

US ambassador lavishes praise on US-Kuwaiti relations



Attacks revive debate on encryption, surveillance



Charlie Sheen admits he is HIV positive to stop blackmail



Qatar first to qualify for Asian Cup, Iran win



5 KILLED AS RAINS, FLASH FLOODS HIT SAUDI COAST

RESIDENTS URGED TO STAY INDOORS; SCHOOLS CLOSED



Min 16°
Max 27°
High Tide 02:29 & 17:08
Low Tide 10:10 & 22:18

KUWAIT RULES PAVE WAY FOR MORE SUKUK

LONDON: New rules from the Capital Market Authority of Kuwait (CMA) could reinvigorate the country's stalled sukuk market and open the door for issuance by corporations in 2016, Fitch Ratings says. But it is uncertain how the rules will be received by issuers and investors and how effective the implementation will be. The lack of a specialized legal framework for sukuk has been a key factor in the limited issuance in Kuwait over the past few years and the new rules could therefore be a significant step. They provide a broad framework, setting out general terms and structure of sukuk, requirements for appointing trustees and setting up special purpose vehicles as well as rules on governance and ensuring sharia compliance.

There are requirements for a credit rating for public issuance and the need for approval by the CMA and the Central Bank of Kuwait. The rules also cover perpetual sukuk issuances and update Kuwait's regime for traditional bond issuance. As well as the lack of a regulatory regime, corporate sukuk issuance has also been limited due to the sector's heavy reliance on bank lending, helped by strong liquidity.

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JEDDAH: A man pushes his car in floodwaters following heavy rainfall in this Saudi port city yesterday. — AFP

RIYADH: Severe weather along Saudi Arabia's Red Sea coast claimed five lives yesterday, including three children who drowned, and closed schools and universities, the country's Civil Defense said. An 11-year-old child drowned in the western province of Yanbu, apparently due to a valley flooding. Another child, whose age was not disclosed, died after being swept by floodwaters in the northwestern province of Hail. A third child was confirmed dead after drowning in area on the outskirts of Jeddah, the Civil Defense authority said. Two other people died when they were electrocuted by a lamp-post in the coastal city.

Civil Defense rescue crews are searching for another child that is missing in Hail, while a third was rescued from a flooded valley there. "We are all pained today by the loss of our children's lives in accidents and various areas after being swept away by the floodwaters," the civil defense authority said in a tweet. A picture posted by the agency showed water over the wheels of cars in one Jeddah location, but elsewhere it covered only the feet of firefighters. The government urged Jeddah residents to stay home, and gave children there a day off school yesterday and today.

"The next few hours will see more moderate rains in Jeddah and its northern areas," said Hussein Al-Qahtani, a weather department spokesman. Even heavier rains fell in the northwestern city of Tabuk, near Jordan, where 46 mm were recorded since Monday, Qahtani said. Following cool winds, moderate to heavy rains would today move east to the Riyadh region and other areas, he told Al-Ekhabria television news channel. Floods killed 123 people in Jeddah in 2009, and about 10 people two years later.

Continued on Page 13

GCC EXPRESSES SOLIDARITY WITH FRANCE

FRANCE, RUSSIA HIT IS • MOSCOW CONFIRMS BOMB DOWNED JET

SPORTS TRIBUNAL REJECTS KUWAIT SHOOTING APPEAL

IOC SLAMS INTERFERENCE

LAUSANNE: The international sports tribunal yesterday dismissed accusations made by a Kuwaiti challenger when longstanding International Shooting Federation (ISSF) president Olegario Vazquez Rana won reelection in 2014. Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah, Kuwait's Information Minister and former head of the Asian Shooting Confederation, had alleged "a number of violations" when Mexican Rana won the vote, said a Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) statement.

But a CAS panel "was unable to find sufficient evidence that the rule violations alleged by Sheikh Salman took place, and in addition, could not find any indication of how certain alleged failures could have affected, or did affect, the validity of the election," Rana, an 80-year-old business tycoon and former Olympic competitor, has led the international shooting federation since 1980 and is also a longstanding International Olympic Committee member. Sheikh Salman was an ISSF vice president when he sought to oust Rana in the vote in Dec 2014. Shooting is one of the most popular sports in Kuwait.

Separately, the IOC athletes' commission has condemned attempts by Kuwaiti authorities to prevent athletes from competing in qualifying events for next year's Olympics. Kuwait's national Olympic committee was suspended by the IOC last month for government interference.

Continued on Page 13

RIYADH/PARIS/MOSCOW: Gulf foreign ministers expressed solidarity with France yesterday after attacks claimed by the Islamic State group killed at least 129 people in Paris. "The ministers affirmed the support of the Gulf Cooperation Council to France and her friendly people at this difficult moment," the six-nation bloc's secretary general said in a statement after a meeting in the Saudi capital. Friday's shootings and suicide blasts "will only reinforce the determination of France and the entire world to continue to combat terrorism and uproot these organizations hostile to human civilization," said GCC Secretary General Abdullatif Al-Zayani.

The statement came at a ministerial meeting to prepare for the GCC's annual summit in December. The GCC includes the monarchies of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait and Oman. Since Sept 2014, French warplanes based in the Gulf have been flying missions against the extremist Islamic State group in Iraq. France extended its attacks on IS to Syria in September this year. Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the UAE also carried out air strikes against IS in

Continued on Page 13



RIYADH: Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Adel Al-Jubeir (center) and Abdullatif Al-Zayani (right) Secretary General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) escort Kuwait's Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah (left) and Qatari Foreign Minister Khalid Al-Attiyah (second right) upon their arrival to attend the ordinary meeting of 137th session of the GCC yesterday. — AFP



KUWAIT: Oil Minister Ali Al-Omair (left) speaks to Prime Minister HH Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah during a session at the National Assembly yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

NOD TO MORE INCENTIVES FOR SPECIAL NEEDS PEOPLE

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly yesterday approved several amendments to the law governing people with special needs, granting them more financial and other incentives. The new amendments stipulate granting such people a monthly assistance of not less than KD 300 per month, according to the degree of their disability, until the age of 21. People who continue their university studies will enjoy the assistance until the age of 28. Disabled people who go for postgradu-

ate studies can continue to receive the assistance until the age of 45.

Another amendment stipulates to cut the service period for disabled people to be allowed to seek retirement to 15 years for males and just 10 years for females. The pension for retired disabled people can be as high as 100 percent of their last salary. During the debate, MPs called for adopting stringent measures to examine people for disability and to apply penalties in the law against those who illegally receive benefits intended for disabled people.

Continued on Page 13



TORBAT-E-JAM, Iran: A general view shows an explosion as Iranian soldiers participate in military manoeuvres on the outskirts of this northeastern Iranian town near Mashhad yesterday. — AFP

IRAN ARMY SIMULATES RESPONSE TO IS ATTACK

TEHRAN: Iran's army conducted exercises yesterday close to its border with Afghanistan designed to simulate how it would respond if "terrorist groups" such as the Islamic State organization mounted an attack. The operation in the northeastern province of Khorasan came a day after a military commander said IS would be "neutralized" if it breached a 40 km zone approaching Iran's borders. Tanks, helicopters and planes took part in yesterday's manoeuvres, the ISNA news agency reported.

The exercise followed IS attacks that killed 129 people in Paris last week. "One aim of the exercise was to practice methods and means to confront the possible actions of terrorist groups at the borders," said General Amir Reza Azarban, an army commander in the province. Iran, the major Shiite power in the Middle East, is heavily involved in conflicts in Syria and Iraq against IS, primarily Sunni

Muslims who denounce Shiites as apostates.

On Monday, General Ahmad Reza Pourdastan, the army's head of ground forces, announced the 40 kilometre limit on the borders with Iraq and Afghanistan, which if breached would trigger action. "We have strongly warned that if any action is taken (by IS), it will face a decisive response from Iranian armed forces and we will do the same in Afghanistan," Pourdastan said. "Before the enemy reaches borders, its actions will be neutralized."

His comments came after Iraq's Foreign Minister Ibrahim Al-Jaafari said intelligence sources showed Iran was among countries IS planned to attack. Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps, which is independent of the army, has advisory missions in Iraq and Syria at the invitation of the Baghdad and Damascus governments. — AFP



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets chairman of the board of trustees of Technische Universitat Munchen in Kuwait (Munich technical university) Ahmad Al-Abdullah and board members. — KUNA photos



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets Special Advisor to Saudi King, Dr Abdullah bin Abdulrahman Al-Mutlaq

AMIR, CROWN PRINCE RECEIVE TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITAT MUNCHEN BOARD MEMBERS

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah separately received chairman of the board of

trustees of Technische Universitat Munchen in Kuwait (Munich technical university) Ahmad Al-Abdullah and board members, at Bayan Palace yesterday, on the occasion of establishing the universi-

ty's branch in Kuwait.

Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince also received member of the Council of Senior Scholars, and Special Advisor to the

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman Bin Abdulaziz, Dr Abdulla Bin Abdulrahman Al-Mutlaq, Minister of Justice and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane attended the

meetings. Also yesterday, His Highness the Amir and His Highness the Crown Prince received His Highness Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. —KUNA

BRITAIN, KUWAIT TO JOINTLY HOST SYRIA DONORS CONFERENCE '16 IN LONDON

LONDON/ANKARA/BEIRUT: Britain, Kuwait, and a number of other countries and organizations are to jointly host the Syria Donors Conference 2016 in the British capital in February, British foreign ministry announced Monday.

"We, the leaders of the United Kingdom, Germany, Norway, Kuwait and the United Nations, are increasingly concerned about the plight of the Syrian people," the ministry said in a press statement. "Now is the time to act. So we will together host a conference on the Syria humanitarian crisis in London in early February 2016, building on previous conferences in Kuwait," it added.

The conference will increase funding in order to meet the needs of all those affected by the ongoing crisis inside Syria with the support of Syria's neighboring countries who have shown "enormous" generosity in hosting refugees to cope with the impact of the crisis, it indicated.

The event will also identify long-term funding solutions, covering 2016 and subsequent years, in addition to addressing the longer-term needs of those affected by the crisis, said the British ministry. The joint conference will also find ways to create jobs and provide education, offering all those that have been forced to flee their homes greater hope for the future, it added.

Meanwhile, the British ministry called the international community to bear its

responsibility in helping the 13.5 million vulnerable and displaced people inside Syria, as well as the 4.2 million Syrian refugees in neighboring countries.

Surgeries

In other news, Kuwait's Shifa humanitarian team conducted Monday 12 surgeries for Syrian refugees in Amal Hospital in the southern city of Hatay, close to the Syrian borders. The operations were carried out on 10 Syrian men and women refugees with ages between 20 and 35 years old, Dr Talal Al-Fadhlah, team coordinator, said in a statement to KUNA.

The surgeries included transplant of tissues from leg to foot, amputating part of the foot and other plastic operations, he said. Most of the injuries were burns or caused by shrapnel, explosions or gun shots, said Fadhlah.

Meanwhile, the team distributed medicine to a clinic in Antakya, the administrative capital of Hatay, which was serving around 4,000 Syrian refugees. Members of the Shifa team had carried out two days ago 10 operations, mostly plastic surgeries. Shifa humanitarian team, sponsored by Kuwait's Zakat (alms) House, is carrying out its mission in cooperation with doctors from the LEAP Global Missions and Interplast-Germany.

Aid packages

Separately, the Kuwait Red Crescent Society has continued delivering relief aid to Syrian refugees settled in Lebanon. Ahmad Al-Fegaan, an envoy of the society, told KUNA yesterday that 300 food rations and 300 cartons filled with detergents have been distributed to Syrian families in Dahr El Ahmar town located in the Rashaya District of the Beqaa Governorate, near the Syrian border. He added the latest delivery was part of a chain of aid deliveries to around 7,000 Syrian families. Number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon has reached more than one million-most of them in northern Lebanon where a number of Kuwaiti charities are active. Kuwait is the largest donor since the beginning of the devastating crisis in Syria.



KUWAIT: Interior Ministry Undersecretary Lieutenant General Suleiman Al-Fahad (second from left) is seen off by senior ministry officials before departing to Paris yesterday. — KUNA

KUWAIT-FRANCE SECURITY TIES SOLID: OFFICIAL

PARIS: A senior Interior Ministry official has reiterated Kuwait's firm stance supporting France against all forms of terrorism. The Kuwaiti-French ties stand on firm basis, especially in the security domain, Interior Ministry Undersecretary Lieutenant General Suleiman Al-Fahad said in a press statement on arrival in Paris, leading a delegation on a several-day visit.

He pointed to promising opportunities for further cooperation over the coming period. He expressed his own condolences as well as those of Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister

Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah to the French people and government over the victims of the recent terrorist attacks that hit the French capital.

Late on Friday, a series of attacks targeted different parts of Paris killing 129 people and wounding 352 others. Fahd stressed Kuwait's support to France and the entire international community to combat all forms of terrorism. He thanked the French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve for inviting him at that time to discuss bilateral security ties and have consulta-

tions on the latest regional and international developments.

The Interior Ministry Undersecretary noted that Kuwait has a sincere desire to benefit from France's leading expertise in security technology and cooperation in general to counter terrorism, organized crime and drugs, as well as for exchanging information and training. Upon arrival, the delegation, that include senior officials from the Interior Ministry, was received by Kuwait's Ambassador to France Sami Al-Suleiman and embassy officials. — KUNA

PARLIAMENT SPEAKER LAUDS TALKS WITH UAE OFFICIALS

KUWAIT: President of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU) and the National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem lauded talks he held late on Monday with UAE officials during his brief visit to the GCC country.

In a press statement, Ghanem said that his discussions with the UAE Vice-President, Prime Minister, and Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, were constructive and fruitful.

"As head of the Arab parliament, I declare that my discussions with Sheikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al-Maktoum and Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed Al-Nahyan focused on urgent regional files especially the situation in the occupied Palestine," said Ghanem, affirming that it was important for Arabs to unite in an effort to halt the Israeli aggression and mistreatment of Palestinians. He said that "discussions also touched on developments in Yemen, Iraq, and Syria in addition to issues related to the ongoing acts of terrorism requiring a firm regional and international stance."

Ghanem called on the GCC states to cooperate within the counter-terrorism domain, adding that he had received the UAE's views regarding the matter during his meeting with the Emirates top officials. He thanked the UAE officials for their support for the Arab parliamentary union and commended at the same time the role played by the UAE within the GCC and Arab legislative spheres.

Ghanem concluded his statement by saying that the talks with the UAE officials had reflected the long standing relations linking the two brotherly countries "which will hopefully continue to develop ever more."

Historic ties

Meanwhile, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid affirmed Abu Dhabi's Keeness on cementing the brotherly and historic ties with the State of Kuwait. The Vice President made the affirmation during his hosting of Ghanem at Qasr Al Bahar (the Sea Palace), the official UAE



ABU DHABI: UAE Vice President and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum meets Kuwait National Assembly Speaker and Head of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU), Marzouq Al-Ghanem. —KUNA

news agency, WAM, reported yesterday.

Sheikh Mohammed stressed on the UAE resolution on boosting the deep-rooted ties with Kuwait, describing the bilateral relations as distinguished at the political, economic and social levels. He asked the Kuwait Parliament Speaker to convey his greetings to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, wishing him everlasting health and wellness. He also wished the Kuwaiti people further progress and prosperity. Both sides discussed bilateral ties and means to enhance them at all levels to best serve the interests of both countries, besides the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

They also tackled latest developments on the Arab and regional arenas and means of boosting Arab unity and solidarity, besides the role of the Arab parliamentarians in achieving the ultimate aspirations of the Arab states and peoples.

Strong relations

In the meantime, Speaker of the UAE National

Council Mohammad Al-Murr praised the strong and brotherly relations between the UAE and the State of Kuwait at all levels. Murr lauded Ghanem for his efforts in strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries, especially the parliamentary ties.

