhuwa Al-Yaddah in their goal to raise awareness on proper childcare in the community and provide an outlet for children to discover their talents."

"We are keen on supporting such events which aim to develop our youth into successful future leaders," he continued. The expo, had welcomed over 7,000 visitors from 8-10 December, it was an open space for children to safely learn, shop, and play.



KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) is participating in the Elite Real Estate Exhibition as a platinum sponsor for the event. The exhibition takes place at the Kuwait International Fairground in Mishref (Hall 8), and runs through December 19, 2015.

#### KEPS CONCLUDES NINTH **GREEN SCHOOLS PROGRAM**

105 Public, Private Schools

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Environment Protection Society (KEPS) announced yesterday the conclusion of activities of the first stage of green schools' 9th program of the first term in the current academic year, with participation of 105 public and private

Director of programs and activities at Kuwait Environment Protection Society Jenan Bahzad said in press remarks that 105 schools from primary, intermediate and high school stages registered in the activities of green schools for the first term of the current academic year, as the program includes 15 educational axioms. The 15 axioms of the programs' activities were distributed according to KEPS' educational and training curriculum prepared by specialists in various environmental domains, she said.

This will cover the subjects of birds and natural habitats, climate change and its impact on Kuwait, desertification and fungal flora in Kuwaiti wild, water scarcity and quality of drinking water, environment protection, besides Kuwait Environmental Police, she added. The green schools program offered specialized activities for the morning assembly in schools, besides offering workshops, scientific lectures, field trips, besides documentary films, she stated.

The environmental clubs in the schools which took part in this program during the past years gained sufficient experiences which qualified them to prepare their own schools' programs according to the needs of the schools environment, she said.

KEPS' long-term goals include integrating the environmental culture into the national plans, especially in the educational field in order to face the negative impact on the environment and work to encounter them, she added. —KUNA

### KUWAITI-ARMENIAN MEETING ON **ECONOMIC COOPERATION KICKS OFF**

**KUWAIT:** Preparatory meetings for the second joint Kuwaiti-Armenian ministerial committee for economic and technical cooperation kicked off yesterday. Heading the Kuwaiti side to the meetings was assistant undersecretary for economic affairs at the ministry of finance Sami Al-Sagoubi who told KUNA on the sideline of the meetings today that the second joint Kuwaiti-Armenian ministerial committee meeting will pick up where the earlier one, held in Armenia in

October 2011, left off.

In his speech at the meetings, Saqoubi emphasized the economic and commercial ties between the two countries, particularly those in the fields of investments, health, tourism, and post-graduate education. These and other issues will figure highly in the two-day preparatory meetings, he said.

Speaking on behalf of the Armenian side to today's preparatory meetings, director of the

department of Middle Eastern affairs at the Armenian foreign ministry Sarman Baghdassarian said his country sought closer economic and commercial relations with Kuwait and countries of the GCC.

A ministerial Kuwaiti-Armenian meeting will be held next Thursday, chaired by deputy prime minister and finance minister and acting oil minister Anas Al-Saleh where a number of memorandums of understanding will be signed. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Officials attend a preparatory meeting for the second joint Kuwaiti-Armenian ministerial committee for economic and technical cooperation. —Photo by Fouad Al-Shaikh

#### Crime

#### CHILD FOUND **DRIVING ATV**

**KUWAIT:** Acting Jahra Security Director Colonel Waleed Al-Shihab was shocked to see a seemingly 'driverless' ATV on a street. He approached the vehicle and asked the driver to stop, only to be surprised that the driver was an 11 year old boy with his siblings sitting next to him. When asked what were they doing, the children said they were going to their grandfather's house. The three were taken to Taima police station, the vehicle impounded and the father cited.

#### Marijuana found at airport

Airport customs officers foiled an attempt to smuggle marijuana by an Indian man who brought it from his country in a box. The man was sent to the Drugs Control General Department (DCGD). The 2.25 kilograms of marijuana were found when the luggage was checked. The Indian works as a driver for a citizen and said the drugs are for his own personal use.

#### **Public drunk arrested**

Hawally police arrested a young man in a state of intoxication. The man was found to be in possession of a bottle of locally made liquor, a pistol and five rounds. He was taken to Hawally detectives department. A police patrol stopped a car being driven erratically and found the driver to be intoxicated.

#### Absconding girl and man arrested

A citizen caught with an absconding girl was arrested for helping her and resisting police. He was charged with harboring an absconder and resisting arrest. Southern roads police stopped a car with a man and woman inside. When their IDs were checked, it was found the girl was reported missing from her family's home four days earlier. A security source said the citizen resisted police and attempted to attack them but was controlled and taken along with the girl to the police station.

#### Local liquor maker seller arrested

Policemen arrested a taxi driver in possession of 94 bottles of locally made liquor he was selling in the Mangaf area. The Indian man was sent to DCGD. He was stopped by a police patrol and seemed confused, so he was searched and the bottles were found.

#### **Embezzler arrested**

Hawally detectives arrested an Egyptian man for embezzling KD 3,120, following a complaint by a citizen at Nugra police station. In this complaint, the citizen told police that the Egyptian man who works in food stuff sales took the money and disappeared. He was taken to Hawally detectives office for further legal action. — Al-Rai



اللثنباء

Al-Anbaa

#### **ISLAM-DESTROYING ISLAM!**

By Sami Al-Nisf

eviewing the world map and following up on the amount of destruction and bloodshed worldwide, one can easily notice that unlike other countries enjoying peace, development and respect of humanity around the world, devastation and killing have been stationed in our Arab and Muslim region for long years now. One can also find that the absolute majority of civil wars, killings, decapitations and bloodshed under fake flags of Islam are taking place in our region, regardless of false pretense to love and advocate Islam by those carrying them (those who see describing other Muslims as infidels and killing them daily as the only way to promote Islam and improve its image amongst other nations)!

Real Muslims from various sects and doctrines must unite (instead of divide) to face those working on destroying Islam in the name of Islam. Bloodshed and dividing nations is not being done under secular, Marxist or liberal flags. These crimes are rather being committed under the flags of Islam with the aim of disfiguring it and deceiving misled youth. This will go on as long as 'deceivers' continue receiving billions

and millions as the price of destroying their own nations with the excuse of protecting them.

Other peoples around the world cannot tell the difference between Sunnis and Shiites, Zaidis and Alawites, Ibadis and Druze, Sufis or Ismailis, etc. We ought to treat each other the way others treat us without discriminating between the followers of this or that doctrine. Everybody has peacefully co-existed for thousands of years.

If only the Arab League had not been deeply asleep, we would have called for an immediate meeting for all sects and doctrines' clerics in the Arab region so that the ongoing wars and genocide can immediately stop and all followers can realize that the problem is not in their religions or doctrines. The real problem is in those taking advantage of such dissimilarities to kill everybody and destroy nations.

Finally, we need new initiatives and creative thoughts in the Arab League's Secretariat General because the Arab nation is being destroyed while the Secretariat General is preoccupied with futile bureau-

— Translated by Kuwait Times

#### الثنباء

#### **ENOUGH ABOUT SUBSIDY CUTS!**

**By Dr Nermin Al-Houti** 

am not an economic expert, nor a political analyst, yet I remain a Kuwaiti citizen who lives in Kuwait and has my constitutional rights, and here starts the dialogue through the words in my column: I was reading the newspapers in the middle of last week, and I read a news item, which is actually a proposal under study by the International Monetary Fund demanding lifting subsidies on electricity, water and gasoline for

I will not go into the study, because it is not my specialty, and my words will not go deep into the economic world, because I am not an economic expert, but I want to ask about who made that study, to a point that he made it a proposal with its result being lifting subsidies from electricity, water and gasoline. Did you conduct your study on all "petty" spending of the state's institu-

"Stop", for all those who want to mess with the Kuwaiti society! I am a citizen who reads and listens all day long news that concerns my homeland, and I am surprised the IMF did not consider it in its study. My message today is directed to all researchers and experts in that international economic facility, and will mention some questions that were absent from their study - rather my lines will not be limited to researchers and experts of IMF, but my questions include every Kuwaiti official who will read that proposal.

I tell them: Stop! Before reading and thinking about the study, you should answer the questions of public opinion. Where are your studies about the donations presented by Kuwait to foreign projects that have nothing to do with the development of Kuwait society? Before you lift subsidies, why all those who squandered public funds through bogus deals were not punished? Did your proposal look at some names that embezzled and stolen public funds, and the law was not applied to them to recover what was taken from the state coffers?

Many questions remain on the minds of the Kuwaiti citizen who does not know what the future has for him out of those foreign studies and proposals. We became bored of attracting those who plan for our country and decide our society's fate. Until when will we keep others deciding our future path? And until when will we remain puppets, and our strings in the hands of others?

A final note: "Democratic life is the way of people who respect their will in free life, and there is no dignity without freedom and there is no freedom without dignity," said Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, the "father of the constitution".

—Translated by Kuwait Times



Ooredoo representatives receive the award.

#### OOREDOO KUWAIT WINS 'CREATIVITY AWARD' BY THE ARAB MEDIA FORUM

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait, a member of international Ooredoo Group, has recently received the 'Creativity Award' for its Ramadan 2015 TVC, by the Arab Media Forum. The ceremony was conducted under the patronage of Sheikh Salman Al-Homoud Al-Sabah, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs. The award was presented by Information Ministry Undersecretary Tareq Al-Mizrim.

The award sheds light on and present in a unique twist that Ooredoo's great efforts to engage with the local community, in creative and innovative ways and in areas and matters of their interest and its commitment toward preserving Kuwait's heritage and local traditions, elements which were highly reflected in its Ramadan 2015 TVC. The Ramadan TVC celebrates Ramadan's modern culture, high-

focuses on the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s television series and cultural scene in Kuwait.

The Arab Media Forum awards ceremony is considered as one of the renowned events that take place in the region, which brings together representatives from the different industries in one place to celebrate their tremendous revolutionary lighting the merge between past efforts in innovation and creativity.

### PRISONERS TO BE ALLOWED 72-HOUR FAMILY VISITS

and defense committee recently discussed a number of proposals to amend the prisons and police laws and allow prisoners doing time for non-dishonorable or state security crimes 72-hour visits to their families. In this regard, informed sources also noted that the committee agreed to allow the public prosecution inspect prisons to check the committee discussed amending police force leaves and vacations, promotions and some organizational issues," added the sources.

Meanwhile, a committee formed to study prisoners' files and decide which match the Amiri pardon conditions has so far studied 1,615 cases and found that 1,001 of them matched the conditions of immedi-

**KUWAIT:** The parliamentary interior conditions there. "In addition, the ate pardon, reducing their time to one quarter or half, or paying fines. In this regard, security sources said that the process is expected to go on until February - the annual Amiri pardon period -before the national day and liberation day celebrations. The sources also highlighted that Amiri pardons do not apply to drug trafficking-related crimes or murders. — Al-Rai



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#### S AFRICA'S FIRST BLACK WOMAN NAVAL COMMANDER CALLS THE SHOTS

**US soldier Bergdahl** facing life sentence

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SANAA: Shiite tribesmen, known as Houthis, hold their weapons as they chant slogans during a tribal gathering showing support for the Houthi movement yesterday. — AP

# YEMEN CEASEFIRE TAKES EFFECT

#### UN-BROKERED PEACE TALKS BEGIN IN SWITZERLAND

**ADEN:** A ceasefire took effect yesterday in conflict-ravaged Yemen as warring sides began UN-brokered peace talks in Switzerland, according to the United Nations and the Saudi-led coalition battling Iran-backed rebels. The World Health Organization outlined plans to take advantage of the halt in fighting to distribute much-needed medical supplies across the country. Limited violations of the truce were reported shortly after it began at midday (0900 GMT), with two loyalists killed in clashes in the east and mortar rounds hitting government forces in the southwestern province of Taez, according to security and military officials.

The Saudi-led coalition, which launched an air war against the Houthi Shiite rebels and their allies in March, said the ceasefire had started as scheduled following a request by Yemeni President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi. The rebel forces, who control the capital, did not say if they would abide by the truce. Previous UN efforts have failed to narrow differences, and attempted ceasefires have broken down.

The UN envoy to Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, hailed the halt in fighting as "a critical first step towards building a lasting peace in the country". He said that the talks in Switzerland "seek to establish a permanent ceasefire and pave the way for a return to a peaceful and orderly political transition". UN spokesman Ahmad Fawzi confirmed that the talks had begun at an undisclosed location. "These consultations seek to establish a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire, secure improvements to the humanitarian situation and a return to a peaceful and orderly political transition," he told reporters. Fawzi said 12 negotiators and six advisers made up each of the two delegations taking part in the talks.

#### **Warning of Retaliation**

Ahead of the truce, clashes shook the flashpoint city of Taez and coalition warplanes bombed rebel positions. Soon after the ceasefire took effect, a Yemeni security official reported five mortars targeted pro-Hadi forces in Shuraija, south of Taez. Residents had earlier reported hearing shelling in the city. In the eastern province of Marib, clashes killed two pro-Hadi fighters in the early afternoon before subsiding, military sources said. A pro-Hadi officer told AFP: "We have received orders from our military leadership not to respond to the rebel shelling unless they advance towards us." The coalition has warned that it any violation".

Hadi has declared his government's intention to have a seven-day truce to coincide with the peace talks and to be "renewed automatically if the other party commits to it," the coalition said. A Yemen presidential statement said the proposed ceasefire "comes out of keenness to grab any chance to achieve peace, to reduce the suffering of our people in Yemen and to end bloodshed." Yemeni civilians are anxious to see peace prevail. "We demand the warring parties who are in Geneva now offer concessions...because all Yemenis are eager to get Yemen out of this crisis," a resident of the capital Sanaa, Ali Hasan, told

#### **Aid Delivery to Begin**

A lull in fighting is sorely needed in the Arabian Peninsula's poorest nation, where the UN says an estimated 80 percent of the population requires humanitarian aid. The WHO representative in Yemen, Ahmed Shadoul, said that the UN agency had received assurances from the warring factions that its staff were free to distribute medical supplies while the ceasefire holds. "We have requested unconditional move-

"reserves the right to respond in case of ment of supplies, personnel and teams to all parts of the country and we got the confirmation that this will definitely be granted." Shadoul said in Geneva.

More than 5,800 people have been killed in Yemen - about half of them civilians - and more than 27,000 wounded since March, according to the UN. Jihadists, including the Islamic State group, have exploited the violence, gaining ground and carrying out deadly attacks against both sides. Ahead of the ceasefire, coalition warplanes bombed rebel positions in Taez and south of Sanaa, according to witnesses and a military official.

The rebel-controlled Saba News Agency said 10 people were killed and 20 others were wounded in an air raid early Tuesday on the village of Bani Haddad, in the Haradh area of northern Yemen. The warring sides have agreed to talks despite protracted differences, including over a UN Security Council resolution calling for rebels to withdraw from key cities and surrender their weapons. The government and its Gulf allies say the resolution is a prerequisite for peace. In addition to the air cover, the coalition has backed pro-government forces with soldiers and heavy weaponry.

#### IAEA 'CLOSES' IRAN NUKE BOMB PROBE

VIENNA: The UN atomic watchdog's board yesterday drew a line under a long-running probe into Iran's past efforts to develop nuclear weapons, removing an important obstacle to implementing July's landmark deal with big powers, diplomats said. A resolution approved by the International Atomic Energy Agency's 35-nation board of governors said the investigation was "implemented in accordance with the agreed schedule" and that this "closes the board's consideration of the matter".

Iran had warned that unless this happened, it would not implement key parts of July's accord with six major powers to scale down its nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief. The IAEA keeps close tabs on Iran's nuclear program, and its inspections role is set to grow under July's hard-fought deal, which defused a standoff dating back to 2002.

But the Vienna-based watchdog has also long sought to clear up allegations that until 2003, and possibly since, Iran also secretly sought to develop an actual nuclear weapon. After stalling for many years, Iran agreed in July to cooperate with the IAEA to address the claims, which it has always rejected, allowing inspectors to visit sites and providing additional information. As a result the IAEA on Dec 2 released a "final assessment" - even though it did not receive all the information it sought -concluding that some of the allegations were indeed accurate.

It said Iran conducted "a range of activities relevant to the development" of a nuclear bomb before the end of 2003 in a "coordinated effort", and that some activities continued until 2009. It stressed though that these "did not advance beyond feasibility and scientific studies" and that there was no evidence that Iran diverted nuclear material such as uranium or plutonium to these efforts.

#### **Continued Scrutiny**

But despite the findings, the six major powers - the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany, who co-authored the IAEA resolution - have decided to move on. Despite Iran's "long history of concealment, denial and deception", the July deal is "forward-looking," the US ambassador to the IAEA, Henry Ensher, said yesterday. The powers stress that Iran will remain under close IAEA scrutiny to ensure that it does not contravene the July deal or again secretly engage in more research on getting the bomb.

Nor is Iran completely out of the woods with the IAEA, with the agency's "broader conclusion" that all Iran's activities are exclusively peaceful still to come. This could take several more years, and Tuesday's resolution stated that the board will "remain seized" on the matter for another 10 years, or until the "broader conclusion", whichever is sooner.—AFP

### KERRY MEETS PUTIN TO PUSH SYRIA PEACE PLAN

**MOSCOW:** US Secretary of State John Kerry met Russia's President Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin yesterday to seek agreement on how best to push forward efforts to halt Syria's brutal civil war. Russia and the United States are sponsors of an international effort to broker a ceasefire and political talks between Bashar al-Assad's regime and Syria's armed opposition. But their positions on Assad's eventual fate and the best tactics to employ against the jihadist Islamic State group differ starkly, threatening to stymie the process.

Kerry came to Moscow yesterday not even knowing whether Russia would agree that the next international meeting on the crisis should take place on Friday in New York. And as he sat down with the Russian leader, despite broad smiles, it was still not clear whether there had been a breakthrough. "I am very happy to have the opportunity to meet and talk with you," Putin said, sitting beside his foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, who had met Kerry earlier in the day.

"Minister Lavrov just now informed me in detail about both your proposals as well as some issues which require additional discussions," Putin added. Kerry said that he hoped to address the crises both in Syria and in Ukraine, where Washington accuses Moscow of backing separatist rebels and has imposed

sanctions on Russia. "You had a chance to speak to President Obama in New York and then subsequently in Paris," Kerry said, sitting across from a smiling Putin at a conference table in an ornate Kremlin salon.

"Both you and President Obama have committed themselves to trying to develop as much as possible ... an approach that can try to deal with Ukraine and deal with Syria," Kerry said. "So I very much look forward to our discussion now and appreciate the seriousness of your commitment of time and thought about these issues," he added. Then the press was ushered out, and the talks began in earnest.

Kerry and the UN envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, want to hold the next round of Syrian peace talks on Friday in New York, but Moscow has so far refused to confirm the date. Speaking after meeting Lavrov, Kerry declined to say whether the New York negotiations would go ahead on Friday. "Well, I need to meet with the president," he told reporters on a stroll in central Moscow, where he was mobbed by Russians wanting to meet Washington's top diplomat.

Washington is relying on the Kremlin to drag Russian ally Bashar al-Assad to the table for talks with his rebel opponents on ending Syria's vicious four-and-a-half-year-old civil

war. US ally Saudi Arabia is putting together the coalition that would negotiate on behalf of the rebels, with a view to first agreeing a ceasefire and then launching a political dialogue. And looming over the effort to end the

State group to spread the carnage beyond

Kerry hopes that if the regime and the rebels can agree a truce then they, Russia and a US-led coalition of Western and Arab allies



MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin (right) speaks with US Secretary of State John Kerry during a meeting at the Kremlin yesterday. — AFP

#### INTERNATIONAL



SALT LAKE CITY, Utah: A car navigates a snow-covered road in City Creek Canyon as a major storm dumped snow throughout the state on Monday. — AP

### OBAMA OPENS WHITE HOUSE TO FORGE CEO ALLIANCES

#### President has lined up squarely with business



WASHINGTON: US President Barack Obama, accompanied by Defense Secretary Ash Carter and Commander of US Central Command Gen Lloyd Austin, speaks at the Pentagon on Monday about the fight against the Islamic State group following a National Security Council meeting. —AP

# OBAMA WARNS ISLAMIC STATE LEADERS: 'YOU ARE NEXT'

WASHINGTON: US President Barack Obama voiced fresh determination to destroy the Islamic State on Monday, vowing to kill the group's leaders and win back territory in the Middle East. Sounding a notably more strident tone, Obama said that the United States and its allies were taking the fight to Islamic State extremists in Iraq and Syria, but admitted that progress needed to come faster. "We are hitting ISIL harder than ever," said Obama, in a second address following the seemingly Islamic State-influenced attack in San Bernardino, California that has raised questions about his strategy.

"As we squeeze its heart, we'll make it harder for ISIL to pump its terror and propaganda to the rest of the world," Obama insisted at the Pentagon, after meeting top military and national security advisors. Listing eight Islamic State figures killed in coalition operations, Obama issued a stern warning. "ISIL leaders cannot hide and our next message to them is simple: You are next"

Obama said that US special forces were now in Syria and were helping local groups

squeeze the Islamic State group's proclaimed "capital" at Raqa. Meanwhile, he said, Iraqi forces were moving to take Ramadi "encircle Fallujah and cut off ISIL's supply routes into Mosul." From the air, Obama said the United States and its allies had begun targeting "oil infrastructure, destroying hundreds of their tanker trucks, wells and refineries". "Since the summer, ISIL has not had a single successful major offensive operation on the ground in either Syria or Iraq," Obama said. Even before the Dec 2 attack by a Muslim husband and wife in California killed 14 people, polls showed that more than 60 percent of Americans disapproved of the way Obama is handling the Islamic State and the broader terror threat. According to a Wall Street Journal/NBC poll published Monday, Americans now view national security as a top priority. The same poll found that Obama's own job approval ratings were at the lowest level this year, at 43 percent. That is a major shift since Obama's first term in the White House, when he was hailed for authorizing a high-risk special forces raid that killed Osama bin Laden.

**WASHINGTON:** President Barack Obama, who made few friends in corporate board rooms early in his first term as he pressed for tighter regulations on banks and remarked on the "fat cats" who helped precipitate the financial crisis, heads into his final year in the White House having built - or rebuilt - alliances with chief executives of the nation's biggest companies.

The president and his top advisers have kept an open door for CEOs of Fortune 100 companies, keeping almost 1,000 appointments with them, a Reuters review of White House records shows. Of the hundreds of appointments listed, Obama himself was present at about half, ranging from intimate Oval Office gatherings to lavish state dinners. Obama is the first US president to make White House visitor logs public.

"That number is the tip of the iceberg," said Valerie Jarrett, Obama's longest-serving senior adviser who runs his Office of Public Engagement. The president and his aides also regularly meet with representatives from the rest of the Fortune 500, as well as small- and medium-sized businesses, both in Washington and around the country, she said. The Reuters review included only the Fortune 100 list of largest companies, and was limited to White House meetings.

Following tensions between the White House and business during the financial crisis, a turning point in the relationship came after the debt ceiling impasse in 2011 and the subsequent "fiscal cliff" of tax hikes and spending cuts in 2012, Jarrett said. Business leaders were alarmed that Congress seemed ready to blow through fiscal deadlines in spite of the effect on stock markets and the US credit rating, and partnered with the White House to urge an end to the drama.

Since then, CEOs and the White House have become allies in advocating for immigration reform, the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal and reauthorization for the Export-Import Bank. "I do take a fair amount of grief from Republican colleagues who think that I've just like totally lost my mind," said Honeywell International Inc's David Cote, 63, the most frequent CEO visitor to Obama's White House, having turned up more than 50 times.

Cote was part of a high-profile commission on the nation's debt in 2010 and serves on another advisory panel on technology and manufacturing. He said he thinks CEOs should not delegate their responsibility to help politicians understand business. "You've got to be able to talk about this stuff and have both sides understand the needs of the other," he said. Cote, a life-long Republican, said he doesn't always agree with Obama but enjoys talking with him, calling him "a very smart guy" who doesn't get enough credit for his work on the economy.

For Obama and his advisers, spending time with CEOs means gaining valuable insights, while gaining support for various policies. For CEOs, White House encounters may produce tangible business benefits, not to mention providing an opportunity to hobnob with the most powerful man in the world. Reuters contacted the companies whose CEOs were among the top 30 White House visitors. Many declined comment. Some noted their chiefs were involved with advisory councils on jobs, trade and manufacturing, while noting that CEOs often discuss the same issues with law-makers from both parties in the US Congress.

The White House has tapped individual CEOs for help on policies where there is "alignment" of views, extracting a mountain of corporate pledges to bolster its policies to boost wages, provide more opportunities for young men of color, foster science and math in schools, increase diversity in the technology sector, and enhance college and training programs, among other initiatives. Obama has bolstered his arguments for an international deal to curb climate change by securing promises from US companies like Intel, Johnson & Johnson and Apple to reduce waste and use more renewable energy.

The logs show CEOs from large manufacturing and industrial companies have commanded more White House meetings than other sectors. Early on in Obama's presidency, visits by bankers and health insurance executives predominated, reflecting the president's focus on addressing the 2008 financial crisis and reforming health care. Technology and telecom CEOs have also been regulars at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

It's not all business. For example, Cote attended a Super Bowl party in 2010, an inauguration after-party in 2013, and in October, a concert featuring Buddy Guy, Smokey Robinson and James Taylor. IBM Corp executives hold the record for the most invitations to state dinners during the Obama administration, with CEO Virginia Rometty present at a September dinner with Chinese President Xi Jinping and at the March 2012 dinner for UK Prime Minister David Cameron. Her predeces-

sor CEO Sam Palmisano was at the June 2011 dinner for German Chancellor Angela Merkel. IBM declined comment for this article.

#### **Meeting of the Minds**

To be sure, while Obama and corporate chieftains may have a meeting at the White House, there may not be a meeting of the minds. "We are not their advocates unless there is an alignment of interest," Jarrett said. For instance, in October, Obama announced he would deny an application for the Keystone XL crude oil pipeline from Canada because it would undermine his position to lead climate talks. The project was supported by a wide range of US businesses.

That decision showed that White House meetings only go so far, said John Engler, president of the Business Roundtable, which represents CEOs of large companies. "Sometimes it can be helpful. Sometimes you saw the Keystone decision - it doesn't have much impact," he said. On other issues, Obama has lined up squarely with business, raising eyebrows among both traditional Democratic allies and populist conservative Republicans. Examples include his second-term drive for a sprawling trade deal with Asia and his defense of the Export-Import Bank against its opponents in Congress.

At the end of a session with some CEOs in February 2011, one attendee recalled how a chief executive told Obama that two new Environmental Protection Agency rules would push US semiconductor manufacturing offshore. Obama listened, said the issue was new to him and asked senior staffers to inquire. Within days, the EPA had heard from the White House. Weeks later, the problem was resolved, said the attendee, who requested anonymity to describe the private meeting.

The logs provide a snapshot of corporate power and influence, said John Wonderlich, policy director for the Sunlight Foundation, a nonprofit good-government advocacy group. "There's a concern when you have the people with the most power and who control huge industries and companies, that the president ends up spending an enormous amount of time worrying about their views," he said.

#### Inner Sanctum Invite

The logs show that Obama has most often met with CEOs in groups of 11 to 20 people in the Roosevelt Room, but on occasion also in the State Dining Room, the Old Family Dining Room, and even the Situation Room.—Reuters

# DOC BREAKS OUT SUPERLATIVES FOR TRUMP'S HEALTH

**WASHINGTON:** Republican US presidential candidate Donald Trump is in fine health, has never used alcohol or tobacco, and would undoubtedly be "the healthiest individual ever elected to the presidency" if he wins in 2016, his doctor said in a letter released by the campaign on Monday. "Mr. Trump has had a recent complete medical examination that showed only positive results," wrote Dr Harold Bornstein, who has treated Trump since 1980. "Actually, his blood pressure, 110/65, and laboratory results were astonishingly excellent."

Earlier this month the 69-year-old real estate mogul had predicted his medical report would indicate "perfection" and Bornstein's assessment reflected that. "If elected, Mr Trump, I can state unequivocally, will be the healthiest individual ever elected to the presidency," the doctor's letter said. The letter said Trump had lost 15 pounds in the past year, has never had cancer and has not had surgery since an appendectomy at age 10. He takes an aspirin daily and a low dose of a statin, a class of drug used to treat high cholesterol. "He has no history of ever using alcohol or tobacco products," Bernstein wrote.

It is customary for candidates to release their health records or letters from their physicians signing off on their fitness to be president. Republicans Jeb Bush and Chris Christie and Democrat Hillary Clinton have released summaries of their records. As Trump continued to rise in the polls, calls for him to release his records increased in recent weeks, with some critics saying he was withholding them to mask questions about his health.

The suggestion that Trump could be more fit than President Barack Obama, known as an avid basketball player, drew questions for White House press secretary Josh Earnest, who asked whether the doctor had examined Presidents John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. "I will not call into question the credentials of a physician who conducted a medical examination of Mr Trump," Earnest said. "That must have been a pretty interesting appointment."—Reuters



#### US BORDER PATROL TRIED TO SHORTEN POLYGRAPH TESTS

**WASHINGTON:** Gil Kerlikowske, the head of US Customs and Border Patrol, vowed at his Senate confirmation hearing in January 2014 to strengthen the integrity of the nation's largest law enforcement force amid persistent complaints of corruption and abuse within its ranks. Nearly two years on, he can point to several significant achievements, notably expanding the investigative authority of the agency's internal affairs unit and giving all agents new training on use of force to reduce the number of deadly incidents that have tarred its reputation.

edge the changes. But they complain these steps have yet to lead to adequate prosecutions of officers for misconduct or more transparency in how the agency handles, and resolves, criminal cases against its employees. Reuters interviews with current and former CBP employees and congressional staff have found the agency has yet to implement certain recommendations to improve accountability, and it has quietly objected to a proposed reform that would give Congress oversight on how it handles

Some civil rights groups acknowl-

complaints of misconduct.

ening congressionally mandated polygraph tests for new agents, which has not been previously reported. The difficulty of the tests and high failure rates have made it hard for the CBP to hire fast enough. Some new recruits are caught lying about drug abuse or affiliation with drug cartels, according to those who have seen test results. CBP officials told Reuters shortening the test would help the agency meet its ambitious hiring goals, but some polygraph experts said this would have meant removing questions, which would have weakened the tests and invalidated the results. An oversight agency denied the CBP request.

The agency has also proposed short-

When he took office, Kerlikowske, President Barack Obama's former "drug czar," outlined an ambitious agenda to weed out corrupt agents and address a series of damning reports on the agency's use of force. The Southern Border Communities Coalition, a rights group, has compiled media reports of 40 deaths between January 2010 and Sept. 1, 2015. One agent has been prosecuted.

Some supporters say Kerlikowske, who gained a reputation as a man who could turn around law enforcement organizations after nine years as police chief in Seattle, has made impressive strides. "He's got a lot on his plate. He's trying to prioritize everything," said former Secret Service Director John MaGaw, a member of an integrity advisory panel set up by Kerlikowske.

Kerlikowske has rewritten the CBP's use of force rulebook to prohibit the shooting of suspects fleeing the scene who do not pose a threat to themselves or others. In the year since the new policy has been in effect, use of force overall is down from 1,037 to 768 incidents. Firearm-related incidents, however, are only down by one, from 29 to 28. Under Kerlikowske, the CBP has also assumed direct control of internal criminal investigations into misconduct by its employees. Previously these were handled by other agencies, like the Federal Bureau of Investigation. But the CBP has yet to refer any use of force cases for prosecu-

"Our sense is that there have been improvements, but from a very low

baseline. And the transparency problems of both the past and the present make it very difficult to gauge where exactly the agency is now," said Chris Rickerd, policy counsel to the American Civil Liberties Union.

#### **Shorter Polygraph Tests**

CBP's struggle to reform comes as it continues to grow: the Department of Homeland Security has requested \$13.5 billion for the CBP from Congress in fiscal 2016 and plans to hire nearly 1,950 employees in the next year. Since Obama became president in 2008, its staff numbers have tripled, to 60,000. To screen new hires, CBP uses a polygraph test mandated by a 2010 law aimed at blunting the infiltration of the agency by drug cartels. Officers have been paid cash bribes and given sexual favors in exchange for allowing gangs to use their lanes at checkpoints to smuggle drugs and people across the US-Mexico border, say current and former DHS officials.

The CBP would not say how many applicants currently fail polygraphs, but initial pilot tests found about 60 percent of applicants who passed the agency's

background checks failed a polygraph, then CBP internal affairs chief Jim Tomsheck testified to Congress in 2010. In February, CBP officials tried to make changes to the test that were rejected by government oversight agencies for not meeting standards for law enforcement screenings, although what exactly they tried to do is disputed.

Former CBP internal affairs chief Tomsheck told Reuters he was aware of two specific questions that CBP had been trying to remove: "Did you lie about anything on your application?' and another related to handling classified information critical to national security. Tomsheck retired under pressure in 2014 and is a critic of the agency's leadership. Four CBP officials acknowledged to Reuters the agency did try to shorten the time to complete the test, which can take up to 10 hours to finish, but denied they had tried to eliminate specific questions. While the officials would not say how they had planned to shorten the test, they said the goal had been to enable each polygraph administrator to test more than one applicant per day.—Reuters

# US SOLDIER BERGDAHL FACING LIFE SENTENCE

**AUSTIN:** US Army Sergeant Bowe Bergdahl, who walked away from his post in Afghanistan and became a Taleban prisoner for five years, will face court-martial with a potential life sentence, the Army said on Monday. Bergdahl, 29, was charged earlier this year with desertion and endangering US troops and could face the life sentence if convicted of the latter, more serious offense. In ordering the court martial on Monday, Army General Robert Abrams did not follow the



**Bowe Bergdahl** 

recommendation of a preliminary hearing which, according to Bergdahl's lawyer, called for Bergdahl to face a proceeding that could impose a potential maximum penalty of a year in confinement.

Bergdahl's lawyer, Eugene Fidell, said the defense team "had hoped the case would not go in this direction". He also urged Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, who has called Bergdahl a "dirty, rotten traitor," to "cease his prejudicial months-long campaign of defamation against our client." In a later interview on Monday, Fidell also criticized members of Congress for publicly saying they were closely monitoring the outcome of the

Sen John McCain, who chairs a committee that oversees promotions of senior military officers, said last month that he would hold a

hearing on the case if Bergdahl was not punished. The senior general who will ultimately decide Bergdahl's fate is expected to come before McCain's committee in the future for his next promotion. "I think the politicization of everything surrounding this case is very disturbing," Fidell said. "And the willingness of members of the... Senate to interfere with the adjudication of a pending criminal case is appalling."

Bergdahl disappeared on foot on June 30, 2009, from Combat Outpost Mest-Malak in Paktika Province, Afghanistan, and was subsequently captured by the Taleban. He left his post to draw attention to "leadership failure" in his unit, Bergdahl said last week on the popular podcast Serial, which is focusing a season on his case. The Idaho native suffered torture, abuse and neglect at the hands of Taleban forces, including months of beatings, and confinement for 3-1/2 years in a metal cage barely big enough to stand in, a military expert testified previously.

The head of the Army team that investigated Bergdahl has said he does not believe he should face jail time. The official search for Bergdahl lasted 45 days, but the United States spent years trying to determine his whereabouts and bring him home. He was freed in a prisoner swap in May 2014 that sent five Taleban leaders held by the United States at Guantanamo Bay to Qatar, where they had to remain for a year. The deal drew heavy criticism from Republicans.

Major General Kenneth Dahl, who led the military's investigation of Bergdahl's case, testified at a military probable cause hearing in September that Bergdahl was not a Taliban sympathizer and no soldiers directly involved in the search for him were killed. Jeff Addicott, an Army officer in the Judge Advocate General's Corps for 20 years and a law professor at St Mary's University, said Bergdahl, who has been stationed at a base in San Antonio, Texas, may now be confined to his base.—Reuters



SACRAMENTO, California: Amanda Wilcox, a member of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, shows a photo of her daughter, Laura, who was killed in a shooting at a mental health clinic in 2001, following a hearing on gun violence on Monday. — AP

# AMERICA'S PENCHANT FOR GUNS STRONGER THAN EVER

#### 2015 to set new record in gun sales

RANDOLPH TOWNSHIP: The Paris and San Bernardino attacks have fueled a surge in US gun sales, as Americans seek to protect themselves - and stock up in case lawmakers finally act to tighten firearms controls. Since a Muslim husband and wife opened fire in California on Dec 2, killing 14 people and wounding 22 others, sales at the RTSP range in New Jersey - one of the largest centers in the northeastern United States - have surged 50 percent, according to one of its owners. "We saw a spike after Paris and San Bernardino even more so," Rick Friedman told AFP.

If gun purchases follow the same pattern as after previous mass shootings, Friedman said, sales will slow after several months. As well as selling firearms, his sprawling facility in Randolph has 21 ports or spaces on its range from which clients can practice shooting. Just down the road in Jersey City, Caso's Gun-A-Rama saw an equal jump in sales, which its manager attributed to nervousness over political chatter about ramping up anti-gun legislation. "That's when everybody has been panicking," Lisa Caso said.

P James Debney, CEO of storied US gunmaker Smith & Wesson, told investors last week that his company sees "growth in the handgun portion of the consumer market as a longstanding trend," as he discussed its latest quarterly earnings. Following a 32 percent increase in sales for August, September and October - before the Paris and San Bernardino attacks - the manufacturer raised its earnings target for the full financial year.

The strong figures jibe with statistics from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), which says the number of handguns manufactured in the United States has quadrupled between 1998 and 2013. And 2015 should set a new record in gun sales, according to data from the FBI, which conducts background checks on such purchases. According to the independent Small Arms Survey, some 270 million firearms are in circulation in the United States, which has a population of around 322 million people.

#### 'Everybody Should Consider It'

"People are reaching out and not just those that support the Second Amendment. Not just traditional Republicans. It's pretty much everybody," Friedman said, referring to the part of the US Constitution that gives citizens the right to own guns. One of his clients, Abby, said she believed more people should consider gun ownership.

"I think everybody should think about it," she said after a shooting session. Mass shootings are historically rare in New Jersey and the state has some of the country's strictest antigun legislation.

But that was of little solace to range patrons, including former policeman Con Hartnett, who said that the fact that the San Bernardino attacks took place in a facility that normally serves the disabled was further proof of the vital need for guns. "It's the softest target you could imagine. And it happened," he said. David Yamane, a professor of sociology at Wake Forest University, said "self-defense has always been a component of American gun culture alongside hunting and recreation. "But self-defense tends to be much more prominent within the last 30 years."

He pegged the change as part of a broader shift in society toward what he identified as "a greater sense of fear." This dynamic, he said, comes from a combination of factors: foremost an increase in crime between the 1960s and mid-1990s, but also major societal changes relating to minorities and women. "It was easy for people to have a sense that the entire society was falling apart around them," he said. On top of this, he added, is the proliferation of media and the emergence of the 24-hour news cycle. "Anything bad gets magnified much more today than it did before," he said

But for Friedman, it all boils down to there being a "different situation in this day and age". "We are at a period that I don't think we've ever witnessed," he said, alluding to fears about terrorist plots on US soil. "It's an unfortunate one, but it's one that only reinforces our core beliefs that you have the right to protect your life." — AFP

# BALTIMORE POLICE VAN WAS 'COFFIN ON WHEELS'

BALTIMORE: An activist holds a poster outside the Baltimore City Circuit Courthouse

East during the trial of police Officer William G Porter yesterday. — AFP

where an African American suffered fatal injuries was "a coffin on wheels," a court heard Monday, as jurors started deliberations in the trial of one of the six police officers charged over his death. William Porter is the first police officer to stand trial for the death of Freddie Gray, 25, who suffered a snapped spine while being transported unrestrained in the rear of the police van.

Gray's death in April was one of several cases casting a harsh national spotlight on race and police brutality in the United States. It also became a flashpoint that led to rioting in Baltimore, a downtrodden East Coast city an hour from Washington. Porter, who is black, has been charged with involuntary manslaughter, reckless endangerment and assault on Gray, who had been picked up after fleeing at the sight of police. As she wrapped up her case, prosecutor Janice Bledsoe told the jury that Porter and his fellow officers displayed "disregard for human life" in their treatment of Gray.

"With great power comes great responsibility," she said, accusing Porter and his colleagues of transforming the police van into "a coffin on wheels". But defense attorney Joseph Murtha countered that the

state failed to meet its burden of proof, and that the jury therefore could not convict his client. "There is an absolute absence of any testimony from a state's witness that Officer Porter acted in an unreasonable manner," Murtha told the jurors.

Arrested and charged with possession of a knife, Gray was loaded onto the police van with his hands and feet shackled. When police later checked on their prisoner, he was in a coma with a severed spine, investigators found. He died of his injuries April 19, sparking protests, looting and arson. President Barack Obama addressed the case in televised remarks, denouncing the violence, while acknowledging that the incident left troubling unanswered questions. After the medical examiner declared Gray's death a homicide, the Baltimore city prosecutor filed charges against six officers - three white and three black. All six have entered not guilty pleas. Lawyers for the accused call Gray's death a tragic accident possibly caused when the police van braked suddenly. They also have suggested that he might even have deliberately injured himself. City officials, meanwhile, have paid Gray's family \$6.4 million, a settlement negotiated independently of the court proceedings. —AFP

# GANG IN BRAZIL FALSIFIED DOCUMENTS FOR SYRIANS

RIO DE JANEIRO: Police in Rio de Janeiro have broken up a ring that arranged fake Brazilian citizenship for dozens of Syrian nationals, TV Globo's Jornal Nacional newscast reported, raising security concerns following militant attacks in the United States and Europe and before the Rio Olympics in August. Police have identified 72 Syrian nationals involved in the scheme, which arranged false Brazilian birth certificates for Syrian immigrants, the report said on Monday.

Those certificates were then used to obtain valid Brazilian documents, including passports and national ID cards identifying them as Brazilian-born citizens, Jornal Nacional said. Four people face charges of fraud and belonging to a criminal organization, the report said. Among the false birth certificates identified, 20 were used to obtain Brazilian passports, Jornal Nacional reported. Seventeen of the 72 people involved in the scheme asked for visas to the United States in Rio, five of them using

their fraudulently obtained Brazilian passports, the report added, citing officials at the US Consulate in Rio de Janeiro.

Several of those who traveled to the United States are former members of the Syrian armed forces, the report said. Some of the passport holders also traveled to Europe. Police also found anti-Semitic articles and documents supporting Islamist militants on computers used by some of those who obtained the false documents. The fraud occurred from 2012 to 2014 and involved falsifying written birth records recorded at a Rio de Janeiro cartorio, or privately owned civil data registry, the Globo report said. The false certificates all recorded birth dates from the 1960s and 1970s.

The Syrian refugee issue has become politically charged, particularly in the United States, since the Nov 13 attacks in Paris and the Dec 2 mass shooting in San Bernardino, California, raised concerns some of the migrants might include militants linked to Islamic State. — Reuters



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#### EU PLANS NEW BORDER GUARD TO STEM MIGRATION

#### BUDGET FOR EU FRONTIER DEFENSE TO TREBLE IN FIVE YEARS

BRUSSELS: The European Union will nearly treble its spending on frontier defense provided by a new European Border and Coast Guard under proposals unveiled yesterday to tackle a migration crisis that threatens Europe's security and passport-free travel area. If approved by governments, the new body will replace the EU's Frontex agency and have expanded powers, including keeping a 1,500-strong rapid reaction force on standby. It will have funding worth 322 million euros (\$354 million) by 2020, up from the 114 million euros originally budgeted for this year.

With Greece and Italy struggling to control hundreds of thousands of people, including Syrian refugees, the bloc's executive the European Commission proposes taking the power to deploy EU forces without the consent of the member state concerned-an idea that has already hit resistance in national capitals and which many see as impractical. However, frustration among northern powers, including France and Germany, at failures by Greece and Italy to document and screen masses of people arriving by boat from Turkey and Africa has driven demands for more central European control of the external frontiers of Europe's borderless Schengen

Concern that the Islamic State attack on Paris last month was also carried out in part by militants who had travelled along the migration route from Syria via Turkey and Greece has also increased pressure for tighter checks on the frontiers. The Commission proposal says the EU agency overseeing the frontiers should be able to "intervene immediately in crisis situations" and deploy border guards from the standby pool drawn from other national border guard forces. However, EU officials stressed that national governments would be able to block that if a majority of them were against. "We don't replace member states' responsibilities and definitely not

#### 'More Europe'

told the European Parliament.

Commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos

sovereignty," Migration

"What we are creating today is more Europe," Avramopoulos said in statement. "To manage our external borders, to step up returns of irregular migrants, to allow our asylum system to function properly for this in need and to strengthen checks at the external borders." The budget of Frontex has already been increased three times this year to stand

at 143 million euros for 2015. That will increase to 238 million euros for next

The current staffing of Frontex, which serves to coordinate national border agencies, is around 400. That will more than double to 1,000 by 2020, including field operatives. In addition, member states will have to put at least a total of 1,500 personnel on standby for deployment within days. The new body will also have a dedicated Returns Office with the task of stepping up deportations of those who fail to qualify for asylum. Yesterday's proposals may be discussed by EU leaders when they meet in Brussels on Thursday and Friday for a summit, although the short time for preparation means such talks will be brief. The migration crisis has drive a wedge among member states that many fear threatens the overall unity of the 28nation bloc.

Among other proposals presented yesterday, the latest of several packages of measures this year to contain migration, the Commission proposed legislation to increase systematic security and identity checks at the Schengen frontiers, including of EU citizens who typically pass with limited scrutiny at present. Many of those who have carried out



ATHENS: Migrants sit below a banner outside a former Olympic indoor stadium in Faliro, southern Athens yesterday. Hundreds of people have been temporary housed in the stadium after being removed last week from Greece's northern border with Macedonia, which only allows Syrians, Afghans and Iraqis through on their trek to wealthier European countries - rejecting others as economic migrants who do not merit refugee protection. —AP

Islamist attacks in Europe in the past two years have been EU citizens who have fought in Syria and then returned to their home countries, notably to France and Belgium. The Commission said an esti-

mated 5,000 EU citizens have joined militant groups. An unprecedented 1.5 million people crossed into the EU irregularly between January and November 2015.—Reuters



CAPE TOWN: Lieutenant Commander Zimasa Mabela (right), talks to a junior officer on the deck of the South African Navy mine-counter-measure vessel, the Umhloti, which she commands. — AFP

# SOUTH AFRICA'S FIRST BLACK WOMAN NAVAL COMMANDER CALLS THE SHOTS

**CAPE TOWN:** Zimasa Mabela grew up under apartheid in a South African village just two hours drive from the ocean, but she was 18 by the time she first saw the sea. Now, aged 38, she is the first black African woman to command a South African naval vessel. Lieutenant Commander Mabela's first visit to the beach coincided with the end of white rule in 1994 - and she caught the historic wave of change that followed.

"I wasn't terrified of the water," she said, gazing out from the bridge of her sleek minehunter, the SAS Umhloti. "In my village there was a swimming pool at the church where us kids could swim." But Mabela's desire for a life at sea came later, when she was at university studying for a Bachelor of Science degree in education. She attended a presentation by the navy and was captivated by the slogan: "Join the navy and see the world." "I thought, where else would I get the opportunity to see the world?"

She signed up in 1999 at the age of 22 as a radio operator, and the navy has so far lived up to its promise-she has travelled to places as diverse as India, Uruguay, St Helena island and Canada. Now, the ship she took command of in August is berthed in Cape Town's historic Simon's Town harbor, first established by the Dutch and taken over by Britain's Royal Navy more than two centuries ago. The harbor, curled under the mountains of Cape Town's Southern Peninsular, is now South Africa's main naval base. Men make up the bulk of the ship's crew of 54, but Mabela, in an officer's uniform of crisp white shirt and black slacks, says her gender has not been a problem.

#### More ambitions ahead

"They have accepted me very well. If I give an order, it is an order," she says with a warm smile-and a glint of steel in her eyes. "I'd like to encourage other women to be brave enough and not think that this is a man's world. You can achieve anything you want to achieve." Mabela is a mother of two daughters, aged six and four, but she says juggling work and motherhood is not a problem. "I manage to balance my family life and job because I have a strong support system from my mother and my husbandwho is also in the navy, so he understands.

"When I'm at work or at sea, I'm comfortable knowing they are looking after the kids well." At the same time, when she gets home, the naval commander takes on many of the tasks of a wife and mother. "Over the weekend I have time to catch up on cleaning the house, doing the laundry and all those things. "And during the week when I get home from work, I still cook

supper for everyone so it is quite hectic."
On board ship, with South Africa at peace and no mines to hunt, the focus is on training, search and rescue operations and "whatever requirements we can carry out". But the girl who grew up living "a normal village life", looked after by her grandparents while her mother worked away from home as a nurse, is not resting on her laurels. On her ambitions for the future, she says: "I have quite a lot, because there is so much to do in this organization. "I'd like to be involved in training, and if I get an opportunity to command a bigger ship that would be a plus for me."—AFP

# EU TALKS HIT TROUBLE

#### COLD SHOULDER FOR CAMERON

LONDON: David Cameron heads to an EU summit in Brussels tomorrow hoping to breathe new life into Britain's bid to recast its ties with the union, which have hit a snag over his plan to cut benefits for migrants. With a referendum on leaving the EU due by 2017, Cameron's plan to curb benefits for EU migrants for the first four years they are in Britain faces stiff resistance from other leaders, who see it as discriminatory. "Cameron's hardest battle is certain to be on welfare reform," said Agata Gostynska-Jakubowska of the Centre for European Reform (CER) think-tank. "He has made a fetish of in-work benefits in his negotiations," she said, noting that an overwhelming majority of EU members opposed his proposals.

The measure affects a small proportion of Britain's total social welfare bill but is one of the four main pillars of the prime minister's strategy to renegotiate Britain's membership of the EU and then campaign to stay in the bloc. Early hopes that an overall deal for Britain to take to voters could come at this week's summit after Cameron outlined his wish list in a letter to EU president Donald Tusk last month have been dashed. The pair are now aiming for a February agreement instead. But the tricky question is how to secure it, given the scale of opposition to Cameron's benefits proposal. Members of Cameron's centre-right Conservative party, which has a strong eurosceptic strand, have been voicing their concerns in public. London Mayor Boris Johnson wrote in Monday's Daily Telegraph that Cameron's "modest" proposal had been given "the bum's rush" in Brussels-an expression referring to an abrupt rejection. Johnson, seen as a possible successor to Cameron, added that the EU needed to recognize that Britain was a "special case" due to the number of migrants it attracts.

Owen Paterson, a eurosceptic former minister, told Sky News Sunday that Britain had been promised "a total change" in its relationship with the EU. "What actually is happening, he (Cameron) is like someone in a little dinghy, bumping along, being towed along by the enormous great Channel ferry," Paterson added. Ahead of tomorrow night's summit dinner, where the renegotiation is expected to be the main topic of conversation, two polls were published in Britain showing the "leave" and "stay" sides on a knife-edge.

#### 'Creative proposals'

While British officials deny reports they have dropped the four-year benefit restriction proposal, it is clear that Cameron's shuttle diplomacy with European leaders in recent days has been complicated. In Poland-one of the EU countries with the biggest migrant populations in Britain-officials said during a visit by Cameron last week that they were waiting for "creative proposals" from London on how to address the issue. Cameron's Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond has indicated that such alternative proposals should come from other member states. Possible solutions to the impasse could include an emergency brake on migration into Britain, according to EU diplomatic sources.

This would allow Britain to limit migration from the other 27 EU countries if its public services are overwhelmed or its welfare system is being abused, the sources said. Some analysts suggest another alternative could be to withdraw benefits from young Britons as well as EU migrants. The cost of EU migrants claiming benefits n Britain has been hard to assess because the British benefit system does not systematically record the nationality of claimants. But several studies have found that EU migrants paid more in taxes in Britain than they received in benefits over the last decade. EU migrants accounted for 2.5 percent of benefit claimants processed by Britain's Department for Work and Pensions, according to official figures released in 2014.

Even if Cameron succeeds in agreeing reforms, a group of MPs warned there was "no certainty" any would be implemented as they might require EU treaty changes, a lengthy and uncertain process. How the disagreement is resolved could be key to the referendum's outcome. "Attitudes to immigration are a strong predictor of likely support for leaving the EU," a paper from foreign affairs think-tank Chatham House said this month. "The more salient this issue becomes or the more it concerns voters, the more likely it is that the number of outers' will rise."— AFP



LONDON: Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron takes a drink as he speaks to members of the social services team at Twickenham Civic Centre in London. — AP

# MERKEL BUYS TIME WITH PARTY COMPROMISE ON THE REFUGEES

**KARLSRUHE:** German Chancellor Angela Merkel won a respite on the refugee question with a strong show of unity at a party congress but must deliver results ahead of key elections next year, analysts said. Merkel turned in a decisive performance at the Christian Democrats' gathering in the southwestern city of Karlsruhe on Monday, uniting delegates behind a centrist line of humanitarian commitment coupled with a promise to reduce refugee numbers. Commentators said that predictions of Merkel's political demise after 10 years in office, rampant just weeks ago, would now go quiet, at least for a time.

"There was a lot of criticism in the run-up to the event but with a clever, feisty appearance, Merkel managed to suddenly make this criticism look quite petty," news website Spiegel Online said. "The twilight of Merkel has been called off for now." The top-selling Bild called it her "strongest hour". Christian Haardt, a member of the legislature in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany's most populous state, said Merkel's "inspiring" address would give the CDU momentum ahead of three important state elections in March. "Merkel's speech sent the right message of unity and confidence to the party and the rest of the country," he said. "But of course party members are more loyal than voters-they are still anxious and will need to be convinced."

Barbara Klepsch, social affair minister in Saxony, home to the anti-Muslim movement Pegida and the state with the highest number of attacks against refugee shelters, admitted local politicians now had their work cut out for them. "We're facing a situation in villages and towns that we haven't seen since World War II," she said. "Our job is now to take this optimistic message that Merkel sent out back to the places where the fears are the biggest." After weeks of damaging infighting over an expected one million new arrivals in 2015, Merkel successfully blocked right-wing rebels from having the party adopt a call for a firm cap on refugees. Instead, she won overwhelming backing for a position paper calling for "a tangible reduction" of asylum seekers. "We will live up to our humanitarian responsibility," she

#### 'A breather, nothing more'

The party rewarded her carefully wrought compromise with a lengthy standing ovation and an implicit pledge to honor her call for "patience" for new German policies to take effect and to fight for more EU support for a more equitable distribution of asylum seekers. Paul Ziemiak, head of the party's youth wing, which spearheaded the call for an upper limit on refugees, said his supporters had achieved a key symbolic victory. "We got the message we wanted from the party congress that another refugee onslaught like we've seen this year would overwhelm the state and our society in the long-run," he said. In one electoral district of North Rhine-Westphalia, he noted, we are taking in three times as many refugees as all of Poland".

Merkel's promise to staunch the flow of refugees was built on medium-to-long term goals, such as tackling the root causes of the mass exodus of people from crisis zones, increased European solidarity in sharing the refugee burden, and greater cooperation with Turkey, the main launchpad for migrant crossings to Europe. Spiegel noted that such goals would take months if not years to realize. "But the placated critics at the party congress won't give her that much time," it said. "Karlsruhe gave Merkel a breather, nothing more."

The daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung said Merkel had relied on her time-tested strategy of co-opting her critics' arguments and thus occupying, even defining, the middle ground in German politics. Yet despite the overwhelming show of support for Merkel, some critics said the party had failed to calm the fears of the CDU base. "The position paper goes in the right direction but further steps are needed," the head of the party's business wing, Carsten Linnemann, said. And party deputy leader Julia Kloeckner, a rising star in the party and the CDU's candidate for state premier in a Rhineland-Palatinate next March, said the platform should have focused more on how to integrate mainly Muslim newcomers into German society. "Integration shouldn't be left to chance," she warned. — AFP

#### PAKISTAN EXECUTES EIGHT

**MULTAN:** Pakistan hanged eight more convicted murderers yesterday, a day ahead of the one-year anniversary of an extremist attack that prompted authorities to lift a six-year moratorium on the death penalty. Pakistan reinstated executions last year as part of a crackdown on extremism after Taliban attackers gunned down more than 150 people, most of them children, at an army-run school in the restive northwest on December 16, 2014. The latest executions took place in various locations in Punjab province. "Two convicts on death row were hanged in Multan, two each in Bahawalpur and Guirat and one each in Attock and Dera Ghazi Khan," Chaudhry Arshad Saeed, an adviser to Punjab's chief

minister for prison affairs said.

Hangings were initially reinstated only for those convicted of terrorism, but in March they were extended to all capital offences. No official figures on the number of executions carried out since the moratorium was lifted are available. Rights activists recently put the number at around 300. Supporters argue that executions are the only effective way to deal with the scourge of militancy in the country. But critics say the legal system is unjust, with rampant police torture and poor representation for victims during unfair trials, while the majority of those who are hanged are not convicted of terror charges.— AFP

#### TYPHOON KILLS FOUR IN THE PHILIPPINES

**BULAN:** Tattered lanterns, festive lights and tin roofs littered towns in the central Philippines yesterday after Typhoon Melor swept through, killing at least four people and leaving millions without power ahead of Christmas. Distraught survivors surveyed their damaged homes on the eve of the traditional nine-day Christmas vigil that Filipinos observe with dawn masses and rice cakes. Christmas is the most celebrated holiday in the Philippines, where 80 percent of its 100 million people are Catholic, and decorations such as colorful lights and lanterns have already been put up in most towns. "It will be a very sad Christmas and a dark one because we have no power. But the important thing is everyone around me is still moving," 54-year-old rice farmer Noemi Pesigan said.

Melor blew out the windows of Pesigan's two-storey brick and wood house in Bulan, a small farming town about 350 kilometers southeast of the capital, Manila, and she survived the storm by sheltering in a nearby shop. The typhoon tore in off the Pacific Ocean on Monday afternoon and hit farming and fishing communities in the eastern Philippines with winds of up to 185 kilometers an hour. Three people were killed in floods in Northern Samar province, which faces the Pacific, municipal disaster officer Jonathan Baldo told DZMM radio. Flying debris also killed a man in Northern Samar, national disaster agency spokeswoman Mina Marasigan said, without being able to confirm the other three fatalities.

Civil defence officials said they were checking reports of additional deaths in isolated areas but were struggling to confirm new causalities due to "communication issues", caused by the storm. The road out of Bulan was littered with fallen trees and toppled power lines, making travel difficult, while nearby wooden and thatch houses laid in ruin. Melor weakened slightly as it cut across the central islands of the archipelago, but on Tuesday afternoon its wind gusts were still reaching 170 kilomeMindoro. It was expected to weaken further and move out into the South China Sea by Tuesday evening.

#### **Dark Christmas**

In Bicol, a vast region in the east often hit by typhoons, authorities credited the early evacuation of 720,000 people for what they believed would be a low death toll. "We have zero floods, zero deaths, zero casualties," Joey Salceda, governor of Albay province in Bicol, told ABS-CBN television. But he said the entire province of 1.2 million people was without power. "What we are asking for is the early restoration of electricity," he said.

Residents of neighboring Sorsogon, which takes in Bulan town, were also without power yesterday, and authorities could give no guarantees if electricity would be restored by Christmas.

"Our target is to restore power by Christmas, but it will still depend on many factors," Mina Marasigan, spokeswoman of the national disaster management agency said. She said the timing would depend on how badly damaged towns were, and how much cleaning up of roads was required before teams could go in to put up new power poles and lines.

The Philippines is hit by an average of 20 typhoons a year, many of them deadly, with the strongest often happening towards the end of the year. Last year, 53 people died in floods and landslides after Typhoon Jangmi hit another part of the eastern Philippines five days after Christmas, catching many people on holidays off guard. The last deadly storm to hit the country this year, Koppu, killed 54 people and forced tens of thousands to flee their homes after it pummeled rice-growing northern provinces in October. In November 2013, one of the strongest typhoons on record, Haiyan, flattened entire communities in the central region with tsunami-like waves, leaving 7,350 people dead or missing. — AFP



AT SEA: A Rohingya migrant eats food dropped by a Thai army helicopter after he jumped to collect the supplies at sea from a boat drifting in Thai waters off the southern island of Koh Lipe in the Andaman sea. — AFP

# TENSIONS TEST US-THAI TIES AS STRATEGIC TALKS RESUME

#### US ENVOY FOR EAST ASIA BRANDED 'UGLY AMERICAN'

**WASHINGTON:** The top US envoy for East Asia returns to military-governed Thailand this week, hoping for better news coverage than on his last visit a year ago. Local media branded veteran diplomat Daniel Russel an "ugly American" and the government protested that he had "wounded the hearts of Thais" for public criticism of the country's curbs on democracy. Russel is traveling to Bangkok for the first formal US-Thai strategic dialogue since the May 2014 coup. That is part of a broader Obama administration effort to build stronger US ties in Southeast Asia and counter China's rise. But the underlying problems remain. The Thai military keeps delaying a return to civilian rule, and Washington keeps falling afoul of Thailand's hyper-sensitive politics. Police recently took up a complaint brought by hardline royalists who accused US ambassador to Thailand, Glyn Davies, of defaming the monarchy after he voiced concern about long prison sentences under a law that criminalizes criticism of the royal family. That reflects broader US concerns about the junta's clampdown on dissent.

Police appear unlikely to pursue an investigation against Davies, who has diplomatic immunity. But the adverse response he provoked, despite prefacing his remarks with praise of Thailand's revered King Bhumibol Adulyadej, underscored the disconnect that increasingly weighs on America's oldest diplomatic relationship in Asia. "The military is convinced that it saved Thailand from spiraling into chaos and acts hurt and puzzled that Washington doesn't understand this," said Murray Hiebert, an expert on Southeast Asia at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "The current flap is another sign of how much bilateral relations have deteriorated since the coup."

Desmond Wilson, a former US defense attache in Bangkok who criticized Washington's post-coup scaling back of ties, said the strategic dialogue - last held in 2012 - showed the US is shifting toward a more pragmatic approach. He predicted Wednesday's talks between the two foreign ministries would be followed by a high-level military dialogue early next year. The US-Thai diplomatic relationship dates back 182 years. Today, Thailand is less critical to American interests than it was during the Vietnam War, for instance, when it hosted 50,000 US forces.

#### **Restricted military assistance**

But it remains a regional hub for the US on issues like intelligence, law enforcement and counternarcotics. Although the US has restricted military assistance since the coup, Thailand continues to host America's largest multilateral military exercises in the Asia-Pacific. Thai ambassador to the US, Pisan Manawapat, said that the US and Thailand have shared interests in the region, and hoped the strategic dialogue would elevate bilateral relations. "The US knows well how to deal with its friends and allies in order to bring about shared outcomes," he said.

#### Walk away?

Russel said the two governments should "maximize our cooperation within the bounds of what's possible under current circumstances." But he said the US wouldn't "walk away" from its commitment to universal values like free speech. "What ultimately is going to matter is that this story ends well," said Russel. "My primary concern is that the Thai nation emerges from this period of military rule with a stable, democratic, civilian-led, inclusive government."

Thailand has been consumed by political turmoil for the past decade, since the military ousted populist but divisive leader Thaksin Shinawatra in 2006, sparking intermittent bouts of unrest and bloodshed between Thaksin supporters and pro-establishment opponents. On his January visit, Russel stirred a furor because he met with the prime minister ousted in the latest coup, Thaksin's sister Yingluck, and said in a speech that her parliamentary impeachment was politically motivated.

Russel is not expected to meet Yingluck this week, but will confer with political leaders, including from the opposition. The political atmosphere has only grown more intense in recent months as the Thai economy has flagged and concern grows over the health of King Bhumibol, a stabilizing force during his seven decades on the throne. Many analysts predict the military will be reluctant to make way for a new civilian government until Bhumibol's successor is in place. The king, 88, made a rare, brief appearance on television Monday.

He was shown wearing a suit and seated in a chair while presiding over the swearing in of a group of judges in white uniforms at a Bangkok hospital where he has spent most of the last six years. The footage was shown on all major channels and the evening news. Lese majeste cases have multiplied, with some people receiving sentences of more than 25 years for anti-royal comments on the Internet, amid signs the draconian law is being wielded to check political dissent. The military has postponed elections until at least 2017. While that is straining Thailand's relations with the US, ties with China have deepened. For the first time last month, Thailand and China held a joint

# FILIPINO MAID SAYS SINGAPORE

After a few months of employment,

the family home and accompanied by her female employer to a washroom next to the condominium's swimming pool whenever she needed to relieve herself, the court was told. On a family trip to Hong Kong, she was also fed instant noodles and bread. On April 18 last year, Gawidan managed to escape to a nearby shopping centre and called a fellow countrywoman who fed her before taking her to a shelter. Gawidan, a mother of three, has since regained weight. If convicted, trader Lim Choon Hong and his wife Chong Sui Foon, both 47, face a fine of up to Sg\$10,000 (\$7,100), imprisonment of up to 12 months, or both, for failing to provide the maid with ade-

#### THAI FACES PRISON FOR INSULTING KING'S DOG

BANGKOK: A Thai faces prison after being charged with lese majeste for insulting the king's dog, his lawyer said yesterday, in an escalation of the already draconian royal defamation law. Thanakorn Siripaiboon, 27, has been charged by police with lese majeste for a "satirical" Facebook post about the king and his dog, lawyer Pawinee Chumsri said. "There was a post including three photos on his Facebook page on December 6 with a message that satirized the king's dog," she said. Thanakorn also faces lese majeste, sedition and computer crimes charges for clicking "like" on a doctored photo of the king and sharing it, plus an infographic on a growing corruption scandal engulfing the junta.

Thailand has one of the world's harshest royal defamation laws. Anyone convicted of insulting the revered but ailing 88-year-old King Bhumibol Adulyadej, or the queen, heir or regent can face up to 15 years in jail on each count. Prosecutions have soared since the army, which styles itself as the champion of the monarchy, grabbed power in a coup last year. Thanakorn, an auto-parts worker, could face up to 37 years in prison. There has been a recent trend towards record-breaking sentences on transgressors, many of whom are also regime critics. Even the US ambassador faces a police investigation for royal defamation over a speech last month in which he expressed concern at the lengthy sentences.

Bhumibol, the world's longest-serving monarch, is seen as a unifying figure in the deeply divided nation and his economic



BANGKOK: In this file photo, Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej holds the leash of his dog while sitting in a wheelchair at a hospital in Bangkok. — AFP

and social teachings are relentlessly promoted in Thailand. Over the last decade his favorite dog, an adopted stray called Tongdaeng (Copper) which is praised for her loyalty and obedience, has been used to outline his vision of how Thais should behave. —AFP



months until her weight dropped to 29 kilos (64 pounds), Singapore media reported yesterday. Thelma Gawidan, 40, who escaped in April 2014 to a shelter for migrant workers, told a trial court on Monday that she was only fed instant noodles and bread twice a day in a condominium at the posh Orchard Road area. Gawidan testified again yesterday and said the couple withheld her salary, watched her every move and and did not let her speak to anyone outside, the Straits Times newspaper's website reported. "They're watching me when I wake up, what I eat, what I drink and when to take a shower," she was quoted as saying.

quate food. — AFP





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**Focus** 

#### YELLEN: ORTHODOX **ECONOMIST FOR UNORTHODOX TIMES**

By Jason Lange

anet Yellen is guiding the Federal Reserve towards its first rate rise in a decade armed with traditional economic models that some economists worry could fail her in a world of massive money printing and near zero rates. The 69-year-old economist argues the time is coming for a rate-lift-off even though inflation has yet to accelerate, trusting decades of studies that suggest a tight labor market eventually creates inflationary pressures. It is a risky wager considering that global inflation is at historic lows and many central banks remain in an easing mode as their economies struggle to get any trac-

If she is right, Yellen, who has already presided over the end of the Fed's bond-buying stimulus program, will cement her reputation and that of her "dashboard" that relies on long-established relationships between jobs, wages and prices. If she is wrong, the Fed could join the European Central Bank and the central banks of Sweden, Israel and Canada, which have all tried, but failed, to escape the drag of zero rates in the wake of the 2007-09 financial crisis.

There are reasons to doubt conventional economic theory. Many economists predicted a spiral of falling prices when the US jobless rate soared during the crisis and then thought inflation would rise when unemployment plunged. Neither happened, though Yellen has maintained this year that the Fed was on course for rate increases, which would be data dependent," likely gradual, and with no pre-set path. This shows Yellen "is grounded in traditional modeling but she is well aware that there is uncertainty," said Randall Kroszner, who served with Yellen as a Fed governor between 2006 and 2009. "It is possible, though unlikely, the traditional models are just all wrong (and) we're in a whole new world. But she's not going to fly by the seat of her pants," Kroszner said. Yellen has made clear that models only serve as guideposts in a complicated decision-making process.

#### **Models and Hunches**

Interviews with the Fed chief's former colleagues paint a picture of Yellen as a pragmatic economist who is ready to adjust course when necessary, but one who relies on data and economic theory rather than guesswork or hunches. That could mean sometimes missing signals that are either too new or too hard to measure for traditional models and yet possibly relevant for policy.

Fed transcripts show that at a Fed policy meeting in September 1996, Yellen, then a Fed board member, said she was "quite willing" to support an increase in rates because her analysis suggested inflation was poised to rise. However, Alan Greenspan, the Fed's chairman at the time, convinced policymakers to hold fire at that meeting arguing that he saw changes in the economy that were holding back prices and it later turned out that inflation indeed stayed low.

"It was intuition more than anything else," said Alice Rivlin, fellow board member at the time, referring to Greenspan's hunch that US productivity was rising. A wrong call on inflation now could stunt job growth and possibly keep rates stuck near zero or even force the Fed to reverse course and cut rates. "If they don't see any pickup in costs or prices, that would cause them to be even more gradual than they think they are going to be," said Donald Kohn, who served on the Fed's board when Yellen headed the San Francisco Fed between 2004 and 2010. Fed policymakers saw higher inflation around the corner in 2013 and 2014 that did not materialize. Yellen has argued this year that temporary factors such as low oil prices and a strong dollar will fade while a tight labor market sparks price pressures. "It's straightforward analysis but the issue is they have been saying this for years, so they are not hitting something right in their story," said Timothy Duy, an economist at the University of Oregon. Hiking rates too early could make it more likely the US economy tips into recession, he said.

The Fed's preferred inflation measure stripped of food and energy prices is now at 1.3 percent and its policymakers on average see the gauge accelerating next year but not quite hitting their 2 percent target. Jon Faust, a former special adviser to the Fed board whose inflation forecasting research has been cited by Yellen, says he doubts any policymakers have a firm view how to get inflation back to target and keep it there even if they agree that a tightening job market will help. With the jobless rate at 5 percent, half its 2009 level, Yellen was confident enough to warn lawmakers on Dec 3 that inflation could rise "significantly" above the Fed's 2 percent target if rate-setters aren't ahead of the curve. However, some policymakers, including Fed Governor Lael Brainard, argue that the relationship between unemployment and inflation is not as straightforward as it used to be and that global economic weakness could knock the United States off course. Many analysts expect Brainard, who has emerged as the leader of the Fed's cautious faction, will accept a first hike without dissenting, but could need more convincing for subsequent rate rises. Brainard said on Dec 1 the US dollar's appreciation, driven in part by global economic weakness, could argue for a "delay in the date of lift-

off and a shallower path for the federal funds rate over several years." On the other side of the policy debate is Charles Plosser, who led the Philadelphia Fed from 2006 until March 2015. Plosser would have preferred to raise rates "a year ago" but was glad that the Fed chief facilitated the debate over liftoff. "The fact that she can articulate the rationale, that's really important," he said. "Because then you can debate." —Reuters

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# POWER ELUDES FRANCE'S FAR RIGHT

**By Gerard Bon** 

t's hard to imagine a more favourable year for the French National Front: unemployment at an 18-year high, euroscepticism on the rise, security and immigration fears heightened by deadly armed attacks on the streets of Paris. So there was little wonder that in a first round of voting in regional elections on Dec 6, Marine Le Pen's far-right party outstripped its mainstream rivals, notching up the biggest win of its history.

But by Monday, after a second round of voting, it was as far away from power as ever - tactical voting by the ruling Socialists and withdrawals of their candidates to favour the centre-right in crucial regions scuppering her and her niece's chances of securing footholds in regional power. Will the frustration of that failure start a drift away from the FN and doom Le Pen's presidential ambitions in 2017? Or could it fuel enough anger over the party's exclusion from mainstream politics to propel her through the "glass ceiling" she complains about?

For many, the result was proof of the old French adage that people vote with their hearts in the first round and with their heads in the second. It bodes ill for Le Pen's chances in 2017, they say. The sort of tactical voting the Socialists used - pulling out to leave their centre-right rivals with a clear field to defeat the FN - is baked into the presidential election, where the rules dictate a run-off between the two top scoring candidates from the first round. "The FN is

up against a wall, especially in the presidentials," said Jean-Yves Camus, a specialist on the far right. "It's a great first round party, but it hits a wall in the second. If it can't get out of this dead end, it can't win power."

Others think that the FN could discover more momentum yet. The party scored 42 and 45 percent respectively in its two strongest regions - the northern industrial rust-belt, where Le Pen led the FN ticket, and the southeastern sun belt, where Arab immigrants and former French colonists live uneasily cheek-by-jowl, and where her niece Marion Marechal Le-Pen ran. In both regions there was only one alternative in the run-off - ex-president Nicolas Sarkozy's conservative Republicans.

President Francois Hollande's Socialists withdrew in both areas and urged supporters to back the centre-right, aiming to take the moral high ground by sacrificing seats to freeze out a party it says is racist and extremist. But that approach has its risks. "This feeds into one of the FN's main campaign messages - that the notions of left and right are essentially meaningless and that the two-round system produces a cosy, lazy, political centre which can afford to ignore the needs of millions of French citizens," said Charles Lichfield of Eurasia group.

With 27.7 percent in the first round more than either of the other two main parties - the FN gained ground in its social and geographic heartlands, but also in the west, around Paris, and among the young, where it has struggled in the past. "The main feature of this presidential term (since 2012) has been the rise of the National

Front, which establishes deeper roots election after election," said Frèdèric Dabi, deputy head of pollsters Ifop. "Each time they get a little closer."

#### **Populists Set Agenda Without Power**

In many ways, Le Pen can argue that her party, as with several other like-minded eurosceptic parties in Europe, has set the pace of the political agenda - even if it has not won power. Despite strong scores in European Parliament and local elections, right-wing populist parties with similar anti-immigration, anti-Islamic and anti-European ideologies have failed to break through to national power, except as junior partners with little sway on policy as in Finland and Norway.

In Britain and Germany, the Eurosceptic UK Independence Party and Alternative for Germany remain fringe groups. Yet even without reaching the top rung, populists have forced mainstream conservatives to take a more restrictive line on immigration and multiculturalism, and resist further European integration. In France, the FN's surge has ignited fierce debate on the centre-right about whether to take a harder line against immigration, public displays of Islam and the EU's open-border policy - as Sarkozy espouses - to win back voters lost to Le Pen, or to draw a clear dividing line and cleave to the centre, as his main challenger Alain Juppe advocates.

Away from the limelight on its three main target regions, the FN also gained ground in three-way races in rural regions and declining industrial areas blighted by high unemployment. The fragility of France's economic recovery is another factor boosting Le Pen. Unemployment reached its highest level for 18 years in the third quarter, well above 10 percent and higher than the eurozone average for the first time since 2007. Growth has not been strong enough to generate the jobs Hollande has promised ever since his election in 2012, and an expected decline in the jobless total next year may be too little, too late to create any "feel good factor" for

#### **Arithmetic and Psychology**

Yet electoral arithmetic and psychology still work against Le Pen and the party she has led since she took over from her father, Jean-Marie, in 2011. Even if, as Sunday's score shows, she has a good chance of getting through to the second round of the presidential election, as her father did in 2002, polls suggest she would be trounced by Sarkozy and especially Juppe, and would lose by a narrower margin to Hollande.

Sociologist Sylvain Crepon says the angry outsider appeal that is Le Pen's strength is also her weakness, and there is little chance she can shake off a 70 percent unpopularity rating without losing those who support her. "Her get-out-of-the-euro policy is something that closes the door to any alliance (and) she goes over the top in her attacks on the elite and on immigration," he said. To change that, though, he said, "would risk losing her distinguishing feature." —AFP

#### PAK SCHOOL MASSACRE SURVIVORS STILL HAUNTED

**By Issam Ahmed** 

ubashir Subhan was in the school auditorium, surrounded by friends, when the Taleban gunmen came crashing in. The first bullet grazed the back of his head, the second passed through his shoulder, and the third struck his left hand. More than 150 lives were lost in the Peshawar school massacre of Dec 16. 2014, the deadliest extremist attack in Pakistan's history. One year on, those who survived now study in the same rooms where they huddled in terror as their classmates fell around them.

The majority of them were children, many of whom were in the auditorium with Subhan when nine attackers armed with guns and explosives went on a cold-blooded killing spree. Many are still gripped by a sense of paralysis when they enter the Army Public School in the northwestern city. "I feel unable to function. I keep remembering everything," Subhan, a bearded, soft-spoken 16-year-old says.

When he is alone, memories of the friends who died alongside him that day come crowding in, and he says he cannot fathom how quickly his life was shattered. "I think about how I used to be with my friends," he says. His parents also remember how he used to be, saying their confident, outgoing son was transformed by the hours-long siege. "The slightest of things he takes as though a bullet hit him," says his father Subhan Uddin. "When he comes home he just locks himself in his room. He doesn't meet us or his brothers or sisters or friends. He just sits and thinks."

#### **Unfit for Duty**

The auditorium is now a sports hall and soldiers stand atop recently fortified walls as children play on the green, expansive grounds below. But the trauma has lin-

gered, says Andaleeb Aftab, a chemistry teacher at the school who fled into a bathroom with other staff after gunmen opened fire on them in a hallway. Aftab's son, 16-year-old Huzaifa, was among those who died in the auditorium. In their last exchange, she said, he came to the staff room and asked her for pocket money. "But I told him I just saw you taking pocket money from your father in the parking lot so don't double cross me!" she remembers.

Aftab was trapped in the bathroom until evening, listening for hours as the attackers blew themselves up one by one. It was only after she was rescued that she learned her

son had died. "They made our college a graveyard," she says. Mathematics teacher Abu Bakar, 43, now uses a cane to walk after he was shot three times when he threw himself in front of four students fleeing the gunmen. Three of them survived. "I'm a teacher and I have to do my duty no matter what," he says.

For other survivors the destructive effects of Dec 16 continue to shape their future. Waheed Anjum, 18, was shot three times during the attack - once in each arm and once in the chest. Numerous operations meant he was out of school for six months, affecting his final grades, as well as



In this photograph taken on December 12, 2015, Andaleeb Aftab, a chemistry teacher at the army-run school where she lost her son Huzaifa, scene of the Peshawar school massacre of December 16, 2014, the deadliest terror attack in Pakistan's history, sits alongside a portrait of Huzaifa during an interview with AFP at her residence in Peshawar. —AFP

his chances of either entering a college engineering program or becoming a soldier like his father. "I can't move my arms properly. I can't lift weights," he said. "They have declared me unfit."

'We Can't Forget'

Today, the anniversary of the attack, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the powerful army chief Raheel Sharif will join opposition leader Imran Khan for a ceremony at the school marking the massacre. The attack on the Army Public School saw a shift in public opinion on the country's more than decade long struggle against extremism. Parents seeking vengeance backed by a shocked and outraged public drove support for a nationwide military-led

crackdown. The army intensified an offensive against militants in tribal areas where they had previously operated with impunity, and the government launched a sweeping plan to tackle extremism, including greater prosecution of hate crimes. The effort has seen levels of militancy-linked violence fall to their lowest levels since 2007, the year the Pakistani Taleban came into being.

But critics have voiced concerns over a failure to tackle the long-term causes of the violence, suggesting the drop in attacks may be a veneer covering the extremism that still bubbles beneath society's surface. On Sunday, just four days before the anniversary, a bomb blew apart a market in the town of Parachinar in the tribal areas, killing some two dozen people. "It's been a whole year but we can't forget a single moment of that day," chemistry teacher Aftab says. "Many of the students are still facing psychiatric problems. Many of the students are still injured." They are recovering "a little", she said, but the suffering goes on. "We're not out of the 16th of December." —AFP





A mural is seen with a slum in the background on the bank of the Rio Negro (Black River) in Manaus in Amazonas state in Brazil on Dec 11, 2015.— AFP

#### LA SHUTS PUBLIC SCHOOLS AFTER THREATENING EMAIL

**LOS ANGELES:** Los Angeles shut down the United States' second-largest public school system yesterday after officials received a threatening email mentioning backpacks and packages, two weeks after a married couple inspired by Islamic State killed 14 people in San Bernardino just 100 km away. The unprecedented move left some 643,000 students of the Los Angeles Unified School District and their families scrambling to make alternate arrangements and drew criticism as officials in New York said they received the same threat and deemed it not to be credible.

A law enforcement source told Reuters that Los Angeles authorities ordered the closure to allow a full search of about 900 public school facilities without consulting with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which takes the lead on any potential terrorism investigation. But the city's mayor, Eric Garcetti, denied that assertion, saying that officials had contacted federal law enforcement officials. Los Angeles Police Chief Charlie Beck said at a news conference that he was contacted late Monday night about a "very specific threat" delivered by email to school board members. Some other public schools in the city remained open as did private

The Los Angeles school district regularly receives threats, but this one stood out for its scale, schools Superintendent Ramon Cortines said. "This is a rare

threat ... It was not to one school, two schools or three schools, it was many schools," Cortines told reporters. A US official said investigators were looking for a possible bomb or bombs in connection with the Los Angeles closure. The threat came via an email sent to a school board member and mentioned backpacks and other packages, Cortines said.

New York City Police Commissioner William Bratton said that city's school system, the largest in the United States, had received "almost exactly the same" threat yesterday but deemed it non-credible. "LA is a huge school system," said Bratton, who had served as police chief in Los Angeles. "To disrupt the daily schedules of half a million school children, their parents, daycare, buses based on an anonymous email, without consultation, if in fact, consultation did not occur with law enforcement authorities, I think it was a significant over reaction

Los Angeles Mayor Garcetti defended the closure. "It is very easy for people to jump to conclusions and I have been around long enough to know that usually what people think in the first few hours is not what plays out in later hours," Garcetti told a press conference. "But decisions have to be made in a matter of minutes."

Police Chief Beck said it was "irresponsible" to criticize the decision to close the schools in the aftermath of the Dec 2 attack on a regional center in San Bernardino, California, east of Los Angeles. The attack and other

mass shootings have pushed the issues of militant Islamism and gun violence to the forefront of the US presidential campaign.

#### 'You Hope it's a Hoax'

Students already at school were sent home, officials said, and families scrambled to come up with plans after the last-minute closures. "It's disappointing," said Trinity Williams, a high school student who dropped off her younger sister at elementary school, only to find it was closed. The two traveled on to Williams' high school before they realized the whole system was shut down. "I was supposed to give an essay in class today, and finals are Friday," Williams said. "I can't afford to miss a day."

Lee Stein, a parent with a daughter in fifth grade at Ivanhoe Elementary School, said he heard about the cloby calling the principal. "It's very concerning, especially

It's unfortunate that someone is preying upon people's fears." Other parents used social media to vent frustration at having learned about the closures from the news media, rather than directly from the schools. Ronna Bronstein, who has two sons in the fifth and eighth grades, said she was trying to find out more about the threat while shielding her younger child from the news. "I don't want him to be frightened to go back to school tomorrow," she said.

School officials said that on Sept 11, 2001, when many people returned home early from work after the attacks on the East Coast, Los Angeles schools remained open. The United States has suffered repeated deadly attacks in schools in recent years, typically carried out by gunmen. The deadliest one in the past decade occurred at Virginia Tech, where a shooter killed 32 people. In the second deadliest, a lone gunman shot dead 20 young children and six educators at Sandy Hook Elementary in light of recent events," Stein said. "You hope it's a hoax. School in Newtown, Connecticut, in 2012. — Reuters

#### KEJRIWAL SLAMS 'PSYCHO' MODI AFTER HQ RAID

#### **Continued from Page 1**

then accused Modi of being "a coward and a psychopath" who could not "handle me politically". Although his initial comments sparked an uproar, Kejriwal was unrepentant when he later addressed reporters. "I have a message for Mr Modi: 'You can't scare me. You have no idea what I'm made of. I won't be afraid even until my last breath," he said. "My words may have been harsh but it is you who have committed the real misdeeds.

"Why don't you apologize to the country for your misdeeds first and then I'll apologise for my words," Kejriwal added, in an apparent reference to Modi's refusal to apologise over deadly communal riots in Gujarat when he was chief minister in 2002. The raid triggered chaos in parliament where Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said repeatedly that it "has nothing to do with Mr Arvind Kejriwal" and ridiculed the suggestion it was politically motivated. "The search is in relation to a case for an alleged offence committed in his (Kumar's) capacity before he joined the office of Mr Kejriwal," he told the upper house of parliament, his voice drowned out by opponents.

Modi's right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) demanded an apology from 47-year-old Kejriwal for his "unwarranted and shameful" description of the premier, while the CBI termed his claims "false propaganda". The CBI is nominally independent but long suspected of being under government influence. It was described by India's top court in 2013 as a "caged parrot" that spoke "in its master's voice".

Kejriwal and Modi stood against each other in last year's general election in the Varanasi constituency. Although Kejriwal lost, he then oversaw a dramatic landslide victory over the BJP in polls in February for the Delhi state assembly. The two men have since clashed repeatedly, with Keiriwal accusing the federal government of blocking a series of initiatives, including a new push to clean up the capital's polluted skies. Kejriwal, a self-styled revolutionary, has also been pushing to be given control of the police force operating in Delhi in line with other state administrations. His calls have been rebuffed by the prime minister.

Mohan Guruswamy, head of New Delhi's Centre for Policy Alternatives think-tank, said he was not surprised by the raid given the history of tensions between the two men. "It is a well-known fact Kejriwal is opposed to Modi... Kejriwal has opposed his brand of politics, economic policy and finds him the only political competitor in present political system," Guruswamy told AFP. Although Kejriwal's party had a disappointing showing in the May 2014 parliamentary elections, the victory in Delhi bolstered its hopes of making major inroads elsewhere, especially as the main national opposition Congress party is in the electoral doldrums. In October Kejriwal sacked one of his ministers for alleged bribe-taking, months after his law minister resigned following his arrest for acquiring a fake law degree. — AFP

#### SAUDI ARABIA FORMS ISLAMIC ALLIANCE...

#### **Continued from Page 1**

The prince told a rare news conference that the Riyadh-based coalition will tackle "the Islamic world's problem with terrorism and will be a partner in the worldwide fight against this scourge". Some coalition members like Nigeria have mixed Muslim-Christian populations, but all belong to the Jeddah-based Organization of Islamic Cooperation. They range from tiny African nations such as Guinea to major regional

powers including Turkey. The list does not include Shiite Iran, the archrival of Sunni Saudi Arabia for influence across the Arab world. Tehran and Riyadh are ranged on opposite sides in proxy conflicts in Syria and Yemen. Other Gulf Arab countries such as Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates are also in the coalition, though notably absent from the list is Oman, a neighbor of Saudi Arabia. In recent years, Oman has maintained a neutral role and has emerged as a mediator in regional conflicts, serving as a conduit from the Gulf Arabs to Iran.

US Defense Secretary Ash Carter welcomed the announcement after arriving at Incirlik airbase in Turkey yesterday at the start of a regional tour designed to drum up support for the US-led campaign against Islamic State. "We look forward to learning more about what Saudi Arabia has in mind in terms of this coalition," he told reporters. "But in general it appears it is very much in line with something we've been urging for quite some time, which is greater involvement in the campaign to combat ISIL (Islamic State) by Sunni Arab countries," Carter added. A senior defense official said the US did not know in advance about the plan for the alliance, and that officials were working to find out the

Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu told reporters in Ankara yesterday that his country backed the alliance's formation. "Turkey is ready to contribute by all its means to all gatherings that aim to fight terrorism, no matter where or by whom it is organized," he said. Sunni Islam's leading seat of learning, Al-Azhar, urged all Muslim countries to join the coalition, expressing hope that it would defeat the "evils of terrorism".

The coalition will fight "any terrorist organization that appears", Prince Mohammed said when asked if it would concentrate only on the IS group of Sunni extremists in Syria and Iraq. Saudi Arabia has repeatedly denounced international "terrorism" and has itself seen an upsurge of attacks claimed by IS over the past year, against minority Shiites and members of the security forces.

A Jordanian government spokesman confirmed that the Hashemite kingdom is part of the coalition. Spokesman Mohammed Momani would not comment specifically on the alliance but said that "Jordan is always ready and actively participates in any effort to fight terrorism." A Lebanese official confirmed to AP that his nation was also part of the 34-nation coalition. Tiny Lebanon has seen frequent spillovers from Syria's civil war next door, as well as sectarian clashes and militant attacks. "Lebanon is fighting a daily war against terrorism ... Lebanon cannot but be part of the alliance that is combating terrorism," said the official. Asked how Lebanon plans to contribute to the alliance, he said that "these are details that we haven't gotten into yet."

Farea Al-Muslimi, a visiting scholar at the Carnegie Middle East Centre, called most of the countries "honorary members" in a coalition that "seemed to have been cooked at the last minute" without clear goals. Muslimi said the coalition seems like an attempt by Saudi Arabia to ease some of the international pressure it has faced on the issue.

The IS threat "is the most fundamental challenge to Saudi's raison d'etat and the security of its citizens," said Andreas Krieg, a professor at the Department of Defence Studies at King's College London. "It is therefore not surprising for Saudi to seek greater cooperation across the board in the fight against militant Islamism," said Krieg, who also serves as a consultant to the Qatari armed forces. The huge human and financial costs of the kingdom's military operation in Yemen have become increasingly difficult for it to bear, he said. "Only joint military operations are a real option."

In March, the kingdom formed an Arab coalition to support the Yemeni government against Iran-backed Houthi rebels and their allies, who seized much of the country. Saudi Arabia has also played a prominent role in efforts to find a political solution to the war in Syria. Last week, it hosted unprecedented talks between opposition Syrian political and military factions. Muslimi and Krieg did not see the new coalition leading to a more direct Saudi military role in Syria.

Saudi Arabia supports some rebels in Syria, and last year joined other Gulf states in a US-led coalition bombing IS in Syria. The UAE said two weeks ago that it was ready to commit ground troops against jihadists in Syria, and described Russian air strikes there as attacks on a "common enemy". Kremlin spokesman Dmitri Peskov said Russia awaited more details before evaluating the Saudi announcement about the new coalition. — Agencies

#### JOINT PANEL TO STUDY GOVT REQUEST...

#### **Continued from Page 1**

The authority has already started functioning by taking up several suspected graft cases and demanding that top officials and politicians submit their wealth disclosures. The Assembly also debated a follow-up report on the government's annual development program, as several MPs strongly criticized the government's failure to diversify the economy and raise non-oil revenues in the face of the sharp decline in oil prices.

MP Jamal Al-Omar warned that if the current policies and withdrawals from state reserves continue, Kuwait's huge assets will vanish within the next three years, and demanded that the government adopt better economic policies. According to the International Sovereign Wealth Funds Institute, Kuwait has fiscal reserves worth \$592 billion. The International Monetary Fund said that if Kuwait continues with current policies, the reserves are sufficient for over 20 years.

MP Khalil Abul said that the government has done almost nothing to boost revenues other than planning to lift or reduce subsidies. He called on all ministers to explain their programs of diversifying the sources of income away from oil. Several MPs criticized the government for delaying key development projects, with the head of the budgets committee MP Adnan Abdulsamad saying that financial allocations are made for dozens of projects but they still get delayed.

MP Saleh Ashour said that the private sector should not be allowed to dominate and control development programs in the country. He charged that influential people have a say on government policies and things go in favor of the private sector at the cost of public sector. MP Adel Al-Khorafi said that despite the clear delay in many projects, no official has ever been held to account.

A number of MPs also criticized the government for failing to deal with the demographic imbalance in the favor of the foreign population. Ashour said the percentage of citizens has dropped sharply instead of increas-

Meanwhile, MP Saadoun Hammad said that former oil minister Ali Al-Omair was moved from the ministry and appointed as public works minister following a dispute with top oil executives. He asked acting minister of oil and minister of finance Anas Al-Saleh about why he has not yet changed the boards of oil companies. He claimed that some influential people are deliberately delaying projects to serve their own interests. The Assembly also decided to bring forward its two sessions on Dec 29 and 30 to Dec 22 and 23.







Rainer Zietlow with 3M officials. — Photos by Yasser Al Zayyat

#### RAINER ZIETLOW SHARES HIS DRIVING EXPERIENCE WITH KUWAIT FANS

**By Nawara Fattahova** 

**KUWAIT:** To share his experience of driving from the southern tip of South Africa to the North Cape in Norway in record time, Rainer Zietlow was invited by one of the tour's sponsors, 3M, to meet and engage with his fans and supporters in Kuwait. Zietlow spoke about his tour at a press conference held yesterday at the Radisson Blu Hotel.

In Sept 2015, Zietlow and his team drove his Volkswagen Touareg V6 TDI from Cape Agulhas in South Africa, the southernmost tip of Africa, towards the northernmost point of Europe, Nordkapp in Norway. Driving through 19 countries, including some in the Middle East, over 18,000 km, the team reached their destination in record breaking time of 9 days, 4 hours and 8 minutes.

"I am very excited to be in Kuwait today to meet and engage with my many fans and supporters who inspired me along the way to register another world record in this Cape2Cape annual challenge. 3M is one of our key sponsors and I would like to thank them once again for playing an important role in this success, as its paint protection solution ensured that the Volkswagen car endured the rigors of this grueling drive," said Rainer Zietlow.

This was a successful season and tour by Zietlow's team. "This year I didn't face any problems, so I was able to register a world record. Last year, we had an accident which made our tour much longer - 21 days. Also the weather

was nice this year as there was no snow or rain. We were three drivers, two from Germany and one from the US, and we were driving 24 hours, only stopping for toilet breaks and passport checks. One of us was at the wheel every five hours. So usually two were sleeping and one driving," he told Kuwait Times.

#### **World record**

Since 2011, Zietlow is driving a Volkswagen Touareg, and earlier drove other models, but always Volkswagen. "We had half of our vehicle covered with the new protection layer and the other half without it, the vehicle shows scratches on this half. Since 2011, I'm using this protection on the vehicle," stressed Zietlow. 3M has been supplying innovative,

value-added solutions to the automotive industry for almost 100 years. Hundreds of 3M products are used in the manufacturing of vehicles, ranging from consumable products in assembly plant operations, to those engineered into body, exterior, interior, power train, and chassis components. Rainer used 3M's innovative Paint Protection Film on the Volkswagen Touareg V6 TDI which he drove during his Cape2Cape challenge.

"We are very excited to host Rainer Zietlow and his team once again to interact and engage with his fans and supporters from the Middle East region," said AbdulHalim Sayyed, Marketing Specialist of Automotive Aftermarket Division and Automotive Division at 3M Gulf. "At 3M, we provide innovative paint protection films that are the choice for NASCAR race teams and car manufacturers and we are proud that world record holders like Rainer Zietlow are using our products and solutions to help them achieve their goals," he added.

Zietlow and his team drove through 19 countries - South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan, Egypt, Turkey, Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway. The team flew the Volkswagen Touareg V6 TDI from Amman, Jordan to Adana in Turkey for the short flight over Syria. With this feat, the Cape2Cape 2.0 team beat their own existing world record of 21 days and 16 hours between Nordkapp and Cape Agulhas, which was achieved last year.

# Win a ticket to your favorite game Manchester United Vs Chelsea

# VIVA ANNOUNCES WINNERS FOR MAN UTD VS CHELSEA GAME

**KUWAIT:** VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announces the winners of draw campaign to win tickets for Manchester United vs Chelsea game, held on 13 December in presence of a representative from the ministry of commerce and industry.

The winners are: Raed Saud Mehawesh, Adnan Abdulaziz Baqer and Jassim Mohammad Al-Ali. This campaign will grant the chance for those winners to watch the upcoming match between Manchester United vs Chelsea live from Old Trafford stadium in Manchester city, on 28 December 2015.

VIVA announced its official sponsorship of Manchester United Football Club in 2011, being the first in Kuwait to sponsor this world-renowned football club.

To find out more about VIVA's new prepaid packages, or any of its other competitive promotions, products and packages, visit one of the 70 VIVA branches, or the VIVA website at www.viva.com.kw.

#### JAGUAR TO MAKE MOTORSPORT RETURN

**LONDON:** Jaguar will leap back on to the world motorsport stage next year with the British luxury car brand announcing yesterday it was entering the Formula E electric racing series.

"Electric vehicles will absolutely play a role in Jaguar Land Rover's future product portfolio and Formula E will give us a unique opportunity to further our development of electrification technologies," said Nick Rogers, JLR's Group Engineering Director.

"In the next decade we will see more changes in the automotive world than in the last 30," he added at a news conference in London's Shard tower. "We believe electrification is the future." Williams Advanced Engineering, part of the group that includes former Formula One world champions Williams, will be technical partners to the Indian-owned company and much of the team's work will be done at their Grove factory.

Williams chief executive Mike O'Driscoll is a former managing director of Jaguar, leading the company through the sale to Tata Motors in 2008. Jaguar also partnered with Williams on the development of their C-X75 plug-in hybrid concept car.

The decision to enter Formula E, facilitated by the Italian Trulli team already giving up one of the 10 slots, will be Jaguar's biggest motorsport involvement since the then Ford-

owned brand departed Formula One at the end of 2004.

Jaguar, who sold their team to Red Bull, failed to make an impact in the hugely expensive world of Formula One but the costs in Formula E are far lower with restrictions to keep spending in check.

Rogers said the latest foray, which will start when Formula E enters its third season in the latter part of the year, was "all about the technology development" rather than simply winning races.

Formula E launched in 2014 and holds one-day events in city centres around the world, with this season's calendar including Beijing, Moscow, Berlin, Paris, London and Long Beach in California.

Leading manufacturers Renault, Citroen's DS brand, Audi and India's Mahindra are already involved. Rogers highlighted Jaguar's history of technical innovation, from the 1950s Le Mans winning lightweight cars, and said Formula E provided a perfect fit in a carbon conscious world.

"Jaguar is a brand with a rich sporting heritage and the fact that it is returning to global motorsport with Formula E is a huge endorsement of the championship and its ability to influence the development of electric cars," said Formula E chief executive Alejandro Agag. — Reuters

# RYDER CUP HOSTS WARMING UP FOR GOLFING REVOLUTION

MILAN: Italian golf officials believe hosting the 2022 Ryder Cup can spark a revolution for the sport in the country more known for its love of football. Some of the world's top golfers, including Justin Rose, were among the first to congratulate Rome after the Italian capital became only the third host from continental Europe to be chosen to stage the biennial tournament between Europe and the United States. Rome successfully beat off rival bids from Austria, Germany and Spain and the 44th edition will now be played at the Marco Simone club, located 17km from the capital and which boasts a bird's eye view of Saint Peter's Basilica from the 17th tee.

The Ryder Cup committee's announcement came the same morning the Italian Olympic Committee (CONI) unveiled their logo for Rome's bid to host the Olympic Games in 2024

Although hosting the Ryder Cup could give the Rome 2024 campaign a gentle push, the legacy the tournament would leave behind is what most excites the future hosts.

"We are a country of 60 million people and we have only 100,000 golfers," Rome's bid coordinator Marco Durante told AFP on Monday. "There is massive potential to expand the game. Hosting the Ryder Cup will be a great push for our golf movement, and increase participation in our sport." In practical terms that means bringing golf, regarded as an elitist sport in football-mad Italy, to the masses: not an easy concept when the majority of clubs are privately-run and often off-limits to aspiring golfers, especially those on a budget.

But Durante added: "The development of the game throughout Italy was an integral part of our bid and we have plans to expand existing initiatives to promote the sport.