"The youthful energy manifested by Ghanem and the efforts on part of the State of Kuwait in promoting Gulf and Arab relations call for respect and appreciation," Murr added.

The distinguished parliamentary relations between the two countries is an extension of the strong political bonds between the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, under the wise leadership of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and his brother, the UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, he stressed. The ties between Kuwait National Assembly and UAE National Council is an ideal relationship and one of the best relationships between legislative assemblies at the Gulf and Arab levels, he said. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Chairman of the National Security Apparatus Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah met with Head of the EU Delegation to Kuwait Ambassador Adam Kulach on several issues of mutual interest. During the meeting, they also discussed ways of further promoting Kuwait-EU cooperation in all fields, the apparatus said in a press statement. Both sides further addressed the current developments and events at both regional and international arenas, it added. —KUNA

FRENCH EMBASSY STATEMENT

The French Embassy thanks Kuwaiti authorities and all those who sent letters of condolences over the November 13, 2015 attacks in Paris. The French Embassy announces that it will not open a condolences book at its premises, but people who wish to send letters of condolences can forward them to the following e-mail: cad.koweit-amba@diplomatie.gouv.fr

GM DISCUSSES MICROSOFT KUWAIT'S PARTICIPATION IN EGOV3

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: Microsoft was one of several participants in the E-Government Forum (EGOV3) held in Kuwait from November 15-17, 2015 at Arraya Ballroom at Courtyard Marriott in Kuwait City. Microsoft helps clients plan, endorse and benefit from the trends beneficial to customers and the government, especially in their transformation plan to the digital era. Kuwait Times spoke to Charles Nahas, General Manager, Microsoft Kuwait, on the sidelines of EGOV3 forum.

Kuwait Times: What is your participation in the E-Government Forum about?

Charles Nahas: We are very excited to be in this e-government forum. We are participating for the third consecutive time. It is a great opportunity for companies like us and the government to share information, technologies and solutions that everyone can bring. A private company like us aligns plans to suit the needs of the present time. Microsoft can do many things - we have been working with a number of government agencies like the ministries of health and finance in terms of developing services. We are working to share our expertise with them to allow ministries to communicate with each other and share services.

We have lots of projects and are working with different entities to support e-government projects and this is very exciting to us all. We can share the experiences that Microsoft has learned throughout the world in the

Middle East and Europe, North America and Asia, and all the services that we have provided, and take these experiences and solutions that we have developed for governments across the world and share them with the Kuwaiti government to help them launch new services for their citizens and residents. Our commitment to e-government stems from our commitment to Kuwait; and the fact that we see ourselves as business enablers for the government, businesses and individuals in the nation.

KT: The Kuwaiti government is aspiring hard to build the best possible e-government system - can we really trust everything to Microsoft in terms of security?

Nahas: Security is at the heart of Microsoft but this is not just about security. It also includes privacy - we build our products with all this in mind. We have engineers and scientists who are really looking at these issues; the good thing about Microsoft is that we have a very strong research and development team looking at the challenges ahead including security. Windows 10 is one sample product that was built with great security and privacy features - we can assure you that we have the best technology in the world. We have our own cybersecurity center that helps companies if they have issues, and we support our customers beyond our products. We also support them if there are problems like cyberattacks or anything similar. We are helping the government and private sectors in making sure we have an excellent environment.

KT: You have mentioned some threats like cyberattacks and the likes - does the threat differ from one country to another? Say, if you are in the Arab world, do you need more security measures than the rest of the world? Should you consider modifying your features to suit Middle East's need?

Nahas: No, absolutely not. We have the same technology in Europe, Africa,



Charles Nahas, General Manager, Microsoft Kuwait

Asia and the Middle East. We have one single platform for our customers.

KT: Can you reveal something about the e-government 2035 plan? How big is the plan?

Nahas: The government of Kuwait laid down the plan, we did not, but the 2035 vision is something that we look forward to and are aligned to it. Between the vision and execution, there are lots of things to be taken care of. Out of the plan, there are solutions and capabilities that have to be developed. This is where the Microsoft is heading - we teamed with the gov-

ernment and we look at the vision they have. Then we come up with our knowledge and capability. We have solutions that we offer not just for the Kuwaiti government, but to countries around the world. If they want services and capabilities to build for their citizens, we help them. We help them in terms of planning and execution - we have a whole set of people at Microsoft; we have consulting services and about 200 partners in Kuwait. These partners are helping drive our customers and provide many things. We train people to improve capability and ultimately transfer technology.

KT: How is Microsoft helping clients benefit from cloud computing?

Nahas: Cloud computing is a very powerful tool and resource, and it's actually something that we need to leverage when we provide solutions to customers. For example, you have a smartphone, and the phone provides you with lots of services - it provides you with Facebook, email, contacts, weather, news, stock updates; you can chat with friends and access the data of companies - all this access is enabled because of cloud computing. At the backend of the phone, they are there because of the cloud; you have access to that information because of the cloud. If you don't have cloud computing, your phone will not be able to receive and send messages, etc. Cloud computing is a very powerful capability and we need to provide solutions to customers.

KT: A number of government agencies in Kuwait already use Microsoft Azure-based office plat-

forms. Can you elaborate on this?

Nahas: Azure is used under cloud offering - the capability to have storage and computer capability in the cloud. For example if you want to develop a new application for your phone, with Azure, you develop it on the computer, and cloud computing will give you a chance to control your computer in the cloud. So, instead of having to buy lots of computers, if you need it, you can just use Azure; and if you are not using it, you can allow others to use it.

Azure helps you in many things - instead of occupying capacity in your computer, you can have them stored in the cloud, and give access to your employees at any place, home, mobile phones and in the office. In Kuwait, a number of government agencies already use Microsoft Cloud Azure and Office365 platforms as their office collaboration and messaging system. This step is aligned with future technology trends. It came after rigorous due diligence through which the government departments could ascertain the robustness and relevance of Microsoft cloud offering.

KT: In general, what is the future of Microsoft in the Middle East and Kuwait in particular?

Nahas: Microsoft has gone through a lot of changes. We embraced the cloud from day one and we are the pioneers in cloud technology; Microsoft has become a place for business opportunities and we see where the company is heading day by day, as what we want is to provide the best experience ever for our customers, leveraging the technology available for everyone.

ZAIN STRATEGIC PARTNER OF 8TH INTERNATIONAL INVENTION FAIR

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its strategic partnership of the 8th International Invention Fair Middle East, organized by the Kuwait Science Club. The event is held under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and runs from 16-19 November 2015.

Zain's support of this event since its inception is part of the company's keenness to encourage Kuwaiti and Arab nationals' endeavors in the fields of science and creativity. Zain supports such areas as it believes the opportunity for young Kuwaiti and Arab inventors to exchange knowledge and experience with international inventors is a powerful and fruitful experience.

Sheikh Salman Al-Homoud Al-Sabah, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Eyad Al Kharafi,

Honorary President of Kuwait Science Club, and Dr Adnan Shihab-Eldin, Director General of Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), were present at Zain's booth during the opening ceremony of the event.

Zain will continue to foster young talent, believing that the current generation of youngsters holds the keys to the future development of Kuwait and need to be well supported by private and governmental entities. The 8th International Invention Fair is one of the most significant and largest specialized exhibitions of inventions in the Middle East, and is considered as the second largest such international exhibition in the world. The fair is part of the International Exhibition of Geneva, and offers an opportunity for inventions from different cultures to be exhibited and the strengthening of relationships among inventors and corporations.



KUWAIT: Information and Youth Affairs Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Homoud Al-Sabah (second from left), Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science's Director General Dr Adnan Shehab-Eddine (left) and Head of the Higher Organizing Committee of the fair Ayad Al-Kharafi (third from left) inaugurate the exhibition. — Photos by Joseph Shagra

INTERNATIONAL INVENTIONS FAIR KICKS OFF AT KUWAIT SCIENCE CLUB

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The 8th International Inventions Fair in the Middle East kicked off on Monday at the Kuwait Science Club (KSC). Over 160 inventors from 30 countries are participating in the 4-day event, including 20 Kuwaiti inventors.

The inventions displayed at the fair focus on community development. "Most inventions in this fair aim to preserve the environment or are healthcare related," said Minister of Information and State Minister for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Homoud Al-Sabah during the inauguration. "This fair is getting more and more successful every year, and this is reflected in the great number of participants. I noticed the tremendous organization of this event and I appreciate the efforts of KSC's management and staff in addition to the volunteers."

More than 120 inventions are displayed at the fair. "The inventions are very interesting," said Ayad Al-Kharafi, Head of the Higher Organizing Committee of the fair. "I believe that with the attendance of inventors here, these inventions may be applied and marketed. Some of these inventions participated in the past as prototypes, while today they're displayed for marketing in the local and international market. I also appreciate the sponsorship of His Highness the Amir of this event, which gave it the chance to continue and make Kuwait popular."

More participants

Ahmad Al-Manfouhi, Chairman of KSC, spoke about the history of the fair in the past eight years. "The number of inventors and the countries partici-

pating in this fair have increased this year. During the first few years of holding this fair, it became very successful and in demand. This fair has become the second biggest fair for inventions in the world after the Geneva fair, and the biggest in the region in terms of the number of participating inventors and the scientific value of the inventions," he pointed out.

"The judging committee will start its duties from the second day of the fair, and we hope the results will be satisfying for all participants. I appreciate the interest of the minister of information in this event and his encouragement of the inventors by listening to their explanations and expectations. Furthermore, I also appreciate the efforts of more than 100 volunteers working in this fair to make it successful," added Manfouhi.

Barrak Al-Subaih, Chairman of the Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity, praised the achievements of the inventors. "The center is participating with around 20 inventions that will be soon realized, and some are already manufactured and ready for marketing, but they only need support for production and marketing. The center adopts such creativity and provides creative youth with support so they can get patents for their inventions. Kuwait is rich with inventors, but they need encouragement, and the center provides this with the support of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science (KFAS) and the National Fund for Small and Medium Enterprise Development," he explained.

Sponsor

Waleed Al-Khashti, Zain's Corporate



Sheikh Salman Al-Homoud Al-Sabah checks an invention at the exhibition.



Sheikh Salman Al-Homoud Al-Sabah, Eyad Al Kharafi, and Dr Adnan Shihab-Edin at Zain's booth.

KCCI KEEN ON PROMOTING COOPERATION WITH BOSNIA

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) is eager to widen trade cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina in all fields, Deputy Chairman of KCCI Abdulwahab Al-Wazzan stressed yesterday.

After inaugurating an exhibition of "Made in Bosnia and Herzegovina", Al-Wazzan added in a statement that Kuwait, and Bosnia and Herzegovina have deep-rooted political relations based on friendship and mutual respect, calling for promoting economic and trade cooperation between the two sides.

The volume of trade between the two sides hits USD seven million, he said, adding the figure should have been bigger, especially as Bosnia and Herzegovina has several promising industrial sectors for investment.

Wazzan noted that the exhibition includes representatives from companies in Bosnia and Herzegovina specialized in food and electricity and are waiting for building partnerships with Kuwaiti companies. He urged Kuwaiti businessmen to discuss with those representatives available commercial opportunities in Sarajevo.

Meanwhile, President of Foreign Trade Chamber of Bosnia and Herzegovina Bruno Bojic said that his country welcomes cooperation with Kuwait in all fields, adding that Sarajevo provides a congenial investment environment for foreign investors in several

sectors like tourism, energy and food industries. He advised all Kuwaitis interested in investing in his country to contact with the foreign trade chamber for facilitating their tasks and getting information they need in this regard.

Student exchange

Meanwhile, a visiting Bosnian professor said that Bosnia and Herzegovina is seeking to strengthen cooperation with the State of Kuwait in many fields, mainly the educational sector. The objective of the visit is to hold a series of meetings with officials and specialists here and discuss means of promoting relationships between Kuwait and Bosnia and Herzegovina which have resemblances in several aspects, especially the culture one, Denis Prcic, President of American University in Sarajevo, told KUNA in an interview yesterday. Prcic stressed the importance of a student exchange program between the two countries to encourage Kuwaitis to study in Sarajevo and help Bosnians study in Kuwait so as to benefit from their educational systems. He said there are plans to sign a number of cooperation and research agreements between the two countries on exchange of students, noting that the American University in Bosnia tries to promote its relationship with the Kuwait University and American University in Kuwait in this regard. — KUNA

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News

in brief

DRUG DEALERS ARRESTED IN SULAIBIYA

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Drugs Control General Department officers arrested two men in Sulaibiya after they sold 100 grams of shabu (methamphetamine) to an undercover agent. Both men admitted under investigations that they left more drugs inside a car, where police found 1.5 kilograms of shabu and 500 grams of heroin. Both suspects are ex-convicts in drugs cases.



The suspects are pictured with the drugs in this file photo.

Drug overdose

A man was found dead in his car in Adaliya, and preliminary investigations indicate that a drug overdose may be involved. Drugs were reportedly found in his vehicle. An investigation was filed.

Liquor factory busted

Police patrols in Mangaf asked a bus to stop, but the driver refused. Backup patrols were summoned and the vehicle was forced to stop. Two persons came out and ran into a house, from where a foul odor was emanating. The bus was searched and 29 bags were seen. Meanwhile the house where the two entered was found to be a local liquor factory. Three persons were arrested and a fourth escaped through a side door, while 600 bottles of liquor, 293 barrels and equipment were found inside the house.

Acting director

State Minister of Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah issued a decision to assign the Deputy Director General of Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) Major General Khaled Al-Mekrad with the director general's duties in the absence of the Director General Major General Yousuf Al-Ansari.



Major General Khaled Al-Mekrad

Traffic campaigns

The Traffic Department carried out several campaigns around Kuwait from November 8th to November 14th, resulting in issuing 49,556 citations, and impounding 2,400 cars and 51 motorcycles. Meanwhile, 95 people were detained for grave violations, while 12 expatriates were sent for deportation as they were caught driving without licenses.

Road closed

The Interior Ministry announced that the Nuwaiseeb Road will be partially closed for one day at the 73rd kilometer mark from 6:00am - 11:00am. The closure will start today the direction of Nuwaiseeb border crossing, and tomorrow in the direction of Kuwait City.

Live ammunition

The Kuwait Coastguard Department will conduct a live ammunition exercise in Kuwait's territorial waters in the areas designated by the following coordinates: Latitude 048,37,5.E - Longitude 28,55,0.N, and Latitude 048,30,2.E - Longitude 28,46,8.N, as well as the Qarouh and Um Al-Maradem islands. The department urged sea goers to avoid the areas specified above on December 7th and 9th, from 8:00 am until 2:00 pm.

MINISTER ORDERS RABIYA CO-OP'S BOARD DISSOLVED

By Meshal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Hind Al-Subaih gave orders yesterday to dissolve Al-Rabiya Cooperative Society's board of directors. The minister appointed Faisal Khalaf Al-Mutairi as interim director for a one-year period until a new board is elected.

Citizenship withdrawal

The court of cassation yesterday accepted the challenge filed by media figure Ahmad Al-Jabr Al-Shemmari against a government decision to withdraw his citizenship.

Bribery claims

Former MP Dr Abdulkareem Al-Kandari said that he plans to file a complaint with the Public Anticorruption Authority against MP Mohammad Tana Al-Enezi over some statements he made during a recently televised interview. "I will report what Enezi said about being offered a bribery and that others have accepted it," he explained.

Engineers syndicate

Following six years of litigation, the court of cassation yesterday announced that the procedures followed on founding and proclaiming Kuwait Engineers Syndicate were legal. In this regard, secretary of the syndicate's council Ayed Abdul Rahman Al-Fadhli said the ruling supported the syndicate's legitimacy, and showed that the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor has no jurisdiction over the syndicate's actions and decisions.