"We want to improve access for aspiring players by building driving ranges and introducing golf into schools. We already have an agreement with the ministry of education about including golf in the school programmes. "Legacy is of paramount importance to me. We'll focus our campaign on explaining what golf is all about, because many people are unaware. "We will emphasise its health benefits and the positive effects of playing a sport in which respect for the game, and others, is fundamental."

#### **EXCITING TIMES**

There are exciting times ahead for the hosts, who are also looking back fondly at 1993 when Costantino Rocca became the first Italian to play in the tournament at The Belfry

in England. The United States won that edition, but Rocca was in Europe's winning teams of 1995 and 1997 and in the latter famously beat Tiger Woods 4 and 2 in the final day singles at Valderrama.

Since then, brothers Edoardo and Francesco Molinari have been Italy's flag-bearers and were involved in the narrow victory at Celtic Manor in 2010. Like Rocca, Francesco overcame the threat of Woods when he won by a half point in their final singles match to help Europe to victory in 2012 in the 'Miracle

Francesco Molinari said: "The interest in golf has been growing the last few years and we've been lucky to be part of that movement.... hosting the Ryder Cup will be a huge boost for Italian golf." His brother Edoardo was quick to thank some of the many professionals who had backed Rome's 2022 campaign.

He posted a Twitter message earlier which read: "Thanks Justin Rose for your support of #rydercup2022 in Rome. Looking forward to seeing you play there!" Italy boasts a number of top amateurs but come 2022 it could be time for Matteo Manassero and Renato Paratore-the latest Italian talents to shine on the European tour-to follow in Rocca's foot-

# KAC BEAT SINGAPORE AIRLINES TO CLINCH SQUASH WORLD CHAMPION CUP

**KUWAIT:** Chairperson of Kuwait Airways Rasha Abdelaziz Al-Roumi received the head of Kuwait Airways squash team captain Adel Al-Ghareeb on the occasion of the team defeating Singapore Airline 5-1 and taking first place in the world's airline champion, hosted lately by Singapore.

A-Ghareeb dedicated airlines world championship cup to Rasha Al-Roumi, who expressed her joy over the achievement of Kuwait Airways team. Al-Roumi said the championship brings people closer and increase competition.

Al-Roumi congratulated KAC team for their level in the matches and their ability to win the cup. Al-Ghareeb gave thanks for the support of Al-Roumi and her urging players to present the best of levels and winning the cup at the final. KAC team is comprised of Adel Ghareeb, Hussein Safar, Hisham Ramadhan, Mohammad Al-Ramzi, Abdellatif Al-Magsum and Saleh Al-Khudhan.



KUWAIT: Chairperson of KAC Rasha Abdelaziz Al-Roumi holding the trophy with Kuwait Airways squash team.

# BLANKET BAN ON DOPE-TAINTED NATIONS 'UNJUST': OLYMPIANS

**NEW YORK:** The World Olympians Association (WOA) has called blanket bans on competitors from doping-tainted nations "unjust" and called for urgent action to ensure clean athletes are allowed to participate in major sporting events.

The Russian Athletics Federation (ARAF) was suspended last month following a report by the World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) independent commission that exposed widespread, systematic state-sponsored doping and related corruption

Russian athletes are therefore set to miss the world indoor athletics championships in the United States in March and face a race against time to be cleared to compete in the Olympics in

Rio de Janeiro in August.

The WOA, without mentioning Russia specifically, released a statement supporting the rights of clean athletes. "We believe banning clean athletes is unjust and that sport and its many fans

will ultimately pay the price as they will miss the opportunity to see their clean heroes compete at the highest level," WOA President Joel Bouzou said in a statement on the body's website (http://olympians.org/).

"The individual rights of clean athletes should also be respected as well as their right to train and to compete in the sport that they love.

"One thing is clear: an urgent solution is needed for athletes who are seeking to qualify for and participate in major events allowing them to train, prepare and compete with certainty," the statement said.

The WOA was established by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1994 to represent those who have competed at Games. The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) last Friday published a long and detailed list of criteria that the Russians must satisfy before the ban imposed is lifted.

While accepting that athletes, officials and doctors who cheat should be sanctioned, Bouzou suggested that athletes from banned countries that have clean doping records could undergo "extraordinary testing sessions" to allow them to compete.

The Frenchman, a four-times Olympian in modern pentathlon, also said the WOA supported the IOC's proposal for WADA to run independent dope testing on behalf of the sports federations and National Olympic Committees in

Overall, however, his main concern was to ensure that athletes who have never been found guilty of wrongdoing would not suffer for the offences of others. "It is not only the rights and reputations of athletes at stake, but also their ability to act as role models, inspiring young people and encouraging the next generation to take up sport," he said. — Reuters

### ONCE-MIGHTY 'CALYPSO KINGS' NOW MISSING A BEAT

**HOBART:** The sad state of West Indies cricket will come into sharp focus this week when some of their best players take part in an Australian Twenty20 tournament-just days after sitting out the latest embarrassing Test defeat.

Chris Gayle, Dwayne Bravo and Darren Sammy will all show their talents in the Big Bash League, after they were notable absentees in the West Indies' innings and 212 runs Test loss to Australia in Hobart. A stand-off with administrators, complete with a players' strike and the coach's suspension, is at the heart of what has been a dizzying descent for the former "Calypso Kings".

The West Indies have been stuck in the mire since Australia's watershed series win at Jamaica's Sabina Park in 1995. In 197 subsequent Tests, they have won just 42 — 21 percent-and are above only Bangladesh and Zimbabwe on the Test rankings. For those with memories of the grander times of Garfield Sobers, Clive Lloyd, Viv Richards and Brian Lara there is a hollow feeling watching the current crop.

So how did it come to this? How could the West Indies have become the easybeats of world cricket after producing so many dynamic and inspirational characters?

Fazeer Mohammed has been broadcasting on West Indies cricket for 23 years, and is in Australia witnessing yet another dispiriting chapter in their history.

#### **INDIA WALK-OUT**

"West Indies cricket has been in this situation for almost two decades so it's more of a systemic issue that ties in all aspects of governance of the Caribbean game from the boardroom to the field of play," Mohammed told AFP. "Three reports commissioned by the WICB (West Indies Cricket Board) in the past eight years have all recommended fundamental changes to the administrative structure yet these recommendations have been ignored.



HOBART: Photo taken on December 14, 2015 shows West Indies cricketers practicing their batting after West Indies lost in under three days to Australia in the first cricket Test match in Hobart. The sad state of West Indies cricket will come into sharp focus this week when some of their best players take part in an Australian Twenty20 tournament — just days after sitting out the latest embarrassing Test defeat. — AFP

"Now Caribbean prime ministers are involved following the latest recommendation calling for the immediate dissolution of the present administration and the setting up of an interim management committee." Last year the West Indies players, disgruntled over terms of their contracts, and walked out of their tour of India.

India's BCCI has presented the cash-strapped WICB with a compensation claim for US\$42 million, covering the loss of media rights fees, sponsorships and ticket revenue. Bravo, the captain and players' spokesman in India, and Kieron Pollard were dropped for the subsequent ODIs in South Africa and this year's World Cup. Bravo and Sammy are now long-term absentees from the Test side, and Pollard is yet to make his Test debut. Gayle blames chronic back problems for his reluctance to play the five-day format. Meanwhile coach Phil Simmonds was suspended in September after criticising selection for the tour of Sri Lanka, before being reinstated last month. Trinidad and

Tobago board chief Suruj Ragoonath says the onus is on administrators to make sure players prioritise playing for their country over lucrative Twenty20 cricket.

#### 'BAD GOVERNANCE'

"We must understand that the sport of cricket now is not what it used to be many years ago," he said in the Trinidad and Tobago Guardian last weekend. "Therefore we at the administrative level must find ways and means of dealing with the problem of players choosing to play for club rather than country."

Lara, who scored 34 centuries in 131 Tests and ranks as one of cricket's greatest batsmen, also faults the administration and says there has been a breakdown of trust between the board and the players. "I think it's bad governance. I think the West Indies Cricket Board has faltered over the years," said Lara, currently in Australia. "We've had the same sort of thinking from the 1970s right through until now. There's nothing new going on in West Indies cricket, especially at administrative level.

"The guys don't trust the board anymore." The current West Indies team has no shortage of greats mentoring them, from manager Richie Richardson, travelling selector Courtney Walsh and bowling consultant Curtly Ambrose. During the Hobart debacle, Darren Bravo scored a century and opener Kraigg Brathwaite hit 94, showing talent still exists, and Richardson has been trying to instil more confidence in the largely inexperienced team. "We have to back ourselves and look to win. We have a young team we are moulding," said Richardson, who amassed 16 centuries in 86 Tests before retiring in 1995.

Confidence will help, but it looks likely to a long, tough tour for the West Indies, who will play the second Test from December 26 in Melbourne-with the Big Bash still in full swing. — AFP



KEA with the winners trophy.

#### KEA WIN 18TH CETAA CRICKET FINAL IN NAIL-BITING FINISH

**KUWAIT:** The final of the 18th Prof. Ramachandran Memorial Cricket Tournament (RMC) conducted by College of Engineering Trivandrum Alumni Association (CETAA) and sponsored by GTE Olayan Co, Khuff GT&C and Noun Industrial Est: saw defending champions KEA meet in form and favorites AECK on December 11 at the Fahaheel Grounds.

AECK had the initial advantage winning the toss and batting first. And when danger man Mahesh was dropped off the very first ball, the tension of a final seemed to be telling on KEA. In the 2nd over, prolific run getter Shameer was also dropped and AECK took full advantage of the lapses reaching 39 by the 3rd over. It was danger signs for KEA but they had a stroke of luck when Mahesh (22) pulled Ajin straight down square leg's throat without the fielder having to move to take the catch. This proved to be the break that KEA was looking for and they managed to put the brakes on AECK with only 12 runs coming off the next 3 overs. Shameer (33) and Rafi (19) tried to repair the damage with a 35 run 3rd wicket stand in 5 overs but their exit in the 11th and 12th over proved crucial. KEA bowlers tightened the screws thereafter with speed and accuracy restricting AECK to 106 for 7 off their 15 overs when a score of 120 and beyond seemed very much on the cards. Nithin (2 for 19), Ajin, Nasif, Arjun with a wicket each bowled with heart while Presoon bowled a crucial last over giving away just 2 runs.

#### **LONE BATTLE**

In reply, KEA suffered a setback when Nithin was bowled by a Sebastian special in the 2nd

over. Ajin (13) and Govind (17) tried to get KEA going with a 2nd wicket stand of 24 runs in 5 overs. Govind's and Binu's exit in the 7th over and Ajin's exit in the 8th with the score board reading only 40 seemed to have turned the tide in AECK's favour. But 4 down Renju who had fought a lone battle in their league match against AECK was still at the crease. His late arrival raised a few eyebrows but proved to be a master stroke in the end. Captain Tibish (11 retired hurt) gave good support and with the aid of the tail, Renju brought KEA back into contention with intelligent stroke play and brilliant running between the wickets.

But still 36 runs were needed of the last 3 overs. The 13th and 14 over yielded 16 and 15 which proved critical and brought the required runs to only 5 needed of the last over. But Rinaz bowled a spirited last over giving nothing away. A few scampered singles amidst rising tension made it 2 runs required of 2 balls. Another scampered single and an overthrow of the 5th ball brought victory to KEA by 5 wickets with only a ball to spare. AECK were unlucky to loose after having dominated initially but all credit to Renju (30 not out - man of the match) who again proved spoil sport for AECK.

Special prizes were awarded to Renju (man of the match), Nithin (best bowler), Shameer (best player), Mahesh (best batsman) and the winners I runners cups and medals were presented by Messrs Tapan Ramesh (Regional Manager - GTF), Jose Kurishinkal (President) Cetaa), Anil Kumar (GC-KEF), Sreekumar (GC elect - KEF) and Mohanachandran (RMC



AECK with the runners trophy.

#### GAYLE TALKS UP TEST COMEBACK

MELBOURNE: West Indian Chris Gayle insisted yesterday he has not turned his back on Test cricket and wants to pull on the whites again for his troubled national team. The flamboyant Gayle has been portrayed in the media as preferring to take the money and play for Twenty20 franchises than help rescue Caribbean cricket from its current malaise.

But the ex-Windies captain insisted it was injury that sidelined him from the current series against Australia, who won the first Test in Hobart by an innings inside three days on Saturday.

Gayle, who has played 103 Tests, had back surgery earlier this year. Despite this, the 36year-old expects to be fit enough to play every Big Bash League game for the Melbourne Renegades this season and was adamant he wanted to play Tests again.

"There's no way I could have actually been part of that Test team (in Hobart), I'm just coming back off injury," he told Australian Associated Press. "I haven't retired from the game. Next year hopefully Test cricket is on the agenda."

Gayle's comments came as criticism mounted about the tourists' inept performance in Hobart with pace great Michael Holding telling Fairfax Media the West Indies Cricket Board was "dysfunctional, untrustworthy and not liked by the employees".

Gayle was reluctant to criticise the board, and defended his younger Test team-mates. "It's a young team, so we have to definitely give it time rather than be so harsh on West Indies cricket all the time," he said. "You have to give us time ... it won't happen overnight." — AFP

# AHLI UNITED BANK TROPHY INAUGURATED

#### NITIN SCORES FIRST CENTURY OF THE TOURNAMENT

KUWAIT: Ahli United Bank, pioneers in promoting cricket in Kuwait for many years, added one more feather to their cap by sponsoring the AUB trophy 2015 for the third successive year. Richard Groves, CEO of Ahli United Bank and Mrs Helen Groves jointly cut the cake to officially inaugurate the AUB trophy at a glittering function arranged at the Sulaibiya cricket ground on December 12. Kuwait Banks Club which has many banks affiliated to it and Kuwait Cricket, the official body of controlling cricket in Kuwait has been jointly conducting cricket tournaments for bankers.

The inaugural match of the AUB trophy was played between CBK (Commercial Bank) and Gulf Bank. On a pleasant winter morning, Shahab Kandiyil the CBK captain won the toss and elected to bat first. The highlight of CBK batting was a sparkling 67 balls century by opener Nitin Lobo. The inform Nitin continued his form to play some marvelous strokes to plunder the Gulf Bank bowlers and this lanky lad notched up his first century of the season by scoring a splendid 112 runs which had 3 sixes &9 fours. In conditions where the new ball did nothing, Nitin Lobo and Ajith Nair ran in relentlessly with tremendous stamina as the duo worked out the singles and doubles to keep the score board moving. Aiith Nair found his form to strike a patient 31 runs while Nitin went for the leather hunt as he stepped up to drive the over pitched deliveries and struck the short balls with awesome power. Zaheer Abbas, who came in late struck a brisky 25 runs and CBK at the end of their allotted 20 overs scored 195 runs. Adel Rafat of Gulf bank took 2 wickets.

#### **BLOGGING TACTICS**

Gulf Bank batsmen in an attempt to chase a huge total were restricted by some fine bowling by the CBK bowlers who maintained a tight line and length. Waleed (23 runs) and Bilal (21 runs) put up a brave fight. As the scoring rate slowed down and wickets began to fall on regular intervals and the slogging tactics did not yield much a positive result and Gulf Bank were restricted to 97 runs. Mohammed Nawaz & Prasad bowled well for CBK capturing 2 wickets each.

In the second match of the day, Ahli United Bank fired all their guns to register a convincing 7 wickets victory over Kuwait International Bank. Having won the toss, KIB decided to bat on a cloudy day when many of the Englishmen would have loved to play. The AUB pace attack resorted to a short-pitched attack from over the wicket targeting the right-hand batsman's ribs with men catching close on both the sides of the wicket. The tactics applied by AUB skipper Mahmoud Bastaki paid rich dividends as none of the KIB batsmen could counter attack the AUB bowlers who gave them no width, no opportunity to get on the front foot and hustling them with pace, thus forcing them to take evasive actions. KIB were content with only 34 runs on board. Saud Qamar with his willy off breaks took 3/3, Nabeel Ghafoor 3/11 and Mahmoud Bastaki 2/11 were the successful bowlers for AUB.

Fahad Bastaki and Anuj Rohtagi opened the AUB innings. Fahad Bastaki opted to play with softer hands and a straighter bat and batted with calm technique to rotate the strike. The KIB attack was as hostile as AUB and Nadeem Ahmad bowling with sheer determination struck twice to send back Anuj & Nabeel Ghafoor in one over. Not needing much to chase, AUB got the winning runs in the 7th over as Fahad Bastaki remained not out with 17 runs. Nadeem Ahmad was the pick of KIB attack capturing 2/15. Nabeel Ghafoor for his bowling performance was awarded with the Player of the match memento.

National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) scored a handsome 77 runs victory over Ahli Bank of Kuwait in their first league round match of the AUB trophy. Electing to bat on a perfect batting track, the NBK openers Khuram Rana (21 runs) & Shakthy launched a fierce attack on the ABK bowlers and the duo batted with immense confidence to post 58 runs for the first wicket. Getting to the pitch of the delivery and driving with precise timing Sakthy raced to a quick 41 runs while Khurram clouted two sixes in his brief stay. Ronald Fernandes (16 runs) and Imran Mohammed (22 runs) added



Richard Groves, Chief Executive Officer of Ahli United Bank, Mrs Helen Groves, Mahmoud Bastaki and Kuwait Cricket Council officials cutting the cake to officially inaugurate the AUB trophy.



The combined picture of AUB, CBK Gulf Bank and Kuwait cricket officials.

another 39 runs to set up a huge total. Kiran Lobo played a cameo innings of 36 runs to boost the NBK total to 196 runs in their allotted 20 overs. Fahad Faroog bowled well for ABK to capture 2 for 27. The ABK batsmen initially subdued to a defensive mind set were pinned down to the crease as NBK slowly gained control over the match. Mid way through Fahad Farooq (14 runs) and Malik Awan (15

runs) offered more resistance than expected and added 34 runs for the 5th wicket. As the run rate steeped up, Abdul Rauf of ABK took his chance to counter attack the NBK bowlers and scored a swift 32 runs. Mohammad Rehmatullah bowled well for NBK as he accounted for the top 3 batsmen that fetched him the Player of the match award. Khurram Rana took 2 for 15.

### DHONI TO PLAY FOR PUNE IN IPL

MUMBAI: India's limited-overs captain India batsman Ajinkya Rahane and off-spin-Mahendra Singh Dhoni was the first pick by the new Pune franchise while Rajkot chose batsman Suresh Raina at the Indian Premier League draft for the next two seasons yesterday.

The western Indian cities of Pune and Rajkot were named as home to two new franchises for the next two years, filling the void left by the two-year suspensions on the Chennai and Rajasthan franchises following an illegal betting scandal.

Players from the two suspended franchises were made available in the draft, allowing the two teams to pick five players each. New Rising, a consortium led by Sanjiv Goenka, chairman of the RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group, bagged the Pune team while mobile manufacturers Intex made a successful bid for Raikot in a reverse bidding process, the Indian Cricket board (BCCI) said last week.

Pune, having made the most successful bid, got the first pick and went for the 34year-old Dhoni, who led Chennai in all eight previous seasons of the IPL. Australia captain Steve Smith, South Africa's Faf du Plessis and ner Ravichandran Ashwin were the other players selected by Pune.

New Zealand skipper Brendon McCullum will play for Rajkot, who also added Australia all-rounder James Faulkner, former West Indies captain Dwayne Bravo and India's spin-bowling all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja. Both franchises will lose 390 million rupees (\$5.82 million) from their total purse of 660 million for next year's IPL auctions in which the remaining players from the suspended team will be added to the pool.

The Twenty20 league, with a \$3.5 billion estimated brand value and boasting Bollywood stars and major conglomerates as investors, has been dogged by corruption allegations for years.

In July, a panel set up by India's top court recommended suspending the franchise owners of the two teams following an illegal betting and spot-fixing scandal surrounding the IPL, the ninth edition of which will be played from April 9 to May 29. — Reuters



#### NBA REFEREE KENNEDY TELLS YAHOO HE IS GAY AFTER RONDO'S SLUR

told Yahoo Sports he is gay, nearly two weeks after Sacramento Kings guard Rajon Rondo directed a gay slur at him during a game. Kennedy said he is "proud to be an NBA referee and I am proud to be a gay man," adding that he chose to come out in hopes of sending a message "that you must allow no one to make you feel ashamed of who you are."

Rondo was suspended one game by the NBA for directing a derogatory and offensive term toward a referee in the Kings' game against Boston in Mexico on Dec. 3. Rondo apologized Monday and the Kings said his comments were disrespectful and offensive. Kennedy is in his 18th season as an NBA official,

having worked more than 1,050 regular-season games and five in the NBA Finals. "I wholeheartedly

**NEW YORK:** Veteran NBA referee Bill Kennedy has support Bill's decision to live his life proudly and openly," NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said in a statement. "Throughout his 18-year career with the league, Bill has excelled as a referee because of his passion, dedication and courage. Those qualities will continue to serve him well both as a game official and as a positive influence for others. While our league has made great progress, our work continues to ensure that everyone is treated with respect and dignity."Kennedy worked San Antonio's home game against Utah on Monday, receiving applause from fans when he was shown on the videoboard with the officiating crew and his name was announced.

#### **RONDO CRITICIZED**

Spurs coach Gregg Popovich criticized Rondo's

comments before San Antonio's 118-81 victory. "It's unfortunate," Popovich said.

"It's disgusting, because Billy, he is a great guy. He's been a class act on and off the court. And as far as anyone's sexual orientation, it's just nobody's business. It just shows ignorance to act in a derogatory way toward anybody in the LGBT community. It just doesn't make sense."

The league took more than a week before announcing a penalty for Rondo, who will sit out Sacramento's game against Houston on Tuesday. Yahoo reported that Kennedy and another referee told league investigators that Rondo used profanity and anti-gay comments.

"Rajon's comment was disrespectful and offensive, and we wholeheartedly disapprove of any language that discriminates or disparages others based on sexual orientation or anything else," Kings general manager Vlade Divac said. "Rajon has apologized and this is not the sort of behavior we condone nor is it representative of the Sacramento Kings organization." Owner Vivek Ranadive also apologized to Kennedy. Rondo wrote on Twitter that his actions during the game "were out of frustration and emotion, period!"

"They absolutely do not reflect my feelings toward the LGBT community," Rondo added. "I did not mean to offend or disrespect anyone." The referees union did not return a request for comment. Female official Violet Palmer came out in 2014, announcing that she was marrying her longtime partner. — AP



BOSTON: Edmonton Oilers Andrej Sekera, left, beats Boston Bruins goalie Jonas Gustavsson for the game-winning goal during an overtime period of an NHL hockey game in Boston, Monday. The Oilers defeated the Bruins 3-2. At center is Boston Bruins center Ryan Spooner. — AP

#### CAPS SPOIL SULLIVAN'S DEBUT AS PENGUINS COACH WITH 4-1 WIN

PITTSBURGH: T.J. Oshie scored twice and added an assist as the Washington Capitals spoiled Mike Sullivan's coaching debut for the Pittsburgh Penguins in a 4-1 win on Monday night. Nicklas Backstrom had a goal and two assists for Washington. John Carlson added his fifth goal of the season for the Metropolitan Division leaders. Braden Holtby stopped 44 of Pittsburgh's season-high 45 shots. Evgeni Malkin scored his team-leading 14th goal but the Penguins failed to keep pace with Washington in Sullivan's first game since taking over when Mike Johnston was fired Saturday. Marc-Andre Fleury made 30 saves, but captain Sidney Crosby was held without a point and Pittsburgh's power play went 0 for 2.

#### **OILERS 3, BRUINS 2, OT**

Andrej Sekera scored 41 seconds into overtime to lift Edmonton over Boston for its sixth straight victory. Cam Talbot made 47 saves, and Jordan Eberle and Ryan Nugent-Hopkins scored first-period goals for Edmonton. The victory halted an eight-game losing streak in Boston for the Oilers, fresh off a 5-0 homestand - their best since 1987. The Bruins tied it on Brad Marchand's goal with 4:38 to play in regulation. Matt Beleskey also scored for Boston, which has earned at least one point in each of its last 16 games against the Oilers (13-0-3).

#### **LIGHTNING 2, BLUE JACKETS 1**

Brian Boyle scored a short-handed goal in the third period and Ben Bishop made several

big stops down the stretch, finishing with 25 saves as Tampa Bay beat Columbus. Jonathan Marchessault also scored for the Lightning, but star forward Steven Stamkos was held off the scoreboard for the ninth straight game. Brandon Dubinsky scored for the Blue Jackets, who have dropped four in a row. Joonas Korpisalo, a 21year-old rookie, was impressive in stopping 27 shots during his first NHL start.

#### **SENATORS 5, KINGS 3**

Mike Hoffman had two goals and an assist to lead Ottawa over Los Angeles. Kyle Turris, Erik Karlsson and Mika Zibanejad also scored for the Senators. Craig Anderson made 33 saves in his 15th straight start. Jamie McBain, Tyler Toffoli and Jake Muzzin scored for Los Angeles. Jonathan Quick stopped 16 shots. The Senators scored four goals in the second to build a 4-2 lead.

#### **SABRES 2, RED WINGS 1**

Ryan O'Reilly and Johan Larsson scored 61 seconds apart late in the third period, rallying Buffalo past Detroit. O'Reilly tied it 1-all at 15:46 when his deflected shot beat goalie Petr Mrazek between the legs. Larsson scored the go-ahead goal with 3:13 remaining, his first goal in 30 games since April 6 last season against Carolina. Brad Richards scored for the Red Wings, who had earned at least one point in 13 consecutive games. Buffalo snapped an eight-game winless streak in Detroit with its first victory there since Oct. 13, 2006. Chad Johnson made 33 saves for the Sabres. — AP

16 9 6 79 79 38

#### NHL results/standings

Detroit

Edmonton 3, Boston 2 (OT); Washington 4, Pittsburgh 1; Tampa Bay 2, Columbus 1.

VV	este	rn C	.ontei	renc	e		Detroit	10	9	0	79	79	38	
	Cen	tral	Divis	ion			Ottawa	16	10	5	97	93	37	
	W	_	OTL				Boston	16	9	4	93	80	36	
Dallas	22	_	2	102		46	Tampa Bay	15	13	3	73	69	33	
Chicago		10	4	85	75	38	Florida	14	12	4	76	74	32	
St. Louis		10	4	78	75	38	Buffalo	13	15	3	74	84	29	
Minnesota	15	7	6	73	66	36				5				
Nashville	15	10	5	80	79	35	Toronto		13	_	64	76	25	
Winnipeg	14	14	2	82	91	30	Met	trop	olit	an Di	visio	on		
Colorado	14	16	1	85	88	29	Washington	21	6	2	89	63	44	
	Pac	ific	Divisi	on			NY Islanders	18	8	5	89	72	41	
Los Angeles	19	9	2	78	66	40	<b>NY Rangers</b>	18	9	4	90	72	40	
Arizona	14	14	2	81	95	30	New Jersey	15	11	4	74	75	34	
Edmonton	14	15	2	85	92	30	Pittsburgh	15	11	3	68	71	33	
Vancouver	11	12	8	79	86	30	Philadelphia	12	12	6	62	83	30	
San Jose		14	1	75	78	29	Carolina	12	14	4	74	92	28	
Calgary	13	14	2	78	103	28	Columbus		18	2	75	95	25	
Anaheim	11	13	5	56	73	27				_				
E	aste	rn C	onfer	ence	2		Note: Overt	ıme	los	ses (C	) I L)	are	worth	
	Atla	ntic	Divis	ion			one point in	ı th	e sta	andin	gs a	nd a	re not	
Montreal	20		3	100	70	43	included in t	he l	oss (	olum	n (L)			

**CAPE TOWN:** The South African Rugby Union

(SARU) will attempt to halt their player drain

by making the domestic game more lucrative

Rugby franchises, but also made key players

unavailable for national team selection due to

lion rand (\$4.33 million) per annum will be

distributed among locally-based players in a

bid to keep them at home after they secured

image rights for all professionals in the coun-

try. "It has always been a challenge keeping

our players in the country, made ever worse

by the weakness of the rand," SARU Chief

Executive Jurie Roux said in a statement on

Tuesday. "This new deal that we have struck

with the players' organisation is one part of

the effort to retain the skills available to the

SARU has announced an additional 65 mil-

their overseas club commitments.

Boston	16	9	4	93	80	36	
Tampa Bay	15	13	3	73	69	33	
Florida	14	12	4	76	74	32	
Buffalo	13	15	3	74	84	29	
Toronto	10	13	5	64	76	25	
Met	trop	olit	an D	ivisi	on		
Washington	21	6	2	89	63	44	
<b>NY Islanders</b>	18	8	5	89	72	41	
<b>NY Rangers</b>	18	9	4	90	72	40	
New Jersey	15	11	4	74	75	34	
Pittsburgh	15	11	3	68	71	33	
Philadelphia	12	12	6	62	83	30	
Carolina	12	14	4	74	92	28	

PURSE IN BID TO RETAIN TALENT game. "It has meant a realignment of how we budget, but we are convinced that it is a wise

investment for the benefit of South African

with additional revenue from image rights to players and the game in this country." be distributed to all professionals. SARU has struck a deal with MyPlayers, the A number of top Springbok players have body that acts as the official professional rugheaded to Europe and Japan in recent years by players' organisation in South Africa, to use to take advantage of the weak local currency the collective images of their contracted playin South Africa, while there has also been a ers in marketing material and appearances for sponsors. It means they have budgeted for 90 targeting of young, emerging talent by clubs million rand per annum to be distributed over outside of the country. It has not only diluted the country's Super the next five years, up from 25 million rand in

SOUTH AFRICA TO ADD TO PLAYER

previous seasons. "The foundation for this deal was laid in 2009 when an agreement was reached to remunerate the national players for the use of their collective commercial rights," said Eugene Henning, managing director at MyPlayers. "This new agreement will also be extended to all professional players in South Africa while additional provision is made for

the collective interests of the players. "This is a significant step towards ensuring that professional players are well looked after in an environment that is now much more secure, allowing them to explore options which will prepare them for life after rugby." — Reuters

# GRIFFIN POWERS CLIPPERS TO OT WIN AT DETROIT

**WASHINTON:** Blake Griffin poured in 34 points, and he found Jamal Crawford for a go-ahead threepointer with 12.4 seconds left in overtime as the Los Angeles Clippers outlasted the Detroit Pistons at The Palace. J.J. Redick supplied 24 points and Chris Paul chipped in 13 and 12 assists for Los Angeles. Crawford had 14 points off the bench. Reggie Jackson led the Pistons with 34 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists. Andre Drummond added his league-high 22nd double-double with 20 points and 15 rebounds.

#### PACERS 106, RAPTORS 90

After falling into a 21-point, first-quarter hole, Indiana countered with a 39-4 run on the way to a roller-coaster victory over Toronto. The Pacers' charge, which spanned the end of the first quarter to the start of the second, gave them a 44-30 lead and the home team never trailed again, beating the Raptors for the first time in the past six meetings between the Eastern Conference rivals. Jordan Hill led the Pacers with 20 points and 13 rebounds, each a season high. Kyle Lowry and DeMar DeRozan each had 20 for Toronto.

#### **GRIZZLIES 112, WIZARDS 95**

Marc Gasol and Mike Conley posted doubledoubles as Memphis defeated Washington. Gasol finished with 24 points and 12 rebounds, plus six assists, and Conley scored 18 points with 11 assists. Gary Neal paced the Wizards with 24 points. Just 24th in the NBA in field-goal percentage and 29th in three-point percentage before Monday, Memphis shot a season-best 56.4 percent from the floor and hit 10 of 15 from long range.

#### **HEAT 100, HAWKS 88**

Miami ended a seven-game losing streak to Atlanta with a dominant performance on the backboards and a big effort from the bench. Chris Bosh had 24 points and grabbed 10 rebounds during the Heat's first win in Atlanta since Feb. 20, 2013. Kent Bazemore led the Hawks with 28 points. Gerald Green came off the bench to score 20 points for Miami. Led by Green, Miami's reserves outscored Atlanta's bench, 31-17. The Heat out-rebounded the

#### **BULLS 115, 76ERS 96**

Overcoming a five-point halftime deficit, Chicago rolled to victory over Philadelphia. The 76ers led 56-51 at halftime before the Bulls took control by outscoring Philadelphia 34-12 in the

Tony Snell outscored the 76ers 13-12 in the period and recorded 15 of his 16 points in the second half. He also had 11 rebounds. Chicago's Jimmy Butler scored 19 of his game-high 23 points in the first half. He shot 8-for-9 from the field prior to the

#### **MAGIC 105, NETS 82**

Nikola Vucevic scored 12 of his game-high 18 points in a critical third quarter, and Elfrid Payton added 17, leading Orlando past Brooklyn. The Magic broke open a close game with a 31-24 third guarter, keyed by the perimeter prowess of Vucevic, who made six of eight shots in the period. Orlando received 15 points from Tobias Harris, who was questionable to play right up until game time due to a lower leg contusion, and from Andrew Nicholson who added 15 points. Jarrett Jack topped the Nets with 15 points.

#### **SPURS 118, JAZZ 81**

Kawhi Leonard scored 22 points as San Antonio smashed Utah. LaMarcus Aldridge and Tony Parker had 18 points apiece for the Spurs. No San Antonio starter played more than 24 minutes as the Spurs won their third game in a row in blowout fashion. Derrick Favors led the Jazz with 16 points.

#### NUGGETS 114, ROCKETS 108

Will Barton scored 23 points and added nine rebounds, Gary Harris scored a career-high 21 points, and Denver held on to beat Houston. Joffrey Lauvergne got his second double-double of the season with 14 points and a career-high 11 rebounds for Denver, which swept the three-game season series from Houston. James Harden led the Rockets with 24 points, and Donatas Motiejunas scored 19 off the bench.

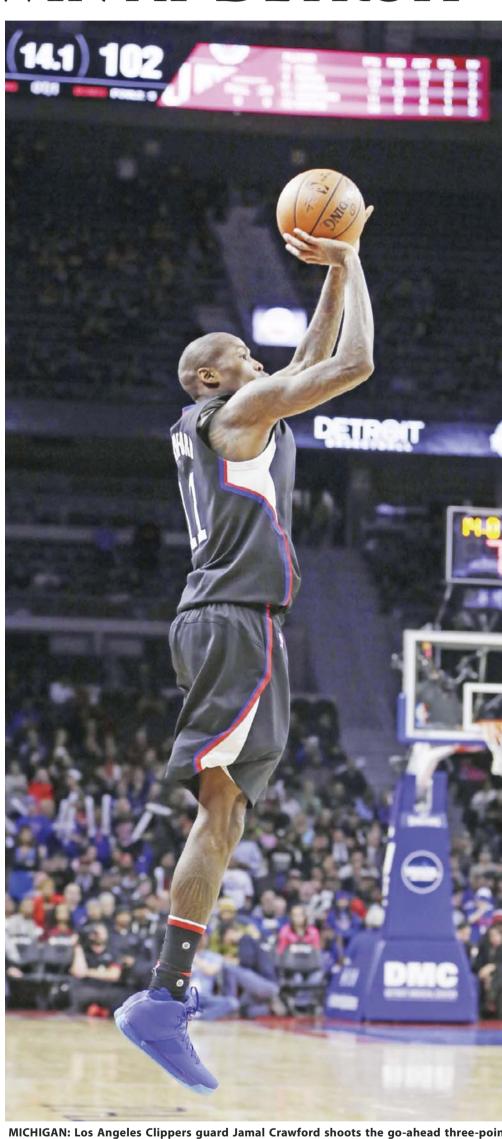
#### **MAVERICKS 104, SUNS 94**

Deron Williams scored 18 in his return, and Dallas snapped a three-game home losing streak by holding off Phoenix. Dirk Nowitzki snapped out of mini-shooting slump with 14 points on 5-of-10 shooting, and he added seven rebounds for the Mavericks. Devin Harris scored 12 and tied his career high with six steals. Phoenix, which had won three of its previous four games, got 23 points and seven assists from Eric Bledsoe.

#### **TRAIL BLAZERS 105, PELICANS 101**

Damian Lillard scored 21 of his 30 points in the second half as Portland hung on to bead New Orleans. Gerald Henderson came off the bench for 19 points, C.J. McCollum chipped in 16 points and Mason Plumlee collected 15 points, 13 rebounds and six assists for Portland, which had lost three of its previous four games.

Anthony Davis poured in 28 points with nine rebounds for New Orleans, which has lost eight of its last 10 contests. — Reuters



MICHIGAN: Los Angeles Clippers guard Jamal Crawford shoots the go-ahead three-point basket during overtime of an NBA basketball game against the Detroit Pistons, Monday, in Auburn Hills, Mich. The Clippers defeated the Pistons, 105-103. — AP

#### **NBA** results/standings

Indiana 106, Toronto 90; Orlando 105, Brooklyn 82; LA Clippers 105, Detroit 103 (OT); Miami 100, Atlanta 88; Chicago 115, Philadelphia 96; Memphis 112, Washington 95; Dallas 104, Phoenix 94; San Antonio 118, Utah 81; Denver 114, Houston 108; Portland 105, New Orleans 101.

Eastern Conference Western Conference									
	Atlanti	c Divi	sion		No	rthwe	est Div	ision/	
	W	L	PCT	GB	Oklahoma City	16	8	.667	-
Toronto	16	10	.615	-	Utah	10	13	.435	5.5
Boston	14	10	.583	1	Portland	11	15	.423	6
NY Knicks	11	14	.440	4.5	Denver	10	14	.417	6
Brooklyn	7	17	.292	8	Minnesota	9	14	.391	6.5
Philadelphia	1	25	.038	15		acific	Divis	ion	
	Centra	I Divis	sion		Golden State	24	1	.960	_
Cleveland	15	7	.682	-	LA Clippers	15	10	.600	9
Chicago	14	8	.636	1	Phoenix	11	15	.423	13.5
Indiana	14	9	.609	1.5	Sacramento	9	15	.375	14.5
Detroit	14	12	.538	3	LA Lakers	3	21	.125	20.5
Milwaukee	10	15	.400	6.5		_			20.5
	Southea	st Div	rision				est Div		
Charlotte	14	9	.609	-	San Antonio	21	5	.808	-
Miami	14	9	.609	_	Dallas	14	11	.560	6.5
Orlando	13	11	.542	1.5	Memphis	14	12	.538	7
Atlanta	14	12	.538	1.5	Houston	12	13	.480	8.5
Washington	10	13	.435	4	New Orleans	6	18	.250	14

### KIESSLING TO STAY AT LEVERKUSEN AFTER TALKS

**BERLIN:** Stefan Kiessling is set to stay at 5-0 thrashing of Borussia Moenchen-Bayer Leverkusen for the rest of the season, the club said yesterday, just days after the ex-Germany striker revealed he wanted to leave.

The 31-year-old, who won the last of his six caps for Germany at the 2010 World Cup, scored twice in Leverkusen's Michael Schade and manager Jonas

gladbach on Saturday in Bayer's final home match of 2015.

The club has confirmed to SID, an AFP subsidiary, that Leverkusen bosses moved fast to reassure Kiessling, who was invited to talks with Leverkusen CEO

Boldt on Monday.

Kiessling has found himself playing understudy to Javier Hernandez since the Mexico star signed from Manchester United at the start of the season.

"I love playing here and I love this club, and it's overall a very difficult situation for me," said Kiessling after the

Gladbach match. "I want to be playing some football at the end of my career and that is why I've got to give things plenty of thought."

According to German daily Bild, director of sport Rudi Voeller wants to offer Kiessling a contract extension to his current deal which runs until 2017.

Augsburg, Mainz and Ingolstadt were some of the Bundesliga clubs reported to be interested in signing him. Kiessling was superb alongside Hernandez as the pair shredded the Gladbach defence, with 'Chicharito' scoring the other three goals to claim the first club hat-trick of his career. — AFP

# BARCELONA BETTER THAN EVER: MESSI

current Barcelona side has more weapons than Pep Guardiola's 2009 world-beaters and wants to prove it by winning a record third Club World Cup. The Spanish giants, who have captured the Champions League, Spain's La Liga, the Copa del Rey and European Super Cup this year, take on China's Guangzhou Evergrande Thursday for a place in the tournament final in Yokohama on December 20.

"It's one of my favourite competitions," said Messi, favourite to win his fifth Ballon d'Or in January. "It gives you the opportunity to round off the year in the best possible way. These titles are an indelible legacy in the history of the club. It's something very important. "It's been an amazing year," the Argentina wizard told fifa.com in the build-up to Barca's clash against Luiz Felipe Scolari's Guangzhou. "That time when we won everything under Guardiola looked unrepeatable. We genuinely weren't sure if we'd get close to that again. (But) here we are. Now what's left for us to do is end the year in the best possible way and make it unforgettable."

Barring an upset in Wednesday's first semi-final between Libertadores Cup holders River Plate and Japan's Sanfrecce Hiroshima, Messi will come face to face with the side which almost signed him as a teenager in his native Argentina.

Remarkably, Messi has only once previously played against an Argentine club, when Barcelona beat Estudiantes 2-1 in the 2009 Club World Cup final. Two years later Barca smashed four past Brazil's Santos, which featured current teammate Neymar.

"I've witnessed (Neymar's) enormous growth, both as a footballer and as a person," said Messi. "Back then he was

YOKOHAMA: Lionel Messi believes the already a great player and now he's much more complete."

#### **Evolving style**

Messi gave an insight into how the Spanish league leaders have evolved under Luis Enrique, who relies less on the "tiki-taka" style of short, intricate passes than Guardiola.

'We've become a more vertical (direct) team," said Messi. "Of course, we've not lost our ideology of keeping hold of the ball. "That's our priority: to control the play and keep possession. But now we've incorporated the idea that, with just a couple of touches, we can get in front of the opposition's goal. Before, it was about getting there using more elaborate build-up play."

The addition of Luis Suarez, with his ability to play off the shoulder of the last defender, has undoubtedly given Barca more thrust. Messi, Neymar and Suarez have plundered a jaw-dropping 127 goals for Barca in 2015 — more than Spanish rivals Real Madrid-although Neymar is a doubt in Japan with a groin

"At the moment Neymar is one of the best three players in the world," defender Jordi Alba said after training on Tuesday. "But Barcelona are able to cope without any player, no matter who they are." Midfielder Javier Mascherano described Barca's three-pronged attack as the best ever. "It is the best I have seen," he said. "I don't know if we will ever see anything better. The most surprising thing for me is how unselfish they are.

"It is difficult to find three players of that level that complement each other so well, and that all offer something different." he added.

"To get on so well and manage the egos like they do is not easy." — AFP



TOKYO: FC Barcelonaís goalkeeper Claudio Bravo, right, of Chile and his teammates work out during a practice session in Yokohama, near Tokyo, yesterday. — AP

#### **Italian Serie A table**

TURIN, Italy: Italian Serie A table on Monday (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals

against, poir	its):										
Inter Milan	16 11	3	2	22 9	36	Torino	15 6	4	5	21 19	22
Fiorentina	16 10	2	4	31 1	32	Lazio	16 6	2	8	18 25	20
Napoli	16 9	5	2	28 1	2 32	Bologna	16 6	1	9	17 21	19
Juventus	16 9	3	4	25 1	2 30	Palermo	16 5	3	8	17 24	18
Roma	16 8	5	3	30 1	3 29	Udinese	16 5	3	8	14 24	18
Sassuolo	15 7	5	3	19 1	4 26	Sampdoria	16 4	5	7	22 26	17
AC Milan	16 7	4	5	20 1	9 25	Genoa	16 4	4	8	15 21	16
Atalanta	16 7	3	6	18 1	5 24	Frosinone	16 4	2	10	15 30	14
Empoli	16 7	3	6	20 2	24	Carpi	16 2	4	10	13 30	10
Chievo	16 6	4	6	21 1	5 22	Verona	16 0	7	9	11 26	7

#### BAYERN'S VIDAL WANTED TO MEET JUVE IN FINAL

**BERLIN:** Bayern Munich midfielder Arturo Vidal is relishing the Champions League last 16 clash against his former club Juventus, but says he would have

prefered to meet them in the final. Bayern play Juventus in Turin in the first leg on February 23, then host last season's finalists at Munich's Allianz Arena on March 16 for a place in the quarter-finals. It will be Vidal's first return to Turin since signing for Bayern in July and the Chile international is wary of resurgent Juve, who have climbed to fourth in Serie A on the back of six straight victories. "They are very strong. They had a few problems at the start of the season, but that was to be expected because they changed many players,"

Vidal told German daily Bild.

"I would have preferred to have had them in the final." Bayern are set to face their former striker Mario Mandzukic, who joined Juventus from Atletico Madrid before the start of the season, while France Under-21 winger Kingsley Coman joined Bayern in August on a two-year loan deal from Juve.

"It will be a great match," said Coman, who has scored four goals for Bayern since his arrival. "I am looking forward to it, because I came to Bayern to play in big games like this." Bayern are eager to reach this season's Champions League final in Milan on May 28 having exited in the semi-finals for the last two years running. — AFP



LEICESTER: Chelsea's Branislav Ivanovic, second right, has his shot at goal blocked during the English Premier League soccer match between Leicester City and Chelsea at the King Power Stadium in Leicester, England, Monday. — AP

# PLUCK, PIZZA PROPEL LEICESTER TO PREMIER LEAGUE SUMMIT

LONDON: To fully appreciate the implausibility of Leicester City's astonishing rise to the top of the Premier League, wind the clock back 12 months. A year ago, Leicester were at the foot of the table, five points from safety with 10 points from 16 matches and looking dead certs for an immediate return to the Championship.

Now they are top, with 35 points from 16 games, and making a mockery of pre-season odds of 2,000-1 by mounting the most unlikely title challenge in the recent history of the English game. "It's a magical time," said manager Claudio Ranieri after Monday's 2-1 home win over his old club Chelsea.

"We must continue to work hard because I don't want to wake up. I want to continue to dream with our fans." The victory over Chelsea, courtesy of goals from top scorer Jamie Vardy and Algerian dangerman Riyad Mahrez, typified Leicester's approach. Their honest, hard-working style has charmed rival fans and journalists alike-"refreshing" was the buzzword on Tuesday's British sports pages-and their success is also a personal triumph for Ranieri. Ranieri was derisively labelled 'The Tinkerman' during his four years at Chelsea, due to his habit of rotating his team, and his appointment by Leicester in July following Nigel Pearson's sacking unleashed a tide of mockery. Former England striker Gary Lineker, probably Leicester's most well-known alumnus, summed up the disdain when he tweeted: "Claudio Ranieri? Really?" "I had mixed thoughts, to be honest," former Leicester captain Steve Walsh told AFP. "But he's 'tinkered about' and added some good tactical things, so it's worked out

The genial Italian, 64, has been converting cynics to admirers with each victory, all the while maintaining the irreverent tone that made him a popular figure during his first spell in England between 2000 and 2004.

#### **English Premier League table**

LONDON: English Premier League table after Monday's match (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

. 5																
Leicester	16	10	5	1	34	22	35	Stoke	16	6	5	5	13	14	23	
Arsenal	16	10	3	3	29	13	33	Southampton	16	5	6	5	21	19	21	
Man City	16	10	2	4	32	17	32	West Brom	16	5	5	6	16	21	20	
Man Utd	16	8	5	3	21	12	29	Bournemouth	16	4	4	8	20	31	16	
Tottenham	16	6	8	2	26	14	26	Newcastle	16	4	4	8	18	31	16	
Crystal Palace	16	8	2	6	21	15	26	Chelsea	16	4	3	9	18	26	15	
Watford	16	7	4	5	18	16	25	Swansea	16	3	5	8	15	24	14	
West Ham	16	6	6	4	25	21	24	Norwich	16	3	5	8	18	28	14	
Liverpool	16	6	6	4	20	19	24	Sunderland	16	3	3	10	17	30	12	
Everton	16	5	8	3	29	21	23	Aston Villa	16	1	3	12	13	30	6	

#### **CONTINUITY**

Takeaway pizza has become the currency with which he rewards his players for clean sheets, while he cited a song by local rock band Kasabian as the inspiration for the opening-day win over Sunderland. On the pitch, the indefatigable Vardy and the jinking Mahrez have been symbols of Leicester's revival, with Ranieri's side typically defending deep and springing forward at devastating speed on the break. Vardy, a £1 million (\$1.52 million, 1.38 million euros) recruit from Fleetwood Town in 2012, has scored 15 league goals, while Mahrez, signed from Le Havre last year for just £400,000, has 11 goals and seven assists. Close-season signings such as N'Golo Kante and Christian Fuchs have slotted in seamlessly, but another important factor has been continuity. Leicester heaved themselves clear of danger last season with seven wins in their last nine games and Ranieri has retained Pearson's back-room staff and kept faith with most of the players he inherited.

He is resolute that neither Vardy nor Mahrez will leave in January, declaring that they "don't have a price", but the club's Thai owners are likely to have their resolve tested in that regard.

Ranieri may not be entirely serious when he says that he is not looking beyond the 40-point margin traditionally required to avoid relegation, but a challenging run of fixtures now awaits.

Leicester have not played any of the current top seven away from home yet and face trips to Everton, Liverpool and Tottenham Hotspur in the next month, as well as a visit from Manchester City.

Premier League history carries ominous precedents, with Newcastle United (2001-02), Leeds United (1999-2000) and Aston Villa (1998-99) among the teams to have topped the table at Christmas, only to fall away. Hull City avoided relegation by a point in 2009 despite having been sixth on December 25, while Blackpool were eighth at the turn of the year in 2010-11,

For now, at least, Leicester are on cloud nine and as a lengthening list of vanquished opponents can testify, they look to be a match for anyone. — AFP

only to go down five months later.

#### HIROSHIMA LOOK TO STAUNCH RIVER'S FLOW

**OSAKA:** Argentina's River Plate will be expected to dispatch Sanfrecce Hiroshima in their Club World Cup semi-final in Osaka today despite the spoiling tactics the Japanese champions plan to deploy. "We will try to frustrate them," Hiroshima manager Hajime Moriyasu told reporters yesterday. "We will need to try and cancel out their strengths to have a chance of winning. Anything can happen in football. A victory would be a huge achievement for us."

Hiroshima will be buzzing after pulling off a 3-0 upset over Congolese side Mazembe in the quarter-finals at the weekend. "We scored more goals than anyone in the J-League and conceded the fewest goals," said Moriyasu. "We will be prepared for a battle."

But Moriyasu's side are likely to find that Libertadores Cup holders River have too much firepower when they compete for the right to face tournament favourites Barcelona or Asian champions Guangzhou Evergrande in the final in Yokohama on December 20.

River Plate won the Intercontinental Cup, forerunner of the Club World Cup, by beating Steaua Bucharest 1-0 in Tokyo in 1986. They will be roared on by around 15,000 fans who have made the trip from Buenos Aires.

"Hiroshima play the game the right way," said River coach Marcelo Gallardo, dubbed 'The Doll' in Argentina for his slight frame. "They're prepared to take risks and look to attack and score goals. "But we will try to play smart with high intensity," he added. "If we play intelligently and press well, we can gain an advantage."

Barcelona remain runaway favourites to

become the first team to win the Club World Cup three times. But Gallardo recently received a glowing tribute from Barca superstar Lionel Messi, who described him as an "intelligent coach". A blushing Gallardo said: "Coming from the world's best player, it is a nice compliment, it's positive. There will be time to take on board such praise but for now we must focus on tomorrow's game against a very good Japanese team." Argentina's Boca Juniors, Estudiantes and San Lorenzo have all finished as runners-up since the revamped FIFA Club World Cup was launched in 2000, with European clubs winning seven of the 11 tournaments played.

"We have the chance to crown an excellent year and make history," said winger Carlos Sanchez, making his River Plate swansong before joining Mexican side Monterrey. "Being here in Japan is special. I don't know if I'll get a chance to experience it again." — AFP



OSAKA: Players of Argentina's River Plate inspect the football field while head coach Marcelo Gallardo (3rd R) and defender Jonatan Maidana (4th R) talk at the Nagai Stadium ahead of their next match in the Club World Cup football tournament in Osaka yesterday. — AFP

KAC beat
Singapore
Airlines to clinch
squash Cup



Barcelona better than ever: Messi



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2015

ONCE-MIGHTY 'CALYPSO KINGS' NOW MISSING A BEAT

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MIAMI GARDENS: Miami Dolphins free safely Michael Thomas (31) tackles New York Giants running back Rashad Jennings (23), during the first half of an NFL football game, Monday in Miami Gardens. — AP

# BECKHAM'S 2 TDS GUIDE GIANTS PAST DOLPHINS

**MIAMI GARDENS:** With the score tied in the fourth quarter, Odell Beckham Jr. somehow slipped 5 yards behind the secondary. That turned out to be the winning margin for the New York Giants.

Beckham's 84-yard touchdown reception put the Giants ahead to stay with 11 minutes to go, and they forged a three-way tie atop the NFC East by beating the Miami Dolphins 31-24 on Monday night. New York's Eli Manning went 27 for 31 for 337 yards and four scores. His passer rating of 151.5 was his highest since 2009, and his 87 percent completion percentage was a

career best.

The Giants (6-7) broke a three-game losing streak and are tied with the Redskins and Eagles for the lead in their woeful division. "It's a must-win, a playoff game for us,"

Beckham said. "They're all playoff games."

The Dolphins (5-8) were mathematically eliminated from the playoff race, extending their postseason drought to a franchise-record seven consecutive years. "Obviously this is not where we want to be," quarter-back Ryan Tannehill said, "but here we are." In celebration of the franchise's 50th season, the Dolphins introduced their 50 greatest players at halftime. The not-so-great 2015 Dolphins topped 20 points for the first time since October, but couldn't keep up with Beckham.

He had seven catches for 166 yards and the game's final two scores. The 100-yard game was his sixth in a row, a Giants record. "They got it to a star player, and he made

plays for them," Dolphins defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh said. Beckham missed one series when he went to the locker room due to cramps in both calves, but didn't let that slow him down. And with the score 24-all, he took advantage of broken coverage to score the go-ahead touchdown.

#### MISCOMMUNICATION

Cornerback Jamar Taylor and seldomused safety Shamiel Gary were the closest defenders, but Manning hit Beckham in stride at midfield and he sprinted to the end zone for his 12th TD this year.

The Giants plotted the play at the team hotel before the game. "We got the coverage we wanted," Manning said. "We thought it would be a big play, but I didn't think he would be that open."

Miami safety Reshad Jones blamed miscommunication. "The corner was supposed to follow up and go over the top," Jones said, "which he didn't." Beckham outplayed his close friend and former LSU teammate, Miami's Jarvis Landry, who made 11 catches for 99 yards but was flagged for a costly personal foul penalty with his team trailing in the fourth quarter.

Beckham made a 45-yard reception to set up a touchdown and had a 6-yard scoring catch. The latter pass was initially ruled incomplete because Beckham was out of bounds, but the decision was overturned by a replay review that made the score 24-all.

His final catch, a diving grab on third down at midfield, sealed the victory with less than two minutes left. "Obviously his performance is something we all expect," Landry said. "He's just continuing to do what he does."

Manning led a touchdown drive in the final two minutes of the first half covering 80 yards, including 45 on a long pass to Beckham, to make it 17-all. The receiver on the 5-yard pass for the tie: Will Tye.

Tannehill threw for 236 yards and burned a blitz by throwing deep to Kenny Stills for a 47-yard score that put Miami ahead 24-17. But Tannehill overthrew an open Landry behind the Giants' secondary with his team trailing and less than five minutes to go.

"Those are the ones you've got to make," Tannehill said. The Dolphins were hurt by 12 penalties and seemed reluctant to run the ball, as has been the case most of the year. Lamar Miller rushed for 89 yards, including a darting 38-yard touchdown run after making Jason Pierre-Paul miss, but carried only 12 times. — AP

#### 'BETRAYED' MOURINHO VOWS TO FIGHT ON



**LEICESTER:** Jose Mourinho insists he will fight to stay as Chelsea manager after accusing his players of betraying him in their 2-1 defeat at Premier League leaders Leicester City. Mourinho told Chelsea's underachieving stars to be humble as they look to turn around their dismal defence of the English title and claimed he wants to remain in charge.

Chelsea have lost nine of their 16 league games so far this season and sit just one point above the relegation zone, while Leicester climbed back to the top thanks to goals from Jamie Vardy and Riyad Mahrez at the King Power Stadium on Monday.

"I feel like my work was betrayed," said Mourinho. "I worked four days on this match and prepared everything relating to the opponents.

"I identified four movements where they score almost all their goals. "My players got all that information but we still conceded the first and the second goals from those movements." Mourinho claimed his team's hopes of a topfour finish are over after they fell 20 points behind Leicester, despite substitute Loic Remy scoring to give them hope with 13 minutes remaining.

Chelsea's latest flop is certain to bring renewed reports that Mourinho is on the verge of being sacked, but he is determined to oversee a turnaround and urged his players to show humility as they look to change their fortunes. "The players who are not performing well must for sure feel attacked in their pride and their self esteem," he said.

"They have to do everything to get results in a humble way. "The players at this minute cannot feel top players or they are superstars. "They have to feel 'I am not the player of the season, not the World champion, not the Premier League champion."

"The players have to put their feet on the ground and be humble. "They have to look to the Leicester players and feel these are the top players. "They have to look to Sunderland and Watford and say we are at the same level as you are." Asked whether he believed he would remain in charge, the 52-year-old said: "I want to be, clearly."

"I have no doubt and I am not afraid of a big challenge. I want to stay. "I hope Mr (owner Roman) Abramovich and the board want me to stay because I want to stay.

"I accept we are around the relegation zone, I don't accept we are in a relegation battle."



Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho

Mourinho gave a more cryptic response to questions about Eden Hazard, who appeared to ignore his manager's request to continue when the Belgium midfielder limped off with a first-half injury.

"He made the decision in a few seconds, he was on the floor, he came off, when he went on to try he immediately decided to go back," said Mourinho. "I have to believe he is injured."

In contrast to Chelsea's troubled title defence, Leicester have lost just once all season in the league and sit two points clear of Arsenal at the summit. But manager Claudio Ranieri insists reaching 40 points to ensure another season in the top flight remains his only objective. "For our fans we are top of the league but for my players we need another five points," he said. — AFP

#### SIERRA LEONE REJECTS FIFA DEMAND TO REINSTATE FA

**FREETOWN:** Sierra Leone has rejected demands by FIFA to reinstate its dissolved football association, cautioning the world governing body yesterday to "respect national laws". FIFA has given the west African nation until Wednesday to comply with the directive or risk an immediate ban from all international competition.

"Our decision stands and it will not be changed," Ibrahim Bangura, of the National Sports Council (NSC), told reporters in the capital Freetown. "The Ministry of Sport and the Sports Council have the responsibility to govern sports in Sierra Leone and will stand by the decision to dissolve the Sierra Leone Football

Association (SLFA).

"FIFA must follow procedures and respect national laws. Our decision is final and cannot be changed or overturned by anyone outside our jurisdiction." Deputy sports minister Ismael Al-Sankoh Conteh said the NSC had been forced to take action last week after the SLFA dissolved a seven-man committee set up to identify delegates for the association's next con-

The NSC says the committee was set up by FIFA and endorsed by Sierra Leone's President Ernest Bai Koroma. FIFA outlaws government interference in the running of football and frequently suspends

national associations, with Kuwait, Nigeria and Cameroon among the most recent targets for sanctions.

Online sports news portal Football Sierra Leone printed a letter on Saturday it said was from acting FIFA secretary general Markus Kattner, warning SLFA general secretary Chris Kamara of a possible ban.

"The decisions of the National Sports Council appear to amount to government interference in the internal affairs of the SLFA," Kattner says in the letter. He warns that unless the NSC backs down, the matter will be referred to FIFA's Emergency Committee, which would almost certainly result in the SLFA being suspended.

"We would like to underline the dire effects a suspension could have on Sierra Leone football," Kattner says. "It would for instance mean that no team from Sierra Leone of any sort (including clubs) could have any international sporting contact."

SLFA president Isha Johansen urged the government to think again in a statement on Tuesday pleading for her organisation to be allowed to "create a culture of good governance".

"Striving to retain independence has been a huge challenge and has made the Sierra Leone football industry the focus of much international and national attention," she said. — AFP

# BUSINES JUSINES

Australia budget deficit blows out on the commodity price hit

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Mexico to hold auction for oil in violent states

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Etihad celebrates official opening of Abu Dhabi new cruise terminal

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#### OIL EDGES UP AS MULTI-YEAR LOWS TRIGGER BUYING

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KUWAIT: The Governor of Al-Ahmadi Governorate Sheikh Fawaz Al Sabah takes a group photo with Jassar Dakheel Al Jassar, Vice Chairman & Chief Executive Officer of Warba Bank and other top executives as Warba Bank inaugurates its new branch in Fahaheel. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat. (See Page 25)

# US RATE HIKE EXPECTED AS FED MEETING LOOMS

#### IS US ECONOMY SUFFICIENTLY STRONG? OFFICIALS WEIGH

**WASHINGTON:** The US Federal Reserve is widely expected to finally push interest rates up after seven years at the zero level when it opens a two-day policy meeting. The break, well-flagged by Fed officials including Chair Janet Yellen, would signify leaving behind the extraordinary crisis stance in monetary policy that aimed to restore the US economy's strength after the financial crisis and deep recession of 2008-2009. While an increase in the federal funds rate-which has not been moved higher in almost a decade-is not certain, Yellen strongly pointed to it at the beginning of December.

Since then, economic data, including job creation and consumer spending, have been strong enough to keep her from changing her view. The Fed's policy body, the Federal Open

Market Committee, will weigh over whether the US economy is sufficiently strong to weather increasing the fed funds rate from 0-0.25 percent to an expected 0.25-0.50 percent. The benchmark rate is a short-term peg for interbank lending which influences rates throughout the financial system.

Most importantly, expectations about its future level determine long-term interest rates on car and home loans, financing for businesses and foreign governments, and savers' deposits. The prospect of the launch of a campaign to raise the rate and tighten US monetary policy after years of cheap dollars has already stirred turmoil in the global financial system, hurting especially emerging-market economies with significant dollar exposure and weakening currencies.

It will come as leading central banks elsewhere, including China, Japan and the eurozone, are easing monetary policy to boost growth.

#### 'Calibrating' policy

But even with a 0.25 percentage point increase, US rates would still be extraordinarily low, far below what the Fed considers a "normal" monetary stance. Yellen has stressed that the Fed still wants to see more tightening in the labor market and to push inflation up, and that means continued low rates to support stronger growth. "The Fed is not trying to slow down a fast-growing economy or dampen runaway inflation," Sam Stovall, equity strategist at S&P Capital IQ. A hike would be "an attempt to recalibrate, not restrain." Extremely

weak inflation, though, is a key reason why many in the FOMC have resisted, arguing that there is time to wait before liftoff

there is time to wait before liftoff.

However, Yellen argued in a December 2 speech that if the Fed waits too long," we would likely end up having to tighten policy relatively abruptly to keep the economy from significantly overshooting both of our goals." With the first rate hike already presumed, the greater question is, what happens next? Yellen has repeatedly said that the liftoff from zero will initiate a series of increases whose pace will depend on how the economy reacts-slower if there is weakness, and faster if it picks up strength. For that reason, most eyes will be on what the Fed and Yellen say in statements and in forecasts about their expectations for eco-

fed funds rate at the end of 2016 and 2017.

"There is a large gap between financial markets' expectation of the path of rates and the FOMC's expectation," said Deutsche Bank in a client note. Deutsche Bank noted that markets on average are expecting just two increases next year while in the FOMC's September projections four increases to end at about 1.5 percent were indicated. If the Fed reiterates that stance, it could strengthen the dollar but also weigh down equity markets. The impact of sinking oil prices aside, however, markets were relatively subdued Monday going into the meeting. "Overall, markets are on edge," said David Levy of Kenjol Capital Management. "There is not a lot a reason to get ahead of the Fed and step and be a buyer today. — AFP

#### Why the Bitcoin's founder matters

LOS ANGELES: Since the founding of the cryptocurrency Bitcoin in 2009, its inventor - or inventors - have been shrouded in mystery. For six years, that individual or group has lurked behind the pseudonym Satoshi Nakamoto and hoarded a pile of the digital currency so large it might crash the market if sold today. The hunt for Bitcoin's secretive founder has taken a turn. The technology magazine Wired and the website Gizmodo both published investigative pieces this week that sorted through a trove of leaked (and possibly hacked) emails and documents that pointed to Craig Stephen Wright, a 44-year old Australian bitcoin entrepreneur living in a

posh suburb of Sydney.

While neither report was conclusive - no attempt at identification can be without the founder sending a message or moving bitcoins using Nakamoto's own encrypted signature, known as a PGP key - both raised startling circumstantial evidence that puts a bright spotlight on Wright. Attempts to reach Wright on Wednesday were unsuccessful. The hunt for Bitcoin's founder has become a cottage industry among some journalists. The chase has veered from a Finnish sociologist to a Japanese mathematician to a Japanese-American engineer, all of whom denied it - the latter after a car chase with



SYDNEY: This general view shows a house that police raided in Sydney where Australian entrepreneur Craig Wright reportedly lived with his family. Craig Wright has been identified by tech publications as possibly the mysterious founder of online cryptocurrency Bitcoin, shortly before his Sydney home was reportedly raided in a tax probe. — AFP

reporters that ended at the offices of The Associated Press in Los Angeles in March 2014.

Why anyone cares boils down to three key things: Bitcoin is designed for secure financial transactions that require no central authority no banks, no government regulators. That makes it attractive to off-the-grid types such as libertarians, people who want to evade tax authorities, and criminals, even though Bitcoin doesn't guarantee anonymity, since it documents every transaction in a public forum. Still, it attracts conspiracy theorists interested in the very conspiracy that created it.

"It's part of the mystery of Bitcoin," said James Angel, associate professor of finance at Georgetown University. "Usually when people invent something really cool, they're more than happy to take credit for it. Here, we have this obsessive anonymity. You kind of wonder, 'Who is Satoshi Nakamoto?"" Bitcoin is still working out kinks and problems, one of which is a dispute over an arbitrary cap on the number of bitcoins transactions that are processed each day by so-called miners who keep the system running. Some advocates would like Nakamoto to reemerge and resolve the conflict, even though the founder hasn't been involved for years.

Nakamoto's encrypted PGP key can unlock a huge stash of bitcoins - a million or so worth more than \$400 million, accounting for about 7 percent of all bitcoins in existence. No one has touched that bitcoin hoard. Should the real Nakamoto begin cashing in those bitcoins, it could destabilize the cryptocurrency. According to Nicholas Weaver, a researcher at the International Computer Science Institute in Berkeley, California, bitcoins are thinly traded. Only about \$1.4 million in real dollars flow into the system every day to buy the roughly 3,600 bitcoins created by "miners" who run intensive computations necessary to keep track of bitcoin transactions in exchange for new bitcoins. —AP



RENTON: Boeing's first 737 MAX named the 'Spirit of Renton' is parked on the tarmac at the Boeing factory in Renton, Washington. The latest version of Boeing's best-selling 737, introduced in the mid-1960s is due to make its first flight early next year and reach customers in 2017. It will burn an estimated 14 percent less fuel per seat than current 737s and fly farther, allowing airlines to open new routes. — AFP

# BOEING UNVEILS A \$14BN SHARE BUYBACK PROGRAM

**NEW YORK:** Boeing has unveiled a \$14 billion share buyback program and boosted its quarterly dividend as the US aerospace giant shared its bounty with investors from strong demand for its jetliners. The Chicago-based company said it would pay investors a \$1.09 dividend for the quarter under way, a 20 percent increase from a year ago. It noted

that it had raised the dividend for five straight years.
In addition, Boeing will embark on a new \$14 billion share repurchase program that replaces the \$12 billion buyback approved last December, of which \$5.25 billion remained. The company said repurchasing was expected to resume in January and likely would be made over the next two to

"Once again, we are demonstrating our commitment to a balanced cash deployment strategy that fuels investments in our people, innovation and growth, and returns significant value to our shareholders," said Dennis Muilenburg, Boeing president and chief executive, in a statement. Investors welcomed the bonanza, pushing shares in the Dow member up 1.2 percent to \$144.75 in after-hours trade. Boeing has benefited from a strong civil aviation market as airlines, reaping cost savings from lower fuel prices, update and expand their fleets. Boeing reported a \$485 billion backlog of nearly 5,700 commercial airplane orders at the end of the third quarter and said it had delivered 580 planes in the year to September. — AFP



# CHINA READY TO MODERATE SHARP OFFSHORE YUAN FALLS

#### PBOC STEERS AWAY FROM DOLLAR-YUAN RATE

BEIJING: China's central bank is on guard against a sudden attack on the yuan in offshore markets, and is ready to intervene if the gap between offshore and onshore exchange rates becomes destabilizing, sources involved in policy discussions say. Though the People's Bank of China (PBOC) wants to avoid a sharp depreciation in the currency, it is comfortable with further weakening of the yuan against the dollar, policy insiders said, especially as the US Federal Reserve is expected to raise interest rates on Wednesday for the first time since 2006. "An interest rate rise by the Fed could put big pressure on the yuan ... so it's a good thing to allow the yuan to depreciate modestly to help release the pressure," said a senior economist at a top government think-tank.

But the bank, which devalued the yuan by an initial 2 percent in August when it introduced a marketbased mechanism to determine the daily opening rate, was alive to the dangers of more abrupt falls, he added. "A sharp yuan depreciation is not what the PBOC is happy to see ... If that happens, the PBOC will intervene ... because sharp yuan falls could fuel capital outflows and financial risks." "The government still has various means to manage the yuan exchange rate," said another influential economist who advises policymakers. "The central bank may still intervene to preonshore and offshore markets."

The bank indicated late on Friday that it wanted markets to stop fixating on the dollar-yuan rate, which is at its lowest since July 2011, and launched a new index measuring the yuan, also known as the renminbi (RMB), against a basket of currencies. "We should use the RMB index to show that the RMB has gained against most currencies, although it has depreciated against the dollar," said a policy insider at the Commerce Ministry. "We should find the yuan's equilibrium exchange rate between the dollar, euro and yen," he added.

#### Mind the gap

A growing problem of the yuan's depreciation offshore - including a 2 percent fall this month alone - is that a wide gap is opening up with the onshore rate, which is partly sheltered from market forces by China's capital controls. "The gap is not sustainable," said the think-tank insider, since it could lead to more capital outflows as trading companies sold dollars offshore to get a better rate. With China's growth at its weakest in 25 years, it can ill afford further capital outflows, nor for its currency to keep pace with a rising dollar, which would suck money out of the slowing economy.

The growing spread could also disrupt corporate vent sharp fluctuations in the yuan exchange rate - on behavior, such as trade financing on commodities

imports, which has benefited by arbitraging lower dollar interest rates offshore. Two senior oil traders said that was now on the decline because of the likely exchange rate loss. "I believe the PBOC is still watching. It hopes the offshore rate could get closer to the onshore rate. If the big gap persists, we cannot rule out fresh interventions," the think-tank source said. The gap between onshore and offshore rates also creates a diplomatic headache for China, less than a month since its currency was accepted by the International Monetary Fund into its Special Drawing Rights (SDR) basket of reserve currencies.

Before the IMF decision, the PBOC had intervened offshore to minimize the gap. "If the onshore-offshore spread is too wide, China will lose credibility after joining the SDR; it will have two currencies," said Zhou Hao, China economist at Commerzbank in Singapore. That would give ammunition to critics, especially in the United States, who complain that China keeps its currency low to support otherwise uncompetitive exporters. With both the think-tank and Commerce Ministry source forecasting further currency weakness of at least 3 percent and perhaps as high as 6 percent against the dollar next year, it is little wonder that China is aiming to steer market attention away from the dollar rate and towards its new basket index. "This could help avoid currency wars," said the latter. —Reuters

#### ALEX APPOINTED MEIRS CHAIRMAN

**KUWAIT:** The Middle East Investor Relations Society (MEIRS) has appointed Alex MacDonald-Vitale, who has headed regional IR at HSBC Middle East for the past five years, as its new Chairman for the region. Alex replaces Oliver Schutzmann, who has been Chairman since 2014. Oliver will remain active with MEIRS as Board Member. Speaking of his appointment, Clemence Piot, General Manager, MEIRS, said: "The role of Investor Relations (IR) has become increasingly important in driving economic growth for the region and we are pleased to welcome Alex as the new Chairman of the Middle East Investor Relations Society. The appointment comes at a crucial time, as we work to help



**Alex MacDonald-Vitale** 

further develop the IR profession and evolution of the region's capital markets and its economy."

MEIRS, an independent and nonprofit organization, aims to enhance the reputation of the Middle East's capital markets through upholding international best practice across the investor relations ("IR") profession. Working alongside and supporting regional stock exchanges and regulators, MEIRS seeks to improve the efficiency of Middle East capital markets and is the only organization providing accreditation for the IR profession in the region.

Alex has been working with HSBC in Dubai since 2010, heading the Bank's investor relations department for the MENA region. Prior to

that, he worked with HSBC's associate SABB, where he established the first bank Investor Relations function in Saudi Arabia. Alex has worked closely with MEIRS since 2010, leading on the Regulatory Development Committee and other initiatives.

"I am honored to be taking a leadership role in MEIRS, and to continue supporting members and stakeholders in upholding best practice in corporate governance and IR across the Middle East. I look forward to further developing MEIRS' regional footprint, providing a dynamic platform to support and enable our membership to meet the rapidly evolving demands of regulation and market practice." said MacDonald-Vitale, Chairman, MEIRS.

#### AHLI UNITED BANK ORGANIZES SEMINAR ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY IN UNITED KINGDOM

**KUWAIT:** With its concern to keep its clients interested in the residential property sector in the UK informed. Ahli United Bank organized recently a seminar in cooperation with the renowned London-based law office, Charles Russel Speeches, to shed light on the latest developments in UK tax regulations. Such changes commenced some years ago impacting residential properties owned by residents outside the UK. The seminar presented the most prominent anticipated changes to be issued in 2017, including inheritance tax on offshore companies.

In his welcoming remarks, Medhat Tawfik, General Manager of Private Banking and Wealth Management at Ahli United Bank, asserted the Bank's willingness to organize such seminars on a periodic basis to enable clients of Private Banking to benefit from the best legal expertise in the field and which helps broaden the understanding of clients interested in UK investment. Tawfik added: Ahli United Bank will continue its efforts to avail of all information and assistance to its clients to enable them to own UK properties minimizing the potential risks that come with owning such property, especially the implications of the tax regime.

On the other hand, Piers Master, partner in Charles Russel, addressed the issue of UK taxes relevant to Kuwaiti citizens who already own or intend to invest in residential and commercial property in the UK. He clarified that that UK still offers a competitive environment in terms of tax conditions

taxes including land stamp duty, capital gains tax, income tax and inheritance tax. Piers Master drew attention to an important proposal presented during the discussion of the Summer budget on July 8, 2015 which specified a new inheritance tax pertinent to British residential properties under the offshore



despite the introduction of new and more onerous tax laws in the past few years while indicating the possibility of avoiding the legal and financial consequences to these changes by obtaining proper and sound legal advice.

The seminar also addressed the anticipated inheritance tax which concerns Kuwaiti investors and advised clients not to take any precipitative action at this stage but to explore and discuss the issues with a specialist adviser. The seminar focused on the main UK

regime which would become effective in April 2017. The seminar clarified that residents outside the UK, who own a residential property through an offshore company, are not currently subject to any liability towards inheritance tax on properties. However, starting April 2017, these properties will be subject to inheritance tax for the first time in addition to the annual tax on offshore

dwellings introduced in 2013. This means that if a non-British resident passes away while owning a property in the UK through offshore companies, beneficiaries will be subject to the inheritance tax in the amount of 40% of the total value of property after deducting 325,000 pounds sterling exempted from tax. This exemption amount applies to the value of all assets inside the United Kingdom, he clarified. The seminar added: Parties affected by the proposed changes should review their investments during 2016 when the new laws will become clearer, indicating that some investors will defer from the offshore model ownership. Others who own rented properties might obtain tax privileges.

Fahad Abu Aisha of Berkeley Real Estate Group in London shed light on the real estate market in London and the investment vision for the real estate sector in the coming period. He highlighted the main real estate projects in the British capital. Tawfik concluded the seminar and said: Those who are interested in owning real estate in the United Kingdom should seek specialized advice to address the anticipated inheritance tax implications. He stressed the importance of clients' knowledge of fundamental laws relevant to their real estate investments to avoid any negative consequences for the projected tax changes.

### 'الوطنى National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report At 02:00 PM Previous Day

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Chan	ge	Daily Performance %	Yearty Performance %
Dow Jones	17,265.21	17,368.50	103.29	<b>A</b>	0.60	-2.55
NASDAQ	4,933.40	4,952.20	18.80	<b>A</b>	0.38	4.56
S&P 500	2,012.37	2,021.94	9.57	<b>A</b>	0.48	-1.86
Financial Times	5,874.06	5,972.91	98.85	<b>A</b>	1.68	-9.03
DAX	10,139.34	10,336.65	197.31	<b>A</b>	1.95	5.42
CAC 40	4,473.07	4,565.52	92.45	<b>A</b>	2.07	6.85
Swiss	8,375.31	8,498.61	123.30	<b>A</b>	1.47	-5.40
Nikkei 225	18,883.42	18,565.90	-317.52	•	-1.68	6.39
Topix	1,527.88	1,502.55	-25.33	•	-1.66	6.75
Hang Seng	21,309.85	21,274.37	-35.48	*	-0.17	-9.87
Straits Times	2,815.04	2,815.52	0.48	<b>A</b>	0.02	-16.33

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Chan	ige	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait	5,602.38	5,616.18	13.80	<b>A</b>	0.25	-16.66
Saudi Arabia	6,686.27	6,762.47	76.20	<b>A</b>	1.14	-19.76
Dubai	2,916.00	2,919.64	3.64	<b>A</b>	0.12	-22.73
Abu Dhabi	4,026.23	4,014.92	-11.31	*	-0.28	-11.10
Bahrain	1,206.70	1,197.06	-9.65	•	-0.80	-15.41
Qatar	9,742.78	9,789.80	47.02	<b>A</b>	0.48	-20.70
Oman	5,403.67	5,365.61	-38.06	•	-0.70	-14.81
Lebanon	1,157.46	1,153.86	-3.60	•	-0.31	-2.23
Jordan	2,080.13	2,087.06	6.93	<b>A</b>	0.33	-3.94
Egypt	6,408.12	6,406.57	-1.55	•	-0.02	-28.21
Могоссо	8,865.63	8,874.24	8.61	<b>A</b>	0.10	-7.84
Tunisia	4,934.17	4,927.07	-7.10	*	-0.14	-3.06

Currency	Kuwaiti Dinar	Saudi Riyal	US Dollar	Euro	Sterling Pound	Swiss Franc	Japanese Yen	Australiar Dollar
Kuwait Dinar		12.2669	3.2830	2.9829	2.1674	3.2298	397.34	4.5189
Saudi Riyal	0.08152		0.2676	0.2432	0.1767	0.2633	32.39	0.3684
US Dollar	0.30460	3.7365		0.9086	0.6602	0.9838	121.03	1.3765
Euro	0.33524	4.1124	1.1006		0.7266	1.0830	133.22	1.5154
Sterling Pound	0.46138	5.6597	1.5147	1.3763		1.4903	183.34	2.0857
Swiss Franc	0.30962	3.7980	1.0165	0.9234	0.6710		123.06	1.3991
Japanese Yen	0.00252	0.0309	0.0083	0.0075	0.0055	0.0081		0.0114
Australian Dollar	0.22129	2.7146	0.7265	0.6599	0.4795	0.7147	87.93	

Currency	US Dollar	Kuwaiti Dollar	Saudi Riyal	Bahraini Dinar	Qatari Riyal	Omani Riyal	Emirates Dirham	Egyptian Pound
US Dollar		0.30460	3.7365	0.3740	3.6264	0.3831	3.6574	7.7201
Kuwaiti Dinar	3.2830		12.2669	1.2279	11.9054	1.2578	12.0072	25.3450
Saudi Riyal	0.2676	0.08152		0.1001	0.9705	0.1025	0.9788	2.0661
Bahraini Dinar	2.6737	0.81439	9.9901		9.6957	1.0244	9.7786	20.6409
Qatari Riyal	0.2758	0.08400	1.0304	0.1031		0.1057	1.0085	2.1289
Omani Riyal	2.6101	0.79503	9.7526	0.9762	9.4652		9.5461	20.1501
Emirates Dirham	0.2734	0.08328	1.0216	0.1023	0.9915	0.1048		2.1108
Egyptian Pound	0.1295	0.03946	0.4840	0.0484	0.4697	0.0496	0.4738	

Currency	1-Week	1-Month	3-Month	6-Month	1-Year
Kuwaiti Dinar	0.00	1.13	1.38	1.56	1.88
US Dollar	0.29	0.34	0.51	0.74	1.06
Euro	-0.26	-0.19	-0.12	-0.02	0.06
Sterling Pound	0.48	0.50	0.58	0.74	1.05
Swiss Franc	-0.82	-0.80	-0.77	-0.71	-0.62
Australian Dollar	2.06	2.08	2.06	2.04	2.00
Canadian Dollar	0.00	0.84	0.84	0.92	0.97

1.67

-0.04

1.28

2.25

0.65

1.92

0.96

-0.33

0.62

Index	Previous Close	Last Price	Char	nge	Daily Performance %	Yearly Performance %
Kuwait Oil	29.77	30.71	0.94	<b>A</b>	3.16	-71.75
Brent	36.62	37.70	1.08		2.95	-51.47
West Texas	36.36	36.26	-0.10	•	-0.28	-47.00
Gold	1062.60	1065.10	2.50	<b>A</b>	0.24	-11.42
Silver	13.70	13.75	0.05		0.34	-14.64

Kuwaiti Dinar

Lebanese Pound

Nigerian Naira

Omani Riyal

Qatar Riyal

Saudi Riyal

Syrian Pound

Turkish Lira

**UAF Dirhams** 

Yemeni Rival

0.224717

Tunisian Dinar

Moroccan Dirhams

#### **EXCHANGE RATES**

#### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

	<b>ASIAN COUNTRIES</b>
Japanese Yen	2.511
Indian Rupees	4.544
Pakistani Rupees	2.920
Srilankan Rupees	2.123
Nepali Rupees	2.842
Singapore Dollar	216.100
Hongkong Dollar	39.232
Bangladesh Taka	3.849
Philippine Peso	6.424
Thai Baht	8.451

GCC COUNTRIES Saudi Riyal 81.123 Qatari Riyal 83.565 Omani Riyal 790.150 Bahraini Dinar 807.890 **UAE Dirham** 

#### **ARAB COUNTRIES**

Egyptian Pound - Cash Egyptian Pound - Transfer 38.897 Yemen Riyal/for 1000 Tunisian Dinar 151.270 Jordanian Dinar 428.390 Lebanese Lira/for 1000 2.027 2.168 Syrian Lira Morocco Dirham 31.345

#### PFAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

EUROPEAN	N & AMERICAN CO
US Dollar Transfer	304.050
Euro	334.760
Sterling Pound	463.370
Canadian dollar	222.100
Turkish lira	102.530
Swiss Franc	309.940
Australian Dollar	220.130
US Dollar Buying	302.850

**GOLD** 20 Gram 219.040 10 Gram 112.210 5 Gram 56.79

#### **UAE EXCHANGE CENTRE WLL**

-		
COUNTRY	SELL DRAFT	SELL CASH
Australian Dollar	208.92	
Canadian Dollar	224.82	
Swiss Franc	313.81	
Euro	337.20	
US Dollar	304.15	
Sterling Pound	465.50	
Japanese Yen	2.55	
Bangladesh Taka	3.853	
Indian Rupee	4.555	
Sri Lankan Rupee	2.128	
Nepali Rupee	2.842	
Pakistani Rupee	2.923	
UAE Dirhams	0.08277	
Bahraini Dinar	0.8083	
Egyptian Pound	0.03875	
Jordanian Dinar	0.4326	
Omani Riyal	0.7898	
Qatari Riyal	0.08386	
Saudi Rival	0.08107	

#### DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	304.300
Canadian Dollar	223.610
Sterling Pound	462.955
Euro	334.875
Swiss Frank	300.725
Bahrain Dinar	805.040

UAE Dirhams	83.090
Qatari Riyals	84.310
Saudi Riyals	81.825
Jordanian Dinar	428.910
Egyptian Pound	38.751
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.126
Indian Rupees	4.537
Pakistani Rupees	2.920
Bangladesh Taka	3.846
Philippines Pesso	6.431
Cyprus pound	579.600
Japanese Yen	3.505
Syrian Pound	2.610
Nepalese Rupees	3.830
Malaysian Ringgit	71.210
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	47.600
Thai Bhat	9.375
Turkish Lira	102.970

Canadian Dollar

#### RAUDAIN EVOLANCE COMPANY

DAHRA	AIN EXCHANGE COM	MPANY
COUNTRY	SELL CASH Europe	SELLDRAFT
British Pound	0.453924	0.462924
Czech Korune	0.004365	0.016365
Danish Krone	0.040481	0.045781
Euro	0.329187	0.337187
Norwegian Krone	0.031064	0.036264
Romanian Leu	0.074170	0.074170
Slovakia	0.009076	0.019076
Swedish Krona	0.031819	0.036819
Swiss Franc	0.302412	0.312612
Turkish Lira	0.098036	0.108336
	Australasia	
Australian Dollar	0.211941	0.223441
New Zealand Dollar	0.200176	0.209676
	America	

0.216217

US Dollars	0.299800	0.204200
US Dollars US Dollars Mint	0.299800	0.304300 0.304300
US Dollars Wilnt	0.300300	0.304300
	Asia	
Bangladesh Taka	0.003457	0.004057
Chinese Yuan	0.045875	0.049375
Hong Kong Dollar	0.037120	0.039870
Indian Rupee	0.004324	0.004714
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000017	0.000023
Japanese Yen	0.002427	0.002607
Kenyan Shilling	0.002968	0.002968
Korean Won	0.000246	0.000261
Malaysian Ringgit	0.066841	0.072841
Nepalese Rupee	0.002881	0.003051
Pakistan Rupee	0.002696	0.002976
Philippine Peso	0.006425	0.006705
Sierra Leone	0.000068	0.000074
Singapore Dollar	0.211974	0.217974
South African Rand	0.014040	0.022540
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001763	0.002343
Taiwan	0.009137	0.009317
Thai Baht	0.008112	0.008662
	Arab	
Bahraini Dinar	0.799211	0.807211
Egyptian Pound	0.036164	0.039290
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000200	0.000260
Jordanian Dinar	0.424634	0.432134

1.000000

0.000151

0.022067

0.082762

0.080403

0.001288

0.147938

0.098036

0.081760

0.001374

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0.046067

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0.081103

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0.108336

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30-Year

2.98

1.43

2.59

#### News

in brief

#### 'Doomsday vault' to receive two deposits

OSLO: Two new consignments of crop seeds will be deposited next year in the "doomsday vault" built in an Arctic mountainside to safeguard global supplies The vault - which opened on the Svalbard archipelago between Norway and the North pole in 2008 - is designed to protect crop seeds such as beans, rice and wheat against the worst cataclysms of nuclear war or disease. It already has more than 860,000 samples, from almost all nations. Even if the power were to fail, the vault would stay frozen and sealed for at least 200 years. "The seed vault is the back-up of the back-up," said Cierra Martin, a spokeswoman for the Crop Trust, the Bonn-based organization which manages the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. She said two deposits were planned for next year, but that the details of the deposits were as yet unclear. "The deposits are due in March and May," she said. To protect the seeds, the vault is rarely opened. Syria's civil war prompted the first withdrawal of seeds from the vault in September, following a request by the International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA). ICARDA moved its headquarters to Beirut from Aleppo in Syria in 2012 because of the conflict.

#### **DP World to invest** \$1.9 billion in China

**DUBAI:** Dubai ports operator DP World will invest \$1.9 billion in China, according to the Twitter account of the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi. The Twitter post did not elaborate and DP World could not immediately be reached for comment. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al-Nahayan is on a three-day official visit to Beijing, during which a host of business deals have been announced between the United Arab Emirates and China. DP World has three ports in China-Qingdao, Tianjin and Yantai-according to its website.



BERLIN: People walk past stands of a Christmas market in Berlin yesterday. — AFP

#### **Investor sentiment rises** in robust Germany: ZEW

FRANKFURT: Investor sentiment in Germany rose for the second month in a row in December, amid confidence Europe's biggest economy is robust enough to withstand the refugee crisis and the economic slowdown in China, a leading survey said yesterday. The investor confidence index calculated by the ZEW economic institute rose to 16.1 points from just 10.4 points a month earlier, the think tank said in a statement. "While the large influx of refugees is above all a major challenge facing policy-makers and civil society in Germany, the economic slowdown in emerging markets is exerting pressure on the German export industry. Overall, however, confidence is growing that the German economy is sufficiently robust to meet these challenges in the coming year," said ZEW president Clemens Fuest. For the survey, ZEW questions analysts and institutional investors about their current assessment of the eco nomic situation in Germany, as well as their expectations for the coming months.

#### Egypt Central Bank sold over \$750 million to clear imports

CAIRO: Egypt's Central Bank sold between \$750 million and \$1 billion in an exceptional dollar auction on Sunday, the head of the Egyptian Federation of Industries Mohamed El Sewedy said yesterday. Egypt's central bank injected the foreign currency liquidity into the banking system on Sunday in a surprise operation, the latest in a series of steps aimed at ending a foreign exchange shortage that has seen goods pile up at ports. The central bank has not announced the exact quantity of dollars sold to banks and bankers said each bank was only aware of the share it would be receiving. Sewedy told Reuters the dollars sold were directed at smaller importers with needs of less than \$750,000. and prioritized importers of foodstuffs, medicine and raw materials. Sunday's auction follows a similar measure in November that Sewedy said supplied an initial \$1 billion to banks to cover their dollar overdrafts.

#### S Korean tycoon jailed for fraud, tax evasion

SEOUL: Ailing South Korean business tycoon Lee Jay-Hyun was sentenced to two and a half years in prison yesterday, following a court review of his trial on charges ranging from embezzlement to tax evasion. Lee, the head of the South Korean food and entertainment giant CJ Group, was also slapped with a heavy fine. "The court finds it necessary to send a clear message that such economic crimes won't go unpunished," the high court in Seoul said in passing the sentence. The court also handed down 25.2 billion won (\$21 million) in fines. The tycoon will not go straight to prison as the court granted a stay of sentence pending hospital treatment. Lee, who has undergone a kidney transplant, claims to suffer from multiple illnesses, including a degenerative neurological disease. The businessman was initially sentenced to four years in prison in 2014 by a district court. He served just 50 days before being released for treatment.





AHMADABAD: Indian vendors prepare garlands of marigold at a flower market in Ahmadabad, India yesterday. — AP

# UK inflation turns positive

#### British households better placed to cope with rate hike

rebounded slightly in November after two months in negative territory, aided by smaller-than-expected falls in the prices of alcoholic drinks, tobacco and transport. The 12month Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose by 0.1 percent last month, after registering minus 0.1 percent in both September and October, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said in a statement. "Although the prices of many items continue to fall, because they are falling at a slower rate than

**LONDON:** Britain's annual inflation rate is a slight rise in headline CPI," added Philip Gooding, head of ONS, in the statement. The rise in inflation took CPI into positive territory for the first time since July. However, the rate has remained at or close to zero for 10 months in a row in the longest run of flat or falling prices since records began, dented by collapsing oil prices.

Meanwhile, Britain's first rate hike in nearly a decade should have little impact on spending as households are better placed to cope with higher borrowing costs than last at the same time last year, the overall effect year, a survey commissioned by the Bank of

England showed yesterday. British households' debt represents a hefty 135 percent of their income, making them potentially sensitive to a rise in interest rates, which financial markets pencil in for late 2016 or early 2017. But the survey does not foresee an "unusually large effect on household spending".

It estimates a 1 percentage point rise in interest rates could reduce aggregate spending by around 0.5 percent as borrowers reduce spending by more than savers increase it. Households have been able to reduce their debts as a share of income in recent years, helped in part by historically low interest rates. The BoE has kept its benchmark rate at a record low of 0.5 percent since 2009.

"Modest improvements in balance sheet positions imply that households are in a slightly better position to cope with an increase in interest rates than they were a year ago," the survey of around 6,000 British households conducted by NMG Consulting said. The survey results also suggest that government spending cuts would continue to weigh on household spending. — Agencies

# AUSTRALIA BUDGET DEFICIT BLOWS OUT ON THE COMMODITY PRICE HIT

**SYDNEY:** Slumping commodity prices and lower tax receipts will see Australia's budget deficit balloon to Aus\$37.4 billion (US\$27.2 billion) this year, Treasurer Scott Morrison said yesterday as he downgraded economic growth forecasts. Australia's resources-driven economy has enjoyed more than 20 years of growth but it is now transitioning out of an unprecedented mining investment boom, and the going has been bumpy with revenues under pressure.

The conservative government's mid-year economic update showed the deficit this financial year will blow out from the Aus\$35.1 billion forecast in the May budget, when Joe Hockey was treasurer. This is largely due to falling commodity prices, especially iron ore which accounts for a large part of the nation's export income and now stands at around US\$38 per tonne-US\$10 lower than the average predicted in May.

Slow wages growth also contributed, hammering tax receipts. The government had previously aimed to return the budget to balance in 2019-20, but has now pushed this back a year. Economic growth is projected to come in at "a more realistic" 2.5 percent in 2015/16, a quarter of a percentage point lower than the previous estimate, and is expected to be 2.75 percent in 2016/17 a significant deterioration from the 3.25 percent forecast in May. However, unemployment forecasts rebounded in one of the few bright spots, with the jobless rate set to peak at six percent next year instead of the previously expected 6.5 percent.

#### 'Budget disappointment'

"Despite revenue writedowns of Aus\$34 billion caused by falling commodity prices, a declining terms of trade, weaker global growth and the adoption of more realistic domestic growth outlook, we continue patiently and responsibly on the path to budget balance," said Morrison. "I want to stress those words: Patiently and responsibly. "We need to take a safe and careful route and one that does not put at risk our jobs and growth," he added.

"Our plan is straightforward-responsibly restraining expenditure while supporting economic growth to lift revenues." HSBC chief economist Paul Bloxham said the



SYDNEY: A ferry passes Sydney's skyline from Fort Denison in Sydney Harbor. Slumping commodity prices and lower tax receipts will see Australia's budget deficit balloon to 37.4 billion AUD (27.2 billion USD) this year. — AFP

mid-year update repeated the "pattern of continued budget disappointment". "There will be a formidable challenge in terms of getting back to an eventual budget surplus," he said.

"A lot can happen between now and 2020/21 - anything can happen." Morrison said major savings on welfare cheats and changes to family day care and aged care would help offset much of the new spending since the budget, including Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's recently announced innovation agenda and an

increased humanitarian refugee intake. ANZ said in a research note the government had rightly taken remedial steps to offset new policy expenditure with savings. "The government has not fully offset softer revenue though, which is why the deficit widens," it said. "At a time when national income is being damaged by softening commodity prices, this is likely a wise course of action. To have tightened fiscal policy or even left it in neutral would have placed most of the burden of lower commodity prices on the private sector." — AFP

#### British Airways threatens to shift business abroad

**LONDON:** The boss of British Airways' parent group has threatened to develop the business abroad rather than in Britain after the government further delayed a decision on expanding airport capacity. Prime Minister David Cameron had promised a decision on where to expand airport capacity in southeast England by the end of the year, but last week said no decision would be taken until at least the middle of next year.

The government said it needed to assess environmental impact, but business leaders who have lobbied hard for a third runway at London's Heathrow, Europe's busiest airport, condemned the delay as "gutless". "If the government continues to dither over a new runway, then I'll move my business elsewhere," Willie Walsh, head of International Airlines Group (IAG), wrote in Britain's Daily Mail newspaper.

"We now have airlines in Dublin and Madrid, and can expand our business there, supporting the strengthening Irish and Spanish economies." Irish carrier Aer Lingus and Spain's Iberia are also part of IAG. Walsh accused the government of choosing short-term political gain over a longterm boost for British business. While in opposition in 2009, Cameron had opposed adding a third runway to Heathrow, "no ifs, no buts". However, a commission on boosting British air capacity later recommended he do so. A U-turn would be embarrassing for his government, and also poses further risks given a prominent member of his party has threatened to resign should a third runway be built.

Zac Goldsmith, who represents a constituency near Heathrow, is running for London mayor in elections next year, and his resignation would trigger a by-election that could turn into a referendum on Heathrow's expansion. "Politicians have no accountability. They're not interested in making decisions that will benefit the country if



LONDON: Photo shows an aircraft preparing to land at London's Heathrow Airport. — AFP

it's likely they'll lose votes over it," Walsh said. Heathrow lost its crown as the world's busiest airport for international passenger traffic to Dubai last year, while Turkey is planning massive airport capacity expansion in Istanbul.

Environmentalists and those living near Heathrow are fiercely opposed to its expansion given hundreds of homes would have to be demolished and the extra traffic could mean Britain misses emissions targets. Walsh said he did not necessarily advocate expanding Heathrow because under current plans the projected costs are too high and the bill would have to borne by passengers. "This is not just fighting talk-we have the practical ability to expand elsewhere," he concluded. "This means Spain and Ireland will get the economic benefits and new jobs from our expansion plans, while the UK government twiddles its thumbs and watches as the world progresses around it." — AFP

# IL EDGES UP AS MULTI-YEAR LOWS TRIGGER BUYING

LONDON: Oil prices edged higher yesterday as a slump to near 11-year lows in the previous session triggered investors' buying appetite. Brent crude, the global benchmark, traded up 60 cents at \$38.52 a barrel at 1117 GMT, after touching an intraday high of \$38.95. US crude was trading at \$36.82, up 51 cents. "It's technical buying. It's pretty obvious shorts started to take profit when Brent prices dropped down to the 2008 low," said Tamas Varga, oil analyst at London-based PVM Associates.

The dollar also slipped to a seven-week low against a basket of currencies, incentivizing the purchase of dollar-denominated oil contracts. In the United States, now the world's biggest oil producer, congressional leaders inched closer on Monday to agreeing to repeal a 40-year old US oil export ban. If the United States started exporting large volumes of excess oil it would alleviate pressure on its oil swelling storage tanks. "We read any lifting of the US export ban as a significant structural

change...Lifting the ban could help to clear US crude oil stocks," said said Olivier Jakob, an analyst at consultant Petromatrix.

OPEC Secretary General, Abdullah Al-Badri, said yesterday current low oil prices would not continue and may rise in a few months or a year. Nevertheless, bearish sentiment remained strong with prices hovering around 7-year lows. An OPEC decision to abandon setting a production ceiling for the oil cartel, as well as a likely rise in Iranian oil exports after sanctions since the OPEC meeting on Dec 4. Credit ratings agency Moody's said yesterday it had lowered its 2016 Brent crude oil estimate to \$43 a barrel from \$53 on a the outlook for a prolonged oversupply.