PARLIAMENT CALLS FOR INVESTIGATING INT'L SUSPENSION OF KUWAITI FOOTBALL ACTIVITIES

FARMING LANDS REMOVED IN WAFRA FOR GCC RAILWAY

KUWAIT: The National Assembly approved during its regular session yesterday a number of proposals asking for an investigation into the international decision regarding the status quo of the local sports scene as well as the ban on Kuwait's football activities.

Proposals by a number of MPs called for an immediate investigation regarding the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and FIFA's suspension of the Kuwaiti football activities. They called for relaying their proposals to the parliamentary sports and youth affairs committee to investigate the reasons behind the ban and find a solution to this crisis.

The MPs also called on the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Youth Affairs to work with regional and international partners "to face this irresponsible decision that was against international laws governing sports."

The MPs denied that local sports regulations were in contradiction to international laws, affirming that the suspension was "tantamount to meddling with the State's authority." They called for formation of a 30-member advisory committee consisting of sports and legal experts in addition to former athletes to look into the problems facing the Kuwaiti sports.

GCC railway

Meanwhile, Minister of State for Assembly Affairs and Minister of Oil Dr Ali Al-Omair announced that Kuwait will remove 29 farming lands in the northern Al-Wafra region as they are located on the



KUWAIT: MPs surround Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa during yesterday's parliament session. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

path of the planned GCC railway.

The Public Authority of Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR) will compensate owners of those lands, Omair said during the session. He noted that PAAAFR is using border lands to create a vegetation to provide green cover and develop food security in the country.

Education costs

Separately, Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa said that the costs between the public

and private education are subject to a number of aspects, including teaching cadres. Cost comparison between public and private education are subject to a number of aspects, also including size of the land, location of the school and services provided by the schools, Essa said in response to a question during the session. Services provided in private education are varying, where the student cost goes up whenever the level of the cost of services rise and vice versa, he added.

In the meantime, lawmakers agreed to

give the parliamentary committee on education more time to look into any irregularities in the granting of scholarships to students attending Kuwait University and Public Authority for Applied Education and Training.

MPs' immunity

Earlier, the National Assembly refused the Public Prosecution's request of lifting parliamentary immunity from MP Nabeel Al-Fadhil in relation to a felony case and MP Abdullah Al-Ma'youf for a 'press offense'.

National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem opened the session with a eulogy to former MPs Yusef Khaled Al-Mekhlid Al-Mutairi and Dr Nasser Sarkhou, expressing his deepest condolences and sorrow for their death and praising their traits and services for Kuwait. "The Kuwaiti people are grieving over the death of the MP Al Mekhlid who was a member of the constituent assembly and contributed to an enacting the Nations Constitution (in 1962)," he said. On the late MP Sarkhou, he said that such a key political figure in Kuwait has had accomplishments that "still shine on the national arena."

In the same session, Omair expressed the government condolences for the demise of the veteran MPs, hailing Mekhlid's contribution to the establishment of the founding council and enactment of the Constitution. On MP Sarkhou, he described the late lawmaker as a wise politician and decent parliamentarian who was keen on Kuwait's stability. — KUNA



KUWAIT: A ceremony held at the Ibn Al-Tufail Middle School for boys, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the liberation of Kuwait from the Iraqi invasion.



Jahra Governor Fahad Al-Amir (third from left), US Ambassador Douglas Silliman (fifth from left) and other officials attend the ceremony. — KUNA photos

US AMBASSADOR LAVISHES PRAISE ON US-KUWAITI TIES

KUWAIT: The United States Ambassador to Kuwait Douglas Silliman touted yesterday the US-Kuwaiti ties encompassing numerous fields including the economic, military, and cultural ones. The ambassador was speaking during a ceremony held at the Ibn Al-Tufail Middle School for boys in Al-Jahra educational district, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the liberation of Kuwait from the Iraqi invasion of 1990. The commemoration was organized jointly by the US embassy and Kuwait's ministry of education.

The ambassador said "we are proud that the United States stood by Kuwait at a difficult moment of history, the result of which can be seen today as there are members of the US armed forces with us today, part of the 700,000 US soldiers who took part in the liberation of Kuwait quarter of a century ago, eager to commemorate that event."

He urged his student audience to recall the sacrifices of their elders at that moment in history along with those from the US and other coalition nations that offered many



The United States Ambassador to Kuwait Douglas Silliman speaks at the ceremony.

sacrifices to enable Kuwait to be the free and prosperous country it is today. He stressed United States' firm standing with its allies in "rejecting extremism and terror-

ism," as he at the same time congratulated the ministry of education on commemorating liberation day with student activities involving photography, music, and

theatrical presentations. The ambassador took the opportunity to offer the condolences of his country and government to families of the victims of terrorist attacks in Paris, Beirut, Sharm el-Sheikh, Ankara, and Iraq and other locations in the region. Speaking to the students on behalf of the ministry of education, Assistant Undersecretary for educational development Faisal Al-Maqseed said that today's commemoration was "an apt opportunity for young students to learn more about the tremendous efforts exerted to bring freedom back to Kuwait and its people." He praised the US embassy and ambassador Silliman along with the diplomatic corps in the country for their efforts at making the commemoration the success it is.

Attending the commemoration ceremony at the middle school was Jahra Governor Fahad Al-Amir who said it was with pride that everyone recalls the sacrifices made in order to bring liberty back to Kuwait and its people following months of foreign suppression. — KUNA

JULAI'AH APPROVED FOR CAMPING

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: MP Faisal Al-Kandari said that a decision was made to allow licensing camps for citizens in the Julai'ah Southern area. The lawmaker explained that officials agreed to a request he had previously made to re-opening the area for camping.

Railway projects

According to a report made by the German-

Middle East Friendship Committee, the total cost of railway projects, including metro, tramway, fast trains and mono-trails, in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries accumulates up to \$ 115 billion.

The study said that Saudi Arabia came first in terms of spending on these projects with \$ 45 billion, followed by Qatar with \$ 35 billion, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait with \$ 15 billion each and Bahrain with \$ 10 billion.

KUWAIT, JORDAN SIGN AVIATION AGREEMENT

KUWAIT: The Civil Aviation General Directorate announced yesterday signing an accord with Jordanian counterpart authorities regulating navigation services between the two countries and effectively replacing a previous agreement in the

sector. It said in a statement that the new accord stipulates new rules for operating national airlines in the two countries, swapping transportation rights, in addition to some facilities for the two sides in the civil aviation's security and safety. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Khalid Suleiman Al-Jarallah heads a meeting for state departments to participate in a joint Kuwait-Iraq committee meeting. — KUNA

DEPUTY FM HEADS MEETING ON JOINT KUWAIT-IRAQ COMMITTEE

KUWAIT: Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Khalid Suleiman Al-Jarallah headed yesterday a preparatory meeting of Kuwait's institutions and ministries that will participate in meetings of the joint Kuwait-Iraq committee to be held in mid-December. During the meeting, topics of the committee's agenda were reviewed by conferees.

Jarallah then met with head of the EU Commission in Riyadh Ambassador Adam Kulach and discussed bilateral relations between the State of Kuwait and the EU, and the developments on regional and international arenas. The Undersecretary's Bureau Chief Ambassador Ayham Abdullatif Al-Omar attended the meeting. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Civil Aviation General Directorate's President Fawaz Al-Farah signs the accord with Jordanian Ambassador to Kuwait Mohammad Al-Kayed. — KUNA

KOC DENIES REPORTS OF OFFSHORE OIL DISCOVERIES

KUWAIT: Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) Monday denied as "false" a report by a local newspaper that Kuwait has made offshore oil discoveries. Offshore explorations are in their initial stages following completion of Three Dimensional Survey, said Saad Al-Azmi, KOC Deputy CEO for Administration and Finance.

KOC has already announced 3-D Seismic Survey in Kuwait Bay, operations that are ongoing, Azmi, also KOC spokesman, told KUNA. He said KOC did not carry out new offshore drilling, but the offshore exploration drilling would start in 2017. Al-Anbaa daily quoted oil sources as saying there were around 14 billion barrels of crude oil offshore. — KUNA



Saad Al-Azmi

PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS KEY TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: KUWAIT

NEW YORK: Kuwait's permanent mission to the UN affirmed Monday that the actual full implementation of the concept of human rights is a collective responsibility that should be shouldered by all the entire international community.

There is a direct interrelation between protection of human rights and the realization of the targets of sustainable development, the mission said a statement read by Haya Nasrallah Al-Nasrallah, political researcher, to a UN General Assembly meeting on the report of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

"The level of a nation's progress and welfare can be gauged by its respect for and commitment to the principles of human rights," she said, citing the UN Charter which provides for protection of human rights and basic liberties. Since the endorsement by the UNHRC of the second periodical comprehensive review in last January, Kuwait has made great efforts to implement the outcomes of the review, Nasrallah said. The review included 278 recommendations of which 178 were endorsed as they are in tune with the provisions of the Kuwaiti constitution and the Islamic Sharia, she said, noting that Kuwait was appraised of 25 other recommendations and partially backed four others.

Guided by the Paris Principles on promotion and protection of human rights, Kuwait has set up the national human rights diwan geared to promote the culture of human rights and public liberties in the light of the provisions of the constitution and the international conventions.

Kuwait backed the UNHRC Resolution 28/20 on the continuing grave deterioration in the human rights and humanitarian

situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, and strongly condemned the widespread human rights abuses in Syria and the oppressive policies of the Israeli occupation forces against the Palestinian people, she went on. The Kuwaiti envoy reiterated the call for the international community to



Haya Al-Nasrallah

shoulder its responsibility for forcing Israel into meeting its obligations as an occupying force under the relevant international laws, and protecting the Palestinians' human rights as per the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949.

It is a great responsibility for all countries to contribute to the promotion of human rights in order to realize goals the Post-2015 Development Agenda, she concluded. These targets of sustainable development for 2015-30 were approved by the world leaders, including His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, in last September. — KUNA

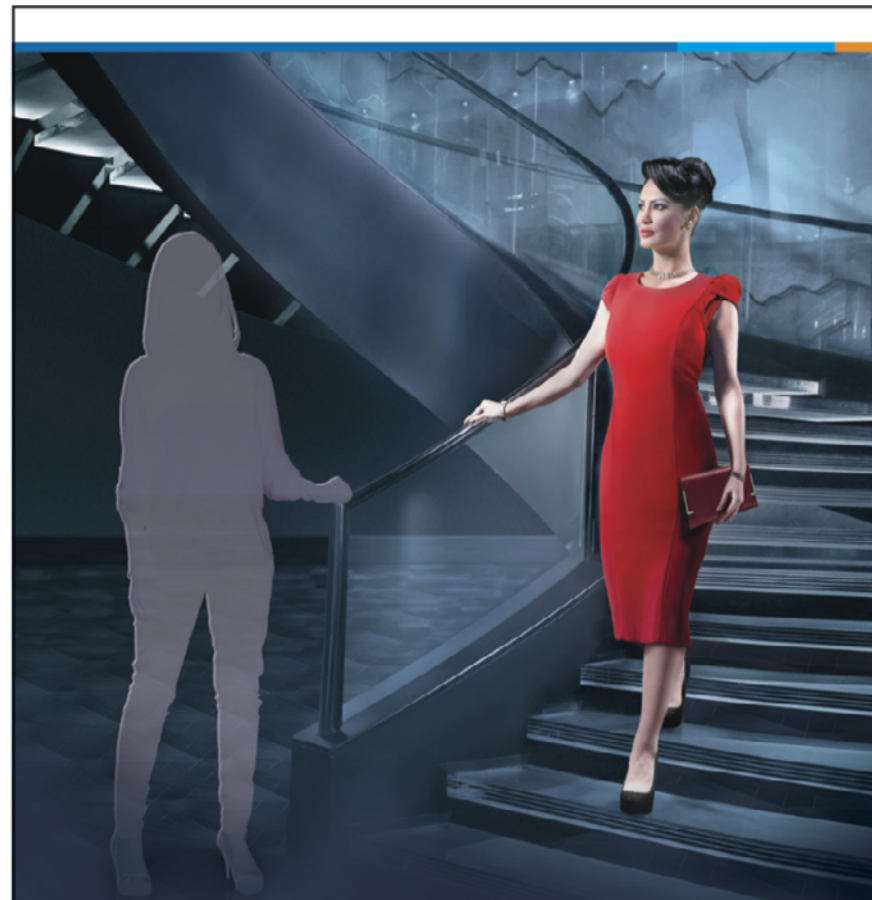


BURGAN BANK SPONSORS DEN GALLERY EXHIBITION


KUWAIT: Borgan Bank is sponsoring 'Den Gallery' exhibition, which will take place at the Kuwait International Fair Grounds in Mishref. The event aims at expanding the idea of contemporary art through a group of talented Kuwaiti artists and will be attended by Secretary General of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) Ali Al-Youha as well as a group of 51 contemporary artists.

During the event, visitors will be welcomed to the open exhibition over the course of 10 days, from November 18th - 28th, 2015. The exhibition is a unique experience which will help contemporary artists to showcase their creative skills and in turn, encourage local youth to explore their creativity and talents.

Borgan Bank's sponsorship of the 'Den Gallery' exhibition falls in line with its corporate social responsibility strategy that focuses on local talents and capabilities in enriching the contemporary art landscape by capturing the country's culture and history through gifted handiwork. The bank's dedication to promoting a more prosperous Kuwait arises from its own commitment of developing youth and proven talents to realize their ambitions while supporting the community as a whole.




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MOH PRODUCES AWARENESS FILM ON TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

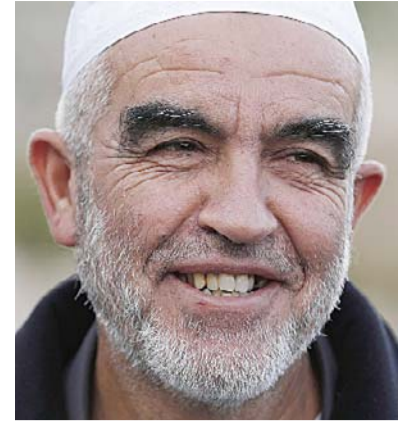
KUWAIT: The Ministry of Health (MoH) has produced and published on YouTube website a short movie to raise people awareness about the dangers of non-abidance by traffic rules. The clip publishing coincides with the World Day of Remembrance of Road Traffic Victims (WDR), Chairperson of the MoH's Media Office Dr Ghaliya Al-Mutairi told KUNA.

She pointed out that the WDR is commemorated on the third Sunday of November each year - to remember the many millions killed and injured on the world's roads, together with their families, friends and many others who are also affected. It is also a Day on which the world thank the emergency services and reflect on the tremendous burden and cost of this daily continuing disaster to families, communities and countries, and on ways to halt it, she said. Mutairi unveiled that the Interior Ministry's Traffic Department figures have shown that 99,000 traffic accident took place in Kuwait in 2014 and left over 461 people dead. She urged all relevant bodies to launch a nationwide campaign to raise people, particularly youth, awareness about the dangers of disobeying traffic and safety rules as a major factors for the growing number of road accidents. — KUNA

HEALTH MINISTRY FACES ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Health is hard at work to face antimicrobial resistance via upgrading relevant policies and protocols, and monitoring as well as continuous awareness and training, a senior official has said.

This is all being done in line with the work plan of the World Health Organization (WHO), Assistant Undersecretary for Public Health Affairs Dr Majda Al-Qattan said yesterday. Qattan's statement comes on the occasion of the first World Antibiotic Awareness Week, 16-22 November 2015, under "Handle antibiotics with care." She noted that antimicrobial resistance has come to constitute a global challenge, referring to the role of hospitals' labs and anti-infectious teams to discover resistant microbes. — KUNA



Israel bans Islamist group over Jerusalem mosque clashes

16 KILLED, 100 INJURED AS PAKISTAN TRAIN DERAILS



MANILA: Protesters burn a US flag during a demonstration yesterday against the ongoing Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit yesterday. —AFP

OBAMA OFFERS ASIAN ALLIES MILITARY AID

TENSIONS RISE OVER SOUTH CHINA SEA

MANILA: US President Barack Obama yesterday offered the Philippines a warship as part of a \$250-million aid package to Southeast Asian allies worried about Chinese efforts to control the South China Sea. Obama made the pledges aboard the Philippine Navy's flagship, shortly after arriving in Manila for a summit of Asia-Pacific leaders to also be attended by Chinese President Xi Jinping. "My visit here underscores our shared commitment to the security of the waters of this region and to the freedom of navigation," Obama said as he announced the assistance.