With OPEC pumping strongly and US drillers keep producing large amounts of crude, the Brent/WTI premium has nearly halved over the last week to \$1.8 per barrel. Oil markets

are lifted, fuelled a 16 percent sell-off usually see strong demand towards year end as the northern hemisphere enters its peak winter heating demand season. Yet an unusually mild start to winter, in part due to the El Nino weather phenomenon, has limited heating demand. Also looming large is an expected increase in US interest rates this week. Crude typically falls as the US currency strengthens since it becomes more expensive for buyers paying in other currencies.—Reuters

#### **Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report** Tuesday 15 December 2015 Index **Last Closing** High Change Closing Low 5,602.38 5,616.80 5,592.09 100,533,692 15,067,174 2,908

Price index			51.55a	5,616.18		5,602.38		ional	616.80	5,592.09	- 25	Volume		
Weighted Index KSX 15	(		0.31	381.58 903.25		381.27 902.71			82.86 11.23	380.38 902.54	_	Value (KWD)		
				990.20		100000000000000000000000000000000000000				170,73,500				
Security	High	Low	Volume	Trades Value (KD)	Trades	Last	CI	hange	Security	High	Low	Volume	Trade	
MARIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	114	_	0.0	зокоик	40.0	39.0	1212981	47	
IKARUS IPG	92 242	87 242	400,111 1,899	35,995 460	23	92 242	*	1.0 -6.0	URC	57 95	56 95	796,682 58,807	44 5,	
NAPESCO	590	590	10	6	1	590	÷	-30.0	NRE	86	84	796,650	67	
ENERGYH	43.0	41.0	1,051	43	2	43.0		-0.5	SRE	0.0	0.0	0		
GPI	55	53	2,591,422	138,406	79	53	<b>A</b>	1.0	TAM	650	610	22,584	14	
ARAR Oil & Gas	124	120	20,940 3,015,433	2,553 177,462	5 112	122 781.32	¥	6.0 -10.36	MASSALEH	0.0 59	0.0 59	10	_	
			0,010,100	111,102		101102		10.00	ARABREC	29.5	29.0	139,186	4,	
KFOUC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	230	-	0.0	ERESCO	66	62	40,681	2,	
BPCC	530	500	11,923	6,295	0	530	A	20.0	MABANEE	930	930	798,260	742	
ALKOUT ALQURAIN	186	0.0	46,174	8,588	8	610 186	¥	-2.0	INVESTORS	85 26.0	85 24.0	16,000 16,147,362	407	
Basic Materials			58,097	14,883	12	992.43	A	9.65	IRC	29.0	29.0	7,311	2	
									ALTIJARIA	81	80	1,043,535	83	
KCEM REFRI	390	390 0.0	4,071	1,588	0	390 320	_	-20.0 0.0	SANAM	0.0	0.0 72	0 70,416	5,	
CABLE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	370	22	0.0	AQAR	0.0	0.0	0	- 0,	
SHIP	146	140	180	26	2	146	•	-2.0	ALAQARIA	21.5	21.0	5,854	1	
PCEM PAPER	1,120	1,060 390	111,811	120,428	14	1,100	A	20.0	MAZAYA ADNC	104	104	532,741	55	
MRC	415 0.0	0.0	5,005	1,952	0	415 79	_	15.0 0.0	THEMAR	28.5	27.5	5,108,100	143	
ACICO	300	300	3,100	930	4	300		20.0	TIJARA	43.0	40.5	140,125	5,	
GGMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	530	_	0.0	TAAMEER	24.0	23.5	10,100	2	
HCC KPAK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	132 390	-	0.0	ARKAN	0.0 178	0.0 178	3,000	5	
KBMMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	_	0.0	ABYAAR	30.0	28.0	1,254,000	36	
NICBM	238	238	10,250	2,440	3	238	_	0.0	MUNSHAAT	82	81	118,175	9,	
EQUIPMENT	59	57	818.339	46.688	23	59		2.0	FIRSTDUBAI	45.0	42.0	290,020	12	
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	99	1000	0.0	KBT	42.5	41.0	303,304	12,	
GYPSUM SALBOOKH	0.0	0.0 82	10,200	0 837	3	102 82	_	0.0	MENA	23.0	23.0	25,000	5	
AGLTY	500	490	1,180,736	584,504	48	495	A	5.0	ALMUDON	30.5	29.5	841,290	25,	
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	216	-	0.0	MARAKEZ	0.0	0.0	0		
CLEANING	39.0	39.0	30,000	1,170	2	39.0	1000	0.0	REMAL	36.0	33.0	71,000	2,	
CITYGROUP KGL	0.0 43.5	0.0 43.5	0 116,175	0 5,054	8	380 43.5	_	1.0	MASHAER Real Estate	0.0	0.0	29,853,174	1,73	
KCPC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	218	_	0.0	1000 2000			20,000,00	.,	
HUMANSOFT	970	950	2,000	1,925	3	950	•	-30.0	KINV	93	93	20,000	1,0	
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	204	_	0.0	FACIL	178	178	10,000	1,7	
SAFWAN GFC	0.0 47.5	0.0 42.5	149,000	0 6,481	60	325 42.5	_	0.0 -2.5	NINV	29.5 95	28.5 93	1,344,285 312,500	38. 29.	
MAYADEEN	21.5	20.5	4,889,336	103,449	73	21.5	A	1.0	KPROJ	580	570	399,925	231	
cgc	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	780	_	0.0	COAST	32.5	30.5	633,000	19	
MTCC	68	66	1,410,936	94,861	56	68		2.0	SECH	39.5	37.5	3,510,012	134	
UPAC ALAFCO	0.0 210	0.0 210	201,000	0 42,210	3	700 210	_	0.0	SGC	0.0 36.0	0.0 33.5	0 372,560	12	
MUBARRAD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	78	_	0.0	MARKAZ	0.0	0.0	0		
LOGISTICS	55	53	270,496	14,496	19	54		-1.0	KMEFIC	28.0	27.0	27,250	7	
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	84	-	0.0	ALAMAN	58	56	20,725	1,	
GCEM QCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	78 80	_	0.0	ALOLA	56 0.0	55 0.0	1,011,952	55	
FCEM	73	73	329,000	24,017	7	73	_	0.0	GIH	26.5	25.5	388,286	10,	
RKWC	106	95	8,589	872	6	106	<b>A</b>	6.0	AAYAN	48.0	47.0	1,614,912	76	
SPEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	88	_	0.0	BAYANINV	34.0	32.0	742.913	24	
Industrials			9,550,224	1,053,927	338	1058.86	A	2.75	OSOUL	40.0	0.0 35.5	0 3,230	1	
KSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	220	_	0.0	KAMCO	0.0	0.0	0		
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	62	-	0.0	NIH	60	55	110,794	6,	
PAPCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	104	_	0.0	ISKAN	29.5	28.5	223,858	6,4	
DANAH	128 83	128 82	35,500 45,900	4,544 3.775	4	128 83	X	-4.0 1.0	MADAR ALDEERA	0.0 32.0	0.0 32.0	0 149,009	4.7	
POULT	176	176	5,329	938	2	176	_	0.0	ALSALAM	36.0	34.0	1,338,830	46	
FOOD	2,080	2,000	147,780	301,176	23	2,000		-80.0	EKTTITAB	31.0	30.5	444,903	13	
Consumer Goods			234,509	310,433	33	1067.66		-6.63	ALMADINA NOOR	36.0	33.5	11,272,856	393	
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	190	-	0	TAMINV	0.0 420	0.0 410	60,600	25	
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920	-	0	EXCH	0.0	0.0	0		
YIAGO	154	154	500	77	1	154	A	6	TAIBA	300	300	10		
Health Care			500	77	-1	956.78		4.36	KSHC STRATEGIA	26.5	25.0	330,690	8,	
KCIN	950	950	9,983	9,484	1	950	_	0	ASIYA	35.5	35.0	189,262	6,	
кнот	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	196	_	0	GNAHC	27.5	27.0	505,793	13	
SULTAN	72	72	500	36	1	72	_	0	AMWAL	0.0	0.0	0		
CABLETV EYAS	22.5 0.0	22.5	85 0	0	0	22.5 310	*	-3 0	MANAZEL	78 20.5	76 20.0	1,745,100 956,795	133	
IFAHR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	166	20	0	NIND	126	124	407,250	51	
OULAFUEL	112	108	22,889	2,485	13	112	A	2	BIIHC	30.5	29.0	50,151	1,	
MUNTAZAHAT	97	95	251,000	24,053	11	97	-	0	SENERGY	13.5	12.5	531,525	6,	
JAZEERA SOOR	890 112	860 108	98,121 23,083	86,542 2,528	17	890 112	¥	-10 4	AGHC KPPC	80 54	80 52	10,000 928,000	49	
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	110	_	0	TAHSSILAT	19.0	49.0	500	- 10	
ALNAWADI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	89	_	0	JEERANH	60	59	700		
ALRAI	152	140	822	119	8	142	*	-8	EKHOLDING	0.0	0.0	0		
ZIMAH UFIG	0.0	0.0	742,619	90,361	82	124 150	A	6	INOVEST	33.5	32.5	1,883,926	61,	
KOUTFOOD	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	740	_	0	Financial Services		0.0	31,552,102	1,48	
Mezzan	1,160	1,140	475,674	549,867	26	1,160	A	20						
Consumer Service	98		1,624,776	765,477	172	1011.28		-2.79	Investment Instru	ments		0		
ZAIN	360	345	2,922,168	1,024,612	78	345	*	-10	ASC	0.0	0.0	0		
OOREDOO	1,040	1,040	1,533	1,594	1	1,040	-	0	osos	82	82	13,399	1,	
HITSTELEC	28.5	27.5	7,376,616	204,701	106	27.5	-	0	FUTURE	0.0	0.0	0	9	
VIVA Telecommunication	1,020	990	4,601,622 14,901,939	4,592,171 5,823,079	237 422	1,000 592.64	-	-2.91	HAYATCOMM	46.5	45.5	10,940 <b>24,339</b>	4	
, eleconimunicatio	VIII		14,001,039	3,023,079	422	JJZ.04	AM	-2.91	Technology			24,000	1,	
NBK	820	810	1,174,754	956,589	44	810	_	0	BAREEQ	0.0	0.0	0		
GBK	265	265	31,025	8,222	4	265	*	-5	AFAQ	0.0	0.0	0		
CBK	500	500	32,836	16,418	3	500	_	0	ALSHAMEL	0.0	0.0	0	-	
ABK ALMUTAHED	370 530	360 520	61,879 264,400	22,306 140,114	3 18	370 530	A	5	SAFRE	0.0	0.0	0 783,387	24	
KIB	530 222	520 222	101.000	22,422	7	530 222	A	2	MASAKEN	27.5 0.0	26.5	783,387	21,	
BURG	380	375	153,677	57,849	6	375	*	-5	DALQAN	0.0	0.0	0		
KFIN	550	530	3,779,424	2,070,703	110	550	A	20	ALEID	0.0	0.0	0		
BOUBYAN	435	435	88,735	38,600	20	435	_	0	MIDAN	0.0	0.0	0		
AUB ITHMR	206 42.5	204 41.0	517,190 1,945,880	106,264 80,886	9	206 41.5	*	-2 -1	THURAYA	0.0	0.0	0	- 4	
		11.0	.,	-0,000			*				~.~	-		

KINS

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102

783,657

8,934,457

156,493

114

200

1094.82

0.0

		4.5						
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Ch	nange
зокоик	40.0	39.0	1212981	47.890	38	40.0	A	1.0
KRE	57	56	796,682	44,629	11	56	*	-1.0
URC NRE	95	95	58,807 796,650	5,587	2	95	A	2.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	790,000	67,895 0	26 0	86 335	<b>A</b>	0.0
TAM	650	610	22,584	14,381	6	650	_	0.0
AREEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	176	_	0.0
MASSALEH	59	59	10	1	1	59	<b>A</b>	1.0
ARABREC	29.5	29.0	139,186	4,047	10	29.0	-	0.0
ERESCO	66	62	40,681	2,645	6	66	_	0.0
MABANEE	930	930	798,260	742,382	16	930	-	0.0
INJAZZAT	85	85	16,000	1,360	2	85	-	0.0
INVESTORS	26.0	24.0	16,147,362	407,972	196	25.5	A	1.5
IRC	29.0	29.0	7,311	212	2	29.0	A	0.5
ALTIJARIA	81	80	1,043,535	83,535	27	81	<b>A</b>	1.0
SANAM AAYANRE	0.0	0.0 72	70,416	0 5.626	9	47.0 80	_	3.0
AQAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	80	_	0.0
ALAQARIA	21.5	21.0	5,854	126	2	21.5	A	0.5
MAZAYA	104	104	532,741	55,405	15	104	_	0.0
ADNC	28.5	27.5	5,108,100	143,015	67	28.0	100	0.0
THEMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	-	0.0
TIJARA	43.0	40.5	140,125	5,780	6	43.0	_	0.0
TAAMEER	24.0	23.5	10,100	237	2	24.0		0.5
ARKAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	112	-	0.0
ARGAN	178	178	3,000	534	1	178	-	0.0
ABYAAR	30.0	28.0	1,254,000	36,942	20	30.0	<b>A</b>	2.0
MUNSHAAT	82	81	118,175	9,573	7	81	-	0.0
FIRSTDUBAI	45.0	42.0	290,020	12.432	16	45.0	A	1.0
KBT	42.5	41.0	303,304	12,632	23	42.5	<b>A</b>	0.5
REAM	0.0	0.0	0 25 000	0	0	136	-	0.0
MENA	23.0	23.0	25,000	575	5	23.0	_	0.0
ALMUDON MARAKEZ	30.5	29.5	841,290	25,099	22	30.0	<u> </u>	0.5
MARAKEZ REMAL	0.0 36.0	0.0 33.0	71,000	2,376	5	23.0 36.0	_	1.5
MASHAER	0.0	0.0	71,000	2,376	0	36.0 106	^	0.0
Real Estate	0.0	0.0	29,853,174	1,732,887	543	938.44	<u> </u>	8.01
KINV	93	93	20,000	1,860	3	93	*	-3.0
FACIL	178	178	10,000	1,780	2	178	_	0.0
IFA	29.5	28.5	1,344,285	38.918	38	29.0	_	0.0
NINV	95	93	312,500	29,301	16	94		-1.0
KPROJ	580	570	399,925	231,857	16	580	_	0.0
COAST	32.5	30.5	633,000	19,941	29	32.5	A	1.5
SECH	39.5	37.5	3,510,012	134,192	116	39.5	A	1.5
SGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	110	-	0.0
ARZAN	36.0	33.5	372,560	12,933	14	33.5		-1.5
MARKAZ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	106	-	0.0
KMEFIC	28.0	27.0	27,250	749	11	28.0		0.5
ALAMAN ALOLA	58 56	56 55	20,725	1,165 55.908	3 25	58 56	*	-1.0
ALMAL	0.0	0.0	1,011,952	55,908	0	32.5	_	0.0
GIH	26.5	25.5	388,286	10,100	21	26.0	_	0.5
AAYAN	48.0	47.0	1,614,912	76,355	42	48.0	Ā	1.5
BAYANINV	34.0	32.0	742.913	24,475	22	34.0	A	2.0
OSOUL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	42.5	_	0.0
KFIC	40.0	35.5	3,230	128	8	40.0	A	2.0
KAMCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	_	0.0
NIH	60	55	110,794	6,474	16	57		-2.0
ISKAN	29.5	28.5	223,858	6,405	15	29.0		0.5
MADAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	20.5	-	0.0
ALDEERA	32.0	32.0	149,009	4.768	6	32.0		-0.5
ALSALAM	36.0	34.0	1,338,830	46,774	53	36.0	A	2.0
EKTTITAB	31.0	30.5	444,903	13,612	14	31.0	A	1.5
ALMADINA	36.0	33.5	11,272,856	393,156	177	36.0		2.5
NOOR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	55	-	0.0
TAMINV	420	410	60,600	25,397	6	420	_	0.0
EXCH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	130	-	0.0
TAIBA KSHC	300 26.5	300 25.0	10 330,690	3 8,269	1 18	300 25.0	=	0.0
STRATEGIA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	33.0	Ξ	0.0
ASIYA	35.5	35.0	189,262	6,624	19	35.5	Ξ	0.0
GNAHC	27.5	27.0	505,793	13,664	21	27.5	_	0.5
AMWAL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	31.0	_	0.0
ALIMTIAZ	78	76	1,745,100	133,428	26	76		-1.0
MANAZEL	20.5	20.0	956,795	19,264	32	20.5		0.5
NIND	126	124	407,250	51,308	18	126		2.0
BIIHC	30.5	29.0	50,151	1,455	4	30.5	_	0.0
SENERGY	13.5	12.5	531,525	6,935	16	13.0	*	-0.5
AGHC	80	80	10,000	800	1	80	_	0.0
KPPC	54	52	928,000	49.024	26	53	<b>A</b>	1.0
TAHSSILAT	49.0	49.0	500	25	1	49.0	*	-2.0
JEERANH	60	59	700	42	2	60	▼.	-1.0
EKHOLDING	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	166	-	0.0
GFH	33.5	32.5	1,883,926	61,987	35	33.0	-	0.0
INOVEST Financial Service	0.0	0.0	31 552 102	1 489 075	973	55 596.99	-	0.0
rmancial Service	8		31,552,102	1,489,075	873	096.99	A	2.79
nvestment Instru	mente		0	0	0	1081.97		0.00
voundnt mstrt			U	•	v	.501.9/	1000	0.00
ASC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	325	_	0.0
OSOS	82	82	13,399	1,099	1	82	_	0.0
FUTURE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	118	=	0.0
HAYATCOMM	46.5	45.5	10,940	498	4	46.5	_	1.0
Technology	. 219		24,339	1,597	5	865.02	A	2.46
BAREEQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	104	_	0.0
AFAQ	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	182	_	0.0
ALSHAMEL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	_	0.0
SAFRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	16.5	_	0.0
NAWLA	27.5	26.5	783,387	21,334	10	27.5	A	1.5
MASAKEN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	46.5	-	0.0
DALQAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	350	_	0.0
ALEID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	-	0.0

Parallel Market			783,387	21,334	10	1195.58		5.75
AMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	53	-	0.0
KCLINIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	29.5	-	0.0
THURAYA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	140	_	0.0
FLEX	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	50	_	0.0
MIDAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,220	-	0.0
ALEID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	95	-	0.0
DALQAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	350	_	0.0
MASAKEN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	46.5	-	0.0

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#### GOLD RISES; DOLLAR RETREATS

**LONDON:** Gold rose yesterday as a retreat in the dollar sparked a rebound after the previous day's 1 percent slide, but moves were muted as traders awaited the outcome of this week's Federal Reserve policy meeting. Gold has fallen 10 percent this year, largely on the back of expectations that the Fed is set to hike rates for the first time in nearly a decade. Rising rates increase the opportunity cost of holding non-yielding bullion. The central bank's Federal Open Market Committee is expected to announce the rate rise at the end of its two-day policy meeting on Wednesday, but has hinted it intends to hike rates only gradually from there.

Gold could bounce higher after the move as attention switches from the timing of the first rise to the pace of tightening, analysts said. Spot gold was up 0.4 percent at \$1,067.27 an ounce at 1033 GMT, while US gold futures for February delivery were up \$3.40 an ounce at \$1,066.80. "Gold continues to be trading in a range until tomorrow," MKS' head of trading Afshin Nabavi said. "I would guess the FOMC will hike by 25 basis points. I guess that much is already in the market, so gold could see a push higher and US dollar probably a touch lower."

The dollar fell to a seven-week low against a basket of currencies yesterday, with investors cutting favorable bets in the currency on growing nervousness about the Federal Reserve's message on interest rates later this week. Stocks rose in Europe and Asia, although volatile oil prices kept investors cautious before a widely anticipated increase in US rates later in the week. "Until the Fed reveals its decisions regarding rates we suspect the financial markets will be volatile and that volatility will seep into gold," HSBC said in

Markets were awaiting US inflation data later in the session for more clues on price pressures in the United States. Rising inflation could boost expectations that the Fed could keep increasing rates next year, analysts said. Gold took little support from the physical markets. Gold prices in India swung to a discount for the first time in a month on Monday as jewelers and dealers in the world's second-biggest consumer postponed purchases ahead of the Fed meeting. Among other precious metals, silver was up 0.4 percent at \$13.81 an ounce after a six-day losing streak. It had dropped to \$13.60 on Monday, its lowest since August 2009. Platinum was up 1.2 percent at \$858.90 an ounce, while palladium was up 1.9 percent at \$554.90 an ounce. —Reuters



TOKYO: A man (center) looks at a share prices board in Tokyo yesterday. Japan's share prices fell 317.52 points to close at 18,565.90 points at the Tokyo Stock, as investors booked profits before a US Federal Reserve meeting at which policymakers will decide whether to announce a long-awaited interest rate rise. —AFP

### GLOBAL STOCKS RISE

#### DOLLAR DROPS VS EURO, YEN

Asia yesterday, though volatile oil prices kept investors cautious before a widely anticipated increase in US interest rates later in the week. Oil prices resumed their fall and the euro rose against the dollar. Concerns in the high-risk US corporate debt market about the potential impact of a rate hike weighed on lowrated euro zone government bonds. European shares opened higher after hitting 2-1/2-month lows on Monday when oil prices fell to their weakest since 2008. The pan-European FTSEurofirst 300 index rose 1.2 percent. MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan was up about 0.1 percent. Japan's Nikkei stock index ended down 1.7 percent at a 7-1/2-week low and Chinese stocks lost 0.3-0.5 per-

On Monday, US stocks ended higher as oil pulled off its lows. However, Brent crude dropped 25 cents a barrel to \$37.67 yesterday after falling the previous day to as low as \$36.33, its weakest since December 2008. A fall below \$36.20 would take it back to levels last seen in mid-2004. Prices have been falling due to a global glut of oil and, in the northern hemisphere, a mild start to winter. The first US rate rise since 2006 is largely priced in, with the Fed expected to increase its targeted rate range to 0.25-0.5 percent from the current zero to 0.25 percent.

"Even if the Fed sends a hawkish message by suggesting it aims to hike actively next year, they are data-dependent," said Shin Kadota, chief FX strategist at Barclays in Tokyo. "Indicators will have to show the US economy can withstand rate hikes before the dollar can

LONDON: Stocks rose in Europe and launch into its next phase of appreciation." However, concerns that a rate rise could hurt highly-leveraged companies have seen a handful of funds in the high-yield debt market fail and propelled measures of risk sharply higher in recent days. They have also pushed the yield premium of short-term Italian and Spanish bonds over German benchmarks to their highest since July.

"At times like this, when liquidity is very thin due to the pending FOMC decision, the correlation between asset classes has a tendency to rise significantly," said Peter Chatwell, head of European rates strategy at Mizuho. "Thus the weakness in credit markets, which itself may also be a function of the FOMC, is apparent in euro sovereign spreads." The dollar index, which measures the U.S. currency against a basket of its peers, fell 0.2 percent. The euro rose 0.4 percent to \$1.1031 while the yen gained 0.2 percent to 120.83 per dollar. "(The dollar) could face additional pressure if U.S. Treasuries are bought back on relief that the Fed's rate hike cycle will be quite a slow one," he said.

#### China's Yuan

China's yuan, however, weakened against the dollar after the Chinese central bank set the mid-point of the permitted trading band at a 4 1/2-year low for a second day. The Swedish crown rose versus the dollar and euro after the Riksbank, Sweden's central bank, kept interest rates unchanged as expected but said it was ready to act if a slight rise in inflation stalled.

Gold fell in anticipation of higher US interest rates. It last stood at \$1,062.15 an ounce. —Reuters







#### Warba Bank inaugurates new branch in Fahaheel

**KUWAIT:** Warba Bank inaugurates its new branch in Fahaheel. The new branch opening marks the 8th in branches network covering all governorates of Kuwait. The opening ceremony has been organized under the patronage and presence of Sheikh Fawaz Al Sabahthe Governor of Al-Ahmadi Governorate, Jassar Dakheel Al Jassar -Vice Chairman & Chief Executive Officer of Warba Bank and attended by huge gathering of prominent figures and Bank's customers in the Bank.

Jassar Dakheel Al Jassar said: The opening of Warba Bank new branch in Fahaheel comes in line with the Bank's aspiration aiming at network expansion and getting closer to our customers and our endeavors to satisfy our customer banking needs by offering them the state of the art products and services in full compliance with the rules of Islamic Sharia. Al Jassar also said: "The new Warba Bank Branch is marked by innovation and creativity on the level of the banking services provided to customers as well as the construction and design level that ensure comfort and superb service to the people of that vibrant highly populated area that is in need of refined banking services.

The Bank's general strategy focuses on high dense population areas across Kuwait to get closer to our customers and facilitate the process of fulfilling their requirements, avail from Warba Bank's products and offers and creative banking solutions that meet their expectations hence serving the Bank's goals for expansion and raising its domestic market share by attracting new customers". Al Jassar added: Warba Bank continues its strategy that



aims at leading the Islamic banking business in Kuwait through an ambitious plan, which targets the inauguration of new branches in lively and strategic locations across the country. The plan also focuses on the ongoing development and introduction of new services and products to serve all segments of the society and give them ad-hoc features to satisfy their ever-changing desires.

He also added:" We are proud to announce the official launch of our 8th branch in Kuwait

at Fahaheel since the Bank's incorporation. This opening of the new branch is just the start of our presence in Al-Ahmadi Governorate. This step will be followed by other steps to provide optimal service to people of that area and to enhance direct communication with them. At Warba, we will continue expanding and devising creative solutions in all our businesses in full compliance with Islamic Sharia in addition to developing our online and mobiles services to make cus-

tomers' experience easier, faster and safer". Jassem Al Muzaini, Fahaheel Branch Manager expressed his delight with Warba Bank's presence in Al-Ahmadi Governorate that encompasses wide range of customer segments wishing to get better banking service. Al Muzaini highlighted that the Branch is equipped with the latest technology to ensure customers' convenience and availing from superb services of opening diverse accounts such as salary transfer account, investment saving account, deposit account in addition to consumer and installment finance. Customers will also enjoy all benefits and services such as credit cards, ATM cards.

The customers will carry out all their banking transactions without having to visit another branch. Warba Bank's Fahaheel Branch is located in the Remal Commercial Complex with separate section for women. The Branch has been designed in accordance with the highest standards of decoration and interiors to provide customers with ultimate comfort and privacy in line with Warba Bank's commitment for applying innovation principle as one of the core values adopted in the Bank's business in the Kuwaiti market.

Prior to the event, Fahaheel Branch work team made several visits to elite people, many Diwaniyas, schools and institutions in the area to introduce the new Branch and the services that will be provided to them and to listen to their suggestions.

This comes our utmost care to fulfill the requirements of that big segment of society for getting innovative banking service suitable to their desires and in full compliance with the rules of Islamic Sharia.

Warba bank continues to interact with customers - answering inquiries and listening to their suggestions through the call center staff available around the clock. To know more about the Bank's products, services, branches, latest exclusive offers, terms and conditions or the customer's rights, please visit Warba Bank's website or follow our social media platforms on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

#### KQIC REVOLUTIONIZES PERSONAL INSURANCE OFFERINGS WITH LAUNCH OF ONLINE PLATFORM

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Qatar Insurance Company (KQIC), a premier insurer offering both conventional insurance and Takaful products yesterday announced the launch of its online retail platform, WWW.KQIC-ONLINE.COM. With this new platform, customers will now be able to renew or purchase personal insurances (car, home and travel) from anywhere just with the click of a button. Speaking at the launching ceremony, Darren Collinson CEO of KQIC stated "KQIC's successful operation in Kuwait for over a decade is testament to that fact that our personal insurance business through our corporate customers has been and is very successful. However, stifling competition in the personal insurance marketplace over the last few years has made it clear that there was a gap which will now be filled with this new online platform."

He further added, "With this online portal, KQIC will enhance its distribution channel to deliver secure, modern and innovative solutions to help customers make their insurance purchasing experience simple, quick and easy. We have revolutionized our personal insurance offerings by making them directly available to individual customers under the theme 'Global Insurance -Local Assurance'.

#### Part of global strategy

KOIC's focus into expanding its direct personal insurance business through the online platform is no coincidence but is an integral part of QIC Group's Global Strategy. Darren Collinson, CEO of KQIC says, "We're already within the top-50 reinsurers worldwide and we aim to place QIC Group amongst the global top 50insurance players. Hence our expansion into direct line is very much in line with our Group strategy."

Hassan Al Jaidah, Deputy CEO of KQIC adds,

"Customers are increasingly getting tech-savvy and their preferences rapidly changing with the evolution of smart technology. Being a customerdriven segment, we are committed to provide new, innovative channels that meet the evolving needs of customers. With the introduction of the online channel, we aim to create a seamless engagement with our customers providing an all new level of convenience of purchasing/renewing personal insurance from anywhere, at any time. Frederik Bisbjerg, Executive Vice President and Head of Group Retail for Qatar Insurance says, "There are mainly two types of insurance companies in the personal insurance marketplace- large international insurers headquartered outside the region and local insurers with strong local knowledge and presence.

The large international insurers are very strong in providing customer service and having their business processes aligned to international standards, while the local insurers 'know the way around the Souq' and are able to provide customers with local knowledge and assistance." "We're proud to offer a very unique online platform where customers can manage all their personal insurances; no need to call or visit our branches; all can be managed online", says Frederik.

#### Online window-shopping

KQIC's online retail platform helps potential customers 'window-shop' while browsing for the best insurance deals in Kuwait in less than a minute, without having to disclose any personal information. Visitors can receive quick quotes and purchase or renew car, home or travel insurance -be it a transfer from another insurance company or a brand new policy purchase or

#### YAHOO FACES PRESSURE FROM FRUSTRATED SHAREHOLDERS

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Yahoo is facing shareholder pressure to pursue other alternatives besides a complex spinoff of its Internet operations while CEO Marissa Mayer struggles to revive the company's revenue growth. The demands from SpringOwl Asset Management and Canyon Capital Advisors reflect shareholders' frustration with Mayer's inability to snap the company out of a financial funk after threeand-half years on the job.

Mayer hoped to placate investors with last week's announcement of a revised spinoff, but the company's stock has slid 6 percent since then. The shares fell 32 cents to close Monday at \$32.59. SpringOwl, a New York hedge fund, has sent a 99-page presentation to Yahoo's board that calls for the company to lay off 9,000 of its 10,700 workers and eliminate free food for employees to help save \$2 billion annually. Canyon Capital, a Los Angeles investment firm, wants Yahoo to sell its

Internet business instead of spinning it off. Yahoo has warned the spinoff could take more than a year to complete, a time frame that Canyon Capital called "simply unacceptable" after Yahoo spent most of this year preparing to break off its \$31 billion stake in China's Alibaba Group in an attempt to avoid paying taxes on the gains from its initial investment of \$1 billion. Yahoo scrapped the Alibaba spinoff after another shareholder, Starboard Value, threatened an attempt to overthrow the board if the company stuck to that plan. —AP

# MEXICO TO HOLD AUCTION FOR OIL IN VIOLENT STATES

#### More than 80 companies line up for contract

**MEXICO CITY:** Dozens of energy firms, including some from Australia, Canada and the United States, have signed up to bid yesterday for onshore oil projects in Mexican regions ravaged by drug violence and pipeline thefts. The government is offering 25 deposits containing more than 100 million barrels of oil in the violent states of Veracruz (east), Tamaulipas (northeast) and Nuevo Leon (northeast) as well as the southern states of Chiapas and Tabasco. More than 80 companies, most from Mexico but others from Latin America and Europe as well, have lined up for a chance to win a contract.

The auction is the third organized by the government this year following the 2014 enactment of a historic energy reform bill that opened the sector to private investors for the first time since 1938. Officials were disappointed with the outcome of the first auctions for projects in shallow waters of the Gulf of Mexico, with fewer investors than expected making bids as company earnings have been hit by falling oil prices. Only two of 14 sites were awarded in July and three of five in September.

Energy Minister Pedro Joaquin Coldwell told Radio Formula that auctioning off five onshore sector's tough international conditions. The pany of Mexican billionaire Carlos Slim, Carso Oil and Gas, is among the national start-ups participating in the process.

#### Violence doesn't deter firms

Coldwell said the onshore fields are attractive because they have already produced oil and still have enough left to make it profitable for smaller firms. Experts estimate that each of the 25 fields are worth between \$50 million and \$100 million. Nuevo Leon, Tamaulipas and Veracruz have seen some of the most brutal turf wars between rival drug cartels as well as rampant theft from pipelines operated by state-run firm Pemex.

More than 5,000 illegal taps were discovered in the first 11 months of the year, compared to 3,386 in the same period last year for an increase of 55 percent, according to official figures cited by Milenio newspaper. Coldwell noted on Monday that Congress is mulling legislation to toughen laws against such theft, which has hit

fields on Tuesday "would be excellent" given the Pemex "very hard." The oil auction "remains more attractive than the security risk," said Raymundo companies participating in the auction include Tenorio, energy expert at the Monterrey Institute Australia's Armour Energy Limited, France's GDF of Technology, noting that companies invest in Suez and several US firms. The new energy com-Shields, direct of the industry magazine Energia a Debate, said "many companies are minimizing" this issue to avoid driving up the costs.

#### **Easier terms**

The government has also softened the rules for the auctions in order to lure more potential investors. The first deals were production-sharing contracts that involve a "sophisticated administrative structure" that smaller firms lack, said David Enriquez, an expert at the consultancy Goodrich, Riquelme and Associates, which represents companies competing. This time, the companies are vying for license contracts, which are "friendlier for the sector" because the income goes through less bureaucratic red tape, Enriquez said. Coldwell said this latest auction was aimed at wooing Mexico's burgeoning small- and medium-sized companies in a country that has only known Pemex for nearly 80

# ARGENTINA'S NEW PRESIDENT CUTS TAXES ON FARMS, MANUFACTURING

**BUENOS AIRES:** Argentina's conservative new president, Mauricio Macri, got down to business Monday by eliminating or cutting a string of taxes on agricultural and industrial exports, seeking to kick-start Latin America's third-largest economy. Macri, whose inauguration Thursday ended more than a decade of left-wing rule, had promised on the campaign trail to slash the South American farming giant's steep taxes on agricultural exports, which triggered major protests by producers against former president Cristina Kirchner.

He fulfilled that promise at a meeting with farmers in the heart of the Argentine breadbasket, announcing the end of taxes on wheat, corn and sorghum exports and a tax cut on soybean exports, from 35 percent to 30. Then he met with industrialists to announce an end to the five-percent tax on their exports, as well. "Let's not think of things in terms of 'farms versus industry," he told farmers in the town of Pergamino, in the heart of the fertile plains known as the Pampas. "It's farms and industry, farms and the country. Without farms, the country can't survive."

Farmers had accused Kirchner of saddling the agricultural industry with an unfair share of the national tax burden, hurting their international competitiveness. Macri vowed those days were over. Taxes on wheat and corn exports were previously 23 and 20 percent, respectively. The taxes had been introduced in 2008 under Kirchner. Protests over the steep rates paralyzed the agriculture sector that year and turned into a crisis for her government. Argentine farmers have been hoarding their crops in hopes of more favorable conditions. Outside Argentina, the tax cuts stoked fears of a glut of grains and soybeans, at a time of already-low global prices for agricultural commodities. Argentina's farmers have an estimated 17 million tons of soybeans, 20 million tons of corn and 10 million tons of wheat in stock. European grain prices were down after Macri's announcement. Argentina is the world's third-largest producer and exporter of soybeans, after the United States and Brazil, and the largest producer of soy products. The country vies with Ukraine for the title of thirdlargest corn exporter, and is the seventh-biggest wheat exporter.

#### 'Double production'

The export tax cuts are the first of the economic reforms promised by Macri, who has vowed to overhaul Kirchner's legacy of hands-on economic

management, including protectionist import controls, heavy taxes on agricultural exports and an official exchange rate. "We have to reward exporters. As of today there will be no more taxes withheld on industrial exports," Macri told the Argentine Industrial Union. The country has major export industries in the food, automotive, and aluminum and steel sectors. Argentina's economy is suffering from high inflation and faces warnings of a recession next year. Its foreign reserves are also precariously low, and Macri urgently needs farmers to start exporting their hoarded crops-a key source of hard currency for the central bank. —AFP



BUENOS AIRES: Argentina's President Mauricio Macri (right) and his wife, first lady Juliana Awada leave the Metropolitan Cathedral after attending a Te Deum in Buenos Aires. — AFP



#### HENKEL DELIVERS STRONG INCREASE IN Q3 SALES AND EARNINGS

**KUWAIT:** "Despite a persistently challenging market environment, Henkel delivered a strong performance in the third quarter. We significantly increased both sales and earnings across all business units. Organic sales in emerging markets were strong, once again making an above average contribution to growth. Mature markets showed a positive development, driven especially by the solid performance in North America. Here we grew our business for the third consecutive quarter," said Henkel CEO Kasper Rorsted.

"Adjusted operating profit and adjusted EBIT margin reached record levels in the third quarter and all business units reported a higher adjusted EBIT and adjusted EBIT margin than in the previous year." "The strong third quarter performance in challenging and volatile markets demonstrates our ability to adjust to the difficult economic environment. Agility and flexibility remain key success factors for us, confirming our strategy of adapting and further simplifying our structures and processes in line with the changing market conditions."

#### Guidance for EPS growth raised

Henkel specified the outlook for organic sales growth and raised its guidance for EPS growth for the fiscal year 2015: "We now expect to achieve organic sales growth of around 3 percent in 2015. We continue to expect our adjusted EBIT margin to increase to around 16 percent and now anticipate an increase in adjusted earnings per preferred share of more than 10 percent."

#### Sales, earnings performance

In the third quarter of 2015, sales rose significantly by 8.4 percent to 4,590 million euros. Adjusted for positive foreign exchange effects of 2.3 percent, sales improved by 6.1 percent. Organically - ie adjusted for foreign exchange and acquisitions/divestments - sales rose by 3.2 percent. The Laundry & Home Care business unit recorded strong organic sales growth of 5.5 percent. In the Beauty Care business unit, organic sales rose by a solid 2.1 percent. The Adhesive Technologies business unit also posted a solid improvement in organic sales of 2.3 percent. After one-time charges, one-time gains and restructuring charges, adjusted operating profit improved by 12.3 percent from 693 million euros to 778 million euros. Reported operating profit (EBIT) grew by 10.4 percent from 603 million euros to 666 million euros.

Adjusted return on sales increased by 0.5 percentage points to 16.9 percent. Reported return on sales rose by 0.3 percentage points to

14.5 percent. Henkel's financial result of -11 million euros was at the level of the prior-year quarter. The tax rate amounted to 24.6 percent (prioryear quarter: 24.0 percent). Adjusted net income for the guarter after deducting non-controlling interests increased by 11.0 percent, from 508 million euros to 564 million euros. Reported net income for the quarter grew by 9.8 percent, from 450 million euros to 494 million euros. After deducting 10 million euros attributable to non-controlling interests, quarterly net income increased to 484 million euros (prior-year quarter: 440 million euros). Adjusted earnings per preferred share (EPS) rose by 11.1 percent from 1.17 euros to 1.30 euros. Reported EPS increased by 10.9 percent from 1.01 euros to 1.12 euros. Net working capital relative to sales increased year on year by 0.4 percentage points to 6.0 percent. The rise is primarily due to acquisitions.

#### **Business performance**

In the first nine months of 2015, Henkel's sales increased significantly by 1,413 million euros to 13,715 million euros, reaching a new high for Henkel. This was an increase of 11.5 percent compared to the first nine months of 2014. Adjusted for foreign exchange, sales grew by 6.4 percent. Organically - i.e. adjusted for foreign exchange and acquisitions/divestments - sales increased by 3.1 percent, with all three of Henkel's business units contributing. Adjusted operating profit grew by 267 million euros from 1,986 million euros to 2,253 million euros (+13.4 percent). Adjusted return on sales increased from 16.1 percent to 16.4 percent.

Adjusted net income for the first nine months, after deducting non-controlling interests, rose by 11.9 percent from 1,459 million euros to 1,632 million euros. Adjusted earnings per preferred share (EPS) improved by 11.9 percent from 3.37 euros to 3.77 euros. Henkel's net financial position as of September 30, 2015 was -336 million euros (December 31, 2014: -153 million euros). The change versus year-end 2014 is mainly due to the dividend payout and payments for acquisitions.

#### Unit performance

The Laundry & Home Care business unit once again very successfully delivered profitable growth in the third quarter of 2015. Sales grew organically by 5.5 percent year on year, outperforming the relevant markets. This led to further market share gains. Nominally, sales again increased double digits, by 10.6 percent to 1,314 million euros (prior-year quarter: 1,188 million euros). The strong organic sales growth was mainly driven by the performance in

emerging markets. The regions of Eastern Europe and Asia (excluding Japan) both recorded double-digit growth. Latin America posted a very strong increase in sales. Despite challenging conditions, the Africa/Middle East region posted strong growth. The mature markets recorded positive sales growth which was due in particular to a solid performance in North America. Sales in Western Europe remained at the level of the third quarter of

Adjusted operating profit of the Laundry & Home Care business unit increased significantly, by 19.3 percent to 239 million euros. Adjusted return on sales showed an excellent increase, reaching a new high of 18.2 percent. Reported operating profit also grew substantially, by 23.0 percent from 171 million euros in the prior-year quarter to 211 million euros. The Beauty Care business unit also continued on its long-standing profitable growth path in the third quarter of 2015. At 2.1 percent, organic



**Henkel CEO Kasper Rorsted** 

sales growth was once again above that of the relevant markets, leading to further market share gains. Nominally, sales increased by 5.0 percent to 964 million euros (prior-year quarter: 918 million euros).

With a very strong increase in organic sales, the business unit's successful development in the emerging markets continued. The Latin America region again grew double digits. Eastern Europe recorded a very strong increase in sales. The Asia region (excluding Japan) posted a strong sales performance, mainly driven by double-digit growth in China. Africa/Middle East posted solid organic sales growth. Business in the mature markets continued to be impacted by intense crowding-out competition and strong price pressure. Due particular-

ly to developments in Western Europe and the mature markets of the Asia-Pacific region, sales were slightly below the level of the prior-year quarter. By contrast - and despite a challenging competitive environment - North America posted strong growth compared to the third quarter of 2014.

Adjusted operating profit of the Beauty Care business unit rose significantly versus the prior-year quarter, by 10.7 percent to 155 million euros. Adjusted return on sales also showed a very strong increase to 16.1 percent. Reported operating profit grew by 45.2 percent to 142 million euros. The Adhesive Technologies business unit recorded solid organic sales growth of 2.3 percent in the third quarter. Nominally, sales increased by 8.5 percent to 2,279 million euros (prior-year quarter: 2,100 million euros).

The business unit's successful development in the emerging markets continued with solid organic sales growth. Latin America recorded double-digit growth. Eastern Europe and Africa/Middle East reported strong sales growth, although the situation in some countries was difficult. In Asia (excluding Japan), sales were below the level of the prior-year quarter, due particularly to weaker economic growth in China. Overall, sales performance in the mature markets was positive, with the mature markets of the Asia-Pacific region recording strong growth.

Sales in North America showed positive development. In Western Europe, however, organic sales were slightly lower year on year. Adjusted operating profit of the Adhesive Technologies business unit increased significantly versus the third quarter of 2014 - by 10.3 percent to 412 million euros. Adjusted return on sales showed a solid improvement - reaching 18.1 percent for the first time. Reported operating profit increased by 3.7 percent to 367 million euros.

#### Regional performance

Henkel's sales in the Western Europe region increased by 6.0 percent to 1,508 million euros. In a highly competitive market environment, organic sales were 1.3 percent lower than in the prior-year quarter, although with mixed developments within the region. While the businesses in the United Kingdom, France, and Southern Europe posted an increase in organic sales, sales in Germany were below the level of the third quarter of 2014. Sales in Eastern Europe amounted to 733 million euros compared to 792 million euros in the prior-year quarter. Despite the challenging market envi-

ronment, however, organic growth amounted to 9.7 percent with the businesses in Russia and Turkey making a major contribution. Sales in Africa/Middle East rose from 279 million euros to 320 million euros. Although political unrest in some countries continued to affect growth, organic sales showed a strong increase of 5.9 percent.

Sales in North America rose from 755 million euros to 940 million euros. Organically, sales improved by 3.2 percent, with all three business units contributing. Sales in Latin America rose from 266 million euros to 280 million euros. The organic increase was 10.9 percent. This improvement was primarily attributable to double-digit growth in Mexico. Sales in the Asia-Pacific region rose from 691 million euros to 777 million euros. Organically, sales improved by 0.8 percent. While the mature markets in the region reported solid growth, sales in the emerging markets rose only slightly as a result of slowing growth dynamics in China.

In the emerging markets of Eastern Europe, Africa/Middle East, Latin America and Asia (excluding Japan), sales grew by 4.2 percent to 1,994 million euros. Organically, sales in emerging markets grew by 6.5 percent, again making an above-average contribution to organic growth at the Henkel Group, with all three business units contributing. The share of sales from emerging markets declined compared to the third quarter of 2014, to 43 percent. In the mature markets, sales grew organically by 0.4 percent to 2,563 million euros.

#### Outlook of Henkel Group

Henkel has specified its guidance for organic sales growth for the fiscal year 2015 and now expects growth of approximately 3 percent. Organic sales growth in the Laundry & Home Care business unit is expected to be between 4 and 5 percent. In the Beauty Care business unit, Henkel continues to expect organic sales growth of approximately 2 percent. Due in particular to slowing growth in China, Henkel now anticipates that organic sales growth in the Adhesive Technologies business unit will be between 2 and 3 percent. As before, Henkel expects a stable development in the share of sales from emerging markets. Henkel confirms its guidance for adjusted return on sales (EBIT) and continues to expect an increase to around 16 percent (2014: 15.8 percent) and that all business units will contribute to this improvement. Henkel has raised its guidance for adjusted earnings per preferred share and now expects an increase of more than 10 percent (2014: 4.38 euros).

# ETIHAD CELEBRATES OFFICIAL OPENING OF ABU DHABI NEW CRUISE TERMINAL

national airline of the United Arab Emirates, celebrated the official opening of Abu Dhabi's new cruise terminal, flying in more than 650 guests for the inaugural voyage from the facility in Zayed Port. In conjunction with MSC Cruises, Etihad Airways has created a special Fly-Cruise package for travelers from around the world to experience the splendors of luxury cruising around the Arabian Gulf. MSC Cruises' ship, MSC Musica, will serve the region for the 2015/2016 cruise season which runs from 13 December 2015 to 3 April 2016. The Abu Dhabi-based carrier's destination management company, Hala

**KUWAIT:** Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, celebrated the official opening of Abu Dhabi's new cruise terminal, flying in more than 650 guests for the inaugural voyage from the facility in Zayad Part In

qualified guides.
Peter Baumgartner, Chief Commercial Officer for Etihad Airways, said: "The new cruise terminal at Zayed Port represents our shared vision alongside our local partners to position Abu Dhabi as a world-class transport hub. "Cruising is an exciting and fast growing sector of the travel industry and we look forward to helping develop this segment further with the expansion of our services from the brand new

cruise terminal in Abu Dhabi."

Many of the ground services will also be handled by Etihad Airways and Hala Abu Dhabi. The airline will provide an enhanced quest experience in Abu Dhabi including a meet and greet service and return coach transfers between Abu Dhabi Airport and the Cruise Terminal. Additionally, Abu Dhabi Airports Company (ADAC) has placed 15 check-in counters at the cruise terminal where the airline will provide check-in services, allowing passengers to proceed directly to immigration and customs. Currently cruise passengers in the region need to disembark the ship and go to the airport to check-in for their flights.

MSC Cruises, the world's largest privately-owned global cruise line, is offering week-long cruises from Abu Dhabi with ports of call including KhorFakkan (UAE), Muscat and Khasab (Oman) and Dubai. The company has repositioned MSC Musica, a 1,268 cabin vessel accommodating more than 2,500 passengers, to Abu Dhabi to operate the 16 weeklong cruises from the new terminal during the current season. Located at Abu Dhabi's Zayed Port, the new terminal covers 8,000sqm and houses all key passenger facilities, retail outlets and a cafÈ. The architectural design of the new terminal is based on the UAE's heritage and identity with a view of the Louvre Museum.







#### MERCEDES CELEBRATES WORLD TITLE WITH AMG A 45 4MATIC

KUWAIT: It doesn't get any better: With victory in the constructors' world championship as well as the drivers' championship plus runner-up titles clocked up by Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg, the MERCEDES AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team has achieved the ultimate in motorsport's champion's league in 2015. To mark the end of the season, Mercedes-AMG is celebrating this outstanding team achievement with an exclusive special model: The MERCEDES AMG PETRONAS 2015 World Champion Edition of the A 45 4MATIC blends the expressive Formula 1 look of the victorious Silver Arrows with particularly extensive and unique equipment.

A Silver Arrow for everyday: with the ingenious streamlining package, the large 19-inch wheels and the characteristic foiling the MERCEDES AMG PETRONAS 2015 World Champion Edition is taking the Formula 1 success from the race track to the road. "With the World Champion Edition we would like to share with our customers our delight and pride in the strong performance of the MERCEDES AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team," said Tobias Moers, CEO of Mercedes-AMG. "This is a way for every fan to share the success of Lewis Hamilton and Nice Package"."

and Nico Rosberg."
The striking external characteristic of the exclusive edition of the A 45 is the hallmark foiling with petrol green and black highlights in the design of the winning F1 W06 HYBRID super

model. Then there is the ingenious streamlining package. At the front it includes a larger splitter and special flics and there is the roof spoiler at the tail end, also inspired by motorsport's champion's league. Available for selection as paintwork for the edition are mountain grey metallic, designo mountain grey magno and polar silver metallic.

To match there are 19-inch cross-spoke wheels painted in titanium grey and accen-

tuated with a petrol green rim flange. Further equipment includes the Night package, the AMG Performance seats, the AMG Exclusive package plus the AMG DYNAMIC PLUS package.

#### Exclusive interior with motorsport citations

The interior also radiates a racing atmosphere. The exclusive distinguishing feature is a



high-quality badge on the lid of the stowage compartment with the official lettering of the MERCEDES AMG PETRONAS Formula One Team. The electronically adjustable Performance sports seats in leather/DINAMICA microfibre offer increased lateral support even in fast, dynamic bends and immediately attract attention with their exclusive striped design. The fine petrol green topstitching on the armrests and dashboard, the petrol green rings in the air vents plus the seat belts, also with petrol green highlight strips, round off the high-quality impression. The Performance steering wheel in DINAMICA microfibre boasts petrol green topstitching and a 12 o'clock mark in the same colour.

The MERCEDES AMG PETRONAS 2015 World Champion Edition is celebrating its world premiere as part of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix in Yas Marina on 26 November 2015 and from January 2016 it will be available for a limited time, until May 2016. The price in Germany is 65,402.40 euros (incl. 19% VAT), 66,818.50 euros in conjunction with the designo mountain grey magno matt paint. With a maximum output of 280 kW (381 hp), the Mercedes-AMG A 45 4MATIC is the most powerful compact athlete in the world. Thanks to the standard-fit AMG Performance all-wheel drive and the front axle differential lock, the special edition brings power to the road slip-free: 100 km/h is already reached from a standstill in 4.2 seconds.