The offers were aimed at reassuring allies that the United States was committed to maintaining security in the region's waters, following Chinese artificial island building in parts of the South China Sea. China claims nearly all of the sea, a strategically vital waterway home to some of the world's most important shipping routes. The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have competing claims to parts of the sea, which is also believed to sit atop vast oil and gas resources.

China's building of artificial islands

close to the Philippines prompted the US to deploy a missile destroyer and B-52 bombers to the area in recent weeks. China was almost certain to react angrily to Obama's announcement, as it insists the United States has no right to involve itself in disputes over waters that are far away from US coasts. China had also repeatedly called for the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, which starts on Wednesday, to focus exclusively on trade and not be distracted by the rows.

In Beijing just before the US announcement, Chinese vice foreign minister Liu Zhenmin warned the other claimants that China could take control of the islands they occupy. "The Chinese government has the right and the ability to recover the islands and reefs illegally occupied by neighbouring countries," Liu said. "But we didn't do that, we exercised maximum restraint."

'Ironclad' Support

The Philippines, which has one of the weakest militaries in Asia and is the most vocal critic of China's actions in the sea, will receive the most support under

the US package. Obama said the Philippines would get a decommissioned US Coast Guard cutter to be turned into a new warship that will "bolster the navy's ability to conduct long-endurance patrols". He said the Philippines would also get a research vessel to help map its territorial waters, while vowing US commitment to defend its longtime ally was "ironclad".

The Philippines will receive a record \$79 million in assistance to bolster maritime security this financial year, the biggest recipient in Southeast Asia, the White House said. "This will be a significant contribution for our maritime security capability," Philippine defence department spokesman Peter Galvez told AFP. Vietnam, a former US enemy that has also spoken out strongly against China's regional assertiveness, will get \$40.1 million in aid over this financial year and next, according to a White House statement.

Indonesia, which is not a claimant but has asked China to clarify its position in the sea, will get nearly \$20 million to help "protect its maritime areas". Malaysia, where Obama will travel to on Friday for another regional political summit, will receive \$2.5 million worth of maritime security aid. The Philippines and Vietnam also signed yesterday in Manila a strategic partnership to deepen security ties, cementing an alliance built partly on their concerns over China.

Summit Sidetracked

Obama will today meet Xi at the start of the APEC summit, which groups leaders from 21 Pacific rim economies that account for more than half of the global economy. While the two-day summit is meant to focus on fostering trade unity, the annual event is often sidetracked by other global issues. This year it will be held under the global shadow cast by last week's rampage in Paris claimed by the Islamic State group that killed at least 129 people.

Obama, Xi and a host of other leaders arrived in Manila on Tuesday from Turkey, where they attended a summit of the Group of 20 top economies that also focused heavily on IS and how to destroy the jihadist network. Philippine authorities, which had already deployed more than 20,000 police and soldiers for the summit, said security had been ratcheted up even higher because of the Paris attacks. —AFP

ERDOGAN ASKS TURKEY PM TO FORM NEW GOVERNMENT

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday asked Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu to form a new government, two weeks after an election in which the ruling party regained the overall majority it had lost five months ago. Erdogan formally tasked Justice and Development Party (AKP) chief Davutoglu with forming the government in talks at the presidential palace in Ankara, the presidency said in a short statement on its website. The AKP's resounding victory in a November 1 general election gave the party a renewed mandate to govern without any coalition partners.

Davutoglu is expected to present a list of ministers for Erdogan's approval either today or tomorrow, with the new cabinet likely to be composed mainly of Erdogan loyalists. Earlier yesterday, lawmakers were sworn into office as parliament convened for the first time since the election. Turkey's oldest lawmaker, 77-year-old opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) member Deniz Baykal, presided over the session.

With Erdogan looking on, Baykal called for reconciliation in the majority Muslim country, which has been plagued by violence over the past few months, leaving many sections of society - minority Kurds, Islamists, secular Turks - at odds. Wearing the traditional tailcoat and white bowtie of the Turkish speaker, he also invited the lawmakers to swear "loyalty to the secular and democratic Turkish republic."

Tensions rose when pro-Kurdish MP Leyla Zana began her oath with "Biji Asiti", or "Long live peace" in Kurdish. The phrase triggered a storm that recalled her memorable swearing-in 24 years ago when she also spoke the language that was then still taboo in public. Zana, an iconic activist who spent 10 years in jail for her links to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), also changed the wording of "Turkish people" in the parliamentary oath to the "people of Turkey". Baykal asked Zana to recite her oath again, but she declined to do so, walking out in protest. —AFP

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AMERICANS WANT US TO DO MORE TO ATTACK IS

WASHINGTON: A majority of Americans want the United States to intensify its assault on the Islamic State following the Paris attacks, but most remain opposed to sending troops to Iraq or Syria, where the militant group is based, a Reuters/Ipsos poll found. That view runs counter to comments by some 2016 Republican presidential candidates like former Florida Governor Jeb Bush, who called on Monday for more US "troops on the ground" in the region. After years of prolonged conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan, Americans appear reluctant to become embroiled in another war even as they push for more action.

The poll - conducted over the weekend after the suicide bomb and shootings in Paris - also found that 63 percent of Americans were fearful that a Paris-style attack could happen near them, suggesting that national security could emerge as a theme in the campaign for the November 2016 presidential election. Americans are more fearful now than they were in the immediate aftermath of the bombing of the Boston

Marathon in 2013, even though the latter took place on U.S. soil, the poll showed. In Friday's attacks, gunmen struck a concert hall, bars, restaurants and a soccer stadium, killing 129 people.

The poll of 1,483 people found rising concern about terrorism. Of those polled, 17 percent listed terrorism as their top concern - a rise from 9 percent when asked in October. Terrorism tied with the economy as the top issue. The results suggest an opening for Republican presidential candidates, who have been looking for ways to attack Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton's tenure as secretary of state under President Barack Obama. Clinton has argued that her foreign policy experience makes her the best qualified to be the next commander-in-chief, but Republican critics have sought to link her to Obama's Middle East policies, which they say have allowed the Islamic State to metastasize.

Historically, though the economy has remained the top issue for voters even in times of foreign tumult. In 2004, at the

height of the Iraq war, terrorism fell behind the economy and "moral values" when voters were asked to name their top issue, according to exit polls. Nineteen percent listed terrorism as their top concern. Of those who were concerned about terrorism, 86 percent voted for Republican George W. Bush and only 14 percent voted for his Democratic challenger John Kerry, exit polls found.

The new Reuters/Ipsos poll found that 60 percent of Americans think the United States should be doing more to attack Islamic State, also known as ISIS or ISIL.

A small majority said they support using airstrikes in Iraq and Syria, but about 65 percent oppose sending special forces to the region, a move that has already been taken by Obama. When asked about regular ground troops, the opposition grew stronger with 76 percent opposing deploying troops. Speaking in Turkey on Monday, Obama ruled out the possibility of sending ground troops to fight ISIS.

Hawkish Candidate Could Benefit

Benjamin Taylor, a political science professor at the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts who has researched public opinion and war, said it's unsurprising that Americans remain opposed to sending ground troops. Research has found that Americans are only inclined to support such a move when a clear objective has been defined, he said. Taylor said that if national security remained near the top of voters' concerns in the weeks to come, a more hawkish candidate was likely to win the Republican nomination.

Still, it is too early to say if the ripples generated by the Paris attacks in the 2016 White House race will still be felt in the months to come, analysts said. Voters and the media have notoriously short attention spans. The poll also found that 52 percent of Americans think nations which accept refugees fleeing the strife in Syria are less safe. A Syrian passport found near the body of one of the Paris attackers showed that its holder passed through Greece in October, raising concern that the attack-

ers had entered Europe amid the wave of refugees fleeing Syria's four-year civil war.

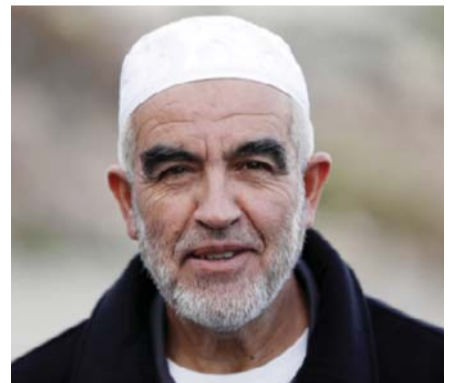
But there was a sharp divide over whether nations should stop accepting refugees, the poll showed. Forty percent said countries should continue to accept refugees because those people are fleeing terrorism. And 41 percent said those countries should stop accepting refugees because of the threat of terrorism. The US State Department said on Monday it still planned to accept 10,000 Syrian refugees in the next year even as Republican governors in at least 10 states said they would try to block them from their states. Republican presidential candidates Ben Carson and Mike Huckabee called on the US Congress to block the administration from bringing in more refugees. The Reuters/Ipsos poll has a credibility interval of 3 percentage points. For more on the 2016 US presidential race and to learn about the undecided voters who determine elections, visit the Reuters website. — Reuters

ISRAEL BANS ISLAMIST GROUP OVER JERUSALEM CLASHES

JERUSALEM: Israel banned the radical wing of the country's main Islamist organization yesterday, accusing it of having instigated violence at a sensitive Jerusalem holy site that sparked weeks of Palestinian unrest. The ban comes as Israel tries on several fronts to stop the knife, gun and car-ramming attacks, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu repeatedly declaring that he will pursue those he accused of incitement.

However, some questioned whether the ban would further stoke tensions and also harm legitimate political debate. Mohammad Barakeh, the head of an Arab Israeli umbrella organisation, accused Netanyahu of taking advantage of anti-Islamist sentiment in the Western world following the Paris attacks to crack down on the group. The radical branch of the Islamic Movement, based largely in northern Israel, rejects the Oslo peace accords between Israel and the Palestinians and boycotts elections on the grounds that they give legitimacy to the institutions of the Jewish state.

It has been behind a campaign alleging



NAZARETH: Arab-Israeli Sheikh Raed Salah, the leader of the radical northern wing of the Islamic Movement in Israel, poses for a picture yesterday in this Arab-Israeli town. —AFP

that the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in annexed east Jerusalem is "in danger", stoking fears that Israel plans to change rules governing the site, which Netanyahu has repeatedly denied. Early yesterday, security forces raided offices of the movement and 17 associated organizations in Arab communities, police said, seizing cash, documents and computers.

Raed Salah, head of the organization, and two other officials were summoned to a police station in the northern city of Haifa for questioning. "All these measures taken by the Israeli establishment are unjust and unacceptable," Salah said in a statement, calling it "blatant injustice".

Slippery Slope?

In announcing the ban, a government statement said that "any person who belongs to this organization or who provides services to it" would be committing a criminal offence. It accused the group of incitement "based on the lie that 'The Al-Aqsa Mosque is in danger,'" adding that the

group shared "an extremist ideology" with Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. Netanyahu said it "incites violence against innocent people". "It has close ties with the Hamas terrorist organization and it seeks to subvert the state in order to establish an Islamic caliphate in its place."

Barakeh said Israel is "exploiting the situation in the region and the world to escalate its repressive and authoritarian attacks against the Arab people in the country." His organization called for a general strike over the ban for Thursday. Arab Israelis - Palestinians and their descendants who remained after Israel was created in 1948 - make up some 17.5 percent of the population.

Others questioned whether the move could harm legitimate political debate. "The sense is that this could be a slippery slope," said Ofer Zalberg, senior analyst with the Middle East program at the International Crisis Group think tank.

Sacred to Both Faiths

The Al-Aqsa compound is the third-holiest site in Islam and the most sacred for Jews, who refer to it as the Temple Mount. Jews are allowed to visit, but not pray there to avoid provoking tensions. Clashes broke out at the site over several days in September. Palestinian youths threw stones and firebombs while barricading themselves inside the mosque and Israeli police responded with stun grenades and tear gas. Strict security measures, including limits on who was allowed to enter, eventually halted those clashes, but a new wave of violence that began in October has seen Palestinians target Israelis elsewhere with knife, gun and car-ramming attacks. The violence has killed 12 Israelis and 83 on the Palestinian side, one of them an Arab Israeli. Many of the Palestinians killed were alleged attackers, while others were shot dead during clashes with Israeli forces.

The attackers have mainly been young Palestinians who appear to be acting on their own, frustrated with Israel's occupation, a frozen peace process and the leadership of Palestinian president Mahmoud Abbas, whose calls for peaceful resistance they have ignored. Other measures Israel has pursued in recent days have included controversial demolitions of homes of suspected attackers, which have sparked clashes, such as on Monday when Israeli forces shot dead two Palestinians in the West Bank.

The northern branch of the Islamic Movement has long been on Israel's radar. In October, Salah was sentenced to 11 months in jail on charges of inciting violence at the mosque compound in a 2007 speech. He is currently pursuing an appeal. His movement has also been accused of financing two Muslim groups, which act as self-appointed sentinels at Al-Aqsa, keeping an eye on Jewish visitors and harassing those they suspect of secretly praying. Both groups were outlawed from the site when tensions boiled over in September. — AFP



ADEN: Yemen's President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi (center) walks at Aden airport upon his arrival from Saudi Arabia yesterday. — AP

YEMEN PRESIDENT RETURNS TO ADEN FROM SAUDI EXILE

HADI TO 'SUPERVISE' TAEZ OFFENSIVE

ADEN: Yemen's president returned from exile to southern city Aden yesterday as his troops and allies in a Saudi-led coalition press one of their most important offensives yet against Iran-backed Houthi rebels. After landing in the provisional capital, Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi went straight to the palace to "supervise" the offensive aimed at retaking Tazeh province, mostly controlled by the rebels, a presidential source said. His return comes just days after Prime Minister Khaled Bahah announced the return of his government to Yemen.

The president has tried to return before. In September, after six months of exile in Saudi Arabia, Hadi and Bahah returned to Aden but had to go back to Riyadh after a deadly attack on the provisional seat of government. Hadi declared the southern port city Yemen's temporary capital after he escaped house arrest in the rebel-held capital Sanaa in February. The following month, he fled into exile as the rebels and their allies entered Aden, prompting a Saudi-led coalition to launch a military intervention in support of his internationally recognised government.

The UN says that some 5,000 people, more than half of them civilians, have been killed in

Yemen since the intervention began. The president will be staying at the Maashiq presidential palace in the central Crater district of Aden. The palace was severely damaged in the fighting that gripped Aden until July but was recently repaired by the United Arab Emirates, which along with Saudi Arabia is taking a lead role in supporting Hadi's government. The coalition sent ground troops to Yemen in early August after months of air strikes.

Loyalists Advance Towards Tazeh

It has deployed significant reinforcements for the advance on Tazeh, Yemen's third city, military officials have said. Tazeh has seen heavy fighting in recent months between pro-government forces and the Houthi Shiite rebels and their allies. There are loyalist troops inside the city but they are besieged by the rebels. Pro-Hadi forces and their coalition allies pushed north towards Tazeh overnight, capturing the village of Waziaa, southwest of the city, military sources said.

The rebel-controlled Saba news agency had said Monday that the insurgents repelled attempts to advance on four fronts towards Waziaa. Further south, pro-Hadi fighters

advanced towards Rahida, the province's second-largest city, following fierce clashes at nearby Shurajja, a military source said. Loyalist forces deployed in Dhubbab advanced towards the port city of Mocha on the Red Sea, an army officer said. "They are 30 km away from Mocha," he said.

The fighting, which has been accompanied by Saudi-led air strikes, has left 26 rebels and 33 loyalists dead since Monday, pro-Hadi military sources said. A 400-strong Sudanese force arrived in Aden this month in support of loyalist forces, joining 500 who arrived in October. Sudanese forces from the strategic Al-Anad airbase in Lahj were taking part in the Tazeh operations, sources said Monday.

The fighting has thrown into question UN-brokered peace talks that had been planned for later this month. A UN bid to launch peace talks in June failed over demands for a rebel withdrawal from seized territory, but this time, much effort has been put into ensuring there is agreement in advance on the agenda. The humanitarian crisis in Yemen has been identified by the United Nations as one of the world's worst, with 80 percent of the country's population on the brink of famine. — AFP

JORDAN KING WARNS OF WAR AGAINST HUMANITY

PRISTINA: Jordan's King Abdullah II warned yesterday of a "third world war against humanity", describing the Islamic State group as "savage outlaws of religion" in the wake of the Paris attacks. During an official visit to Kosovo, Abdullah said both Europe and Islam were under attack from the "scourge" of terrorism that could strike anywhere and at any time. "We are facing a third world war against humanity and this is what brings us all together," he told a press conference.

"This is a war, as I've said repeatedly, within Islam," he said, stressing the high number of Muslim victims of the Islamic State (IS) group. Abdullah said groups such as IS "expose themselves daily as savage outlaws of religion, devoid of humanity, respecting no laws and no boundaries". "So therefore we must act fast and holistically to tackle and respond to the interconnected threats whether it is in this region, Africa, Asia or in Europe," he said.

In France's worst-ever terror attacks, IS gunmen and suicide bombers murdered 129 people in coordinated onslaughts in Paris on Friday night. Muslim-majority Jordan is, like France, a member of the US-led coalition battling the group, which controls swathes of land in its neighbours Iraq and Syria. On Sunday, Abdullah said fighting extremism was "our fight as Muslims against those who aim to turn our societies and future generations towards fanaticism and extremism". Jordan says it has taken in 1.4 million Syrians fleeing the war there since it broke out in 2011, but the UNHCR puts the figure at 600,000. At least 250,000 people have died in more than four years of conflict in Syria. — AFP



PRISTINA: Jordanian King Abdullah II and Kosovo's President Atifete Jahjaga review a Kosovo security force honor guard during a welcoming ceremony as part of Abdullah's official visit to Kosovo yesterday. — AFP

5 TANZANIAN MINERS FREED AFTER 41 DAYS UNDERGROUND

DAR ES SALAAM: Five Tanzanian gold miners have been rescued after spending 41 days trapped deep underground eating cockroaches and frogs to survive, the mining ministry and survivors said yesterday. The miners were among a group of around 20 that were in a pit when a shaft they were working on collapsed on Oct 5. While 14 escaped as the shaft collapsed, six were trapped. One of the miners died more than month-long incarceration underground. The remaining five were rescued on Sunday and are reportedly in a serious condition in hospital.

"The miners were very weak," Minister of Energy and Mines spokeswoman Badra Masoud said, adding they had been trapped some 100 m underground. Survivors have described the horror of surviving in the darkness for over a month so deep underground, sheltering in a chamber where they had stored their tools, eating insects and sipping foul and muddy water to survive. "We were around 20 in the pit that collapsed, some of our colleagues made it out, but six remained trapped underground," survivor Chacha Wambura told state-owned television late

Monday. "We survived by eating cockroaches, frogs and other insects as well as drinking dirty water that seeped in from above."

'A Miracle'

The local miners were digging for gold in the northwestern Shinyanga region, some 900 km west of the economic capital Dar es Salaam, when the shaft collapsed behind them. Initially they had the light from their helmet lamps as well as from mobile phones, but they soon ran out. "Batteries of the torches and flashlights ran out and we ended up in a cave that we earlier used as a store for our tools," Wambura said. Tanzanian newspaper The Citizen said the mining ministry described the rescue as "a miracle" while local officials were initially in disbelief the miners could have been freed safely after so long underground.

Local police commander Justus Kamugisha told AFP that the miners were all believed to have died in the collapse, but that other miners crawling down a separate shaft were started to hear voices coming from the darkness. — AFP

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TEAR GAS FIRED INSIDE AND OUTSIDE KOSOVO PARLIAMENT

OPPOSITION ANGRY AT EU-BROKERED DEAL WITH SERBIA

PRISTINA: Opposition lawmakers in Kosovo fired tear gas and pepper spray in parliament yesterday and police clashed with rock-throwing protesters in a deepening political crisis over relations with former master Serbia. Protesters threw rocks, bottles and petrol bombs at police and parliament in the capital, Pristina, rallying in support of opposition lawmakers who for a fourth time disrupted the work of the assembly with tear gas and, on this occasion, pepper spray. The opposition is demanding the government scrap a European Union-brokered deal to regulate ties between Serbia and Kosovo, its former southern province, which declared independence in 2008.

In particular, they oppose the creation of a so-called "association" of municipalities populated by minority ethnic Serbs, which would have greater local powers and the right to some financial links with Belgrade. Kosovo broke away from Serbia in 1999, when NATO bombed for 11 weeks to stop the killing and expulsion of ethnic Albanians by Serbian forces trying to crush a guer-

rilla insurgency. The territory of 1.8 million people declared independence in 2008 and has been recognized by more than 100 countries, including the major Western powers. But the EU wants the two to regulate their relations as Balkan neighbors if either are to make progress towards eventual membership of the bloc.

Yesterday's protest was led by opposition lawmaker Albin Kurti, who has set off tear gas in parliament several times in recent months. He fired pepper spray at police. "I pointed the pepper spray at the prime minister and the government because they created the 'association,'" Kurti told Reuters in the assembly. "The police just happened to be in the wrong place." Lawmakers, who were due to debate the government's proposed budget for next year, left the chamber. They moved to another room in the building and later approved the budget at a first reading. Prime Minister Isa Mustafa said the opposition's actions were "criminal". "I ask the institutions to take measures, because the state is in question," he told reporters.—Reuters



PRISTINA: Members of the Parliament disperse after a tear gas was launched by opposition lawmakers, in the Kosovo's parliament in Pristina yesterday. —AFP



VAL-DE-MARNE: Photo shows the room rented with the credit card of Salah Abdeslam actively wanted in the investigation in the Appart'City hotel in Alfortville. — AFP

THE BELGIAN CONNECTION: FROM BARKEEPER TO SUICIDE BOMBER

BRUSSELS: Two weeks ago, the mayor of Molenbeek ordered the closure of a neighborhood bar where Brussels police had found young men dealing drugs and smoking dope over the summer. Last Friday, the owner blew himself up at another laid-back corner cafe, this time in Paris, on a mission of retribution from Islamic State. Brahim Abdeslam's journey from barkeeper to suicide bomber remains a mystery, along with the whereabouts of his younger brother Salah, now on the run as Europe's most wanted man but until recently the manager of Brahim's bar, Les Beguines. The brothers sold the business just six weeks ago.

There is a seeming disconnect between the ownership by Muslims, whose religion forbids the use of alcohol and tobacco, of a bar, where drugs were being dealt, on a quiet street in the low-rent Brussels borough of Molenbeek who have become the focus of a manhunt for violent Islamists with ties to Syria. Yet time and again, investigations after attacks like those that killed 129 people in Paris have uncovered tales of workaday Arab immigrant lives, assimilated to the profane daily cares and pleasures of European cities, that have turned, unseen to family and friends, into explosions of pious, suicidal fanaticism.

"It's shocking, especially when it's people you've hung out with," said 25-year-old Nabil, as he walked home from work to his apartment nearby, past the cafe on rue des Beguines, now shuttered by court order, which Brahim Abdeslam, 31, had owned. "They were regular guys, who enjoyed a laugh," he said, still wearing his workclothes and a Nike baseball cap. "There was nothing radical about them. ... They were here just last week hanging out. ... I think they were indoctrinated. ... There is some mastermind behind it all."

'Like Sylvester Stallone'

Hicham, also 25 and in blue tracksuit and sneakers, echoed that view of Brahim and Salah: "They smoked. They didn't go to the mosque or anything. We saw them every day at the cafe," he said. Brahim, with a voice "like Sylvester Stallone," could, he conceded, at times be "a bit crazy." "We played cards. We talked about football," he

added. "We talked about the everyday. Nothing jihadist, not about Islam." Those sentiments were echoed by family including a third brother, a local council employee, who was released on Monday after two days in custody, and by former workmates of Salah at the tram repair shop - though the latter told public radio that the "joker" Salah lost that job in 2011 for absenteeism.

Belgian media also reported that Salah spent time in jail for robbery five years ago alongside another Molenbeek man, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, 28. French investigators believe Abaaoud may have ordered the Paris attacks from Syria, where he has become an Internet propagandist for Islamic State under the nom de guerre Abu Omar Al-Belgiki - the Belgian. Belgian police could not confirm any previous record for the brothers or whether they had been under surveillance.

Strong smell of drugs

What is clear is that the bar the brothers ran had annoyed some of its neighbors and, in August, been raided by police. Details posted on the door, on the ground floor of a typical brick-built 19th-century townhouse and confirmed by police to Reuters, stated: "The premises have been used for the consumption of banned hallucinogenic substances." The notice ordered a five-month closure from Nov. 5, and said police found "a strong smell of drugs" and ashtrays containing "partially smoked joints", while a number of customers were found to be carrying drugs on their persons.

The notice said the manager had been given a chance, on Sept. 4, to object. "But he did not reply to our invitation", Molenbeek Mayor Francoise Schepmans has described Molenbeek as a "breeding ground for radical violence", suffering from high youth unemployment and overcrowding. Belgian ministers have promised to "clean it up." The Abdeslams do not appear to have figured among the jobless. Legal documents reviewed by Reuters and first reported by Belgian newspaper L'Echo show that Brahim, a French citizen born in Brussels, formed a company in March 2013 to run the bar.— Reuters

S AFRICA COURT SAYS 'SWAPPED' BABIES WILL NOT BE EXCHANGED

JOHANNESBURG: South African toddlers accidentally swapped on the day they were born in 2010 will stay with the families who raised them and not be returned to their biological parents, a Pretoria high court has ruled. The two children, a boy and a girl who are now aged five, were born on the same day in a Johannesburg hospital but ended up being taken home and raised by the wrong parents after nurses mixed up their identities.

The precise circumstances of the mix-up have not been made public but the families were unaware of the mistake until one of the mothers underwent tests when her ex-husband refused to pay child support, saying he was not the father. One of the women initially wanted to get her biological daughter back but has since accepted

the opinion of court-appointed experts, who said the children should stay with the parents who raised them.

The Pretoria court ruled on Monday that the children will now be considered to have been adopted by the parents who brought them up, said Anne Skelton, director at the University of Pretoria's Centre for Child Law, the court's advisers. "Now it is as if they are the children of the parents with which they are living," Skelton said yesterday. "Nobody is fighting it. Three of the parents totally agree with the decision. One father is uncertain but he said through his lawyers that he would abide by the decision of the court." The case has drawn comparison to the biblical story of King Solomon who ruled in a dispute between two women claiming to be the mother of a child.—Reuters

RWANDAN SENATE CLEARS KAGAME FOR THIRD TERM

UPPER HOUSE PASSES CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

KIGALI: Rwanda's upper house of parliament passed yesterday a constitutional amendment allowing President Paul Kagame to run for a third consecutive term in 2017, and potentially remain in power for the next two decades. The vote was unanimously passed, an AFP reporter in the senate said. The changes to the constitution will now be put to a national referendum, widely expected to be passed with little outspoken opposition.

"If I ran again, I would do more of what I am doing to improve the well being of the citizens of Rwanda," Kagame said yesterday, in a message posted on the presidential Twitter account. The lower house passed the amendments earlier this month. Lawmakers voted unanimously to approve cutting presidential terms from the cur-

rent seven to five years, and maintain a two-term limit. But an exception was made for Kagame, who would be allowed to run for another seven-year term after his current mandate ends in 2017. After those seven years, he could then potentially run for another two terms of five years each, which would extend his rule to 2034. Minor changes made by senators will now return to the lower house for voting, but those do not include the key sections related to the possible extension of Kagame's rule. Kagame has run Rwanda since his rebel army ended the 1994 genocide and ousted Hutu extremists. He won elections in 2003 and 2010 and, under the current law, is due to step aside in 2017 at the end of his second term. Earlier this year, more than 60 percent of voters signed a petition calling for

constitutional changes to be drafted that would allow Kagame to stand again.

Kagame's aides have insisted that any bid for a third term would be in response to "popular demand" that he stay in power. Supporters portray Kagame as a guarantor of post-genocide stability and the economic growth that has transformed the country over the past 20 years. But critics say the move is orchestrated by a government and leader with an iron grip on a country where freedom of expression is severely curtailed, and part of a wider trend of African leaders seeking to stay put. Rwanda is the northern neighbor of Burundi, where this year President Pierre Nkurunziza gained a third consecutive term despite months of protests and an attempted coup.— AFP

PARIS ASSAILANTS: WHAT WE KNOW

PARIS: Investigators probing the deadly Paris attacks have so far identified five of seven gunmen and suicide bombers whose bodies were found at three sites across the city, while the hunt is on for others. Here is a look at the men behind France's worst-ever terror attacks, which struck a concert venue, bars, restaurants and a stadium.

Omar Ismail Mostefai

The 29-year-old French national blew himself up at the Bataclan music venue, one of three attackers who killed 89 people there in the bloodiest scene of Friday night's violence. His identity was confirmed using a severed fingertip found at the site. Born on November 21, 1985 in the poor Paris suburb of Courcouronnes, Mostefai was known to police as a petty criminal with eight convictions between 2004 and 2010 but spent no time in jail. Between 2005 and 2012, he lived in Chartres, some 90 kilometers southwest of Paris, his former neighbors said, and regularly attended a mosque a few kilometers away in Luce, a source close to the investigation said.

Samy Amimour

The second Bataclan suicide bomber to be identified was 28-year-old Samy Amimour from Drancy, a northeastern suburb of Paris. He was known to anti-terror investigators after being charged on October 19, 2012 with "conspiracy to commit terrorism" over an attempt to travel to Yemen but was released on

bail. He left for Syria on September 11, 2013, violating the terms of his bail, and prompting judges to issue an international warrant for his arrest. In summer 2014 he was still in Syria and his family told AFP their hopes of seeing him again faded because he had married there. Three of his family members were taken into custody early on Monday.

Brahim Abdeslam

The 31-year-old French national living in Belgium blew himself up outside a bar on Boulevard Voltaire, seriously wounding one person. Born on July 30, 1984, he is one of three brothers linked to the probe. He is suspected of hiring a black Seat car, registered in Belgium, that was seen by witnesses at several attack sites and found late Saturday in Montreuil, east of Paris. Inside were three Kalashnikov assault rifles, 11 empty magazines and five full ones.

Dutch media reports said his name appears in police files alongside that of leading Belgian jihadist Abdelhamid Abaaoud in relation to criminal cases in 2010 and 2011. Abaaoud is believed to head a Belgian Islamic State cell, which was dismantled in January. Abaaoud has been on the run since then and is believed to be fighting with the Islamic State group in Syria. Local media reported that Abdeslam used to run a bar in Brussels' impoverished Molenbeek district, which is known as a hotbed of Islamic radicalism. A police document obtained by AFP suggests it was shut down because police believed customers were smoking marijuana there.

Salah Abdeslam, wanted

His younger brother, 26-year-old Salah Abdeslam, is being sought by French investigators who have issued a photograph of him-describing him as "dangerous"-while Belgium has issued international warrant for his arrest. He hired a black Polo, also registered in Belgium, which was found near the Bataclan concert venue. Brussels police on Monday surrounded a property in Molenbeek, but did not find him. Salah was likely extracted Saturday after a call from one of his accomplices from Belgium, according to police and sources close to the investigation. The third brother, Mohamed Abdeslam was arrested in Molenbeek on Saturday, but released "without charge" on Monday with his lawyer saying her client had an alibi and was not in Paris on Friday evening.