# ADYTON ONE PLANS TO EXPAND PRESENCE IN THE GCC REGIONS

**KUWAIT:** Adyton One general trading -a company that deals with unique and high quality Food and Beverage Products, have developed great plans to expand their



presence in the UAE and GCC regions. Founded in the recent year of 2012 the company has already reached great success and is keeping its word on becoming a world leader by rapidly implementing its plan to expand; ensuring quality products are readily available for consumers. Adyton One is proudly in partnership with The Armed Forces

Cooperative Society, and as a part of HH Sheikh Mohammad Establishment giving the company momentum to uphold its high standards.

A major part of the swiftly growing success of Adyton One is its great devotion in providing only the finest quality products to its consumers. Its long list of products include; Waiwera Water, Birk Drinks, Barambo Chocolate, and Zedazeni Drink in addition they also have canned and raw food materials including grain, rice and lentils which are provided to the armed forces cooperative society. The company remains developing the capabilities that have been built up over the years and will continue to create a range of unique products to satisfy their customer's needs

The Food and Beverage Industry has witnessed high growth rates over the last five years and is expected to continue over the next four years. This indicates that there will be an eight percent growth rate annually. The Food and Beverage Retail Market is the fastest growing sector of The UAE's economy and is expected to reach a worth of 10 billion dollars by the end of 2016, verifying that the Food and Beverage segment leads the UAE Retail Sector.

Committed to giving consumers even tastier products that are loved all over the world, Ahmed Al Raeesi, Founder and CEO of AdytonOne said, 'People are starting to educate themselves on what is healthy and good for them, living a healthy lifestyle is on the forefront of everybody's mind, so in actual fact the success of the company has grown itself'. - Ahmed Al Raeesi also hinted to keep our eyes open for the launch of a prestigious product that is expected to take the UAE by storm.

#### SAMSUNG TAKES APPLE PATENT CASE TO US SUPREME COURT

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Samsung, on the losing end of a massive smartphone patent lawsuit, appealed on Monday to the US Supreme Court in hopes of overturning a ruling that it pay \$548 million to rival Apple. The two hi-tech behemoths went to court over the designs that have now become commonplace on most popular smartphones, with a court ruling in 2012 in favor of Apple. At issue were design features by now familiar to consumers: a black, rectangular, round-cornered phone front, a surrounding rim, known as the "bezel" and a grid of 16 colorful icons.

Those design elements were protected, prompting the jury to award Apple all the profits from sales of smartphones containing those features, Samsung lawyers said in their filing. "While Samsung prefers to compete in the marketplace, not the courtroom, the company feels that it is important to appeal this case to the US Supreme Court on behalf of all US companies, big and small, that could be affected if this legal precedent stands," the company said in an email response to an AFP inquiry. Several of the world's technology titans filed briefs supporting Samsung while the case was in federal circuit court in Silicon Valley, according to the firm.

Attorneys for the South Korean consumer electronics titan argued that the massive payout was not warranted, because smartphones "contain countless other features that give them remarkable functionality wholely unrelated to their design."

"Even if the patented features contributed one percent of the value of Samsung's phones, Apple gets 100 percent of Samsung's profits," the appeal said. In response to an AFP inquiry, Apple said it stands by its comment after the trial victory in 2012.

"The lawsuits between Apple and Samsung were about much more than patents or money," the Apple statement said. "They were about values. We applaud the court for finding Samsung's behavior willful and for sending a loud and clear message that stealing

#### Samsung pays up

Samsung early this month agreed to pay smartphone rival Apple just over \$548 million in the yearslong patent battle in federal court in California. However, the agreement came with one key proviso, as the two tech giants agreed to continue "to pursue the existing cases in US courts." Samsung said in a legal filing that it would pay Apple the partial judgement awarded but that it reserved the right to get money back if the amount is modified or overturned on appeal or if the validity of patents at issue is successfully challenged.

Apple said in the joint filing that it disagrees with Samsung's contention that it has a right to be reimbursed. A court in September awarded Apple the partial judgment. Samsung's options narrowed to simply paying the money or trying to take its fight to the US Supreme Court.

The hefty sum is significantly less than the billion dollars Apple sought at the outset of the 2012 patent trial in Northern California, and doesn't put to rest an argument over who should pay Apple's legal costs said to total \$1.8 million.

In another sign that the legal fight would drag on, Apple also asked the court for a green light to file a motion asking for supplemental damages for products that weren't calculated into the award. Samsung and Apple decided last year to drop all patent disputes outside the United States, marking a partial ceasefire in a long-running legal war between the world's two largest smartphone makers.

The arch-rivals have battled in close to a dozen countries, with each accusing the other of infringing on various patents related to their flagship smartphone and tablet products.

But neither has managed to deliver a knock-out blow with a number of rulings going different ways, and in an announcement they agreed to drop all litigation outside the United States, suggesting a line was finally being drawn. — AFP

## EMC ANNOUNCES MAJOR DATA LAKE ADVANCEMENTS

**NEW YORK:** EMC Corporation yesterday announced the next generation of its EMC Isilon Scale-out NAS Data Lake, which includes new products, features and capabilities that allow enterprises to scale easily to edge locations as well as to public clouds. The new products,- Isilon SD Edge, the next generation of Isilon One FS and IsilonCloudPoolsTMenhance the Data Lake by allowing unstructured data to be available not only within the core data center, but also at data center edge locations such as remote offices and archived in the cloud. Designed to offer a more efficient Data Lake, the new Isilon solutions consolidate multiple workloads and allow users to access and analyze data from all locations.

Three major trends are transforming the enterprise. First, enterprises are becoming more global with a distributed workforce. Second, the volume of unstructured data is growing rapidly and doubling every two years, increasing the need for managing data efficiently while also garnering value from it. Lastly, hybrid cloud has become the preeminent choice for customers to most efficiently and effectively run their data centers.

Remote offices and edge locations have historically had challenges with cost, low capacity, management complexity, conflicting formats and spotty governance when it comes to data. This has impacted the productivity of information workers in these locations, as well as IT's ability to view and manage data.

EMC's Data Lake 2.0strategy and new announcements today are at the heart of managing these challenges. Early Data Lake deployments were limited to pulling in only data sources available within -or in close proximity to -the core data center. Now there is an increasing need for the Data Lake 2.0 to expand and be able to manage unstructured data in a simple and consistent way within the core data

center, at edge locations and in the cloud.

Isilon SD Edge is a 100% software-defined offering that runs on commodity hardware. Isilon SD Edge will support VMware ESX and be fully integrated with VMware vCenter for ease of management. Isilon SD Edge sacrifices none of the capabilities of the OneFS operating system and will support OneFS's data services and protocols while scaling up to 36TB, seamlessly replicating data to and distributing it from the core. Isilon SD Edge will be free for non-production use and licensed per cluster for production use.

In addition to extending the Data Lake to edge locations, EMC is also enhancing the Data Lake at the core through the new, next-generation IsilonOneFS operating system. This feature-rich offering is designed to improve resiliency, simplify management, raise efficiency and provide continuous operations for massive Data Lakes. A key enhancement is full Non-Disruptive Upgrade (NDU) support. OneFS has supported NDU for minor code families, and now works across major code families enhancing the resiliency of the Data Lake. The more resilient Data Lake will help ensure no downtime for users and application workloads during major upgrades

Understanding that much of the data within the enterprises today is "cold data" - data rarely in use - that needs to be retained for regulatory and compliance purposes, EMC is also offering EMC CloudPools, a new software application for the Isilon product line that will allow Isilon to easily extend to public, private and hybrid clouds to ensure access to data, regardless of location. When the data is tiered to the cloud, it is encrypted in transit and compressed to ensure security of enterprise data at rest in the cloud. This allows organizations to extend their Data Lakes to tap into cloud-scale capacity while ensuring consistent and simplified access to and management of the data.





#### SIRI VS CORTANA VS 'OK GOOGLE': WHO'S BETTER, WHO'S BEST

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Cortana's learning the neighborhood. Google's digital assistant can't tell a joke. And Siri apparently has a thing for the metric system.

Those are just a few of the things I learned after staging a face-off between the three leading digital assistants. Apple's Siri and "OK Google" - they're not big on personification at Google - are now standard on smartphones; Microsoft recently added its Cortana service to Windows 10, so it works on PCs, too.

Now that just about anyone can talk to their phone or computer, we wanted to see what happens when you try.

Though none of the assistants are perfect, they do have distinct personalities, even if they're just deliberate artifacts

I asked the same 10 questions of each service, using an iPhone with Siri, a Nexus phone with Android's "OK Google" and a Microsoft Surface Pro tablet with Cortana.



BOSTON: File photo, shows signage at a Verizon Wireless retail store at Downtown Crossing in Boston. The country's biggest wireless company has said that its mobile video service, go90, launched in October 2015, will include sponsored content. —  ${\sf AP}$ 

#### **INFORMATION PLEASE**

First up: Some basic factual questions. All three did pretty well when asked, "What's it like outside?"

Cortana earned extra points for answering with a spoken weather report. Google and Siri each showed a screen image that listed current conditions and a forecast.

All three supplied President Obama's age. When asked "What's his wife's name?" they all remembered that the question referred to the president, and correctly identified the First Lady: Michelle Obama.

Similarly, they all knew the length of the Golden Gate Bridge. But for some reason, Siri answered in meters, while Cortana and Google stuck to feet.

#### AT YOUR SERVICE

Next came more complicated tasks, like finding the nearest pharmacy. Google and Siri listed three within a halfmile of The Associated Press bureau in downtown San Francisco. But neither mentioned the drug store on the ground floor of the building where the bureau is located.

Posing questions is hungry work. I asked for help making a lunch reservation at Credo, a fancy restaurant around the corner. Siri and Cortana were stumped, but Google automatically fired up the Open Table app on the Nexus phone, with the form already filled out to make a reservation. Too bad the place is so trendy; it was booked for weeks.

Ever feel like ducking work to catch an afternoon movie? (Shhh! Don't tell my editor.) All three assistants had local movie listings at their digital fingertips. But Siri led off with a new release at a theater just half a mile from the AP bureau. With a couple of taps, Siri had opened Fandango, an app that lets you buy tickets online.

Google also connected with Fandango. Cortana had more trouble; Microsoft lags behind Apple and Google in the number of apps that work with its software, and I couldn't get the right Fandango app to load on a Surface tablet.

#### **JUST FOR LAUGHS**

Finally, a personality test. I challenged each to tell a joke. Siri had the best answer: "If I told you a joke in my language, I'd have to explain it." Then I tried the famous line from "2001: A Space

Odyssey" in which astronaut Dave Bowman tells the ship's computer: "Open the pod bay doors." Cortana knows the right answer: "I'm sorry Dave. I'm afraid I can't do that." But Siri had a better one: "Doesn't anybody knock anymore?"

To be clear, these aren't the witty rejoinders of some artificial intelligence. The creators of Siri and Cortana thought it would be fun to pre-load each service with humorous answers to predictable questions.

Google doesn't bother with such frills. Sticking to its search-engine roots, "OK Google" answered the "2001" question by silently presenting a series of Internet links, starting with one for a YouTube clip from the movie.

Likewise, when asked about the meaning of life, Siri and Cortana were both ready with a quip. Google just recited a dry definition that only a biologist could love: "Life is the condition that distinguishes animals and plants from inorganic matter. ..."

#### **FINAL SCORE**

All three services are good on factual questions. Siri's programmers have the best sense of humor. Google stays focused on the task at hand. And Cortana is quickly catching up to both of them. — AP



TAIPEI: A fan wears a HTC Vive headset and holds two sensors during a promotional event held by HTC in Taipei yesterday. Smartphone maker HTC unveiled to Taiwanese gamers its virtual reality headset for the first time, as the company pins hopes on the new product to help revive its struggling business. — AFP

#### HTC GIVES TAIWAN FIRST LOOK AT VIRTUAL REALITY HEADSET

**TAIPEI:** Smartphone maker HTC unveiled yesterday to Taiwanese gamers its virtual reality headset for the first time, as the company pins its hopes on the new product to help revive struggling sales. HTC has been suffering losses as it grapples with intense competition in the crowded smartphone sector from Samsung, Apple and rising Chinese brands. The HTC Vive will vie for consumers with Facebook's Oculus Rift and Sony's PlayStation VR, all set to be released next year as tech firms seek to make their mark in the virtual reality field. Gamers in the capital Taipei queued at a tech mall for 10-minute trials of the headset, during which they played games including shooting zom-

bies and exploring a sunken ship. "It's exciting to feel like you're in the scene," Judy Chen, 30, told AFP. "It feels quite real and gives you that sense of distance," she said, adding she would consider buying one if it was priced around Tw\$30,000 (\$917). The company has yet to announce pricing for HTC Vive, created with US game developer Valve.

"The sensory aspect of it is quite different. You're not just looking but interacting," said Shawn Chen, 24, but he worried a lack of space would prevent him playing at home.

The Taiwanese company has show-

cased HTC Vive in the US and Europe after announcing the device earlier this year. The lightweight head gear will also be shown at a developer conference in Beijing on Friday and at the Sundance Film Festival in January. HTC will start taking pre-orders in February, with the official sales launch in April.

In a bid to boost its flagging fortunes, HTC also launched a new flagship smartphone-the One A9 — in October to take on Apple's latest iPhones.

HTC reported a second straight quarterly loss in the three months to September, just weeks after announcing job cuts. — AFP



TAIPEI: Local fans wait to test the HTC Vive headset during a promotional event held by HTC in Taipei yestertday. — AFP

aged network," which Comcast considers separate from the

into a channel's app, like HBO or ESPN, or video using

another Comcast app, Xfinity TV Go, would count toward

tomers watch Comcast-supplied TV without counting

toward data caps, but Comcast says the app was scrapped

But in a complication for customers, she says logging

The company used to have an Xbox app that let cus-

Since early 2014, the No. 2 wireless carrier has exempt-

ed some Internet services from data caps on its main wire-

less plans. Instead, AT&T says it has pilot agreements with a

handful of businesses under its "Sponsored Data" program.

On its website, AT&T lists six companies as participating,

including Aquto and Syntonic, which specialize in spon-

are exempted from consumers' plans under these pro-

exempt streaming of its own U-verse or DirecTV online

video from its home Internet data caps in order to win FCC

**VERIZON** 

approval of its July purchase of DirecTV.

The company would not say who pays for the data that

As for AT&T's cable business, AT&T agreed not to

public Internet, says spokeswoman Lisa Scalzo.

caps because data go over the public Internet.

#### MORE TELECOMS LET YOU WATCH VIDEO WITHOUT DINGING DATA CAPS

**NEW YORK:** Cellphone and broadband providers are excluding some video from data caps, meaning consumers have more data available for other apps and services.

But that's not necessarily good, according to advocates of net neutrality, the concept that Internet access providers shouldn't discriminate against some Web traffic in favor of others. They say innovation could be curtailed if smaller video providers couldn't afford to pay for an exemption.

The exemptions come as mobile video booms. But video eats up a lot of data. On a smartphone, an hour or two of video consumes about 1 gigabyte. AT&T and Verizon, the biggest wireless companies, have been phasing out unlimited plans, so customers pay more to watch more over cellular networks.

Even home Internet providers are testing data caps. About 13 percent of Comcast's customers are in a market with caps, according to research firm MoffettNathanson. Comcast exempts its own video, but not video from rivals like Netflix. Critics say that could hurt competition, as consumers would be drawn to the service that's exempt.

The Federal Communications Commission has adopted rules to protect net neutrality, but these exemptions aren't banned under the rules. The FCC says consumers could benefit in some cases and will address complaints as they come up. Here's a look at what major US companies are

#### T-MOBILE

The No. 3 wireless carrier exempts major streaming music and, as of November, many popular video services from data caps on most of its plans. The company says the video providers don't have to pay for that, but do have to meet certain technical requirements. YouTube and Facebook video aren't covered; T-Mobile says it couldn't tell

when those services are delivering video. This fall, the cable TV giant started offering a streaming alternative, with channels delivered to customers' homes without the need for a cable box. That video - and any

streaming that regular cable customers do on the compa-

ny's Xfinity TV app in their homes - aren't counted toward

data caps. That's because they're cable services on a "man-

in late August.

The country's biggest wireless company has said that its mobile video service, go90, launched in October, will include sponsored content. That means Verizon customers watching that video will be exempt from data caps. Verizon will make money instead through ads. Not all go90 video will be sponsored content, though; some does count toward a data cap.

Spokeswoman Marie McGehee confirmed a Re/code report that said Verizon will soon test a sponsored-data program similar to AT&T. It would roll out more broadly next year. She declined to comment further Friday. The company is currently running a promotion in which Verizon customers get an extra 2 gigabytes of data for three months for downloading the go90 app and registering. But you don't have to watch any video to get the deal. — AP

#### SQUEEZED BY BUDGET AND ISLAMIC STATE, IRAQI HEALTH SYSTEM STRUGGLES

#### HEALTHCARE HAMMERED BY WARS AND SANCTIONS

BAGHDAD: Iraq's prime minister responded to protests this summer over failing public services by launching a campaign against corruption and mismanagement, yet more than four months later there is little sign of improvement in one key sector: healthcare. With Iraqis fleeing Islamic State in ever greater numbers, the country's growing population of internal refugees is straining public facilities already ground down by decades of war, sanctions and red tape. Focused on fighting insurgents, the government is struggling to provide the services that Iraqis took to the streets to demand.

That failure is nowhere more acute than in a healthcare system once seen as one of the best in the Middle East. The World Health Organization says Iraq's public health, water, and sanitation systems are collapsing. The situation has become so desperate that thousands of Iraqis forced to flee Anbar province in the west have opted to bypass the government and seek medical care from

non-governmental organizations such as one called Dari.

Based in a modest apartment building in Baghdad's Karrada Mariam neighborhood, Dari treats about 50 patients a day, mostly children and the elderly. So far this year, Dari has provided more than 15,000 families with food aid and registered another 8,400 patients at its free medical clinic, said its president, Alaa Abdel Sadaa. Abdel Sadaa said his organization managed resources better than the government, which is plagued by political infighting. Prime minister Haider Al-Abadi must meanwhile deal with resistance from Iraq's fractious members of parliament, which means that as the healthcare crisis deepens, he has to build a political consensus before he can proceed with any reforms.

For its part, Dari relies on volunteers.

None of its more than 100 medical professionals are paid, said Abdel Sadaa.

"We can treat 100 patients with \$1,000," he said. "That is difficult for the health ministry or any government hospital to

say." Dari relies partly on donations and supplies from pharmaceutical firms and food manufacturers. Abdel Sadaa said the government has called on non-governmental organizations to help it fill the gap in public services caused by the state's new austerity measures.

But he said instead of helping groups like his operate, government agencies often obstruct his work. Instead of supervising organizations to prevent corruption and theft, the state uses the security situation to restrict the groups' activities, he said. The chief of the NGO directorate in the Iraqi cabinet, Ali Makki, said his office is intensifying efforts to facilitate the work of non-governmental organizations, especially those providing relief and health services. Dari was founded in 2013 to encourage blood donations after bomb attacks in the capital. It now runs a mobile clinic in one of Irag's provinces every week or so, and has played a big role in fighting the worst cholera outbreak in Iraq in

#### Decades of suffering

Health ministry spokesman Rifaq Al-Araji said non-governmental organizations had helped to ease the pressure. Araji blamed economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations in 1990 after Iraq invaded Kuwait, and subsequent wars and violence, for the poor state of the health care system. The war with Islamic State has displaced more than 3 million Iraqis. With most belonging to the minority Sunni sect, the problem is also a political one which Iraq is poorly placed to handle following years of sectarian bloodletting between Sunnis and Shi'ite Muslims.

With lower revenues from oil exports and higher costs associated with the battle against Islamic State, the government is failing to help the most vulnerable. "We came from the province of Anbar as a displaced family because of the fighting there. We came here as our financial position is weak. I have no job," said Khalil Ibrahim, 60, whose family has 10 members. Anger over shortages of

electricity, water and jobs erupted into protests this summer in Baghdad and many southern cities, prompting Abadi to declare war on corruption. At the same time, falling oil prices forced the government to slash spending.

State hospitals are grim. "I came to a government hospital because I can't pay the high cost of private doctors. But the problem is I still have to get medication from a private pharmacy as it is usually not available here," said Ameera Abdel Muhsin, 50, a housewife, at a state hospital. AI-Yarmouk hospital in western Baghdad is typical. Patients are transported through corridors littered with cigarette butts.

"I was admitted to hospital two days ago suffering with kidney failure but I'm getting worse because of a lack of treatment," said Qasim Al-Kinani, 68, pointing to a cat eating leftover food beneath his bed. "Look at this farce. I'm sleeping on a bloodstained mattress with a filthy smell. I feel like I'm sleeping in a zoo."—Reuters



WILLSTTT, Germany: Felicitas Rohrer, a German woman who is suing German pharmaceuticals giant Bayer, holds a box of the birth control pill "Yasminelle" at her home in Willstaett.—AFP photos

# BAYER SUED IN GERMANY OVER CONTRACEPTIVE PILL AFTER HEALTH SCARES

WILLSTTT, Germany: "If I'd known, I'd never have taken this pill," says Felicitas Rohrer, who is suing German pharmaceuticals giant Bayer, claiming its oral contraceptive Yasminelle caused her to suffer a pulmonary embolism. The accusations against Bayer's contraceptive pills Yasminelle and Yaz, based on drospirenone, are not new and the company has already paid out nearly two billion dollars (1.8 billion euros) to around 10,000 women in out-of-court settlements in the United States to avoid long and costly trials. But Rohrer's case, which opens on Thursday, is highly symbolic in the company's home country of Germany, where Bayer, maker of Aspirin, stands as a beacon for the domestic chemicals and pharmaceuticals sectors.

Rohrer is suing the company for 200,000 euros (\$220,000) in damages and interest. But "the money cannot compensate for what I and other women have gone through," she told AFP. "What I really hope for is justice," she said in her home in Willstaett, not far from the French-German border, adding that her hope is for Yasminelle to be withdrawn from the market. At the age of 31, and following a pulmonary embolism-a blockage of the lung's main artery-Rohrer now has to take an anti-coagulant that significantly reduces her chances of having a baby.

She suffers from shortness of breath and is forced to wear anti-embolism compression stockings on car journeys of any length. She studied to become a vet but now works as a journalist because she is not allowed to carry any heavy loads. It was in June 2009 that Rohrer, hitherto a perfectly healthy young woman, suddenly collapsed. Her heart stopped for 20 minutes. And in an emergency operation, doctors found massive blood clots clogging her heart.

#### Increased risk

"The doctors couldn't believe that a 25-yearold woman could suffer from a pulmonary embolism," she said. And the doctors clearly pointed the finger at the pill. The self-help group Rohrer has since set up has collected testimony from around 250 women who suffered similar side effects. She is the first person in Germany to sue Bayer over the drug, accusing the company of not informing patients sufficiently about the risks associated with Yasminelle. The trial opens on Thursday in a court in Waldshut-Tiengen near the Swiss border.

Bayer-which sold 768 million euros worth of the Yasmin group of contraceptive pills in 2014, compared with total overall group sales of 42 billion euros-rejects the accusations as "unjustified". It insists the pills have a "positive" risk-benefit profile and are approved by every national drug agency. So far, the courts have agreed, notably in a case brought against Bayer in Switzerland.

Nevertheless, a number of studies have suggested that contraceptive pills using drospirenone and other progestins double the risk of clotting blood vessels compared with earlier generations of contraceptive pills. In France,



WILLSTTT, Germany: Felicitas Rohrer speaks to an AFP journalist next to medical documents and a box of the birth control pill "Yasminelle".

where Bayer has already been the target of a number of other high-profile cases, health insurers have halted reimbursements for the pills, hitting group sales there. A German medical journal claims that there has been a drop in the number of women admitted to hospital with pulmonary embolism in France.

#### 'Lack of information'

Taking the pills "increases the risks and women should be aware of that," said Yana Vinogradova, a scientist at Nottingham University in Britain. Nevertheless, "the risks remain low, lower than those connected to pregnancy," she added. One of the leading public health insurers in Germany, Techniker Krankenkasse, expressed alarm in a recent report about the "predominance of high-risk pills" on

the market. "There is a lack of information on the part of the doctors and the pharmaceuticals industry," said Gerd Glaeske, pharmacologist and co-author of the report.

He said he viewed the lawsuit filed by Rohrer as "an important symbol". All the more so, because Yasmin, with its anti water-retention effects, means patients are less likely to gain weight, Glaeske said. It is "the first pill that has a very clear marketing angle on beauty and wellbeing," opening the way for boasts that contraceptive pills are effective in fighting acne, for example, he argued. In the meantime, in the United States, Bayer is also the target of a growing number of lawsuits against another of its contraceptive products, the implant Essure, which women complain has caused them pain and severe bleeding.—AFP

# ELECTED LEADERS DIE YOUNGER, SAYS STUDY

**PARIS:** Politicians may achieve a lifelong dream of becoming a prime minister or president, but in doing so may face the Grim Reaper somewhat sooner than the expected. So suggests an offbeat study in the Christmas edition of the British medical journal, The BMJ. Researchers led by Anupam Jena, an associate professor in health care policy at Harvard Medical School, looked at the age of death among 279 nationally-elected leaders in 17 Western countries, from 1722 to 2015.

22 to 2015. This was compared with 261 runner-ups in

the election who never served in that office. In Britain and other parliamentary democracies, the researchers looked at politicians who served as party leaders at the time of their election to the legislature. After adjusting for life expectancy at the time of the last election, elected heads of government lived 2.7 years less than nonelected rivals. "We found that heads of governments had substantially accelerated mortality compared with runner-up candidates," says the study. "Our findings suggest that elected leaders may indeed age more quickly."—AFP

# WHO PLANNING MAJOR AID DELIVERY DURING YEMEN CEASEFIRE

**GENEVA:** The World Health Organization yesterday outlined plans to take advantage of a ceasefire in Yemen to distribute medical supplies across the crisis-hit country. The WHO representative in Yemen, Ahmed Shadoul, told reporters in Geneva that the UN agency had received assurances from the warring factions that its staff were free to move with the supplies while the ceasefire holds. "We have requested unconditional movement of supplies, personnel and teams to all parts of the country and we got the confirmation that this will definitely be granted," Shadoul said.

Yemen's healthcare system has been devastated by the conflict pitting pro-government forces backed by a Saudi-led coalition against Houthi rebels supported by Iran. Attacks on health facilities and a lack of vital supplies, especially fuel, have posed major problems but Fadoul stressed that limited access to hard-hit areas has been

one of the greatest challenges for health workers. Fadoul said WHO had prepared "around 19 trucks which will be distributed to different parts of the country, probably to 14 locations." He said he believed those trucks had already left warehouses in Sanaa and in the southern governorate of Aden.

A key priority was Taiz in the southwest, where oxygen and trauma kits were due to be dispatched. The operation was on track despite reported breaches in the ceasefire that came into effect earlier yesterday, Shadoul said. WHO was also aiming to move some 150 metric tons of material from Djibouti, the delivery of which has been complicated by restrictions on imports imposed by the rival factions. A national polio vaccination campaign has also been scheduled from December 19 to 23, targeting around five million Yemeni children, provided health workers are free to move around.—AFP

# GUATEMALA MULLS REDRESS FOR US SYPHILIS EXPERIMENT VICTIMS

**GUATEMALA CITY:** Guatemala is considering compensation for the family of three people who were victims of a 1940s US-led medical experiment in which hundreds were infected with syphilis, Vice President Alfonso Fuentes said Monday. "They have been heard and what they are asking for is some form of damages," Fuentes told reporters, adding that the government was studying the option of providing "financial and moral" reparation.

The family's relatives were part of a 1946-1948 experiment conducted by US health officials in which 1,300 people in Guatemala-prisoners, prostitutes, soldiers or mental patients-were deliberately exposed to or contaminated with venereal diseases such as syphilis and gonorrhea. At least 83 of those involved in the experiment died, according to a US presidential commission. The aim was to see what

effects antibiotics would have.

The fact the subjects were never informed of what was being done to them prompted President Barack Obama in 2010 to apologize for what he termed a "crime against humanity." Obama vowed to promote ways to remedy the wrong, but made no concrete offer of compensation. The unethical experiment was revealed by Doctor Susan Reverby, a professor at Wellesley College in the US.

She came across the work while researching notes left by John Charles Cutler, a public health services sexual disease specialist who headed up the experiment, following his death in 2003. Cutler was also involved in another infamous US medical experiment that for half a century up to 1972 studied the progression of untreated syphilis in poor American blacks in Alabama.—AFP

# SANOFI AIMS FOR TOP SPOT IN CONSUMER HEALTH VIA ASSET SWAP

PARIS: Sanofi said yesrerday it hopes to take over the consumer health care unit of German peer Boehringer Ingelheim via an asset swap, making the French pharmaceutical giant the sector's world leader. Sanofi is offering its animal health unit Merial in exchange for Boehringer's consumer health, or non-prescription drugs, business plus 4.7 billion euros (\$5.2 billion) in cash in exclusive negotiations between both companies. The announcement was a shot in the arm for Sanofi shares, which posted a healthy 4.8 percent increase at 78.33 in midday Paris

If concluded, the deal would give Sanofi close to 4.6 percent of the world's consumer health care market, making it the global leader in the segment. The German company's Chinese operations are, however, not part of the talks. Boehringer meanwhile would become the world's number two in animal health. Sanofi's animal health unit Merial is valued at 11.4 billion euros in the deal and the assets Boehringer is bringing to the table at 6.7 billion.

"The consumer health care business of Boehringer Ingelheim would strengthen Sanofi's position in Germany and in Japan, where Sanofi's presence is limited," Sanofi said in a statement. Its presence in the United States and Latin America would also see a "significant expansion", it said. Boehringer's consumer health care unit includes leading brands in anti-spasmodics, laxatives, vitamins and cough treatments. "This transaction would allow Sanofi to become a world leader in the attractive nonprescription medicines market and would bring a complementary portfolio with highly recognized brands, allowing for mid and long term value creation," Sanofi chief executive Olivier Brandicourt, said in the state-

"The acquisition is perfectly in line with the announced strategy, with the potential for large synergies, which is very reassuring for markets," Natixis analyst Philippe Lanone told AFP. In addition to the deal itself, stock market sentiment was also underpinned by Sanofi's announcement that it would use part of the deal's proceeds to buy back its own shares from the market, boosting future earnings per share. Sanofi's last major acquisition dates back to 2011, when it bought US bio-technology company Genzyme for 15 billion euros. Last month, Sanofi warned that profits would stagnate for the next two years during a major restructuring drive which would include a streamlining of its product portfolio. At the time, Sanofi also flagged that it would possibly spin off its animal health division.—AFP



PARIS: French drugmaker group Sanofi new CEO Olivier Brandicourt addresses the group's general meeting in Paris.—AFP

#### MENTAL HEALTH CARE WOULD CURB VIOLENCE, SOME AT HEARING SAY

SACRAMENTO, California: A gun club owner and a gun dealer are among those telling a congressman Monday that closing loopholes in federal background checks and increasing mental health help would reduce gun violence. California US Rep Mike Thompson, chairman of House Democrats' Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, held the hearing less than two weeks after 14 people were fatally shot in San Bernardino. Gun rights proponents accused Thompson of politicizing the issue. He conducted the hearing at the state Capitol in

Sacramento on the third anniversary of the Dec 14, 2012, shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut that left 20 first-graders and six educators dead, and he opened by criticizing Congress' inaction since then.

But Thompson said he is a gun owner trying to find middle ground as he co-authors a House bill requiring nationwide background checks at gun shows and for those who buy guns from individuals online. His office said the panel discussion was scheduled before the San Bernardino shootings by a couple who authorities say were inspired by a foreign terror organization. Thompson opposed one suggestion from gun control advocates: background checks for buying ammunition, as would be required under a 2016 ballot initiative proposed by Lt. Gov Gavin Newsom.

Newsom, a Democrat who is running for governor in 2018, also wants to ban the possession, not just the sale, of large-capacity ammunition magazines and require police reports when guns are lost or stolen. Thompson said in an interview that he is concerned

about the cost of requiring ammunition buyers to buy a license every two years. He also opposes a ban on sales to those under age 18 and said the checks could make it difficult for gun owners who live in other states to buy ammunition during visits to California.

"Doesn't California the Congressman want to know if a visitor from another state buying deadly ammo is a violent felon?" Dan Newman, a spokesman for the ballot measure campaign, responded in an email. "Right now there is absolutely no oversight on the sale of ammunition." On background checks for buying guns, Thompson had support from Joe Deaser, owner of Capital Gun Club in Roseville, and Chris Kitaeff, a gun show dealer from Arizona and board member of Arizonans for Gun Safety. "This really isn't about gun control. It's about keeping bad people from doing dumb things," Deaser said. But Craig DeLux, an advocate with the California Association of Federal Firearms Licensees, said even California's strict gun control laws aren't enough to stop criminals, terrorists, or others willing to break the law.—AP

#### STUDY DOCUMENTS SEA LION BRAIN DAMAGE DUE TO ALGAE'S TOXIN

IN CHILE, WORLD'S ASTRONOMY HUB, SCIENTISTS FEAR LOSS OF DARK SKIES

**WASHINGTON:** A toxin produced by called Pseudo-nitzschia, responsible for the marine algae is inflicting brain damage on sea lions along California's coast, causing neurological and behavioral changes that can impair their ability to navigate in the sea and survive in the wild, scientists said on Monday.

Brain scans on 30 California sea lions detected damage in the hippocampus, a brain structure associated with memory and spatial navigation, in animals naturally exposed to the toxin known as domoic acid, the researchers said. Domoic acid mimics glutamate, a chemical that transmits nerve impulses in the brain, and leads to over-activation of hippocampus nerve cells and chronic epilepsy, according to Emory University cognitive psychologist Peter Cook, who worked on the study while at the University of California-Santa Cruz.

"The behavioral deficits accompanying brain damage with domoic acid are severe, and may negatively impact foraging and navigation in sea lions, driving strandings and mortality," Cook said. Hundreds of sea lions annually are found stranded on California beaches with signs of domoic acid poisoning such as disorientation and seizures. Thousands are thought to be exposed to the toxin.

View galleryA photo showing normal California sea lion brain section &hellip; A normal California sea lion brain section (L) and California sea lion brain that has been affected ... The microscopic algae,

CHILE: When some of the world's leading

astronomers scaled a frosty, Chilean peak in

mid-November to break ground on a state-of-

the-art, \$1 billion telescope, they were

stunned by an unexpectedly hazy glow. On

the floor of the Atacama Desert, some 1,700

meters (5,600 ft) below the planned Giant

Magellan Telescope, new streetlights lining

Chile's north-south highway shone brightly.

To the naked eye, the Milky Way still looked

sharp. But to a sensitive, state-of-the-art tele-

scope scouring the deepest reaches of the

known universe, the new ground light could

the Great Barrier Reef," said Guillermo Blanc, a

University of Chile astronomy professor, who

first saw the lights at the opening. "It's insane,"

he added. "Why are they trying to light up the

Andes?" In the past 30 years, Chile has carved

out a niche as the global hub for observation-

al astronomy. More than a dozen major

research telescopes have already been built,

and by 2020, the South American country will

boast around 70 percent of the world's astro-

nomical infrastructure. The low humidity and

"It's like putting an oil rig in the middle of

be blinding.

toxin occur naturally in coastal waters. Their blooms have become more frequent and severe in recent years. This year's bloom was the largest on record, reaching from Santa Barbara, California to Alaska.

Ocean pollution from chemicals like fertilizers and warming ocean temperatures associated with global climate change are believed to contribute to bloom size and frequency. The toxin accumulates in shellfish and small fish that consume algae. Sea lions, other marine mammals and seabirds are exposed to it after eating those shellfish

"Domoic acid-producing blooms have been in the environment for a very long time, but the current pattern of much larger and more frequent blooms causing more visible damage to marine animals has been going on since the 1980s," Cook said. Sea lions exposed to the toxin had greatly reduced connectivity between the hippocampus and the thalamus, a brain structure associated with sensory perception and regulation of motor functions. Those with hippocampus damage also performed worse on memory tasks such as one involving finding a food reward. "Hundreds of sea lions end up in stranding facilities each year. A great many of them do die although some can be rehabilitated and survive for some time in the wild," Cook said. The research was published in the journal Science.—Reuters

smooth airflow in northern Chile's Atacama

Desert create unrivalled visibility for the high-

tech telescopes that scientists hope will shed

light on the formation of the universe and the

increased sharply in the barren Atacama as

mining cities swell and tourist numbers

mushroom. "There is an ongoing concern that

ground-based astronomy is at risk long-term.

There just are not that many pristine sites

left," said Patrick McCarthy, the president of

the Giant Magellan Telescope, which will be

constructed at the Las Campanas

Observatory in the southern Atacama. "As

these cities and highways grow, you start to

wash out the faintest objects. The thing is, the

faintest objects are the reason we're building

Giant Magellan Telescope, the populations of

Coquimbo and La Serena ballooned by

almost 70 percent from 1992 to 2012.

Nightclubs, sports arenas and sprawling sub-

urbs all spew bright, artificial light into the

Just over 100 kilometers southwest of the

these telescopes in the first place."

night sky.—Reuters

But scientists say light pollution has

possibility of extraterrestrial life.



BAIKONUR, Kazakhstan: Russia's Soyuz TMA-19M spacecraft carrying the International Space Station (ISS) Expedition 46/47 crew of Britain's astronaut Tim Peake, Russian cosmonaut Yuri Malenchenko and US astronaut Tim Kopra blasts off from the launch pad at the Russian-leased Baikonur cosmodrome yesterday.—AFP

# FIRST BRITON TO TRAVEL TO ISS BLASTS OFF INTO SPACE

BAIKONUR, Kazakhstan: Tim Peake, the first Briton to travel to the International Space Station, blasted off yesterday from the Baikonur cosmodrome with two other astronauts, to cheers and excitement back home. Peake, 43, joins Russian space veteran Yury Malenchenko and Tim Kopra of NASA for a six-month mission on the ISS. Fire from the boosters of the Soyuz rocket cut a bright light through the overcast sky at the Moscow-operated cosmodrome in Kazakhstan as the spacecraft launched on schedule at 1103 GMT. "It was great to watch Tim Peake blast off on his mission to join the International Space Station," British Prime Minister

David Cameron said on Twitter. Queen Elizabeth II's official Twitter account @BritishMonarchy retweeted the UK Space Agency saying "We have liftoff! @astro\_timpeake is on his way to space! #GoodLuckTim, the #UK is with you!" Russian space officials said the launch had gone according to plan and that the spacecraft was due to dock at the ISS at about 1724 GMT. Former army major Peake-a European Space Agency flight engineer-begins a mission of more than 170 days or nearly six months at the orbiting research outpost along with Malenchenko, 53, and 52-year-old Kopra. His two fellow crew members have already spent 641 and 58 days in space respectively.

'Quite emotional'

Peake's mission has generated considerable excitement in Britain. Crowds gathered in the Science Museum in London to witness the liftoff, with thousands of people including around 2,000 schoolchildren breaking into screams and waving British flags as giant screens set up in the exhibition hall showed the rocket blasting off. A further party is planned for Tuesday evening, when the museum will stay open late in a special celebration, and the first British citizen in space Helen Sharman will give a talk.

"If just one or two of the school children here decide to be engineers or scientists or test pilots as a result of this mission, then it's going to be worth it," said TV science presenter Brian Cox, who watched the launch at the Science Museum. In Peake's hometown of Chichester in southeastern England, the launch was shown at his old school.

The Chichester Observer quoted his old physics teacher, Mike Gouldstone, as saying: "This is every physics teachers dream, to have had a future astronaut in front of you. "It is all quite emotional for me. A lot of children come here because 'the astronaut Tim Peake' came here."

**Christmas in space** 

Peake himself was relaxed ahead of his first voy-

age into space, talking about his expectations of a festive season aboad the ISS during a pre-flight news conference at the Cosmonaut Hotel in Baikonur on Monday. "We'll be enjoying the fantastic view of planet Earth and our thoughts will be with everyone on Earth enjoying Christmas and with our friends and family," he said. On the eve of Peake's departure, the British government unveiled an ambitious new space policy. The policy aims to more than triple the value of the sector to the national economy, reaching \$40 billion by 2030.

UK Secretary of State for Business Innovation and Skills, Sajid Javid, said the new policy will "turn science fiction into science fact" while helping London increase its share of the global space market from seven to 10 percent. Space travel has been one of the few areas of international cooperation between Russia and the West that has not been wrecked by the Ukraine conflict.

The Soyuz trio will join up with three astronauts already at the ISS-Scott Kelly of NASA and Russians Sergei Volkov and Mikhail Kornienko. Three other astronauts-NASA's Kjell Lindgren, Japanese astronaut Kimiya Yui and Russian cosmonaut Oleg Kononenko-returned to Earth on Friday in a rare nighttime landing. The ISS space laboratory has been orbiting the Earth at roughly 28,000 kilometers (17,500 miles) an hour since 1998.—AFP



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#### **Birthday Greetings**



come with love, laughter and blessings. May Almighty God shower all His blessing today and throughout the year on you. Many, many happy returns of the day **Charvita** Polineni! From your par-

ents: Santaram Naidu Polineni and Lata Polineni. Brothers and Sisters: Vathsalya, Rupesh, Hemanth and Nani.

#### BANGLADESHI EMBASSY CLOSURE

he Embassy of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in Kuwait will remain closed on Wednesday, 16 December 2015 on the occasion of The Victory Day of Bangladesh.

The Embassy will arrange the following program on Wednesday, 16 December 2015 at Chancery to observe the Victory Day of Bangladesh:

#### **Chancery Roof:**

- 9 am: Ceremonial hoisting of the National Flag. Multipurpose Hall:
- 9:15 am: Recitation from the Holy Quran 9:16 am: Observance of one minute silence
- 9:17 am: Reading out the messages
- 9:30 am: Discussion on the Day 10 am: Speech by the Ambassador.







Ahmadi Governor Sheikh Fawaz Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah sponsored an entertaining day for elderly and disabled people's care home's residents, organized by the social development centers in Fintas and Ali Sabah Al-Salem.

# FRIENDS OF KANNUR AUDITORIUM ക്കാവത്ത

#### AYANAM HOLDS OPENS FORUM 'CINEMA ON CROSSROADS'

s it another cinema possible" was one of the topic presented by national award winning eminent film critic and filmmaker Dr CS Venkiteshwaran in the program "Cinema on crossroads" conducted by Ayanam Open Forum at FOKE Hall.

The event was held as an open forum with active participation from the audience and expanded to an in-depth discussion about cinema and film culture in India and the world present today. Sunny Joseph an Indian Cinematographer and director from Kerala, most known for his award winning work in Shaji N Karun classic, 'Piravi' and other major films in more than 16 languages in India presented the topic

"Creative Possibilities of Cinema" with his vision of cinema and the visual language and culture to evolve in the society to counter the negative elements exists.

Manilal the wellknown film maker and writer presented the topic about the film society movement in Kerala and the present status. He was optimistic about the new trends and expected to produce good films from this evolving cul-

Writer Karunakran opens the discussion about cinema and analyzed the root elements in society which impacts not only cinema but all the other art forms in the present day. Ayanam Open Forum General Convener Mohammed Riyaz

presided the event and Abdul Fathah Thayyil welcomed the audience. Bergman Thomas, Rafeek Uduma, Thomas Mathew Kadavil, Shareef Thamarassery, Kannan Kavungal, Sunil Cheriyan, John Mathew, Mujibullah, and others participated in the discussion and presented their views. Sathar Kunnil, Shaji Raghuvaran and Rafeek Uduma handed over the souvenir to the film personalities. Nottam Fim festival Director Vinod Valloopparambil and other dignitaries from Kuwait art, media and film arena attended the event. Habeebulla Muttichoor, Sabu Peter and Anwar Sadath coordinated the event. Shareef Thamarassery delivered vote of thanks.











The KG Department at the American Baccalaureate School (ABS) went on an exciting field trip to the zoo recently.





#### ACK'S SMOKING AWARENESS INITIATIVE GOES LIVE

s an educational institution dedicated to the advancement of youth, the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) has been committed to the planning and development of a nation-wide initiative raising awareness on the health and environmental impacts of smoking.

Set as a priority, ACK's executive management has put together a core team to ensure the sustainability of the initiative through the inclusion of its students, academic and administrative staff.

Now in its second year, the initiative has witnessed input from its School of Business academic staff and students. During previous semesters ACK's Mechanical

Engineering students, guided by their instructors, designed and constructed models to demonstrate the effects of smoking on humans and the environment. It is worth mentioning that the students' efforts were recognized and rewarded at the Kuwait National Petroleum Company's (KNPC) 8th Annual CEO Awards ceremony. This semester, ACK's School of Business students took part in the project and used these models by organizing school visits to the International Academy of Kuwait (IAK) and showcasing presentations to inform Grade 1 students on how smoking can nega-

tively affect them and their loved ones.

Rawa Al-Wadani, a Junior Instructor at the School of

Business, noted that the experience had a strong impact on the participants. She commented: "My students have been developing their presentations for the past 10 weeks and were well prepared. However, when they actually stood in front of the young 6-year olds, and they could see that these children were listening to the message, my students realized how important it was that they show their personal belief in the smoking awareness initiative. I have no doubt this experience will remain with my students way into their futures."

ACK's Advisor to the Chairman, Dr Usameh Jamali, was also in attendance at the school presentations. Commenting on the success of the initiative, Dr

Usameh said: "We need to show children from a very young age what can happen to their bodies if they smoke. This is one of the most important messages they should hear for their futures. I believe that our students will definitely make a difference through this project."

Not only is ACK dedicated to raising awareness externally, the College is also finalizing its internal policy to establish staff and student smoking zones to contain second hand smoke, best it can. The College is now working on the next phase of this important initiative and hopes to engage with more schools and students in the coming months.

# NBK'S 'I DREAM TO BE' INITIATIVE GRANTS FARAH'S WISH TO SPEND A DAY AT KIDZANIA

ational Bank of Kuwait (NBK) continues its 'I Dream to Be' initiative, a first-of-a-kind initiative that aims at granting wishes for children with severe illnesses and special needs around Kuwait, giving them the chance to make their dreams come true.

Farah Al-Odaili, who is undergoing

treatment at NBK Hospital, had her own wish to spend a full day with her friends at Kidzania. Therefore, NBK's family organized exclusive shows and activities in cooperation with Kidzania to draw a smile on her face. The tour included a special fashion show designed for Farah in addition to an exclusive Winter Carnival Show. Photo booths were designed for her to strike poses with her friends in addition to being the main star for each cus-

tomized activity. They ended up the day creating their own burgers.

"Farah's wish is yet another wish granted through NBK's initiative "I dream to be". We are proud to be a part of the children's dreams and expand our support to them as much as possible," said Joanne Al-Abdul Jaleel, NBK Public Relations Officer.

"I Dream to Be" initiative is a lifetime experience for children not only with life-threatening conditions but children with special needs as well," she added. "This initiative is a great way to spread joy and show that there's always a positive side to a difficult situation. We ask children what they want to be and try to fulfill that for them."

NBK gives top priority to children through its commitment to corporate

social responsibility. NBK works closely with the Kuwait Association for the Care of Children in Hospitals (KACCH), Bayt Abdullah for the Care of Children in Hospice (BACCH) and several other special needs organizations to maximize its reach to all the children in numerous hospitals and schools.

NBK has been at the forefront of supporting Kuwait's community through a range of initiatives towards education, health, sports and social responsibilities. The establishment of NBK's Children Hospital for Oncology and Hematology at Al Sabah Medical Area stands as one of many ongoing corporate social initiatives towards health and children. "I Dream to Be" aims at focusing and supporting NBK's efforts towards children and addressing their needs as much as possible.







The Direct Aid Society's Public Relations Director Abdulrahman Al-Shatti received students from the 'Energy Camp' club, and gave them a brief about the society's charitable activities in Africa.







# TOLERANCE, HUMAN RIGHTS CELEBRATED AT KNES

o commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the two international covenants on Human Rights (International covenant on economic, social and cultural rights and the International covenant on Civil and Political Rights) coupled with Tolerance Day, Kuwait National English School (KNES) Primary Department celebrated with song and poetry. We witnessed wonderful assemblies presented by KS1 and KS2 respectively. Songs like, "The waving Flag-song", "Can't we get along", "Song of Peace" were sung and a Tolerance Acronym as well as various other poems were performed. Through the performances pupils learnt about the importance preserving each other's human rights and to be tolerant towards each other.



#### SOUTH AFRICAN EMBASSY CLOSURE

n the occasion of Reconciliation Day, the South African Embassy will be closed on Wednesday, 16 December 2015. The Embassy will resume its normal working hours on Thursday, 17 December 2015, from Sunday to Thursday. Please note that the working hours will be from 8:00 to 16:00 and the Consular Section operation hours will from 8:30 to 12:30. For Emergency calls please contact: 94924895.

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00:20 Fast N' Loud 01:10 Ed Stafford: Into The

02:00 Dual Survival 02:50 River Monsters 03:40 Auction Hunters

04:05 Property Wars Storage Wars Canada 05:00 Americarna 05:30 How It's Made

06:00 Ice Cold Gold 06:50 Kindig Customs 07:40 Fast N' Loud **Auction Hunters** 

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18:30 The Carbonaro Effect

17:40 Mythbusters

21:50 The Carbonaro Effect 22:15 The Carbonaro Effect 22:40 You Have Been Warned

23:30 Kindig Customs



00:35 Mythbusters 01:20 How It's Made How It's Made 02:08 Food Factory 02:31 Food Factor 02:55 What Could Possibly Go Wrong? 03:42 Cosmic Collisions

04:29 Mythbusters 05:16 Food Factory 05:39 Food Factor 06:03 What Could Possibly Go Wrong? 06:50 X-Machines 07:37 How It's Made

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19:50 Strip The Cosmos 20:40 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?

21:25 How It's Made 21:50 How It's Made 22:15 Cosmic Collisions 23:00 Strip The Cosmos 23:45 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?