Bilal Hadfi

The 20-year-old was one of three assailants who blew themselves up outside the French national stadium, killing one person, as France was playing Germany in a football friendly attended by 80,000 fans, including French President Francois Hollande. Investigators say Hadfi was a French national who was living in Belgium and had spent time in Syria.

Ahmad Al-Mohammad

Close to the body of a second bomber outside the Stade de France, investigators found a Syrian passport in the name of Ahmad al-Mohammad, 25, who was born on September 10, 1990, in the Syrian city of Idlib. A passport bearing that name had been registered on the Greek island of Leros on October 3, with the attacker's fingerprints matching those taken during the registration process. The holder of the passport was later registered as crossing from Macedonia into Serbia where he formally applied for asylum, Serbian officials said. But investigators are still trying to verify if the passport is indeed genuine, and the name is not known to French anti-terror police. Serbia detained a migrant on Monday whose passport contained the same data.— AFP



PARIS: This combination of photos shows four men - two suicide bombers who died during the November 13, 2015 Paris attacks, and two others suspected to be implicated. — AFP



BOLAN: Pakistan security officials and local residents gather at the site following the derailment of a passenger train in Bolan district, some 75 kilometers from Quetta yesterday. — AFP

12 DEAD, 100 INJURED AS PAKISTAN TRAIN DERAILS

QUETTA: At least 12 people were killed and more than 100 hundred injured yesterday when a train derailed in Pakistan's southwestern Baluchistan province, administration and railway officials said. The accident occurred near Quetta city, the provincial capital, after the train's brakes failed as it sped down the side of a mountain, officials said. A military spokesman in Quetta said that 26 seriously injured passengers were airlifted to hospital in two helicopters.

"Four carriages of a Rawalpindi-bound train which left Quetta railway station were derailed near Abegum area of Bolan district, some 75 kilometers from Quetta city," Akbar Hussain Durrani, Baluchistan home secretary said. "The incident happened because the brakes of the train failed." Faiz Bugti, a senior railways department official, and head of local community police Tariq Zehri

also confirmed the accident and casualties. The army has joined a rescue and relief operation and will use heavy machinery to free victims, while a quick response force from the paramilitary Frontier Corps has also been deployed, authorities said.

TV footage showed rescuers trying to pull the injured from the derailed cars. Railway officials said the train was carrying around 300 passengers. "Among the dead so far confirmed, five are passengers, two drivers of the train and two members of the railway police," Durrani said. Train accidents are common in Pakistan, which inherited thousands of miles of track and trains from former colonial power, Britain. The railways have seen decades of decline due to corruption, mismanagement and lack of investment. In July, at least 17 people were killed when a special military train fell into a canal after a bridge partially collapsed. — Agencies

BASIJ-RASIKH DRESSED AS A BOY TO DEFY TALEBAN

AFGHAN ACTIVIST WHO CALLS FOR MORE FEMALE TEACHERS

LONDON: When the Taleban banned girls' education in Afghanistan, six-year-old Shabana Basij-Rasikh started dressing as a boy and for five years risked her life to attend a secret school. Today, 14 years on, she runs Afghanistan's only boarding school for girls, aiming to foster a new generation of leaders across professions who can help create a strong country following decades of war.

"It's especially important to educate young girls in Afghanistan because we have not tapped into half of society," said Basij-Rasikh. "We're talking about a phenomenal opportunity for Afghanistan." Despite millions of girls entering education since the fall of the Taleban, many still miss out because of a huge shortage of female teachers, says Basij-Rasikh, now 25, who has won international acclaim for her work championing girls' education.

The gender gap in primary schools remains the largest globally with only 7 girls for every 10 boys, falling to 5.5 girls at secondary level. Basij-Rasikh, a speaker on Tuesday at the Trust Women conference on women's rights and trafficking run by the Thomson Reuters Foundation, said she was lucky to grow up in a family where daughters were prized. Her grandfather insisted Basij-Rasikh's mother go to school even though his father disowned him for doing so. Basij-Rasikh's father - an army general who was the first boy in his family to be schooled - was also adamant his daughters should be educated, even when the Islamist Taleban took power in 1996.

"My parents knew they were risking our lives in

sending us to a secret school," she said. "But it was a lot harder for them to imagine their daughters growing up uneducated. For them, that would have been a major step backwards." Basij-Rasikh and her older sister - dressed in a burqa - would vary their route to school every day to avoid arousing suspicions, hiding their books in grocery bags. They had several "terrifying close calls". "Afterwards we'd beg our parents to let us stay at home like all the other girls we knew," she said. "But my father would always say, 'Look, you can lose everything in life, but there is one thing that nobody can take away from you, and that's your education.'"

Giving girls ambition

After the Taleban fell in 2001, Basij-Rasikh attended a public school before going to college in the United States. While there, she co-founded the School of Leadership, Afghanistan (SOLA) with the aim of giving young Afghans access to an education abroad and jobs back home. In 2012, she turned SOLA - which means "peace" in the Pashto language - into the country's first girls' boarding school to educate girls from across the country. The Kabul school places strong emphasis on critical thinking and leadership skills. Extra-curricular activities that would raise eyebrows in most of Afghanistan include everything from skateboarding and rock-climbing to driving lessons.

SOLA has 25 students and has helped 45 girls study in the United States, Canada, Britain, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan and Bangladesh, with scholarships amounting to \$9.5 million. Some hope to be doctors, others want to

become the country's first female president. One dreams of becoming an astronaut. "Most of them are the first girl in their family to receive an education. It's a huge change," said Basij-Rasikh who plans to expand the school to 340 students in seven years. The guards at SOLA are a reminder that it is still risky for girls to go to school.

One student was nearly killed with her father by a roadside bomb in her home province. Her father received a phone call afterwards warning him of another attack if his daughter returned to school but he refused to be covered. In parts of Afghanistan militants have burnt down schools, poisoned schoolgirls and thrown acid in their faces, but Basij-Rasikh says they return to class as soon as they can. To help boost girls' education, Basij-Rasikh wants to see more female teachers. In conservative communities this can make the difference between a girl going to school or staying at home, she said, yet less than a third of teachers are women.

Female teachers can also be role models and confidantes, Basij-Rasikh said, particularly as girls reach puberty and are more likely to be affected by traditional beliefs - high rates of early marriage are another reason why girls drop out. Basij-Rasikh believes Afghanistan could change dramatically in the coming decades if girls are allowed to reach their potential. "If you want to be inspired by young people go see the girls in Afghanistan who value education so much because they know what it feels like not to have access to it," she said. — Reuters

INDIAN COURT ORDERS ACTION ON CREMATORIUM NEAR TAJ MAHAL

NEW DELHI: India's Supreme Court has ordered the government of Uttar Pradesh state to remove a wood-burning crematorium located near the Taj Mahal to protect the iconic monument from being affected by smoke. Judges Tirath Singh Thakur and Chockalingam Nagappan said Monday that the state government could either move the crematorium away from the monument or install an electric one in its place. The judges were acting on a letter from another Supreme Court judge that said the white marble mausoleum was under threat of pollution due to smoke and soot emanating from the crematorium.

Judge Kurian Joseph said that on a recent visit to the Taj Mahal, he had noticed smoke and ash rising from the crematorium and was concerned about the effect of air pollution on the marble structure. In their order, the two judges suggested

that the state could move the wood-burning crematorium and also build an electric one at the current site. This would allow people wanting to use wood pyres to do so, while others could use the electric crematorium, they said. Hindus traditionally cremate their dead using wood fires. The government has been trying to encourage people to use electricity-powered crematoriums.

With its gleaming dome and graceful spires, the Taj Mahal is one of the world's most recognizable buildings, visited by more than 3 million tourists a year. The monument's domes and minarets, inlaid with semi-precious stones and carvings, is considered the finest example of Mughal art in India. It was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983. Resting on the banks of the Yamuna River in the city of Agra, the Taj Mahal was built in the 17th century by Mogul Emperor Shah Jahan in the

memory of his wife, Mumtaz Mahal, who died giving birth to their 14th child.

Over the decades, the once pearly white Taj Mahal has been turning yellow due to pollution. The government has closed scores of factories located near the monument and has tried to provide uninterrupted power supply in Agra so that residents do not have to use diesel-operated generators. Earlier this year, the state government banned the burning of cow dung fuel cakes by city residents to prevent the dense black smoke from affecting the Taj. Dried cow dung cakes are commonly used in rural areas as a cheap source of fuel for heating and cooking. The court ordered the government of Uttar Pradesh, the northern Indian state where the Taj is located, to come up with a decision on its plans for the crematorium within 15 days. — AP



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INDONESIAN NEWLYWEDS ATE ALLEGED RAPIST'S GENITALS

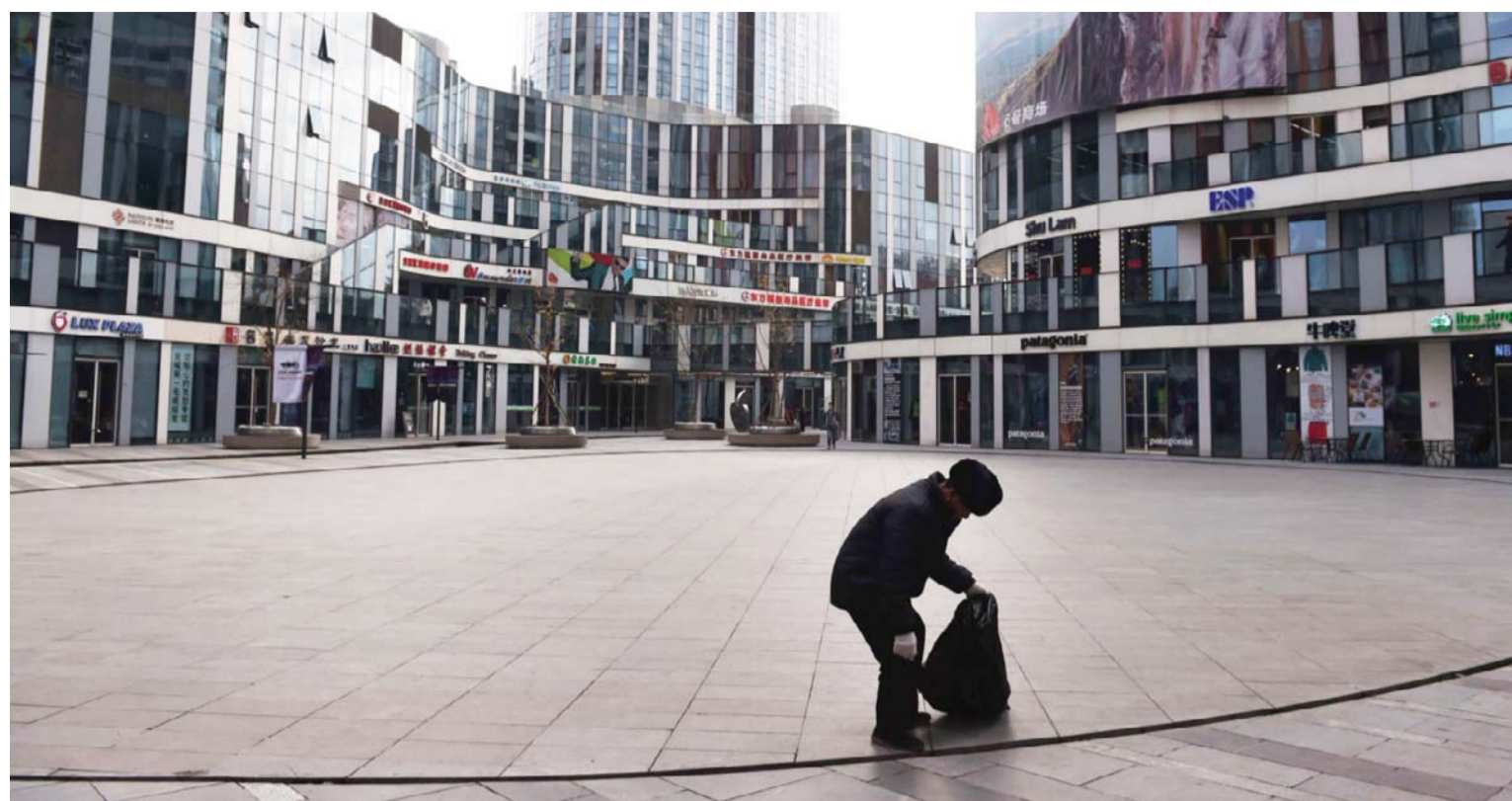
BANDAR LAMPUNG: A newlywed Indonesian couple have been arrested over claims they dined on the genitals of the woman's suspected rapist after her husband allegedly murdered him and cut off his private parts, police said yesterday. The victim's body was found in a burnt-out van after a suspected revenge attack sparked by claims from the new wife she was raped a week before her wedding on Sumatra island.

The husband, 30-year-old Rudi Efendi, has admitted murdering the man after discovering his wife was not a virgin on their wedding night in September and being told of the alleged rape, but insists he acted alone. "I was so outraged," Efendi told reporters after his arrest last month, adding that deciding to eat the victim's genitals was "to cure my heartache". Police say that after murdering the man, Efendi took

home the victim's severed genitals, ordered his 20-year-old wife to cook them, and the pair then ate them together. The victim was a driver, whom the wife used to date. Sulistyaningsih, a local police spokeswoman who goes by one name said: "The case is still under investigation but we strongly suspect that this is a premeditated murder." The husband is accused of carrying out the murder, while police believe the wife acted as an accomplice. The victim was found dead in early October in a burnt-out van in Tulangbawang district, Lampung province. Police later arrested Efendi and his wife. Efendi had ordered his wife to contact the victim and set up a meeting, according to police. But when the victim arrived, he found only Efendi, who then allegedly stabbed him to death, cut off his genitals and set the vehicle on fire.—AFP



BANDAR LAMPUNG: Photos shows suspected murderers Rudi Efendi (center) and his wife Nuriah (center front). A newlywed Indonesian couple stands accused of dining on the genitals of a man believed to have raped a woman after her husband allegedly murdered him and cut off his private parts.—AFP



BEIJING: A worker picks up trash in a shopping complex in Beijing yesterday.—AFP

UN'S TORTURE WATCHDOG QUESTIONS CHINA OVER CRACKDOWN ON ACTIVISTS

RIGID CHAIRS, ELECTRIC SHOCKS, LEG CUFFS ALLEGEDLY USED

GENEVA: UN rights experts pressed senior Chinese officials yesterday about persistent allegations that torture is rife in their police stations and prisons, especially of political prisoners, and about deaths in custody. China said it was working to combat torture but that it had not been eliminated. The United Nations Committee against Torture's regular examination of Beijing's record came after what the group Human Rights in China says has been "a year of massive crackdowns on rights activists and lawyers" on the mainland.

Chinese government officials told the 10 independent experts that their country was working to eliminate torture including through better training of police and prison guards, and audio and video recordings of interrogations. "Our efforts have produced major progress in our combat against torture," Wu Hailong, China's ambassador who heads its delegation of 39 senior officials, told the UN group, which is also reviewing the records of Hong Kong and Macao. "Since 2014, public security authorities

have comprehensively adopted the audio and video recording system for the entire process of interrogation of criminal suspects for major cases, and will gradually apply this system to all criminal cases," he said.

Illegally obtained evidence and forced self-incrimination of detainees are banned, Wu said, "thus preventing interrogation through torture". He conceded that there was "still a long and arduous path ahead before elimination of torture". Committee member George Tugushi raised various issues, including the use of "rigid chairs, electric shocks and weighted leg cuffs" on detainees. Sleep deprivation remains lawful and mental torture is not explicitly banned. "We have received reports that torture is particularly pervasive in black jails," Tugushi said, referring to facilities outside the official prison system.

Deaths in custody

"Please explain the deaths that have occurred in Chinese detention facilities because

people were unable to obtain (medical) treatment on time, based on a number of reports the committee has received," Tugushi said. Other committee members suggested China establish an independent monitoring body to investigate torture and questioned the treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in prison clinics, including alleged electric shocks. Amnesty International said last week that China's criminal justice system relies heavily on forced confessions obtained through torture, including beatings and the use of iron restraint chairs. Dissidents and minorities are at highest risk. Defense lawyers who raise claims of abuse are often threatened "or even detained and tortured themselves," it said, adding that 12 Chinese lawyers and activists are currently detained on state security charges. Wu said that China's 270,000 lawyers played an increasingly vital role in "law-based governance, protection of human rights and combating torture". "Lawyers are an indispensable part of China's rule of law," he said.—Reuters

MYANMAR'S FORTUNE TELLER MP PREDICTS BRIGHT FUTURE

YANGON: For part-time astrologer Aung Shwe, success in Myanmar's historic elections was written in the stars long before the ballot box made him the only member of his political party to win at the polls. The Democratic Party candidate for Mandalay's regional parliament said his victory in the November 8 vote came as no surprise, in a nation where the occult is believed to be as common in the highest echelons of power as it is on streetside stalls.

"I made a calculation using my date of birth and my astrological thinking and I found I would win this election," he said, adding that the absence of competition from Aung San Suu Kyi's wildly popular party may also have smoothed his way to a seat. Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy won a resounding landslide that wiped many smaller parties from parliament and looks set to redraw the political landscape in Myanmar after decades of military domination.

A new parliament, due to sit in February, will see a flood of fledgling NLD lawmakers including poets, hip-hop stars, former political prisoners and doctors. The size of the

NLD victory took many political analysts by surprise. Not so for Aung Shwe. "I also knew the NLD would celebrate such a landslide, by astrology," said the former school teacher, who gave up his career in education in favour of politics to pursue a "vision for my country". Myanmar's fortune tellers are thought to be behind several unexplained occurrences in the country, including the abrupt decision by the former junta to relocate the capital in 2005.

Reliance on astrologers dates back hundreds of years—Myanmar's former kings regularly consulted their fortune tellers and even now most ordinary people have an astrological chart drawn up at birth. Ne Win, the strongman who ruled Myanmar for around three decades, was notorious for his use of mystics. In the late 1980s, the military leader caused economic chaos when he introduced notes in the local kyat currency of 45 and 90, because the numbers added up to his lucky number nine. Aung Shwe plans to promote business and development during his time in the parliament in Mandalay. "Myanmar has a brighter future, according to my astrology," he said confidently.—AFP

FEAR AMONG AFGHANS AT 'THE HIGHEST LEVEL'

KABUL: Afghans fear for their safety more than at any time in over a decade, according to an annual survey published yesterday, which also found confidence in the government at its lowest since polling began. Some 67.4 percent of Afghans say they are worried about their well-being at all times, often, or sometimes, the highest figure since the survey began in 2004, and up two percentage points from a year earlier.

Only around a third of people questioned in the Asia Foundation's annual survey believed the country is "moving in the right direction", down from over half in 2014 and 58 percent in 2013 - record breaking years for optimism in a country ravaged by a war that has pitted foreign-backed government forces against Taliban rebels since 2001. Some 57.5 percent of Afghans believe their country is not improving. They cite insecurity, unemployment and corruption as the main scourges that plague Afghan society. Optimism for the future was at its highest in the southern province of Helmand—a Taliban stronghold—and lowest in Kabul, according to the survey. Bombings, kid-

nappings, unemployment and an economy that has failed to take off are the most frequently cited factors for Afghans wishing to migrate, legally or illegally, to Europe. Afghans are the second most numerous nationality after Syrians to be sweeping into Europe with the aid of human traffickers. "This year's survey shows that Afghan optimism about the overall direction of the country fell to the lowest point in a decade, after steadily rising through 2014," noted the Asia Foundation, which highlighted the prevailing skepticism towards the government of President Ashraf Ghani.

The survey, which took place in June involved individual interviews with 9,586 Afghans of 14 different ethnicities in the country's 34 provinces. The margin of error was 1.6 percent, according to the organization. It came in the midst of the Taliban's annual surge in fighting across the spring and summer months, which claimed the lives of thousands of security personnel, but before the insurgents' brief capture of northern Kunduz, their biggest military victory since the insurgency began.—AFP

'UNPRECEDENTED' RISE IN DEATHS FROM TERRORISM

32,658 PEOPLE DIE IN 2014: GLOBAL TERRORISM INDEX

LONDON: The number of people killed globally in terrorist attacks jumped 80 percent last year to the highest level ever recorded, the Institute for Economics and Peace said yesterday. The Global Terrorism Index found that 32,658 people were killed by terrorists in 2014, up from the 18,111 fatalities of the previous year, the largest increase on record.

The study defines terrorism as "the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation". Nigeria-based Boko Haram and the Islamic State group were responsible for more than half of the deaths, according to the study, which measures attacks, deaths and damage from terror attacks in 162 countries. "Terrorism is gaining momentum at an unprecedented pace," said Steve Killelea, the executive chairman of the Institute of Economics and Peace, which produces the study.

The increase followed a 61 percent rise in 2013. The study found that terrorism was highly concentrated, with the five countries of Afghanistan, Iraq, Nigeria, Pakistan and Syria accounting for 78 percent of deaths last year. Iraq was the worst affected with 9,929 deaths from terrorism—suffering both the highest number of attacks and the most fatalities from terrorism ever recorded by a country. The biggest rise in fatalities from terrorism however was in Nigeria, which saw an increase of over 300 percent in deaths to 7,512.

Western states were much less at risk from attacks, which were most likely to be perpetrated by lone wolves driven by political extremism, nationalism or racial and religious supremacy rather than Islamic fundamentalism, according to the study. Britain suffered greatest number of terrorist incidents in the West, mostly relating to Irish republican paramilitaries in Northern Ireland, it found. Nevertheless, attacks claimed



ALSDORF: Police lead away a man in handcuffs in Alsdorf near Aachen, western Germany yesterday. German police hunting for suspects in the Paris attacks said they had arrested one man and two women of foreign nationalities near the Belgian borders but couldn't confirm their identities yet.—AFP

by Islamic State in Paris that killed at least 129 last week could prove to be a milestone, according to Killelea. "The Paris incident in many ways is a watershed within Europe. It shows that ISIL (IS) has the capabilities to be able to launch sophisticated and deadly attacks in Europe," Killelea said. He warned that foreign fighters who had travelled to Iraq and Syria, estimated to number between 25,000 and 30,000 since 2011,

could prove a risk. "The returning fighters from Syria will have the military training," Killelea said. "The tactics of Isis are changing. They are targeting more private citizens. It's difficult - taking the time frame forward two years - to see the Isis threat disappearing." The study estimated that the economic cost of terrorism amounted to \$52.9 billion, the highest ever level and a tenfold increase since 2000.—AFP

HOW ISLAMIC STATE JIHADISTS OPERATE

BAGHDAD: The Islamic State jihadist group, which holds large areas in Iraq and Syria and has affiliates and operatives in other countries, claimed attacks in Paris that killed 129 people. But how does IS function, and who calls the shots?

Who's in charge?

The group is headed by Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi, who rules over a self-declared Islamic "caliphate", but military and administrative responsibilities are diffused to lower-level officials as well. IS has various departments responsible for issues such as education and services, and there are also security commanders for specific geographic regions. "In the grand scheme of things Baghdadi

seems to be an important figure in decision-making," said jihadism expert Aymenn Al-Tamimi. "However, I think as with any government there is some autonomy in decision-making granted to more local manifestations of IS government departments."

Who orders attacks?

There is not yet any hard evidence that top leaders directly ordered the Paris attacks, and it is likely that Baghdadi dictates strategies while less senior commanders and operatives see to the execution. "We don't have any evidence at the present time that the Paris attack was ordered by the highest echelons of the Islamic State," Tamimi said. "Baghdadi likely does not micromanage

every attack that (IS) launches abroad. It is more likely that (IS) commanders execute campaigns according to Baghdadi's intent," said Harleen Gambhir, an analyst at the Institute for the Study of War. IS-linked "operatives have attempted to attack Europe repeatedly this year. The Paris attacks simply represented a success in that effort, rather than a unique event that would have required special permission from Baghdadi," Gambhir said.

How are fighters recruited?

IS employs a sophisticated propaganda machine to produce videos, photos and statements about its activities, including brutal public executions, helping it attract

recruits. A large number of supporters disseminate this material online. But for an operation like Paris, having operatives with connections in Europe is key. IS "likely chose to use European foreign fighters to launch the Paris attacks because those fighters maintain connections to radical and criminal networks in their home countries," said Gambhir. "These networks aid with the weapons procurement and other logistics required for an operation like the Paris attacks," she said.

How is IS financed?

In territory it controls in Iraq and Syria, IS finances itself through means including oil smuggling, extortion, kidnapping for ransom and selling looted antiquities. But external

operations would largely be financed independently, though they may still receive some funding from the central IS organization. IS "is a different can of worms than Al-Qaeda traditionally has been," said Matthew Levitt, a former deputy assistant secretary for intelligence and analysis at the US Treasury Department who is now at the Washington Institute. This is because it "controls a large swathe of territory, and is therefore able to do everything from tax people, both literal taxes and other taxes that we might think of more properly as forms of extortion, and all kinds of criminal activity," Levitt said. But "the type of operations we just saw in Paris are mostly going to be independently financed, largely through criminal activity," he said.—AFP



Silhouettes of trees and a woman contrast on a fire-red sunset, as the autumn darkness falls outside Pamplona in northern Spain yesterday. — AP

SPORTS TRIBUNAL REJECTS KUWAIT SHOOTING...

Continued from Page 1

Claudia Bokel, chair of the IOC athletes' commission, said the panel learned "with dismay about attempts by the Kuwaiti authorities to prevent athletes from taking part in national and international sporting events,

including qualifiers for the Olympic Games" in Rio de Janeiro. She says it was "never the IOC's intention to penalize the athletes in Kuwait" when it suspended the national committee on Oct 27. Bokel said "we condemn in the strongest terms" any attempt to block athletes from competing. — Agencies

NOD TO MORE INCENTIVES FOR SPECIAL NEEDS...

Continued from Page 1

A number of MPs also called for raising assistance to disabled people and to their relatives, especially their mothers, to account for the high cost of living.

In other business, MPs agreed to debate today a report on the investigation into the \$2.2 billion penalty paid to petrochemicals giant Dow Chemical after Kuwait unilaterally scrapped a multibillion-dollar joint venture with the US firm. MPs had repeatedly claimed that Kuwait rushed the payment of the fine ordered by the International Chamber of Commerce, which acted as an arbitrator. The Assembly panel probed all aspects related to the issue which began in 2008, and submitted its conclusions to the Assembly.

During the debate yesterday, Minister of Social Affairs and Labour Hind Al-Subaih said that the ministry has applied the law against those who raise funds illegally. She said that Kuwaitis involved in such activities are asked to pay a penalty, while expatriates are handed to the interior ministry to be deported immediately. She said this year, Kuwait was praised by the US Congress

and Department of Treasury, and the country did not receive any criticism for illegal charity work.

The minister was responding to remarks made by MP Saleh Ashour, who said he did not get a clear answer about a question on advertisements for unlicensed fundraising campaigns. He said that the interior minister referred him to the social affairs minister, who said that she has notified the interior ministry. Ashour said that Kuwait is a member of the international treaty to combat terrorism and should drain its sources of funding, and accordingly authorities should apply the law correctly.

The Assembly also decided to assign its bureau to discuss the status of 16 laws that have been passed by MPs but were not implemented by the government. MPs demanded that the issue should be debated in a special session. MPs also agreed to delay debating recommendations by the public funds protection committee that the government should stop selling its stakes in profitable local companies. The delay was requested by the government because of the absence of Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh for personal reasons.

KUWAIT RULES PAVE WAY FOR MORE SUKUK

Continued from Page 1

This resulted in the almost complete absence of corporate sukuk issuance in 2014 and 3Q15. The recent decline in oil prices has pushed a few of the Gulf Cooperation Council member states to issue or consider domestic issuance of sovereign debt in 2015.

Much of this debt is likely to be long term and would be bought by the country's banks. This could consume some of the liquidity that has helped to make bank lending the primary source of funding for Kuwaiti corporates. Sovereign debt issuance could also help potential corporate issuers by creating a pricing benchmark. We believe Kuwaiti corporates are more likely to issue sukuk than bonds because there is a wider local and regional investor base for sukuk and because some corpo-

rates are restricted to sharia-compliant borrowing by their own rules. Regional and international investors are increasingly happy to invest in sukuk.

Corporate sukuk would add a much-needed sharia-compliant investment instrument for the Islamic banking sector, which is not allowed to invest in traditional bonds. A recent memorandum of understanding between the CMA and the Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA) is a step towards allowing Kuwaiti financial institutions into the Dubai International Financial Centre, which is emerging as an international hub for sukuk listing. This could eventually broaden the potential investor base for Kuwaiti sukuk by enabling them to be listed in Dubai. Islamic finance and banking have been present in Kuwait since the 1970s with the first fully-fledged Islamic bank, Kuwait Finance House (KFH), established in 1977. — Reuters

5 KILLED AS RAINS, FLASH FLOODS HIT SAUDI...

Continued from Page 1

Jeddah's King Abdulaziz International Airport said eight domestic flights were delayed "due to the rainy weather conditions in Jeddah". One international flight was diverted to Madinah, it added in a statement, without giving more details. "Air traffic is now back to normal," the airport said.

Saudis took to social media to share videos and pictures of flooded streets and high winds. Flooding is politically sensitive in

Jeddah, where previous incidents have prompted widespread anger over the perceived failure of local and national government to build suitable defences and to prevent illegal housing developments in risky areas. Footage and photographs shown on Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya television pictured cars being swept along Jeddah streets and people using boats to navigate districts of the city. The National Center for Meteorology and Seismology in the neighboring United Arab Emirates says rain is expected there Friday. — Agencies

GCC EXPRESSES SOLIDARITY WITH FRANCE

Continued from Page 1

Syria as part of a United States-led coalition, although their participation in that campaign diminished after a Saudi-led alliance in March began bombing Iran-backed rebels in Yemen.

Meanwhile, France and Russia agreed to coordinate their military and security services in an unusual alliance against IS jihadists in Syria yesterday after the devastating attack on Paris and the bombing of a Russian plane.

Warplanes from both countries unleashed bombs on the IS stronghold of Raqqa as Paris and Moscow vowed merciless retaliation for attacks that have galvanized international resolve to destroy the jihadists and end the nearly five-year Syrian war.

"It's necessary to establish direct contact with the French and work with them as allies," Russian President Vladimir Putin told his military top brass as France prepared to send its flagship aircraft carrier to the eastern Mediterranean, where the Russian navy is deployed. Hollande will hold talks on strengthening cooperation against IS with Putin in Moscow on Nov 26, two days after seeing US President Barack Obama in Washington.

In grieving France, police racked up arrests and seized weapons as they scoured the country for clues after a wave of coordinated attacks by gunmen and suicide bombers on Friday night that left 129 dead and shook the country to its core. Only 117 of the victims have been identified and 221 people are still in hospital. Stunned residents continued to flock to shrines of candles and flowers, while photographs of smiling young victims have been pasted at attack sites or outside their places of work.