00:00 Violetta 00:45 The Hive 00:50 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch 01:15 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch 01:40 Wolfblood 02:05 Wolfblood 02:30 Violetta 03:15 The Hive

03:20 Sabrina: Secrets Of A

03:45 Sabrina: Secrets Of A

Teenage Witch

Teenage Witch

04:10 Wolfblood 04:35 Wolfblood 05:00 Violetta 05:45 The Hive 05:50 Mouk 06:00 Lolirock 06:25 Hank Zipzer 06:50 Girl Meets World

07:15 H2O: Just Add Water 07:40 H2O: Just Add Water 08:05 Austin & Ally 08:30 Austin & Ally 08:55 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch 09:20 Sabrina: Secrets Of A Teenage Witch 09:45 Jessie 10:35 Aladdin & The King Of Thieves

11:55 Hank Zipzer 12:20 Hank Zinzer 12:45 | Didn't Do It 13:10 I Didn't Do It 13:35 Liv And Maddie 14:00 Liv And Maddie 14:30 H2O: Just Add Water

14:55 H2O: Just Add Water 15:20 Dog With A Blog 15:45 Girl Meets World 16:10 Violetta 17:00 The Next Step 17:25 Mako Mermaids

17:50 Girl Meets World

18:15 Dog With A Blog 18:40 Gravity Falls 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 Wolfblood



00:00 Nina Needs To Go 00:05 Henry Hugglemonster 00:20 Calimero 00:35 Zou 00:50 Loopdidoo

01:05 Art Attack 01:30 Henry Hugglemonster 01:45 Calimero 02:00 Zou 02:15 Loopdidoo

02:30 Art Attack 02:55 Henry Hugglemonster 03:05 Calimero 03:20 Zou

03:30 Loopdidoo 03:45 Art Attack 04:10 Henry Hugglemonster 04:20 Calimero 04:35 Zou 04:45 Loopdidoo

05:00 Art Attack 05:25 Henry Hugglemonster 05:35 Calimero 05:50 Zou 06:00 Loopdidoo

06:15 Art Attack 06:35 Henry Hugglemonster 06:50 Calimero 07:00 Zou 07:20 Loopdidoo 07:35 Art Attack 08:00 Calimero

08:10 Zou

08:25 Limon And Oli 08:35 Jake And The Neverland 09:05 Sofia The First 09:30 Miles From Tomorrow 10:00 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

10:30 Doc McStuffins 11:00 Sofia The First 11:30 Jake And The Never Land 11:55 Miles From Tomorrow

12:25 Henry Hugglemonster 12:55 Loopdidoo 13:10 Sheriff Callie's Wild West 13:35 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse 14:00 Sofia The First 14:30 Henry Hugglemonster 14:45 Calimero

15:00 Doc McStuffins 15:30 Zou 15:45 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse 16:15 Sofia The First 16:45 Jake And The Never Land

17:10 Aladdin 17:40 Adventures Of The Gummi

18:10 Chip n Dale Rescue Rangers 18:40 Jake And The Never Land 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

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

23:30 Lilo & Stitch

23:00 Chip n Dale Rescue Rangers



01:25 Keeping Up With The Kardashians 02:20 Giuliana & Bill 04:10 Pop Innovators 05:05 E! Entertainment Special 06:00 Keeping Up With The

MICHELLE YEOH

ARABARA F

"A Classic Kung Ju

**ACTION FEST** 

Paul Clifton, Combat Magazine

00:00 Stewarts And Hamiltons 00:55 The Grace Helbig Show

03:15 Christina Milian Turned Up Kardashians 06:55 Keeping Up With The

Kardashians 07:50 Style Star

08:20 New Money 08:45 New Money 09:15 Giuliana & Bill

10:15 Giuliana & Bill 11:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills #RichKids Of Beverly Hills The Grace Helbig Show 12:05 12:35 The Grace Helbig Show Fashion Bloggers 13:05

13:35 Fashion Bloggers 14:05 Dash Dolls 15:00 Keeping Up With The 16:00 Keeping Up With The

Kardashians 17:00 Hollywood Cycle 18:00 E! News 19:00 Dash Dolls 20:00 Fashion Bloggers 20:30 Fashion Bloggers 21:00 House Of DVF

22:00 E! News 23:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians 23:30 Keeping Up With The



00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 01:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 01:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives

Man Finds Food 02:30 Man Finds Food 03:00 Man Fire Food Man Fire Food

04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 04:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives Guy's Grocery Games 06:00 Chopped 07:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin

Roadtrip With G. Garvin 08:00 Chopped 09:00 Guy's Grocery Games

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

Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 15:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin 15:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin Chopped 17:00 The Kitchen 18:00 Jenny And Reza's Fabulous

Food Academy 18:30 Grandma's Secret Cookbook 19:00 Chopped Guy's Grocery Games 21:00 Chopped 22:00 Chopped South Africa

23:00 Iron Chef America



00:10 Come Date With Me Australia 00:35 Come Date With Me

Australia 01:05 Seven Days With,Ķ 02:00 Emmerdale 02:25 Coach Trip 02:55 Coronation Street

03:25 Midsomer Murders 05:15 Come Date With Me Australia 05:40 Come Date With Me

Australia 06:10 Seven Days With,Ķ 07:05 Coronation Street 09:20 Peter Andre's 60 Minute

Makeover 10:10 Seven Days With,Ķ 11:05 Coach Trip 11:35 Four Weddings UK

12:30 Come Date With Me Australia 12:55 Come Date With Me Australia 13:25 Emmerdale 13:50 Coach Trip

14:20 Coronation Street 14:45 Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover 15:35 The Jonathan Boss Show 16:30 The Syndicate 17:25 Seven Days With,Ķ 18:20 Come Date With Me Australia

19:10 Coronation Street 19:35 The Jonathan Ross Show 20:30 The Syndicate 21:25 Seven Days With,Ķ 22:20 Coronation Street 22:50 Emmerdale 23:15 Four Weddings UK



01:00 Air Crash Investigation 02:00 Wicked Tuna: North vs. 02:55 Cosmos: A Spacetime

03:50 The Border

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REIGN OF ASSASSINS ON OSN MOVIES ACTION

04:45 Brave New World 05:40 Nat Geo Amazing! 06:35 China's Grand Canal:photog-

rapher's Journey 07:30 The Great Food Revolution 08:25 The Toilet Men 09:20 Brave New World 10:15 Do Or Die

10:40 Do Or Die 11:10 Man V Viral 12:05 Car SOS 13:00 Expedition Wild 14:00 The Great Food Revolution 15:00 Hubble's Cosmic Journey

16:00 Do Or Die 16:30 Do Or Die 17:00 Man V. Viral 18:00 Car SOS 19:00 Air Crash Investigation 20:00 Do Or Die

20:25 Do Or Die 20:50 Man V. Viral 21:40 Car SOS 22:30 Air Crash Investigation 23:20 Nat Geo Amazing

#### NAT GEO people E

00:10 American Food Battle 00:35 David Rocco's Dolce Vita 01:00 Chefs Run Wild 01:25 Tales From The Bush Larder 01:50 Food Lover's Guide To The

Planet 02:15 The Food Files 02:40 Eat Street 03:05 The Best Job In The World 03:30 The Great Food Revolution

04:20 Bondi Rescue Outback Adventure 05:10 Home Strange Home 06:00 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet

06:25 International Open House 06:50 Chefs Run Wild 07:15 Tales From The Bush Larder 07:40 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet

08:05 The Food Files 08:30 Eat Street 08:55 The Best Job In The World 09:20 The Great Food Revolution 10:10 Bondi Rescue Outback Adventure 11:00 Home Strange Home

11:50 Dog Whisperer 12:40 Chefs Run Wild 13:05 Tales From The Bush Larder 13:35 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet 14:00 American Food Battle 14:30 Eat Street

14:55 The Best Job In The World 15:25 The Great Food Revolution 16:20 David Rocco's Dolce India 16:45 David Rocco's Dolce India 17:15 Home Strange Home 18:10 Food Lover's Guide To The

18:35 International Open House 19:05 The Best Job in The World 19:30 The Great Food Revolution 20:25 David Rocco's Dolce India 20:50 David Rocco's Dolce India 21:15 Home Strange Home 22:05 Food Lover's Guide To The

22:30 International Open House Chefs Run Wild 22:55 Tales From The Bush Larder 23:45 Food Lover's Guide To The



00:20 World's Deadliest 01:10 Man V. Monster 02:00 Africa's Deadliest

02:50 World's Deadliest Animals 03:45 Animal Fight Club 04:40 Built For The Kill 05:35 Africa's Deadliest 06:30 World's Deadliest Animals

07:25 Animal Fight Club 08:20 I, Predator 09:15 Built For The Kill 10:10 World's Deadliest 11:05 72 Dangerous Animals

Australia 12:00 Global Whale Shark Mystery 12:55 Ultimate Animal Countdown 13:50 World's Deadliest Animals 14:45 Animal Fight Club 15:40 How Big Can It Get 16:35 Built For The Kill 17:30 World's Deadliest Animals

18:25 72 Dangerous Animals Australia 19:20 Animal Fight Club 20:10 How Big Can It Get 21:00 Built For The Kill 21:50 World's Deadliest Animals 22:40 72 Dangerous Animals

Australia 23:30 Global Whale Shark Mystery OM FIRST HD

#### COMEDY 00:30 Hot In Cleveland

01:00 The Nightly Show With Larry 03:30 2 Broke Girls 04:30 The Tonight Show Starring

23:00 American Horror Story: Hotel **O/N** FIRST

MORE 00:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show 01:00 Good Morning America

03:00 Tyrant 04:00 Helix 05:00 Good Morning America 07:00 Emmerdale 07:30 Coronation Street

The Ellen DeGeneres Show 09:00 Red Band Society 10:00 Emmerdale 10:30 Coronation Street



AGE OF DINOSAURS

#### AGE OF DINOSAURS ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

06:30 My Name Is Earl 07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers 10:30 My Name Is Earl

11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon 12:30 \$#! My Dad Says

13:00 Suburgatory 13:30 My Name Is Earl 14:00 2 Broke Girls 15:30 Hot In Cleveland Wilmore

16:00 The Nightly Show With Larry 17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers 18:00 Marry Me

18:30 2 Broke Girls 20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon 21:00 Hot In Cleveland 21:30 The Nightly Show With Larry

Wilmore 22:00 The League

22:30 The League23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers

# OM FIRST HD

00:00 Bates Motel

01:00 Blood & Oil 03:00 Scream Queens 04:00 The Voice 06:00 Unforgettable

07:00 Bones 08:00 Resurrection 09:00 The Voice 11:00 Blood & Oil 11:00 12:00 Emmerdale 12:30 Coronation Street

The Ellen DeGeneres Show 13:00 14:00 Resurrection 15:00 Unforgettable 16:00 Emmerdale 16:30 Coronation Street 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show

18:00 The Voice 20:00 Supergirl 21:00 Marvel's Agents Of S.H.I.E.L.D. 22:00 The Flash

#### 11:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show 15:15 Robot & Frank-PG15 12:00 Drop Dead Diva 17:00 Quartet-PG15 13:00 Once Upon A Time

14:00 Red Band Society 15:00 Live Good Morning America 17:00 Drop Dead Diva 18:00 Once Upon A Time 19:00 Red Band Society

20:00 Drop Dead Diva 21:00 Once Upon A Time Tyrant 23:00 Helix

**MOVIES ACTION** 00:00 Reign Of Assassins

02:00 At The Devil's Door 04:00 The Scorpion King 4: Quest For Power

06:00 Last Passenger 08:00 The River Wild 10:00 The Italian Job (2003) 12:00 The Scorpion King 4: Quest

For Power 14:00 Marvel's Next Avengers:

Heroes Of Tomorrow 16:00 Last Passenger Age Of Dinosaurs 20:00 Escape Plan 22:00 The Outsider

#### OM MOVIES HID **ACTION** 00:00 At The Devil's Door-PG15 02:00 The Scorpion King 4: Quest

For Power-PG15 04:00 Last Passenger-PG15 06:00 The River Wild-PG15 08:00 The Italian Job (2003)-PG15

10:00 The Scorpion King 4: Quest For Power-PG15 12:00 Marvel's Next Avengers Heroes Of Tomorrow-PG 14:00 Last Passenger-PG15 16:00 Age Of Dinosaurs-PG15

18:00 Escape Plan-PG15 20:00 The Outsider-PG15 22:00 The Terminator-18

**MOVIES HD** 

COMEDY 00:00 The Hot Chick 02:00 Zoolander 04:00 Foodfight Simon Birch

08:00 Tooth Fairy 10:00 Foodfight! 12:00 Zoolander 14:00 The Ladykillers 16:00 Tooth Fairy 18:00 Planes, Trains And **Automobiles** 

20:00 That Awkward Moment

#### **OVI** MOVIES DRAMA

01:00 InSight-PG15 03:00 At Middleton-PG15 05:00 Wrath-PG15 07:00 A Promise-PG15 09:00 Paranoia-PG15 11:00 Wrath-PG15

17:00 Paranoia-PG15 19:00 Jack Strong-PG15 21:15 As Cool As I Am-PG15

ON MEYIES

15:00 The Truth About Emanuel-

13:00 At Middleton-PG15

01:00 The Hidden Face 03:00 The Bag Man 05:00 1911

09:00 Tea With Mussolini

11:00 The Bag Man

13:00 Rushmore 15:00 We Are Family 17:00 Tea With Mussolini 21:00 Jersey Boys 23:15 Mobius

#### OM MOVIES HD

01:15 Ask Me Anything-PG15 03:00 Million Dollar Arm-PG15 05:15 Lizzie Borden Took An Ax-

#### 19:00 Transcendence-PG15 21:00 Before I Go To Sleep-PG15

RONNY COX

23:00 Taken 3-PG15

01:30 Hiroku: Defenders Of Gaia Bolts And Blip 04:30 Mamma Moo And Crow 06:00 Christmas Is Here Again

07:45 Marco Macaco 09:30 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure 11:00 Charlie And The Chocolate Factory

13:00 Bolts And Blip 14:30 Hatching 16:00 The Elf Who Stole Christmas 18:00 Pim And Pom: The Big

Adventure 20:00 Minuscule: Valley Of The Lost Ants 22:00 Hatching 23:30 The Elf Who Stole Christmas

#### **MOVIES** 00:00 Men, Women & Children-18

02:00 Big Hero 6-PG 04:00 No Clue-PG15 06:00 Marvel's Hulk vs. Thor & Wolverine-PG 08:00 So Undercover-PG15 10:00 Hellboy: Sword Of Storms-

12:00 Brick Mansions-PG15 14:00 Sabotage-PG15 16:00 So Undercover-PG15 18:00 Vamps-PG15 20:00 A Case Of You-PG15 22:00 The Skeleton Twins-18

#### OM NEWS 01:00 Live MSNBC Mtp Daily

02:00 Live MSNBC News 03:00 Live NBC Nightly News 03:30 ABC World News With David 04:00 Live MSNBC All In With Chris

Haves 05:00 Live MSNBC The Rachel Maddow Show 06:00 Live MSNBC The Last Word W/ Lawrence O'Donnell 07:00 NBC Nightly News 07:30 ABC World News With David

07:57 NBC Nightly News 08:18 ABC World News With David 08:39 Live ABC Nightline 09:06 MSNBC The Rachel Maddow Show 10:00 MSNBC The Last Word W/

11:00 Live ABC World News Now 11:30 Live ABC World News Now 12:00 Live NBC Early Today 12:30 Live ABC America This Morning 13:00 Live ABC America This Morning

13:30 Live ABC America This

14:00 Live ABC America This

Morning

Lawrence O'Donnell

14:30 MSNBC First Look 15:00 Live NBC Today Show 18:57 MSNBC Hardball W/ Chris Matthews 19:38 MSNBC The Rachel Maddow Show 20:19 MSNBC The Last Word W/ Lawrence O'Donnell 21:00 Live MSNBC Live With

#### амс

23:00 Live MSNBC Live With Kate

11:05 Death Rides A Horse 13:00 Big Screen 13:15 Saved! 14:45 Thunderbirds Are Go 16:20 The Great Escape 19:10 Shattered Glass

Thomas Roberts

04:20 Big Screen

09:30 Little Sister

04:35 Nobody's Fool

07:55 Late For Dinner

06:20 Inspector Clouseau

20:45 Big Screen 21:00 The Blair Witch Project 22:20 Cold Mountain 00:55 Cabin Fever 02:30 The Heavenly Kid

04:25 Killer Iq: Lion vs Hyena 05:15 Gator Boys 06:02 Treehouse Masters Shamwari: A Wild Life

07:12 Shamwari: A Wild Life Call Of The Wildman

08:00 Call Of The Wildman 08:25 Killer Ig: Lion vs Hyena 09:15 Gator Boys

10:10 Treehouse Masters 11:05 Tanked 12:00 Dogs/Cats/Pets 101

12:55 Bondi Vet 13:50 The Primeval Forest Of Belovezhskaya Pushcha 14:45 Killer Iq: Lion vs Hyena

Tanked 17:30 Shamwari: A Wild Life 17:55 Shamwari: A Wild Life 18:25 Killer Iq: Lion vs Hyena

15:40 Treehouse Masters

Yankee Jungle 20:15 Tanked 21:10 Shamwari: A Wild Life

21:35 Shamwari: A Wild Life 22:05 Treehouse Masters Yankee Jungle

Biggest And Baddest Gator Boys Call Of The Wildman 00:50

#### 02:15 Call Of The Wildman 02:40 Yankee Jungle

BBC entertainment Little Britain

04:15 The Weakest Link 05:00 **Teletubbies** The Green Balloon Club Charlie And Lola

06:00 **Teletubbies** The Green Balloon Club 06:50 Charlie And Lola 07:00

Woolly & Tig Woolly & Tig 07:15 Jollywobbles 07:20 Jollywobbles The Weakest Link

08:15 Up The Women 08:45 Doctors Eastenders

09:45 Call The Midwife Starlings The Weakest Link 10:40

12:40 Up The Women Call The Midwife 14:05 Starlings 14:50 Up The Women Doctors

12:10 Up The Women

15:50 Eastenders The Weakest Link 16:20 Up The Women

Up The Women 17:35 18:05 Call The Midwife **Doctors** 19:30 Eastenders

DCI Banks: Aftermath

21:45 Stewart Lee's Comedy Vehicle 22:15 Waking The Dead 23:05 Waking The Dead 00:00 The Weakest Link

**Doctors** 

Eastenders

New Tricks

20:00

01:15

01:40



Call The Midwife

03:14 Grojband 03:35 Johnny Test Transformers: Robots In

Disguise 05:27 Transformers: Robots In Disguise 05:50 Regular Show

06:00 The Amazing World Of Gumball 07:00 Adventure Time 07:25 Teen Titans Go!

08:10 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu 08:35 Ben 10 Omniverse 09:20 Regular Show Clarence 10:30 Johnny Test 11:20 Uncle Grandpa

Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu 12:05 Teen Titans Go! Steven Universe 12:50 Steven Universe 13:15 Regular Show

14:00 Johnny Test

Gumball

Disguise

07:05

13:00

02:25 Grojband

02:51 Groiband

Adventure Time 15:10 The Amazing World Of Gumball 15:35 The Amazing World Of Gumball

16:00 Ben 10 Omniverse Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu 17:10 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu 17:30 Teen Titans Go! Regular Show 19:05 The Amazing World Of

19:30 Johnny Test 19:40 Johnny Test 19:51 Adventure Time Steven Universe Steven Universe Teen Titans Go! 20:27 20:40

21:50 Ben 10: Omniverse 22:15 Uncle Grandpa Adventure Time 00:10 Regular Show 01:40 Transformers: Robots In Disguise 02:02 Transformers: Robots In

Ben 10: Omniverse

crime &investigation

03:40 The Killer Speaks 04:35 Gangsters: America's Most 05:25 Crimes That Shook Australia 06:15 Killers

08:00 The First 48 The First 48 Nightmare In Suburbia 10:00 Very Bad Men 11:00 Very Bad Men 12:00 Frenemies

The First 48

The FBI Files Crime Stories 15:00 Nightmare In Suburbia 16:00 Very Bad Men Very Bad Men 17:00 The First 48 18:00 Frenemies

The FBI Files

20:00 Crime Stories Very Bad Men 21:00 Very Bad Men 22:00 Nightmare In Suburbia 23:00 Celebrity Ghost Stories

My Haunted House 02:45 Nightmare In Suburbia

TREAT WILLIAMS

# PRODUCED & CO-DIRECTED BY JOHN WOO

JUNG WOO SUNG

07:00 The Giver-PG15 09:00 Quartet-PG15 10:45 Divergent-PG15 13:00 The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part I-PG15

The Last Goodbye 00:25 The Last Goodbye 00:50 The Ghost Inside My Child

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"A dazzling martial

arts EPIC"

Andrew J.Staton, Martial Arts Illustrated

# CLASSIFIEDS

Kuwait Times

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2015





#### KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (10/12/2015 TO 16/12/2015)

SHARQIA-1		NO FRI+SAT+MON		CLOSE RANGE	11:00 PM
V8-2	11:30 AM	V8-2	4:30 PM	CLOSE RANGE	1:00 AM
			4:50 PM	CLOSE RAINGE	1:00 AW
THE GOOD DINOSAUR	11:30 AM	FRI+SAT+MON			
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	1:45 PM	BUS 657	6:30 PM	AVENUES-4	
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	4:15 PM	ZINZANA (Emirati Film)	8:30 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	12:30 PM
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	6:45 PM	ZINZANA (Emirati Film)	10:30 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	3:15 PM
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	9:15 PM	,			
		ZINZANA (Emirati Film)	12:30 AM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	6:00 PM
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	11:45 PM			"IN THE HEART OF THE SEA"	6:00 PM
		FANAR-4		IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	8:45 PM
SHARQIA-2		THE GOOD DINOSAUR -3D	1:00 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	11:30 PM
THE GOOD DINOSAUR	1:00 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	3:15 PM		
THE GOOD DINOSAUR	3:15 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR -3D	5:30 PM	AVENUES-5	
THE GOOD DINOSAUR	5:30 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	7:45 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	1:00 PM
THE GOOD DINOSAUR	7:45 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR -3D	10:00 PM	CLOSE RANGE	1:30 PM
THE GOOD DINOSAUR	10:00 PM	BUS 657	12:15 AM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR -3D	3:15 PM
CREED	12:15 AM	503037	12.13744	THE GOOD DINOSAUR -3D	5:30 PM
CHLLD	12.13 AW				
		FANAR-5		THE GOOD DINOSAUR	7:45 PM
SHARQIA-3		CREED	12:45 PM	Special Show "HOWL"	7:45 PM
CLOSE RANGE	12:30 PM	TAMASHA - Hindi	3:30 PM	CLOSE RANGE	10:00 PM
CLOSE RANGE	2:30 PM	BENGAL TIGER - Telugu	3:30 PM	CLOSE RANGE	12:05 AM
CLOSE RANGE	4:30 PM	9		CLOSE HAIVGE	12.05 AW
		BENGAL TIGER - Telugu	6:30 PM		
CLOSE RANGE	6:30 PM	BENGALTIGER - Telugu	9:30 PM	360°- 1	
BUS 657	8:30 PM	CREED	9:30 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR -3D	1:00 PM
CLOSE RANGE	10:30 PM	CREED	12:30 AM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR -3D	3:15 PM
CLOSE RANGE	12:30 AM	CHEED	12.50 / 1111	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	5:30 PM
CLOSE NAINGE	12.30 AW	*** ***			
		MARINA-1		THE GOOD DINOSAUR -3D	7:45 PM
MUHALAB-1		HYENA ROAD	12:45 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	10:00 PM
BUS 657	11:45 AM	HYENA ROAD	3:00 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	12:15 AM
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	1:45 PM	HYENA ROAD	5:15 PM		
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	4:15 PM			3600 3	
		HYENA ROAD	7:30 PM	360°- 2	
CREED	6:45 PM	HYENA ROAD	10:00 PM	BUS 657	1:00 PM
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	9:30 PM	HYENA ROAD	12:30 AM	BUS 657	3:00 PM
CREED	12:05 AM			V8-2	5:00 PM
		MARINA-2		BUS 657	7:00 PM
MILLIAL AR 2			12-20 DM		
MUHALAB-2		THE GOOD DINOSAUR	12:30 PM	BUS 657	9:00 PM
ZINZANA (Emirati Film)	1:00 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	2:45 PM	BUS 657	11:00 PM
ZINZANA (Emirati Film)	3:00 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	5:00 PM	BUS 657	1:00 AM
ZINZANA (Emirati Film)	5:00 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	7:15 PM		
ZINZANA (Emirati Film)	2:00 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	9:30 PM	360°- 3	
	4:00 PM				11.20 444
BENGAL TIGER - Telugu		CREED	11:45 PM	BRIDGE OF SPIES	11:30 AM
BENGAL TIGER - Telugu	7:00 PM			CREED	2:30 PM
TAMASHA - Hindi	7:00 PM	MARINA-3		BRIDGE OF SPIES	5:30 PM
BENGAL TIGER - Telugu	10:00 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	11:30 AM	CREED	8:30 PM
ZINZANA (Emirati Film)	1:00 AM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	1:45 PM	BRIDGE OF SPIES	11:30 PM
ZINZANA (Emirati Film)	10:00 PM			DINIDGE OF SITIES	11.501111
		IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	4:15 PM		
ZINZANA (Emirati Film)	12:05 AM	BRIDGE OF SPIES	6:45 PM	AL-KOUT.1	
		IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	9:45 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	1:00 PM
MUHALAB-3		IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	12:15 AM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	3:15 PM
THE GOOD DINOSAUR	12:15 PM			THE GOOD DINOSAUR	5:30 PM
THE GOOD DINOSAUR		AVENUES 1			
	2:30 PM	AVENUES-1	1.00.014	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	7:45 PM
THE GOOD DINOSAUR	4:45 PM	BRIDGE OF SPIES	1:00 PM	THE GOOD DINOSAUR	10:00 PM
THE GOOD DINOSAUR	7:00 PM	BRIDGE OF SPIES	4:00 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	12:15 AM
THE GOOD DINOSAUR	9:15 PM	BRIDGE OF SPIES	7:00 PM		
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	11:30 PM	BRIDGE OF SPIES	10:00 PM	AL-KOUT.2	
		BUS 657	2:00 PM		12:45 DM
FANAD 1				HYENA ROAD	12:45 PM
FANAR-1	40.45 BM	BENGAL TIGER - Telugu	4:00 PM	HYENA ROAD	3:00 PM
STRIKE ONE	12:15 PM	BENGAL TIGER - Telugu	7:00 PM	HYENA ROAD	5:15 PM
STRIKE ONE	2:45 PM	BENGAL TIGER - Telugu	10:00 PM	HYENA ROAD	7:30 PM
STRIKE ONE	5:00 PM	BUS 657	1:15 AM	HYENA ROAD	9:45 PM
STRIKE ONE	7:30 PM	505057	111371111	HYENA ROAD	12:05 AM
		A1/E111EC 0		HTENA NOAD	12.03 AW
STRIKE ONE	9:45 PM	AVENUES-2			
STRIKE ONE	12:05 AM	HOWL	11:30 AM	AL-KOUT.3	
		BUS 657	1:30 PM	STRIKE ONE	11:30 AM
FANAR-2		HOWL	3:45 PM	STRIKE ONE	1:30 PM
V8-2	11:30 AM	BUS 657	6:00 PM		
				STRIKE ONE	3:45 PM
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	1:30 PM	HOWL	8:15 PM	STRIKE ONE	6:00 PM
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	4:00 PM	HOWL	10:30 PM	STRIKE ONE	8:15 PM
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	6:45 PM	HOWL	12:45 AM	STRIKE ONE	10:30 PM
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	9:15 PM				
		AVENUES 2		STRIKE ONE	12:45 AM
IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	11:45 PM	AVENUES-3			
		CLOSE RANGE	1:00 PM	AL-KOUT.4	
FANAR-3		CLOSE RANGE	3:00 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	11:30 AM
ZINZANA (Emirati Film)	12:30 PM	CLOSE RANGE	5:00 PM		
ZINZANA (Emirati Film)	2:30 PM	CLOSE RANGE		IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	2:00 PM
,			7:00 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	4:30 PM
ZINZANA (Emirati Film)	4:30 PM	CLOSE RANGE	9:00 PM	IN THE HEART OF THE SEA	7:00 PM



**Original** document policy No. 633003315 of Muhammad Mali by the State Life Insurance Corporation Pakistan, Gulf Zone is reported to have been lost. Anyone finding the same or claiming any interest in it should communicate with State Life office Kuwait. Tel: 22452208. **(C 5099)** 16-12-2015

#### FOR SALE

Toyota Aurion - Grande -2011, full options, km 85000, white color, KD 2650. Mob: 50994848. (C 5097)

**KIA Mohave** jeep - (6 clr) 2013, white color, excellent conditions, km 87000, KD 3100. Tel: 66729295. (C 5098) 15-12-2015

#### **CHANGE OF NAME**

My daughter, Magishaa Madhan Kumar, born on 05th June 2014 (native district: Coimbatore), residing at No. 54, Jothi Theatre Road, Chinnasamy Kadu, Ammapet, Salem - 636003. Shall henceforth be known as Darssha Madhan Kumar. (C 5096)

12-12-2015



**NOTICE** December 8, 2015



Mr. Sharaj Manakulangaraparambil Allijan son of Mr. Allijan Hassan, resident of Manakulangaraparambil House, Post Irinjalakuda North, Thrissur, Kerala and Miss Suganya Ramadoss daughter of Mr. Ramadoss, resident of No. 28, Mariyamman Koil Street, Chidambaram Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu, both Indian nationals, presently residing in Kuwait, have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.

(Krishan Kumar Pahel) First Secretary (Consular) and Marriage Officer

Asr:

Isha:

Maghrib:

Embassy of India, Kuwait. Ph.00965-22533315

#### **Prayer timings** Fajr: 05:10 **Shorook** 06:34 **Duhr:** 11:43 14:33





16:51

18:14



# Flight Schedule

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

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

March   15	Airlines	Arrival Flights on Wednesday 16/12/2015 Flt Route	Time	IRM SVA	1186 500	Tehran Jeddah	14:15 14:30	Airlines	Departure Flig Flt	hts on Wednesday 16/12/2015 Route	Time	IRM JZR	1189 176	Mashhad Dubai	13:40 13:45
Dec   198	MSC	415 Sohag	00:05	KAC	672	Dubai	14:45	AIC	988	Hyderabad/Chennai	00:05	IRC	6522	Lamerd	13:55
Post	JZR IZR	267 Beirut		KAC	284 512				302 072			MSR	611 872		14:00 14:15
Decoration   Dec		069 Dubai	00:55	KNE	462		14:55		404		00:55	CLX	792	Hanoi	14:30
Fig.   15		772 Istanbul													
Description   Color   Post															
Care	DLH	635 Doha	01:35	OMA	645	Muscat	15:30	SYR	344	Damascus	01:10	MSR	576		14:55
Property		620 Addis Ababa 784 Luxembourg		NAE			15:45 15:45					KAC	527 673		14:55 15:00
GAR 211 Bahrain	PGT	858 Istanbul	02:00	QTR	1072	Doha	16:10	THY	773	Istanbul	02:30	FDB	058	Dubai	15:10
March   Marc		853 Dubai 211 Bahrain													
FOR   OFF	KKK	6507 Istanbul	02:50	JZR	357	Mashhad	16:30	KAC	203	Lahore	03:05	IRM	1187	Tehran	15:30
Fig.   Graph				ETD											
ORT   1979	RJA	644 Amman	03:05	RJA	640	Amman	16:55	UAE	854	Dubai	03:45	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:45
CEB				KAC								KAC	773		15:50
AGY 680 Akseardris 04-30 GFA 215 Bahrard 17-30 MSR 013 Care O4-10 MRIV 41-4 Mashhad 161-5 MRIV 41-7 Bahrard 17-50 MSR 01-7 Bahrard 17-50		7694 Manila	03:15	SVA				OMA	644			KNE	473		16:05
Try		305 Abu Dhabi		IRC								JZR			
Try		170 Bahrain		JZR											
BAW   157		770 Istanbul	05:55	UAE	875		18:00	QTR	1077		05:00		646	Muscat	16:30
FACE   1412   Manila/Banglokis   07.20   JR   177   Dubal   1820   ACV   685   Sobag   05.30   JR   238   Amman   17.20   CRIR   1086   Dubal   07.00   Dubal   07.00   Dubal   07.00   Dubal   17.30   CRIR   107.00   CRIR		157 London		FDR											
FDB	KAC	412 Manila/Rangkok	07:20	JZR	177	Dubai	18:20	AGY	685	Sohag	05:30	JZR	238	Amman	17:30
FAC   302   Mumbal   07-50   AFY   123   Shajah   1845   JZR   164   Dubal   05-55   CIR   107-3   Doha   17-40		1086 Doha 053 Dubai		KAC IZR									304 052		17:30 17:35
KAC   382	KAC	302 Mumbai	07:50	ABY	123	Sharjah	18:45	JZR	164	Dubai	06:55	QTR	1073	Doha	17:40
KAC   206   Islamabad   08.25   GFA   217   Bahrain   19.30   FDB   5062   Dubal   07.10   RJA   641   Amman   17.75   KAC   342   Chemial   08.30   KAC   616   Para/Flome   19.30   GFA   212   Bahrain   07.15   SYR   342   Damascus   1800   CFA   Chemial   08.40   KAC   618   Dubal   18.35   KAC   511   Mashhad   08.30   SYR   511   Bysch   1815   CFA   Chemial   18.30   KAC   511   Mashhad   08.30   SYR   511   Bysch   1815   CFA		641 Muscat 382 Delhi	07:55 08:00	QTR KAC	1080 774		18:55 19:25					JZR LIAF	538 858		17:45 17:45
KAC   344   Chennal   08:30   KAC   618   Doha   19:35   KAC   511   Mashhad   08:30   SVA   511   Riyadh   18:15   Lix   Li	KAC	206 Islamabad	08:25	GFA	217	Báhrain	19:30	FDB	5062	Dubai	07:10	RJA	641	Amman	17:55
KAC   346   Ahmedabad   08:30   KAC   154   Istanbul   19:45   FDB   054   Dubal   08:30   IRC   6512   ABD   18:20		352 Kochi 344 Chennai													18:00 18:15
KAC   332   Trivandrum   08:50   KTC   919   Abb Dabl   19:55   BAW   156   London   08:45   JZR   124   Dubai   18:40	KAC	346 Ahmedabad	08:30	KAC	154	Istanbul	19:45	FDB	054	Dubai	08:30	IRC	6512	ABD	18:20
ARC   362   Colombo   08:50   KAC   792   Madinah   19:55   OMA   642   Muscat   08:55   LZR   124   Bahrain   19:10   P.20   ETD   301   Abu Dhabi   09:20   KNE   480   Taif   20:10   KAC   117   New York   09:55   ABY   124   Sharjah   19:20   P.20   C. Taif   10:00   C. Taif   20:10   KAC   117   New York   09:55   ABY   124   Sharjah   19:20   P.20   C. Taif   10:00   C. Taif   10:															
FID   301   Abu Dhabi   09-20   KNE   480   Taif   20:10   KAC   117   New York   09-55   ABY   124   Sharjah   19-25   19-2	KAC	362 Colombo	08:50	KAC			19:55	OMA	642		08:55	JZR	124		19:10
OTR   1070   ODA   09:25   FDB   061   OUDal   20:20   UAE   856   DUbal   09:55   UAE   876   OUDal   19:30															
GFA   213   Bahrain   1040   KAC   546   Alexandria   2035   JZR   482   Istanbul   10:00   KAC   361   Colombo   2045   Colombo   10:00   CAC   361   Colombo   2045   CAC   361   CAC	QTR		09:25	FDB	061		20:20	UAE	856			UAE	876		19:30
IRA   665   Shiraz   10-40   MSR   606   Luxor   20-45   KAC   671   Dubai   10-05   QTR   1081   Doha   20-50   Luxor   10-14   Luxor   10-				OMA											
UAE   873				MSR				KAC	671						20:45
AXB         889         Mangalore/Bahrain         11:15         DLH         634         Frankfurt         20:55         KAC         175         Frankfurt/Geneva         10:30         KNE         461         Ryadh         21:10           JZR         165         Dubai         11:35         ETD         307         Abu Dabi         21:20         FDB         056         Dubai         10:30         KAC         331         Trivandrum         21:10           AGY         684         Sohag         11:35         ETD         307         Abu Dabi         21:20         FDB         056         Dubai         10:30         KAC         331         Trivandrum         21:20           KAC         204         Lahore         12:20         UAE         859         Dubai         21:40         QTR         1071         Doha         11:00         MSR         619         Alexandria         21:45           SAW         701         Damascus         12:20         UAE         859         Dubai         21:45         KAC         787         Jeddah         11:25         DHX         171         Bahrain         21:45         MSC         787         Jeddah         11:25         DHX         171         B		157 Al Najaf						ETD	302				351		20:50
JZR		889 Mangalore/Bahrain							175			KNE	343 461		
MEA         404         Beiruf         11:55         ALK         229         Colombo         21:25         KAC         153         Istanbul         10:40         FDB         062         Dubai         21:24           KAC         204         Lahore         12:20         UAE         859         Dubai         21:45         OTR         1071         Doha         11:00         MSR         619         Alexardria         21:45           SAW         701         Damascus         12:20         GFA         219         Bahrain         21:45         KAC         787         Jeddah         11:25         DLH         634         Doha         21:45           IRM         1188         Mashhad         12:25         JZR         125         Bahrain         22:00         GFA         214         Bahrain         11:25         DLH         634         Doha         21:45           MSC         401         Alexandria         12:30         QTR         1082         Doha         22:20         IRA         664         Shiraz         11:50         JAI         571         Mumbai         21:55           JZR         561         Sohag         12:45         AIC         975         Chennai/		165 Dubai		MEA	402	Beirut	21:20							Trívandrum	
KAC 204 Lahore 12:20 UAE 859 Dubai 21:40 OTR 1071 Doha 11:00 MSR 619 Alexandria 21:45 SAW 701 Damascus 12:20 GFA 219 Bahrain 21:45 KAC 787 Jeddah 11:25 DLH 634 Doha 21:45 IRM 1188 Mashhad 12:25 JZR 125 Bahrain 21:45 KAC 787 Jeddah 11:25 DHX 171 Bahrain 21:50 FDB 075 Dubai 12:25 OTR 1082 Doha 22:00 IRA 664 Shiraz 11:40 FDB 5054 Dubai 21:50 MSC 401 Alexandria 12:30 TR 1082 Doha 22:00 IRA 664 Shiraz 11:40 FDB 5054 Dubai 21:55 JZR 561 Sohag 12:45 AIC 975 Chennai/Goa 22:25 AXB 890 Mangalore 12:15 KAC 381 Delhi 22:00 IRC 6511 ABD 13:00 KAC 564 Amman 22:25 JZR 776 Jeddah 12:20 JZR 502 Luxor 22:00 IRC 6511 ABD 13:00 FDB 059 Dubai 22:30 UAE 874 Dubai 12:30 FDB 059 Dubai 22:30 UAE 874 Dubai 12:30 ETD 308 Abu Dhabi 22:30 UAE 874 Dubai 12:30 ETD 308 Abu Dhabi 22:30 IZR 239 Amman 23:05 MEA 405 Beirut 12:35 MEA 403 Beirut 22:20 IYC 82:25 IZR 785 Rejut 12:35 MEA 403 Beirut 22:20 IYC 82:25 IZR 785 Rejut 12:35 MEA 403 Beirut 22:20 IYC 82:25 IZR 785 Rejut 13:30 JZR 13:55 IVC 82:25 IZR 785 Rejut 13:30 GFA 22:00 IVC 82:25 IVC 82:2		684 Sonag 404 Beirut	11:35										648 062		21:20 21:20
IRM		204 Lahore	12:20	UAE			21:40	QTR	1071	Doha	11:00	MSR	619	Alexandria	21:45
FDB   075   Dubai   12:25   DZR   1082   Doha   22:00   IRA   664   Shiraz   11:40   FDB   5054   Dubai   21:50   MSC   401   Alexandria   12:30   AIC   975   Chennai/Goa   22:25   IAW   158   AI Najaf   11:50   JAI   571   Mumbai   21:55   JZR   561   Sohag   12:45   AIC   975   Chennai/Goa   22:25   AXB   890   Mangalore   12:15   KAC   381   Delhi   22:00   AIC   A			12:20 12:25						/8/ 214			DLH	634 171		21:45 21:50
MSC   401   Alexandria   12:30   AlC   975   Chennai/Goa   22:25   IAW   138   Al Najair   11:50   JAI   571   Mulmoai   21:55   IAW   138   Al Najair   11:50   JAI   571   Mulmoai   21:55   IAW   138   Al Najair   11:50   JAI   571   Mulmoai   21:55   IAW   138   Al Najair   11:50   JAI   571   Mulmoai   21:55   IAW   138   Al Najair   11:50   JAI   571   Mulmoai   21:55   IAW   138   Al Najair   11:50   JAI   571   Mulmoai   21:55   IAW   138   Al Najair   11:50   JAI   571   Mulmoai   21:55   IAW   138   Al Najair   11:50   JAI   571   Mulmoai   21:55   IAW   13:06   IAW   13:10	FDB	075 Dubai	12:25	OTR				IRA	664	Shiraz	11:40	FDB	5054	Dubai	21:50
UAE         871         Dubai         12:50         LIV         309         Abu Dilair         22:23         JZR         776         Jeddah         12:20         JZR         502         Luxor         22:00           IRC         6511         ABD         13:00         KAC         564         Amman         22:25         KAC         103         London         12:25         KAC         301         Mumbai         22:10           MSR         610         Cairo         13:00         FDB         059         Dubai         22:30         UAE         874         Dubai         12:30         ETD         308         Abu Dhabi         22:10           CLX         792         Luxembourg         13:15         BBC         044         Dhaka/Dammam         22:40         AGY         681         Asyut         12:35         MEA         403         Beirut         22:20           IZG         4167         Mashhad         13:30         JZR         239         Amman         23:15         MEA         405         Beirut         12:35         MEA         403         Beirut         22:20           IYE         826         Sanaa/Mukalla         13:30         JZR         185         D				AIC	975	Chennai/Goa	22:25		158 890				5/1 381		21:55 22:00
MSR   610   Cairo   13:00   FDB   059   Dubai   22:30   UAE   874   Dubai   12:30   ETD   308   Abu Dhabi   22:10	UAE	871 Dubai	12:50	ETD				JZR	776	Jedďah	12:20	JZR	502	Luxor	22:00
CLX 792 Luxembourg 13:15 BBC 044 Dhaka/Dammam 22:40 AGY 681 Asyut 12:35 MEA 403 Beirut 22:20 IZG 4167 Mashhad 13:30 JZR 239 Amman 23:05 MEA 405 Beirut 12:55 ALK 230 Colombo 22:25 IYE 826 Sanaa/Mukalla 13:30 JZR 185 Dubai 23:15 KAC 785 Jeddah 13:00 GFA 220 Bahrain 22:25 IXE 460 Riyadh 13:50 JZR 555 Alexandria 23:25 JZR 786 Riyadh 13:10 ETD 920 Dubai 22:35 IXE 786 Riyadh 13:10 UAE 860 Dubai 22:35 IXE 786				FDB	059	Dubai	22:30								
No.	CLX	792 Luxembourg	13:15					AGY	681	Asyut	12:35	MEA	403	Beirut	22:20
KNE 460 Riyadh 13:50 JZR 555 Alexandria 23:25 JZR 786 Riyadh 13:10 ETD 920 Dubai 22:35 IRC 526 Mashhad 13:55 FDB 071 Dubai 23:45 FDB 076 Dubai 13:10 UAE 860 Dubai 22:55 MSR 575 Sharm el-Sheikh 13:55 THY 764 Istanbul 23:50 KAC 545 Alexandria 13:25 KAC 345 Ahmedabad 23:00 QTR 1078 Doha 14:10 JAI 574 Mumbai 23:55 MSC 402 Alexandria 13:30 QTR 1083 Doha 23:00	IZG IVE											ALK GEA			22:25 22:30
MSR 575 Sharm el-Sheikh 13:55 THY 764 Istanbul 23:50 KAC 545 Alexandria 13:25 KAC 345 Ahmedabad 23:00 QTR 1078 Doha 14:10 JAI 574 Mumbai 23:55 MSC 402 Alexandria 13:30 QTR 1083 Doha 23:05	KNE	460 Riyadh	13:50	JZR	555	Alexandria	23:25	JZR	786	Riyadh	13:10	ETD	920	Dubai	22:35
QTR 1078 Doha 14:10 JAI 574 Mumbai 23:55 MSC 402 Alexandria 13:30 QTR 1083 Doha 23:05		526 Mashhad 575 Sharm el-Shaikh											860 345		
FDB 057 Dubai 14:10 MSC 403 Asyut 23:55 SAW 702 Damascus 13:35 KAC 205 Islamabad 23:10	QTR	1078 Doha	14:10	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:55	MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30	QTR	1083	Doha	23:05
	FDB	057 Dubai	14:10	MSC	403	Asyut	23:55	SAW	702	Damascus	13:35	KAC	205	Islamabad	23:10

IN THE HEART OF THE SEA

**DIAL161** FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

p34\_p34 stars 12/15/15 8:00 PM Page 1

Kuwait 🗻 Times

#### **CROSSWORD 1111**

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		12	13	14
15	T	T		16	$\top$	T	T	T	T	T	$\top$		17	T	T
18	T		19		1		20		1	T	T		21	T	T
22	$\top$	$\top$	$\top$	$\top$	$\top$		23	$\top$		24	$\top$	25	1	$\top$	$\top$
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62	63	64	┖	$\top$	$\top$	1		65	66		67	$\top$	68	69	70
71	T	T		72	$\top$	T	73	1	T		74	T	T	T	$\top$
75				76	T			1	T	77			78		$^{\dagger}$
79	$\top$	$\top$		80	$\top$		T	T		$\top$	$\top$		81		$^{\dagger}$

#### **ACROSS**

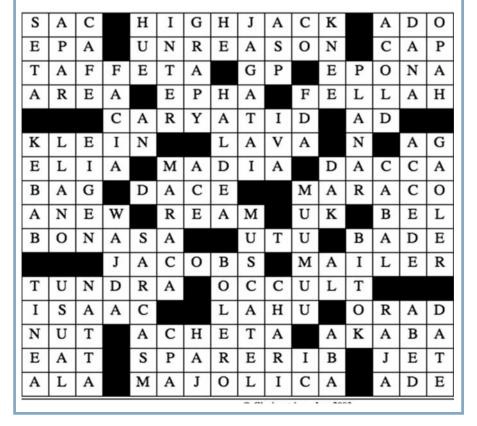
- 1. The syllable naming the sixth (submediant) note of a major or minor scale in solmiza-
- 4. Aromatic gum resin.
- 12. A boy or man.
- 15. A federal agency established to coordinate programs aimed at reducing pollution and protecting the environment.
- 16. (military) Signal to wake up.
- 17. Being one more than two.
- 18. French engineer who constructed the Eiffel Tower (1832-1923).
- 20. A gliding joint between the distal ends of the tibia and fibula and the proximal end of the talus.
- 21. A prominent rock or pile of rocks on a hill.
- 22. A governor of a province in ancient Persia. 23. A radioactive transuranic element which
- has been synthesized. 24. Remote city of Kazakhstan that (ostensibly
- for security reasons) was made the capital
- 26. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
- 28. Of or relating to or caused by magnetism. 30. Small tough woody zamia of Florida and West Indies and Cuba.
- 33. United States industrialist who manufac-
- tured plows suitable for working the prairie soil (1804-1886). 34. A period of time spent in military service.
- 35. A beverage made by steeping tea leaves in
- 37. A plant fiber used for making rope.
- 40. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).
- 41. A ductile malleable reddish-brown corrosion-resistant diamagnetic metallic ele-
- 42. A living organism characterized by volun-
- tary movement.
- 45. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
- 46. (of persons) So unrefined as to be lacking in discrimination and sensibility.
- 49. Having a shell or or containing shell. 52. A member of the North American Indian
- people living in the central Sierra Nevada in California.
- 53. A family of Sino-Tibetan languages spoken in southeastern Asia.
- 55. (of reproduction) Not involving the fusion of male and female gametes reproduc-
- 57. Water scorpions.
- 59. United States naval officer and historian (1840-1914).
- 61. Tag the base runner to get him out. 62. Prohibited by law or by official or accepted
- rules. 67. City in Sudan.
- 71. The cry made by sheep.
- 72. A race between teams.
- 74. An appearance of reflected light. 75. The former capital and 2nd largest city of
- Brazil. 76. A drug (trade name Atabrine) used to treat certain worm infestations and once used
- to treat malaria. 78. The executive agency that advises the
- President on the federal budget. 79. A doctor's degree in dental surgery.
- 80. A great raia. 81. (used as a combining form) Recent or new.

#### **DOWN**

- 1. The sediment from fermentation of an alcoholic beverage.
- 2. The capital of Western Samoa.
- 3. The handle of a weapon or tool. 4. An ability to understand a broad range of
- topics. 5. An ancient Greek city on the slopes of
- Mount Parnassus. 6. A unit of energy equal to the work done by
- an electron accelerated through a potential difference of 1 volt. 7. An accidental hole that allows something
- (fluid or light etc.) to enter or escape. 8. A herbaceous plant genus of the family
- Linaceae with small sessile leaves.
- 9. A kind of person. 10. The amount that a container (as a wine
- bottle or tank) lacks of being full. 11. The feeling of patient submissive humble-
- 12. Understatement for rhetorical effect (especially when expressing an affirmative by negating its contrary).
- 13. Garlic mayonnaise. 14. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics
- and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984). 19. The basic monetary unit in many coun-
- 25. Any admirable quality or attribute. 27. Remove the tusks of animals.
- 29. A public promotion of some product or service.
- 31. Rig used in drilling for oil or gas. 32. A member of the Algonquian people of
- southern Ontario. 36. In bed.
- 38. Genus of erect herbs of the Middle East having showy flowers.
- 39. A spoon-shaped vessel with a long handle. 43. A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in
- favor of a person or cause).
- 44. Not contained in or deriving from the
- essential nature of something. 47. Battle of World War II (1944).
- 48. A photographic image produced on a radiosensitive surface by radiation other than visible light (especially by X-rays or gamma rays).
- 50. German chemist who was co-discoverer with Lise Meitner of nuclear fission (1879-
- 51. Having leadership guidance. 54. A woman who tells fortunes.
- 56. A stiff chitinous seta or bristle especially of an annelid worm.
- 58. (plate tectonic theory) A hypothetical continent including all the landmass of the earth prior to the Triassic period when it split into Laurasia and Gondwanaland.
- 60. Muslim name for God. 63. Set down according to a plan.
- 64. A mountainous landlocked communist
- state in southeastern Asia. 65. (Norse mythology) God of war and strife
- and son of Odin. 66. The largest continent with 60% of the earth's population.
- 68. (in Gnosticism) A divine power or nature emanating from the Supreme Being and playing various roles in the operation of
- the universe. 69. Pathetically lacking in force or effectiveness.
- 70. A platform raised above the surrounding
- level to give prominence to the person on 73. A loose sleeveless outer garment made
- 77. A Mid-Atlantic state on the Atlantic.

from aba cloth.

#### Yesterday's Solution



#### **STAR TRACK**

#### Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may work in an area, already a hotbed of home-building activity, and decide to take on the art of real estate. This sales industry seems perfect for you. By the time you get your license you will find that-regardless of the way the economy is moving-you will be moving houses. Your comedic attitude is appropriate in some places, but inappropriate in others, and you have come a long way in learning when to step back and view the type of audience you might have before inserting foot, so to speak. You are sensitive to the needs of others and can demonstrate this when someone asks for your opinion. Tonight you may enjoy the entertainment of youngsters. A holiday play or musical will show off a child of your own, perhaps.



#### Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may find yourself in a talkative mood this morning. Ideas are clear and easy to see. You may have a conversation with an older person or someone in authority. You tend to business this afternoon and mostly continue working overtime in hopes of getting ahead. Perhaps it is some weather change or the upcoming holiday parties, but you want to be able to leave work without leaving work incomplete. Whatever the case, you aim to get ahead with work issues-as much as possible. Today, an award luncheon may be planned for next week and you will want to go. You find problems are valued for the lessons that you derive from them and you try to teach the young people around you this idea as well. A warm fire is enjoyed this evening.



#### Gemini (May 21-June 20)

The activities before noon are few and you may find that you can get quite a bit accomplished at your own desk. You have a passion for details-be careful not to waste too much of your time. You will feel a sense of satisfaction and completeness by coming to grips with the past or getting in touch with things of a mysterious or spiritual nature. Commiseration and comprehension are emotional qualities that take on greater importance now. Be careful that this does not move into gossip. It's commonsense, not information, that counts at this time. Your taste in art and appreciation are heightened. Perhaps this afternoon is a good time to select furnishings, colors, etc. This is a great time to just sit back and enjoy what you have, to live life completely.



#### Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You should find this an exceptionally good day for anything job related. You may shine in your particular job or find that promotion or practical insights come with ease. You could find yourself representing or speaking for your company or communicating about your skills. This may be a day for figuring out what you truly believe in, maybe even fighting for it. This study becomes a high personal priority and may include religion, law, politics, travel and higher education. There are moments of testing your limits to see how far you can go. You feel a love of law and order and you have an appreciation for responsibilities and duty. Problems are valued for the lessons that they represent, rather than perceived as obstacles.



#### Leo (July 23-August 22)

There is a doorway open for you in which you could receive insights regarding any number of matters. Career opportunities will continue to present themselves to you and you should be able to find a particular job that will match your selfexpression. You have a natural sense for communicating with others, especially those younger than you. You may be advising or guiding young people in matters of driving, voting or budgeting. You will do very well and you have their attention most of the time. Good results happen from your hard work. Your mind is exceptionally sharp and you are quick-witted. There is also a sense of nostalgia today. Certain smells, songs or pictures trigger good memories of the past.



#### Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Problems that you work through today represent lessons, rather than frustrations. You may sometimes feel that you are trudging uphill, especially if you add to your workload just now. The results can be much quicker if you gain help. Taking care of yourself through diet and exercise is important at this time. Depending on the weather, you might enjoy a long drive near the outskirts of town before dinner; perhaps you will discover a country vegetable stand to visit later this weekend. Alternatively, you could choose to work on your car-tinkering with the motor, changing the oil-an activity that you may find comforting. This driving or working on your vehicle will help you to transitior from any workday stress.

#### WORD SEARCH

#### Nursing Home 1

Find and circle all of the words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining 47 letters spell a Mother Theresa quotation

R	E	D	Е	S	D	E	В	W	S	Н	L	P	Y	R	Е	W	0	Н	S	Α	L
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#### Libra (September 23-October 22)

This is a time that you could be enjoying and appreciating your ties to others. You soon may find yourself working especially hard on some project that requires a group effort. Others could view you as the perfect person to be in charge of some project requiring a conservative mind. Marriage and other close relationships give rise to great expectations now, as a new cycle gets underway in your life. It would also be a good time to bring together and organize your affairs or to rearrange your living situation. You may tend to isolate yourself somewhat just now, but only to become caught up on last-minute details for a party or get-together with friends. Expect some change in the way you help others. Perhaps your schedule will become more flexible soon.



#### **Scorpio (October 23-November 21)**

The things that will pique your interest are adventures that take you completely out of your realm of imagination. You may find such travel on the internet or through pamphlets that friends show you. There is an interest in new worlds, new cultures and new styles. You want the freedom to explore places that no one has ever gone to before. These are very deep and powerful longings-it is what got the human race to the other side of the moon. Many of your experiences would be best put into words-the written and spoken word is your work of art. Expect pleasant conversations with others and absorb the new thoughts that may come your way today. You may become a very good writer; keep practicing. Music and fun is scheduled soon.



#### Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Your passion for detail puts you in a slumped-over posture for much too long. Stretch and take a break as soon as you can so that you can finish what you start; pull up a stool. You have the ability to think things through to the most positive end. You dislike working for others and may soon decide to go into business for yourself. There may be an opportunity to have a business consultant advise you this afternoon on going into business for yourself. This way you can intelligently decide whether to do a business out of your home or to work from some rental property. Legal problems are not as bad as they seem. A snarled bit of paperwork is the only problem today, resulting in some delay. Tonight is fun!

#### Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Setting your personal desires aside, you may dive into work with a strong determination to complete all tasks assigned to you. You do not want to get behind and find yourself working overtime. After work, you prepare in advance for a party-perhaps a masquerade party. This party may be done as a benefit planned to help the less fortunate during the cold weather. You may find that your rewards are many as you consider the basics that these individuals might need. The things that you value and care about find a great deal of support. Being appreciated for your gifts and talents is a wonderful feeling, but that comes with family. You could be feeling a particular closeness to lovers, children and other people that are near and dear to you this evening.



#### Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Check to see if your company has, or will create, a college plan for employees. If you could take off work early twice a week, you might have time for night school and might finish some special education. If not for you, it may be that you seek this for a friend. Now is a time when you are particularly helpful to others and willing to set an example. These thoughts occur to you as you see or hear about some great opportunities with a continuing-education project. Expect to make some clear decisions that will affect others. Compliments are easy to find this evening. A party or group meeting is just the thing to keep you aware. You love to know all about the activities and achievements of your friends and neighbors and you are always willing to help.

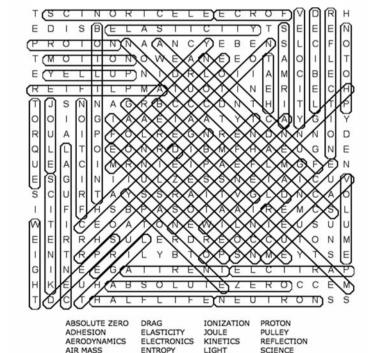


#### Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Something may spell out your need to reorganize and become more conservative. This should all work out since it is probably your intuition telling you it is time for some sort of inspection in your workplace. Because you begin a clean up, others seem to follow suit and when inspection does happen, everyone gets higher points than usual-not necessarily this day. Team sports seem to occupy you and your friends this afternoon. Careful, you could be forgetting an important appointment. A short holiday trip, perhaps to look at lights, can be a fun activity for the whole family this evening. Curb your excessive tendency to spend money on things that are short-time enjoyment. Save some of this money for a real new year's fling, or a special gift.

#### **Yesterday Solution**

#### Physics 2



The hidden message is: THE DISTANCE BETWEEN INSANITY AND GENIUS IS MEASURED ONLY BY SUCCESS

Yesterday's Solution

FARADAY

FRICTION

FUNCTION

GALILEO HALF LIFE

HEAT

INERTIA

AMPLIFIER BIG BANG

BOILING POINT

CHAIN REACTION DECIBEL

5

4

9

CENTRIFUGAL

DIFFRACTION

DISTANCE

#### 8 6 9 3 8 5 6 2 9 4 5 8 6 4

MOLECULE

MOTION

**PHOTON** 

PRESSURE

NEUTRON

NIELS BOHR PARTICLE

SPEED TEMPERATURE

**TORQUE** 

VACUUM

WEIGHT

VELOCITY

WAVELENGTH

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**Sabah Hospital** 

**Amiri Hospital** 

**Chest Hospital** 

**Adan Hospital** 

**Ibn Sina Hospital** 

**Al-Razi Hospital** 

Kaizen center

Rawda

**Adaliya** 

Khaldiya

Kaifan

Shamiya

Shuwaikh

Nuzha

Qadsiya

Dasmah

Shaab

Qibla

Mirqab

Sharq

Salmiya

Jabriya

Bayan

Mishref

Sabah

Jahra

W Hawally

**New Jahra** 

**West Jahra** 

**South Jahra** 

**North Jahra** 

**North Jleeb** 

**Ardhiya** 

**Firdous** 

**Omariya** 

**N** Khaitan

**Fintas** 

**Bneid Al-Gar** 

**Ayoun Al-Qibla** 

**Maidan Hawally** 

**Abdullah Salem** 

**Industrial Shuwaikh** 

**Physiotherapy Hospital** 

**Maternity Hospital** 

Farwaniya Hospital

**Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital** 

Luxembourg

00352

INTERNATIONAL

**CALLS** 

0093

Afghanistan



For labor-related inquiries and complaints: Call MSAL hotline 128

**Hospitals** 

Clinics

24812000

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#### **PHARMACIES** ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION

METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



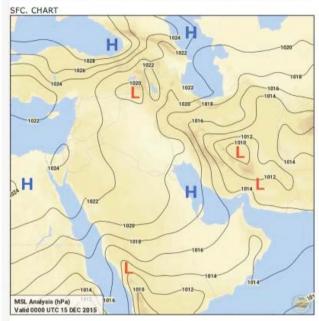
Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630 Fax: (+965) 24348714 www.met.gov.kw



**Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours** Issued 15/12/2015-10:00 LT UTC +3hr

#### MAX Temperature 17 °C

By Day: Partly cloudy with light to moderate westerly to north westerly wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h with a chance for drizzle By Night: Cold with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 10 - 32 km/h



Four-Day Forecast

	wednesday	Inursday	Friday	Saturday	
	*	*	*	200	
Expected Weather	sunny	clouds to increase + chance for fog	cloudy + chance for fog	partly cloudy	
Min Temp °C	06	07	09	09	
Max Temp °C	19	19	21	21	
Wind Direction	north westerly	variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly later on	south easterly to light variable	variable wind changing to ligh to moderate north westerly	
Wind Speed km/h	10 - 32	06 - 26	08 - 28	06 - 28	

Warnings NO CURRENT WARNINGS

Kuwait Forecast		
Station	MIN °C REC	Max °C EXP
KUWAIT CITY	12	19
KUWAIT AIRPORT	07	17
ABDALY	09	18
BUBYAN	08	18
JAHRA	10	19
FAILAKA ISLAND	10	18
SALMIYAH	13	19
AHMADI	12	19
JAL ALIYAH	08	18
QAROH ISLAND	16	21
UMM AL-MARADEM	16	21
NUWAISIB	10	19
WAFRA	08	20
MANAGISH	07	18
SALMY	08	18
MUTRIBA	08	19

Max Tem	p (°C)	19		
Min Temp	(°C)	11		
Max Rel I	Hum (%)	90		
Min Rel F	lum (%)	64		
Max Wind and Direct	46 S			
TOTAL R	AINFALL IN 24 HR	2.11 mm		
*	Sunrise	06:35		
Sunset		16:51		

	05.40
Fajr	05:10
Sunrise	06:35
Zuhr	11:43
Asr	14:33
Sunset	16:51
Isha	18:14

Haiti

India

Iran

Iraq

Italy

Laos

Lithuania

00370

Zimbabwe

00263



#### **PRIVATE CLINICS**

Ophthalmologis	its				
Dr. Abidallah Al-Mansoor	25622444				
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea	25752222				
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171				
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999				
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700				
Dr Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223				
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223				
Ear, Nose & Throat	(ENT)				
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510				
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660				
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478				
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996				
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daaory	25731988				
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166				
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426				
General Practitioners					
Dr. Mohamme Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123				
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312				
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem	23926920				
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465				
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528				
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781				
Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Refae	25333501				
Urologists					
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534				
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955				
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah Al-Awad	i 22616660				
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah Al-Awad Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)					

Plastic Surgeons					
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272				
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700				
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60				
Family Doc	tor				
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581				
Psychiatris	ts				
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047				
Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0				
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians					
DrAdrian arbe	23729596/23729581				
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321				
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539				
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami	25343406				
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272				
Dr. Salem soso	22618787				
General Surg	eons				
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044				
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Bash	er 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 Maaroof	25713514					
Dr. Pradip Gujare	23713100					
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282					
Dermatolo	ду					
Dr. Mohammed Salam						
Bern University	23845955					
Dentists						
Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581					
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2					
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226					
Dr. Abidallah Al-Amer	22561444					
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557					
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888					
Dr. Abidallah Al-Duweisan	25653755					
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111					
Neurologists						
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324					
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875					
	Gastrologists					
Gastrologis	sts					
Gastrologis Dr. Sami Aman	22636464					
	22636464					

	Endocrinologi	st				
_	Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330				
	Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari 25658888					
	Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr 25329924					
	Physiotherapists	&VD				
	Dr. Deyaa Shehab 25722291					
	Dr. Musaed Faraj Khamees	22666288				
	Rheumatologists:					
	Dr. Adel Al-Awadi 25330060					
	Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290				
	Internist, Chest & Heart					
	DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210				
	Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCPC, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicii Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	ne 25339667				
	Consultant Cardio					
	Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555				
	Inaya German Medical Center Te: 2575077					

Albania 00355 00266 Lesotho 00213 00853 Macau Algeria **Andorra** 00376 Macedonia 00389 00244 Madagascar 00261 Angola Anguilla 001264 Majorca 0034 001268 Malawi 00265 Antiga Malaysia 0054 Argentina 0060 Armenia 00374 Maldives 00960 0061 00223 **Australia Austria** 0043 Malta 00356 001242 **Bahamas** Marshall Islands 00692 Martinique 00973 00596 Bahrain Bangladesh 00880 Mauritania 00222 **Barbados** 001246 Mauritius 00230 **Belarus** 00375 Mayotte 00269 Belgium 0032 Mexico 0052 00501 Micronesia **Belize** 00691 Benin 00229 Moldova 00373 001441 00377 Bermuda Monaco **Bhutan** 00975 Mongolia 00976 Bolivia 00591 001664 Montserrat **Bosnia** 00387 Morocco 00212 **Botswana** 00267 Mozambique 00258 0055 0095 Brazil Myanmar (Burma) Brunei 00673 Namibia 00264 00359 Nepal 00977 Bulgaria **Burkina** 00226 Netherlands 0031 Burundi 00257 **Netherlands Antille** s 00599 00855 00687 Cambodia **New Caledonia New Zealand** Cameroon 00237 0064 001 00505 Nicaragua Canada Cape Verde 00238 Nigar 00227 Cayman Islands 001345 Nigeria 00234 00236 00683 **Central African** 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 00682 00680 Cook Islands Palau Costa Rica 00506 **Panama** 00507 Croatia 00385 Papua New Guinea 00675 0053 Cuba **Paraguay** 00595 00357 0051 Cyprus Peru 0090392 **Philippines** 0063 Cyprus (Northern) **Czech Republic** 00420 0048 0045 **Portugal** 00351 Diego Garcia 00246 Puerto Rico 001787 Djibouti 00253 Qatar 00974 001767 **Dominica** 0040 Romania Dominican Republic 001809 **Russian Federation** 007 **Ecuador** 00593 Rwanda 00250 Saint Helena Egypt 0020 00290 00503 Saint Kitts 001869 El Salvador England (UK) 0044 Saint Lucia 001758 **Equatorial Guinea** 00240 Saint Pierre 00508 00291 Saint Vincent 001784 00372 Samoa US 00684 Estonia 00251 00685 Ethiopia Samoa West **Falkland Islands** 00500 00378 San Marino **Faroe Islands** 00298 Sao Tone 00239 00679 Saudi Arabia 00966 **Finland** 00358 Scotland (UK) 0044 0033 Senegal France 00221 French Guiana 00594 Seychelles 00284 French Polynesia 00689 00232 00241 0065 Gabon Singapore Gambia 00220 Slovakia 00421 00386 00995 Slovenia Georgia 00677 Germany 0049 Solomon Islands Ghana 00233 Somalia 00252 Gibraltar 00350 **South Africa** 0027 Greece 0030 South Korea 0082 00299 0034 Greenland Spain 001473 Sri Lanka 0094 Grenada Guadeloupe 00590 Sudan 00249 001671 Suriname 00597 Guam 00502 **Swaziland** 00268 Guatemala Guinea 00224 Sweden 0046 00592 Guyana Switzerland 0041 00509 Syria 00963 Holland (Netherlands) 0031 Serbia 00381 00504 Taiwan 00886 **Honduras** 00852 00255 Hong Kong Tanzania 0036 Thailand 0066 Hungary Ibiza (Spain) 0034 00228 Toga 00354 00676 **Iceland** Tonga 0091 Tokelau 00690 **Indian Ocean** 00873 **Trinidad** 001868 Indonesia 0062 Tunisia 00216 0098 Turkey 0090 00964 Tuvalu 00688 Ireland 00353 Uganda 00256 Ukraine 0039 00380 00225 United Arab Emirates 00976 **Ivory Coast** 001876 0044 0081 Uruguay 00598 Japan 00962 USA 001 Jordan 00998 Kazakhstan 007 Uzbekistan 00254 00678 Kenya Vanuatu Kiribati 00686 Venezuela 00582 Kuwait 00965 Vietnam 0084 Kyrgyzstan 00996 Virgin Islands UK 001284 00856 Virgin Islands US 001340 Wales (UK) Latvia 00371 0044 00961 00967 Liberia 00231 Yugoslavia 00381 00218 00260 Libya Zambia

**Psychologists** /Psychotherapists Soor Center Tel: 2290-1677 Fax: 2290 1688

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**Noor Clinic** 23845955

William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677 Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677



Gossip



#### Kim Kardashian West has shed 17lbs

im Kardashian West has shed 17lbs - 10 days after giving birth. The reality TV star welcomed son Saint into the world on December 5 and has admitted she is determined to lose the 60lbs she gained while she was pregnant with her and husband Kanye West's second child. Speaking to her step-father Caitlyn Jenner on a live stream on her app and website, she said: "This feels like a really hard recovery but we will get through it. Everyone does it." Kim - who also has two-year-old daughter North with

the rapper - revealed she weighed just over 9st when she fell pregnant with Saint and went up to 13st 7lb towards the end of her pregnancy. But when Caitlyn complimented her on her weight loss the 35-year-old beauty admitted she is "feeling much better". Despite shedding more than a stone since she had Saint, Kim insisted before his birth that she wanted to take her time ditching her baby weight. In a post on her website, she wrote: "A few weeks to go and 60 pounds up! I look at other celebrities and Instagram girls who are

literally so skinny right after giving birth. How is that possible?!?! "I mean, I'm focused and I love the challenge of getting my body back and feeling good again, BUT I am going to be a little bit more realistic. I'm not saying anyone is being unhealthy or not doing it the right way, but how do they lose weight and look so good so fast?! (sic)"

# Pregnant **Anne Hathaway**works out

regnant Anne Hathaway spent an hour in the gym doing cardio. The 33-yearold star - who is expecting her first child with husband Adam Shulman - was spotted doing a high-energy workout at a gym in New York City over the weekend. A source told the New York Post's Page Six column: "She spent over an hour on the cardio equipment looking as beautiful as ever." And once the 'Les Miserables' actress gives birth, she isn't planning on rushing back to the gym to get her post-baby body back. A source shared previously: "Anne wants to be healthy and because she doesn't want to rush back into a film role, she's not going to put herself under pressure to slim quickly. "She does yoga every day and eats mainly organic food, although she has been tempted by bagels and doughnuts recently to combat morning sickness." Anne may have more time for the gym after the birth of her little one as she is also said to be planning to "take a break from Hollywood" following the baby's arrival. The source added: "Anne can't wait to be a mum. She's been wanting it for a long time and waited until the right time to take a break from Hollywood. "She feels she's achieved so much already, it's time to take a break from acting. She's told friends she wants to put her career on the back burner for a while and concentrate on being a full-





# Adele gives up drinking tea

dele has revealed her weight loss secret - giving up tea. The 27-year-old singer has "more energy than tea. The 27-year-old singer has more charge, ever after ditching the 10 aromatic beverages she used to down a day, each with two spoonfuls of sugar in, meaning she has cut out 20 teaspoons of sugar from her daily regime. She told The Sun newspaper: "I used to drink 10 cups a day with two sugars in each so I was on 20 sugars a day. "Now I don't drink it and I have more energy than ever." According to the UK's National Health Service (NHS) website, the government recommends adults shouldn't have more than 30g of added sugar a day - which equates to around seven teaspoons. Last month, Adele admitted she doesn't like going to the gym to exercise but doesn't mind lifting weights - although she is concerned the beauty regime might cause blood vessels on her face to burst. She said: "I'm not, like, skipping to the f\*\*king gym. I don't enjoy it. I do like doing weights. I don't like looking in the mirror. Blood vessels burst on my face really easily, so I'm so conscious when I'm lifting weights not to let them burst in my face. And if I don't tour, you'll catch me back down at



# **Fisher** swears during live Star Wars telecast

rrie Fisher swore during a live telecast at the Hollywood premiere of 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens' last night. The 59-year-old actress, who is reprising her role of Leia in the hotly-anticipated movie, turned the air blue when she joked about talking to her younger self during the star-studded event at the TCL Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles. After her co-star Oscar Isaac - who plays X-wing fighter pilot Poe Dameron in the sci-fi film - asked her about her inspiration for reprising her role of Leia, she replied: "I asked the early, young Carrie Fisher what it would be like 48 years later ... oh wait it's 40. "She wouldn't speak to me. She was very busy, partying and making sure I would look bad later." But in an attempt to back-track on her expletives she made things worse as she continued to swear, saying: "I don't mean s\*\*t. By s\*\*t I mean not as good as." The actress turned up for the premiere, but kept fans updated on her progress on social media. Posting a picture from her vehicle, Carrie wrote on Twitter: "We probably'll be stuck in traffic thru first hour of film..bomb dogs currently sniffing the car-almost there (sic)." Carrie eventually made it to the event, and walked the red carpet alongside her daughter Billie Lourd. She had earlier shared a picture of herself and Billie getting ready for the event in their dressing gowns, writing: "Check out pre premiere Robe Warriors!"

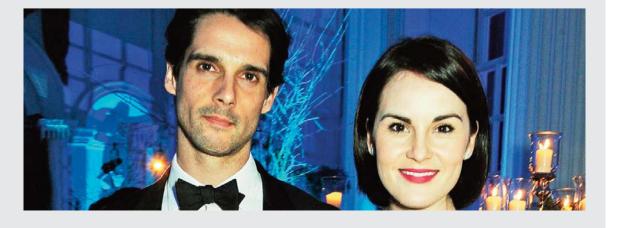
# Vergara and Manganiello first red carpet after marriage

ofia Vergara and Joe Manganiello have made their red carpet debut as a married couple. The pair chose the world premiere of 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens' in Los Angeles on Monday night for their appearance. The newlyweds looked very much in love as they posed for photographers at the star-studded premiere, with their arms wrapped around one another. Sofia later shared a snap from the event on her own Instagram page, tagging her husband and accompanying with picture with several heart emojis. 'Modern Family' actress Sofia looked stunning in a figure-hugging black dress, which she teamed with two buns in her hair - inspired by the 'Star Wars' character Princess Leia. Sofia and 'Magic Mike XXL' heartthrob Joe tied the knot in front of their family and famous friends in Palm Beach, Florida, in November. The pair shunned exclusive offers from various magazines for their wedding pictures, and instead opted to share shots from their special day on social media. They also decided against gifts, and asked their guests for donations to either St Judes Children's Hospital and Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh in lieu of presents. Following the ceremony, Sofia and Joe celebrated their nuptials on a luxurious break at the Parrot Cay by Como resort in Turks and Caicos. They once again treated fans to a look inside their holiday on their social

# **Dockery's** fiance has dies aged 34

ichelle Dockery's fiance has died aged 34. The 'Downton Abbey' star has been left devastated after John Dineen, who she reportedly got engaged to in February, passed away in Marymount Hospital in Cork, Ireland after an illness on Sunday. According to the Irish Examiner, John had been ill for some time. A private funeral for the Irishman is expected to take place in Cork, where he is from, tomorrow. Michelle, 34, has been dating John since May 2013. The brunette beauty didn't like to comment publicly on their relationship but did once

praise him as being a "wonderful man". She said: "I have a wonderful man in my life from Ireland. We were introduced by ['Downton Abbey' star] Allen Leech. That's all you need to know." Michelle is known for playing Lady Mary Crawley in period drama 'Downton', which will end this year after its Christmas special. The actress recently revealed plans to go backpacking to Australia and India. She said: "I never had a year out. I want to go travelling. I've never been to Australia. I'd love to go to India. I want to go backpacking."



McCarthy shocked by show axe

elissa McCarthy is "shocked and heartbroken" after her TV sitcom was axed. 'Mike & Molly' - which Melissa has starred in since 2010 - will end after its upcoming sixth season, which has been cut to just 13 episodes and Melissa admitted the news took her by surprise. She tweeted: "I was shocked and heartbroken when @CBS canceled #MikeAndMolly. I would have shot this show for 50 more years. I'll miss my 2nd family (sic)." Rondi Reed - who plays Mike's mother Peggy on the show - first revealed on Facebook last week that the show had been axed. She wrote: "This is the final and sixth season of Mike & Molly on CBS.... We are done taping as of January 27th. Other venues were explored by [Warner Bros. TV] and [Chuck Lorre's] Bonanza Productions after CBS announced their intentions, but did not turn up a future for our show (sic)." During her time on the show Melissa has seen her film career go from strength-to-strength, with an Oscar nomination for Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role for 'Bridesmaids; in 2011. Last week she also received her first ever Golden Globes nomination for her role in the movie 'Spy' and will compete against Jennifer Lawrence, Amy Schumer, Dame Maggie Smith and Lily Tomlin for Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture - Comedy or



Gossip



# Simpson's sister wants Gigi reconciliation

ody Simpson's sister wants him to get back together with Gigi Hadid. The pair ended their relationship in May with Cody, 18, admitting public interest in their romance made him uncomfortable but his younger sibling Alli, 17, is hopeful that the pair will eventually reconcile. She told Entertainment Tonight: "I want to see it. I'm waiting for it. "I text her kind of every day. She's always been like a big sister to me, and she helped me through my personal insecurities." However, Alli may be left disappointed as Gigi, 20, has moved on with Zayn Malik, 22. The model started dating the former One Direction hunk last month and the pair have been spotted on numerous dates in Los Angeles and New York.

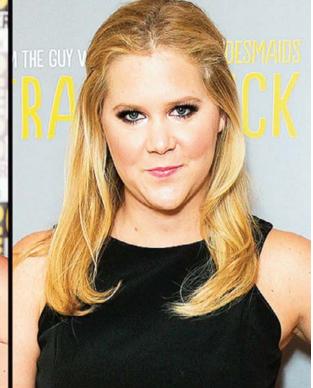
Meanwhile, following their split Cody spoke about his love for Gigi but insisted he was uncomfortable with the level of fame it brought. He explained: "I love my ex-girlfriend, I always will. It was an amicable, mutual decision, and we still talk every now and then, but the highly publicized thing made me uncomfortable. Going out to dinner and there being all this paparazzi and stuff.. as soon as we split I had the realisation that I was straying away from who I was as a whole person. I want to keep it low key, and focus on my music."

# Morgan makes stand-up comedy return



racy Morgan has returned to stand-up comedy for the first time since his horrific road accident in June 2014. The 47-year-old actor and comedian was left with a traumatic brain injury and a broken leg after the crash in New Jersey but took to the stage at the New York Comedy Club on Saturday for an "hilarious and inspiring" set about his recovery. A source told the New York Post's Page Six: "The first thing he asked when the doctors told him he was in an accident [was] if his private part was all right. He then went on to talk about speech therapy and how he had to explain to the therapist that [his brain wasn't injured], this was just his natural way of speaking." He also reportedly joked that before his coma there were "three Kardashians, but now there are nine, and one of them has muscles". Meanwhile, Tracy's '30 Rock' costar Tina Fey hailed his remarkable recovery and admitted she is shocked that he survived. She told Howard Stern on his SiriusXM radio show: "I honestly can't believe that he made it. He was so frail before that. For him to have survived that, it's incredible." Tracy is planning a stand-up comedy tour in February and previously said: "I'm leaving it in God's hands. Things are going to be all right. We're going to have a good time. We're not stressed out about it, we're going to have a

# INTERNATION MAL INTER



# Vikander's career fear



licia Vikander feels "scared" her career dreams are coming true. The 27-year-old actress admits she is feeling "nervous" about the future following high-profile roles in 'Testament of Youth' and 'Ex Machina" and the impending release of 'The Danish Girl'. Discussing 2015 being her break-out year, she said: "To be quite honest, it's nerve-racking, the way these films sort of piled up. "It's a mixed feeling when everything you've ever wanted in making films is coming true, and yet you feel scared because it's happening all at once. "Suddenly you're in rooms with people you've looked up to for years, the Judi Denches. "You wonder if you're good, if you have what it takes. "You carry an anxiety around with you-I've met many actors now who will say this-and the lonely feeling that this could be your one chance." Alicia always looks for the "humanity" in her characters and always tries to embrace their "flaws and doubts" to show a rounded person. She told the January issue of America's Vogue magazine: "Your job as an actor is to try to understand your character's humanity. When she does things that people might judge harshly, you have to summon a real sympathy for her. When she is purely good and you fear that you'll become disconnected from her, you search for doubts, flaws. In the end, you succeed when you show both



# Sam Smith charges his spirit

am Smith has been "charging" his "spirit and soul". The 23-year-old singer - who wrapped his 'In the Lonely Hour' world tour at the weekend - sought solace in gazing at the stars in order to gain some perspective on his life. He tweeted: "Just sat on the beach with my family and star gazed. I have never seen anything like it "Star gazing in Australia is other worldly. "I find just sitting and watching the stars is almost like plugging your spirit and soul on to charge. "Reminds me how small we all are, but also how mighty and magic we all are as humans. "Sorry to be intense and cringe but it's the truth. I will always be in complete awe and filled with complete confusion at the stars x (sic)" While the 'Writing's On the Wall' hitmaker is upset his tour is over, he is already looking ahead to the future and has a title for his second album in place, though it is likely to change before release. He revealed: "I just wrote my new album title in the sand. "I always start new projects with a working title or message of what I'm trying to say - then the writing flows for me. So I have the starting point. "When I'm finished - I'll reveal the rest of this picture. Then we can see if the message stayed the same (I change my mind a lot) xx (sic)"

# Lawrence wants Schumer to win a Golden Globe Award over her

ennifer Lawrence wants Amy Schumer to win a Golden Globe Award over her. The close pals will go compete in the Best Actress In A Comedy category for Amy's performance in 'Trainwreck' which she wrote and Jennifer's starring turn in 'Joy' but the 'Hunger Games' star would be happy to see her friend take home the trophy. She told Entertainment Tonight: "We both agree. We want her up there. Although she won't say that, I can say it." Jennifer previously won Golden Globe Awards in 2013 and 2014 for 2013 'Silver Linings Playbook' and 'American Hustle' and wants her friend to win so that it will increase interest in the screenplay they have written together. She said: "I was like, 'I want to see your sweet little ass up there on that stage'. Selfishly, it would be really good

for our movie if she won. So vote for Amy." Speaking previously about going head-t0-head with Jennifer, Amy joked: "The friendship is completely over. I just blocked her number. It's over." If neither of them are successful they will be able to drink their sorrows away as Jennifer revealed she wants a pina colada tap at her Golden Globes table. Jennifer and Amy's good friend Brie Larson has also been nominated - for Best Actress In A Drama for her performance in 'Room' - and the trio are planning to sit together and have fun. Jennifer said: "We're gonna try to sit at the same table. I texted Brie Larson too. I was like, 'We're gonna try to get the same table'.



# Ray J spent \$6,000 to save his new puppy

he 34-year-old singer and his fiancee Princess Love were extremely worried when Chihuahua Louie fell ill with a 105 degree fever on Thursday and rushed the dog to a New York vet. According to TMZ, the pup was suffering from pneumonia and almost didn't recover from the illness but the couple - who also have two Maltese dogs names Boogotti and Coco - happily paid the huge urgent care bill to save their furry friend. Ray and Princess Love had only acquired Louie a week before he fell ill and a worker at the pet store where they bought him said the dog had a clean bill of health before he was sold, but blamed

the illness on the stress of moving to a new home. The puppy is expected to make a full recovery. Ray is famously devoted to his dogs and earlier this year splashed out \$30,000 for Boogotti's birthday party. The 'Love and Hip Hop' star treated the pooch to a special celebration at the Petrock Hotel and Spa in Encino, California, where guests had to walk a red carpet to enter. As well as food for the human guests, there was also plans for a dog treat station and a special cake for Boogotti's canine pals to tuck into.





# **Bieber** touchy feely with **Kourtney**

"super touchy feely" during a recent night out together in West Hollywood. The 21-year-old singer and the 36-year-old mother-of-three enjoyed a night out together over the weekend and witnesses said the pair appeared to be very close when partying together at The Nice Guy. A source told PEOPLE: "He and Kourtney were nearly inseparable - smoking on the patio together and were super touchy feely. "They went to Blind Dragon afterwards. Kourtney left around 12:45 am and Justin left around 1:30 am." While the pair have been romantically linked, neither have confirmed it and Justin is a close friend of the Kardashian/Jenner family. Kourtney split from Scott Disick - the father of her three children - during the summer after he was spotted getting close to an ex in the south of France. Meanwhile, Justin is currently single but has

admitted there is a chance he will reconcile with his ex Selena Gomez in the future. He previously said: "We have a lot of history together and I am sure it could possibly happen. I think we are both just on our own journeys and figuring ourselves out and I think maybe once we figure ourselves out we can come back and make an awesome duo or she finds someone awesome and I'll find someone awesome. I just want her to be happy. "She is someone I love dearly. I'm never going to stop loving her. I'm never going to stop checking in on her. I don't think if you end a relationship, you should end that, unless it was super toxic and you guys were hurting each other physically or mentally. We always respected each other and we still respect each other."ually gonna be fun this time."

Movies & Music



The Storm Troopers attend the World Premiere of 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens', in Hollywood, California. — AP/AFP photos



The Force Awakens' at the TCL Chinese Theatre.



Fans dressed in character wait in the stands at the world premiere of 'Star Wars: A display of characters built from Legos appear on the red carpet at the world premiere of 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens'.

# 'Star Wars' premiere crowd cheers for familiar, new faces

an expletive.

heading inside.



Mellody Hobson, left, and George Lucas.







Kate Capshaw, left, and Steven Spielberg.

the film's world premiere in Hollywood. Inside the TCL Chinese Theatre, the audience began cheering Monday from the moments the movie's first words appeared on screen and reacted excitedly to seeing the return of Han Solo and Chewbacca after a 32-year hiatus. The audience also greeted newcomers, such as Gwendoline Christie's Captain Phasma and Daisy Ridley's Rey, with vocal enthusiasm and loudly gasped at the film's various twists and turns. After the showing, audiences spilled out into an after-party

he reaction was strong to "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" at

held inside a giant tent erected on Hollywood Boulevard, where they snapped photos with Stormtroopers, lined up to build their own droid toys and noshed on salmon and short ribs. For many of the celebrity guests in attendance, they wholeheartedly approved of director J.J. Abrams' vision for the first new liveaction "Star Wars" film in a decade. "I loved it," actor-director Zach Braff told The Associated Press immediately after the premiere. "I thought J.J. did an amazing job. My favorite part was just seeing the camaraderie between the veteran and the new cast mem-

"The Force Awakens" mixes old-school characters, such as Harrison Ford's Han Solo and Carrie Fisher's Leia Organa, with a new cast that includes John Boyega, Adam Driver and the spherical droid BB-8. Patton Oswalt said "The Force Awakens" represented a return to what made him fall in love with "Star Wars" in the first place. "It was a lot of fun," the actor-comedian said after watching the film inside the TCL Chinese Theatre. "I had the same feeling as when I would watch these films as a kid."

Disney screened "The Force Awakens" simultaneously at three Hollywood venues, with the cast and crew watching the film together inside the adjacent Dolby Theatre. "It can't be said enough - not nearly enough - that none of us would be here tonight without the miraculous creation of one man," Abrams told the crowd before the film. "George Lucas, from the bottom of my heart, and behalf of everyone involved with 'Star Wars: The



**Janelle Monae** 



Cuba Gooding, Jr



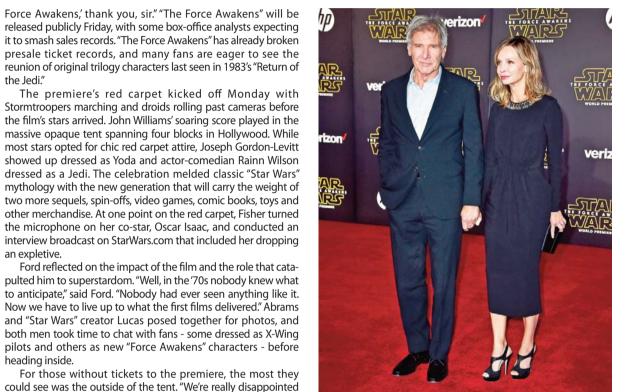
because we are big 'Star Wars' fans, and we were hoping to at

least see a little of the celebrities," said Natalie Arnet, a tourist

from Paris, who attempted to catch of glimpse of attendees from

behind a barricade with her family. — AP

Carrie Fisher, left, and daughter Billie Lourd.



Harrison Ford, left, and Calista Flockhart.



Director JJ Abrams, left, and Katie McGrath.



**Elizabeth Banks** 



Oscar Isaac



**Gwendoline Christie** 





**Daisy Ridley** 

Lupita Nyong'o

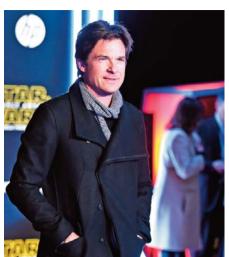
Features







**Andy Serkis** 



**Jason Bateman** 



Film characters R2-D2, left, and C-3PO.



Zach Braff, left, and Donald Faison.



**Bonnie Piesse** 



**Jaime King** 



**Actress Zendaya** 



Spike Lee, left, and Tonya Lewis Lee.



**Joanne Tucker and Adam Driver** 



This photo provided by Nestle Coffee-mate shows the Nestle Coffee-mate limited edition Star Wars bottles.



This Pottery Barn Kids twin bed is designed after Han Solo's Millennium

# From food to makeup, 'Star Wars' stuff is out of this world

ight now, in a store not too far away, there is a galaxy of new merchandise connected to "Star Wars: The Force Awakens." Beyond the usual action figures and apparel, the seventh installment in the space franchise (and the first from merchandisedriven Disney) boasts a broader array of branded products than ever before: From Chewbacca Coffee-Mate creamer (Wookiees drink coffee?) and "Star Wars" mascara to \$400 designer Death Star shoes and a \$4,000 Millennium Falcon bed.

"It's wider and broader and deeper and covers more age ranges and is less gender specific than anything I have ever seen for 'Star Wars," said Steve Sansweet, Lucasfilm's former director of fan relations and Guinness world record holder for the largest collection of "Star Wars" memorabilia. Expanding the universe of "Star Wars" merchandise internationally was part of Disney's original vision when it acquired Lucasfilm, he said: "It was very clear from the front, and they have followed their game plan."

"Star Wars toys have always played an important role in how our fans interact with the Saga," Lucasfilm president Kathleen Kennedy said when the first "Force Awakens" collectibles were introduced earlier this year. "They've inspired multiple generations to relive the experience of the movies and to create new adventures all their own. These spectacular 'Star Wars: The Force Awakens' products will continue that tradition."

The result is an amazingly diverse range of branded items, from the unexpected (light-up lightsaber



'Star Wars' (characters)."

This photo provided by COVERGIRL shows Star Wars nail gloss in Speed of Light, Nemesis and Red Revenge.

carved in traditional format of samurai or geisha or

something like that, and now there's a whole series of

"Star Wars" collection with the public through his non-

profit Rancho Obi-Wan museum in Petaluma,

California, where he offers educational tours and

hosts private events, including two weddings. Here's a

look at some of the more unusual items keyed to "The

Retired from Lucasfilm, Sansweet now shares his



chopsticks) to the unbelievable (haute couture Stormtrooper wear). International offerings have grown in scope and distinction, too, with local licensees and artisans interpreting the iconic characters for their cultures. Sansweet recently added some Japanese items to his collection, including soy sauce plates and "little kokeshi dolls, which are typical of a small community in Japan," he said. "They're usually

Force Awakens," some of which Sansweet has already added to his collection: Food: Chewbacca isn't the only one with his own

Coffee-Mate creamer. Darth Vader, C-3PO, R2-D2 and Boba Fett also got the creamer treatment, and each is a different flavor. (Chewie is spiced latte.) New York's Ample Hills Creamery introduced two new flavors in "Star Wars" packaging: The Light Side is marshmallow ice cream with crispy clusters, and The Dark Side is dark chocolate with espresso fudge brownies. Other branded food items include special General Mills cereal boxes (one shows the Trix rabbit as Princess Leia) with plastic "droid viewers" inside and Kraft macaroni and cheese with pasta in "Star Wars shapes." "I'm chasing around trying to find bags of Darth Vader apples," Sansweet said. "It's crazy! But it's fun-crazy."

Makeup: CoverGirl's limited-edition "Star Wars" col-

lection includes nail polish, mascara and lipstick in

such shades as Droid, Jedi and Dark Apprentice. Clothing: Beyond the typical T-shirts and PJs, there are one-of-a-kind designer outfits based on "The Force Awakens" characters, such as Halston's gown inspired by villain Kylo Ren, up for auction this month to benefit the Child Mind Institute. American watch maker Devon has a limited-edition "Star Wars" model available for \$28,500. The outrageous "Star Wars" collection from British footwear company Irregular Choice is more affordable but may be harder to wear. The C-3PO flats are cute and low-key, but the Death Star platform booties with the Stormtrooper- and Darth Vader-shaped heels are out of this world.

Lifestyle: Adult collectors might covet Pottery Barn Kids' Millennium Falcon bed, modeled after the legendary starship (and only available in twin size). American Tourister has a line of "Star Wars" luggage, and the Disney Store has a backpack shaped like a Stormtrooper helmet. There's a Darth Vader toaster that brands your breakfast bread with the "Star Wars" logo and the aforementioned light-up lightsaber chopsticks, plus an X-Wing knife block and many other household items. Is there anything that can't be branded "Star Wars?" "There are limits," Sansweet said. "I'm not sure we've seen the end of the limits yet."— AP



This photo provided by **Disney Consumer Products** shows a boot from the unique irregular Choice Star Wars shoe collection.







# Home Centre to launch 'Star Wars' themed collection

ome Centre, the largest home retailer in the Middle East, is set to launch its latest collection inspired by the Star Wars movie series. While everyone is gearing up for the December 17th release of the highly anticipated movie - Star Wars: The Force Awakens, Home Centre has decided to bring home the 'Force' by collaborating with Disney to launch a never-seen-before collection that will appeal to every Star Wars fans.

Star Wars' universal appeal is what makes it popular across generations. Every product tells a story and this Home Centre -Star Wars collaboration is a celebration of those stories, promising to reinforce fans' emotional connection with the characters.

In line with the theme of the movie series, the products have been styled as per the 'light side' and 'dark side', bringing the iconic characters to life through a unique collection which includes innovative products like the Darth Vader touch table lamp, the stormtrooper shaped rug, Star Wars posters featuring classic quotes, a Yoda shaped clock and lots more. MÈdÈric Payne, CEO of Home Centre, said "This

initiative is a first for us and we are thrilled to be collaborating with Disney to offer exclusively curated products. Star Wars has a huge fan following in the Middle East and we are sure this product range will find takers among people of all ages. This meticulously crafted collection reiterates our commitment to consistently innovate and offer signature choices to our customers."

Home Centre stores will have ongoing activities for customers. Additionally, its social media platforms will be carrying out engaging contests for customers wherein they will be given a chance to win Star Wars goodies. Star Wars merchandise is now available in all Home Centre stores. Star Wars and related properties are trademarks and/or copyrights, in the United States and other countries, of Lucasfilm Ltd and/or its affiliates & TM Lucasfilm Ltd.



Performers parade in Hong Kong yesterday to promote a funfair and festival taking place during the Christmas festive season. — AFP

# Bullfighting in Spain: Is the allure fading?

lauded by aficionados as an "art" form loftier than sport. The 17-year-old Tellez is so passionate about his dream he makes a 70-kilometre (43 -mile) train journey most days from his home in Toledo to the oldest of Spain's 52 bullfighting academies, the Marcial Lalanda in Madrid.

"I grew up in the world of bullfighting. I have an uncle who was a 'banderillero' (an assistant who sticks the banderilla rods into the bull). He was the one who encouraged



A pupil handle the "capote" and "muleta".

me to attend this school," said Tellez. He and 40-odd classmates, including two girls, are unfazed by the scorn animal rights advocates cast on what they call a blood sport that brutalizes the beast and attracts only a minority of Spaniards. "My role model is Jose Tomas," Tellez told AFP confidently, naming one of Spain's top matadors, now 40, famous for his daring style particularly close to the bull.

The students all hope one day to make it into this rarefied, ritualised circle. Some come from as far as Mexico and Colombia, said teacher and retired matador Rafael de Julia, watching as students, wearing fake

pays little mind to Spain's animal with their capes. They spend 20 hours a bullfighting elite. rights activists driving a move to week at the school, which opened in 1976 in abolish the country's legendary bullfights. the Casa de Campo, the huge woods known as the "lungs" of the Spanish capital, on the site called "La Venta del Batan" where bulls destined for Madrid's main bullring used to be held in the past. Along with the school, it includes holding pens for bulls and a small

#### 'All want to be stars'

Their coursework includes the anatomy of bulls and the history of bullfighting along with the training-some with live bulls which they are taught to respect as brave and noble adversaries. The "live" exercises known as "tentaderos, also give the breeders a chance to test the courage of their bull calves," said De Julia. The students "all want to be stars ... but out of every 100, only one shines and even then they might not make it to the top," said former matador Jose Luis Bote, one of three directors at the establishment that counted 200 students in its heyday in the 1990s.

The matador, the highest rank, is the one

who actually deals the fatal blow to his opponent in the ring. In 2014, of 10,194 bullfighting professionals, only 801 were actually matadors, according to official figures. And even fewer become real stars in a sport that has faced increasing criticism in recent years. Aficionados retort that the animal called "toro bravo"-fighting bulls used in the arena-are bred strictly for use in the corridas. "The end of bullfighting would mean the extinction of a race of animal created by man for combat," thanks to careful selection over generations, said matador Julian Lopez, better known as "El Juli", a former student of the Madrid school.

El Juli is notably critical of the way he says bullfighting has been politicized, after several city halls and regions governed by the left have taken measures against the sport. Madrid city hall, where a coalition of leftists and ecologists took over in May, decided to end a 60,000-euro (\$66,000) subsidy for the Marcial Lalanda academysowing doubt over the school's future

spiring young matador Angel Tellez horns, charge classmates practicing moves despite its huge support among Spain's

#### **Bullfighting opponents**

"We believe that municipal budgets must not be used to endorse such practices," Celia Maier, the city's deputy chief of culture, told AFP. Similarly, the Catalonia region in northeastern Spain banned corridas in 2012, a leftist coalition running city hall in A Coruna in the northwestern Galicia region dropped the "feria"-an annual festival with bullfights and bull running-and the island of Majorca in the Balearic Islands archipelago off Spain's east coast proclaimed itself as "opponents of bullfighting". Today, "only eight percent of Spaniards say they go to the arenas," said Silvia Barquero, head of Pacma, a party opposed to mistreatment of animals that backs a total ban on bullfighting, bull runs and related activities.

The latest official figures show that 1,868 bull-related events were held in Spain in 2014. Combined, they attracted six million spectators in a country of 47 million residents, according to ANOET, the national organization that arranges such events, which said the "bull business" brings in annually 3.5 billion euros. Partisans of bullfighting argue that the low attendance figures are tied more to Spain's economic woes-in 2014 the country came out of five years of crushing recession or zero-growth though recovery is slow-than to any drop in public enthusiasm for the corridas. "Some arenas are better attended, some less," said De Julia looking at his students, "but it is bound to pick up."— AFP



A pupil practices using a small red cape or muleta during an open air class at Marcial Lalanda bullfighting academy in Madrid's Casa de Campo park. — AFP photos



A pupil stabs a fake bull during an open air class at Marcial Lalanda bullfighting academy.



Two pupils practice with a small red cape or muleta and bull's horns during an open air class.



A pupil practices with a small red cape, or muleta, during an open air class at Marcial Lalanda bullfighting academy.



Former Spanish matador Rafael de Julia (center) teaches pupils during an open



A sword and a small red cape, or muleta, lean against a 'burladero', shelter made of planks.