French investigators have identified five of seven attackers who were killed or blew themselves up in the attack, and have launched a manhunt for an eighth man, 26-year-old Salah Abdeslam, whose brother was one of the suicide bombers. A bus driver and a bar owner were among the jihadists, most of whom were French and Belgian nationals, while one of them had a passport apparently issued in Syria. Investigators believe Belgian jihadist Abdelhamid Abaaoud, who is based in Syria and knew Salah Abdeslam, may be the mastermind of the attacks. Police yesterday found a second car rented in Belgium by Salah, while his brother was found to have rented an apartment in the Parisian suburb of Bobigny a few days before the attack.

Yesterday, Paris invoked a never-before used European Union article to ask member nations for help in its military missions that received unanimous backing in Brussels. Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said the EU support would allow France to have "bilateral talks where necessary" with other EU states to establish what assistance France needed. In the Syrian city of Raqqa, the stronghold of IS, French warplanes destroyed a command centre and training centre in its second series of air strikes in 24 hours, according to Prime Minister Manuel Valls. Russia also staged a "significant number" of air strikes on Raqqa. The two countries which have been at loggerheads over Russia's role in the Ukraine

conflict, as well as the role of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad in finding peace in Syria, have become strange bedfellows as both nations have been struck by IS attacks.

On a visit to Paris to show his solidarity after the attacks, US Secretary of State John Kerry said a "big transition" in Syria was probably only weeks away after an agreement between deeply divided countries such as Iran, Russia and Saudi Arabia on a path to elections in Syria at weekend talks. "We are weeks away conceivably from the possibility of a big transition for Syria," Kerry said, hailing the advances in the political process as a "gigantic step". However regime and opposition representatives have yet to sit down together, and the nations involved cannot agree on the role of Assad in any transition.

Also, Putin vowed vengeance as Moscow yesterday confirmed that a bomb attack brought down the Russian passenger jet over Egypt last month, killing all 224 people on board. Putin pledged to ramp up Moscow's bombing campaign in Syria in response to the attack but stopped short of blaming any one group as the country's security agency announced a \$50 million reward for information leading to capture of those responsible.

"It is not the first time that Russia confronts barbarous terrorist crimes", Putin said in a meeting with his security chiefs. "The murder of our people in Sinai is among the bloodiest crimes in terms of victims, he said in comments released yesterday, vowing to hunt down those responsible. "We will search for them anywhere they might hide. We will find them in any part of the world and punish them," he said.

Russia's security chief Alexander Bortnikov told Putin that the passenger jet carrying tourists back from Egyptian resort Sharm el-Sheikh on Oct 31 was brought down shortly after take-off over the Sinai peninsula by a home-made bomb containing explosives of "foreign production" with a force equivalent to one kilo of TNT. "We can say unequivocally that this was a terrorist attack," Federal Security Service (FSB) head Bortnikov said. The FSB later said it would pay "\$50 million for information helping to arrest the criminals."

A group linked to IS had earlier claimed responsibility for downing the plane, and Russia had halted all flights to Egypt despite refusing to endorse growing suspicions in Britain and the United States that the plane was blown up by a bomb. Putin did not expressly blame IS for the attack on the passenger jet but pledged to step up air strikes in Syria where Moscow is conducting a bombing campaign it says is targeting the IS and other "terrorist" groups. "The combat work of our aviation in Syria must not only be continued. It must be intensified so that the criminals understand that vengeance is inevitable," Putin said.

A US defence official said that Russia yesterday staged a "significant number" of air strikes on the Islamic State group stronghold of Raqqa in Syria that may have involved cruise missiles fired from sea and long range bombers. Moscow did not confirm the strikes but the US official said it had given Washington advanced warning of the attacks. — Agencies

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Focus

MIXED MESSAGE
REFLECTS REALITY
OF UNCERTAINTY

By Kate Kelland

Contradictory advice from two European-based agencies about the cancer risk posed by the weed-killer glyphosate offers clarity on only one message - that uncertainty is inherent in the scientific process. Glyphosate - brought into use by Monsanto in the 1970s and used in its top-selling product Roundup - is "unlikely" to cause cancer according to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), yet "probably" does, according to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC).

Both are likely to be right, specialists say, but only in their own contexts. And for consumers, the key distinction to understand is the difference between hazard and risk. "At face value the opinions of IARC and EFSA appear to be contrary, but the reality is they are not directly comparable," said Peter Jenkinson, a genotoxicologist and managing director France & UK of the chemicals consultancy CEHTRA Ltd.

That's partly because the evidence the two agencies considered was not the same - EFSA only assessed glyphosate, while IARC looked at glyphosate alone and at products it's used in - and partly because they used different methods to draw conclusions. Just as importantly, however, it is because they approach their task from different stances - one being hazard identification, the other being risk assessment. Jenkinson noted that while EFSA used a "weight of evidence" approach in its review, published last week, IARC issued its glyphosate classification in March, taking the view that if one study has a positive result it can outweigh negative studies, even if there are more negative than positive ones. EFSA also analysed some studies conducted by industry groups that were not part of IARC's review. IARC says it looks solely at evidence that has already been published and can be reviewed by independent scientists. Monsanto welcomed the EFSA review, saying in a statement that its findings that glyphosate is unlikely to pose a carcinogenic hazard to humans "align with conclusions from regulatory agencies around the world". In contrast, it said, IARC's review "selectively included and interpreted data, followed non-standard toxicological procedures, and only reflects the opinions of a select group of scientists".

Different Frameworks

David Coggon, a professor of occupational and environmental medicine at Britain's University of Southampton, says "it's important to bear in mind that EFSA and IARC operate within different frameworks". "The level of precaution that is applied in the face of scientific uncertainty depends on value judgments, and is not a scientific question." Both agencies note that there is some so-called "genotoxic" evidence that exposure to glyphosate can alter or damage DNA in animal or human cells, but this evidence is then viewed in different contexts.

For IARC, a World Health Organization (WHO) agency whose lists of probable and possible cancer risks include high-temperature frying, shift working and mobile phone use, the glyphosate review was about the assessment of a potential hazard. In other words, IARC is tasked with highlighting anything that might in certain conditions, however rare, be able to cause cancer in people.

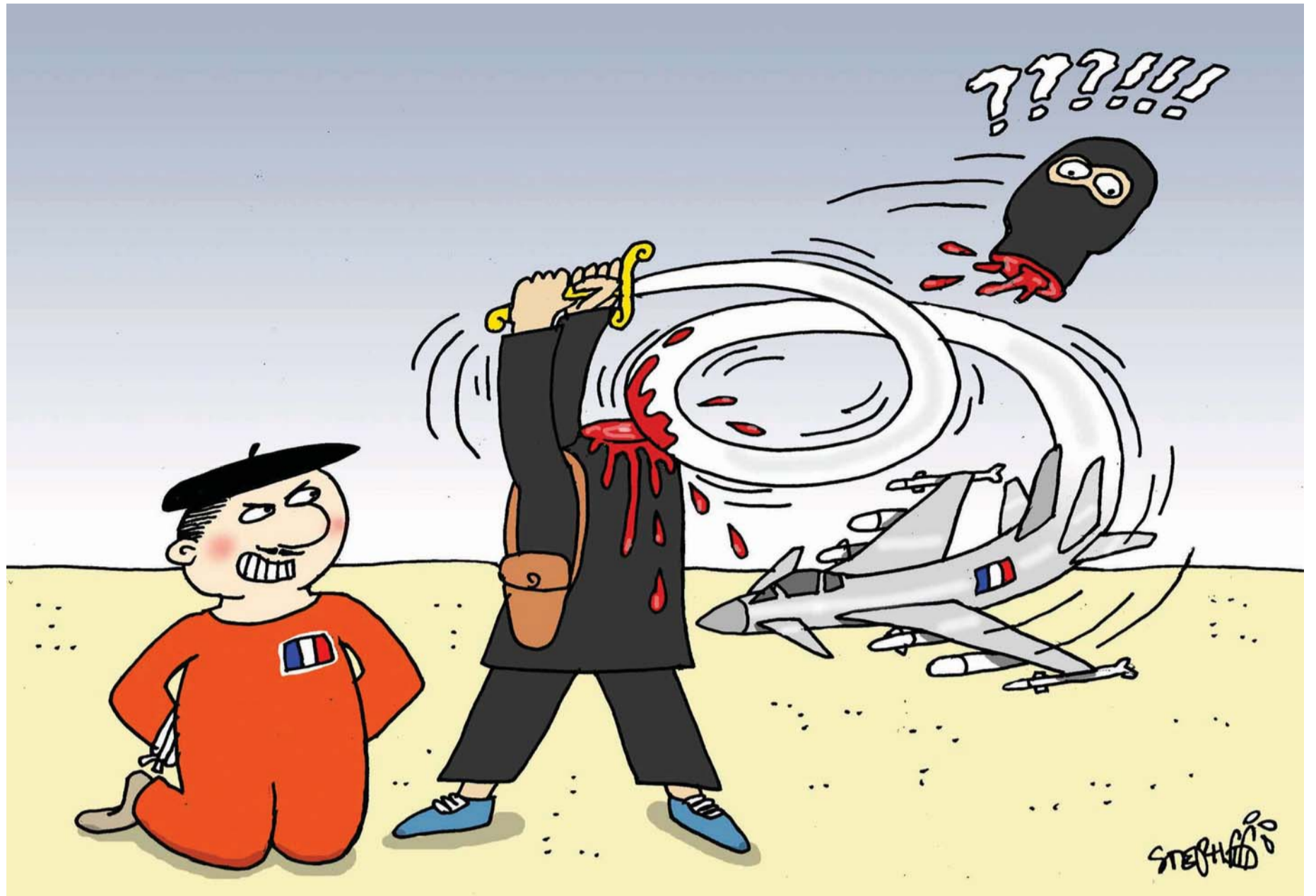
EFSA, on the other hand, is concerned with real life risks and whether, in the case of glyphosate, there is evidence to show that when used in normal conditions, the pesticide poses an unacceptable risk to human health or the environment. EFSA's role is to guide policymaking in the European Union, and it describes itself as an independent agency funded by the EU budget that operates separately from the European Commission, European Parliament and EU member states. IARC's activities are mainly funded by the regular budget contributions paid by its 25 member states, which include the United States, Australia and many European countries. "Which conclusion or opinion is 'correct' depends on your point of view on the methods used by the two agencies," said Jenkinson. "For me, the EFSA methodology is the one that is more scientific, pragmatic and balanced."

Battle Continues

The campaign group Greenpeace described the EFSA's review on Friday as a "whitewash", and the environmental action group the Natural Resources Defence Council (NRDC) accused EFSA of conducting a process "that relies on an industry-supplied scientific review". "The WHO IARC's review is a much more robust, scientifically-defensible and public process involving an international committee of non-industry experts," said NRDC spokeswoman Jennifer Saas.

Yet critics of IARC, which last month classified the consumption of red meat as probably carcinogenic to humans, say its hazard identification approach is becoming meaningless for consumers, who struggle to apply its advice to real life. "The big problem with IARC ... is that what they're doing is looking around for any evidence that might enable them to say that under particular circumstances this thing could be a carcinogen," said Colin Berry, emeritus professor of pathology at Queen Mary University of London. —Reuters

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WAHHABI DILEMMA IN SPOTLIGHT AFTER PARIS

By Angus McDowall

Saudi Arabia's harsh religious tradition is seen by many outsiders - and some Saudi liberals - as a root cause of the international jihadist threat that has inflamed the Middle East for years and struck in Paris last week. However, while Riyadh has cracked down hard on jihadists at home, jailing thousands, stopping hundreds from travelling to fight abroad and cutting militant finance streams, its approach to religion has raised a dilemma.

It assails the ideology of militants who proclaim jihad against those they regard as heretics or infidels, while allying with a clerical establishment that preaches intolerance, although not violence, against exactly those same groups. Wahhabism, the kingdom's official ultra-conservative Sunni Muslim school, regards Shiism as heretical, lauds the concept of jihad and urges hatred of infidels. Its clerics run the Saudi justice system and have funds to spread their influence abroad. "Muslims should be fair to non-Muslims. They can do business with them and should not attack them. But that does not mean they should not hate them and avoid them," a senior Saudi cleric said in a background discussion with Reuters last year. For the government, focusing on that distinction, between accepting hatred and inciting violence, has let it retain the support of Wahhabi clergy and ultra-conservative Saudis while also carrying out a massive security operation against militants.

Modern jihadist organisations, including Islamic State and Al-Qaeda, follow an extreme interpretation of the Salafi branch of Islam, of which Wahhabism was the original strain, and whose clergy still enjoy great influence in wider Salafist circles. Friday's carnage in Paris at the hands of an Islamic State cell follows a series of bombings and shootings by the same group's followers in Saudi Arabia over the past year that have killed dozens, mostly from the kingdom's Shi'ite minority.

The government defends its record on combating Islamist radicalism, pointing to its detention of thousands of suspected militants, its intelligence sharing with allies and its barring of clergy who praised militant attacks. Saudi Interior Ministry spokesman Major General Mansour Turki in an interview this summer rejected the idea that Wahhabism itself was a problem, comparing the 2,144 Saudis who had gone to Syria with the estimated 5,000 European Muslims who had done so. He said the clerics and firebrands now exhorting Muslims - including Saudis - to go and fight in Syria or Iraq, or to launch attacks elsewhere, were themselves living in terri-

tory controlled by Islamic State rather than in the kingdom itself.

Militant Backlash

The Grand Mufti and the council of senior scholars, the top Wahhabi cleric and institution, denounced the Paris attacks and have for years decried militants as deviants and heretics. But Saudi clerics openly defame Shiites as "rejectionists", a term in common currency among Sunni militants in the sectarian bloodbath afflicting many Middle East nations, and often refuse to accept that Shiites are Muslims.

Their teaching on jihad - that it is a blessed activity in defence of Islam against infidels and heretics, and will win rewards in heaven - differs from that of militant groups only in requiring the approval of the king and Saudi official clergy. To outsiders and to liberal Saudi critics of the ruling Al Saud, such intellectual gymnastics, reinforced in frequent clerical messages and a centrepiece of the kingdom's militant rehabilitation program, sometimes look like hairsplitting.

However, they fall squarely in the context of Saudi Arabia's idiosyncratic internal politics, in which the unelected dynasty depends on the Wahhabi clergy to support its legitimacy and often voices fears of a militant uprising against its rule. Certainly, the biggest historical threats to stability in the world's top oil exporter and the birthplace of Islam have come from conservatives reacting against liberalization. The Ikhwan tribal army of the kingdom's founder Ibn Saud rebelled against him over his treaties with non-Muslims. King Faisal was assassinated in 1975 in revenge for the 1966 shooting of a prince during riots against the introduction of television. In 1979 a group of militant Islamists inspired by anger at Westernisation overran Makkah's Grand Mosque in a bloody siege. Widespread Islamist protests seethed in the 1990s and last decade Al-Qaeda staged deadly attacks.

Those shootings and bombings, which killed hundreds, helped prompt the Al Saud to address open militancy among the clergy and to introduce liberalizing reforms aimed at encouraging tolerance and getting more young Saudis into jobs. They included a scholarship program that sent hundreds of thousands of Saudis of both sexes abroad to study, a big drive to get more women into jobs, glacial reforms to the justice and education sectors and the banning of hundreds of preachers. These reforms led to a crescendo of Wahhabi outrage against their progenitor - the late King Abdullah. While the new King Salman gets on better with the clergy, nine months after he

took power he has made no big moves to roll back social change.

Global Influence

The dynasty's critics counter that the state-financed clergy are more pliant to the ruling family's wishes than they appear and that the Al Saud holds up the threat of militancy to avoid making reforms that could ultimately endanger its own power. They add that previous concessions made against fears of a conservative backlash gave Wahhabi clerics influence that simply reinforced their intolerant message.

One problem the Al Saud have in attempts to soften Wahhabism is that the school was founded expressly to end what it saw as heretical and wrong beliefs. Another is the terms of an 18th century pact between princes and clerics dividing authority between the political and religious spheres. To challenge either of those two principles would be to strike at fundamental beliefs and a social contract that lie at the heart of Saudi society.

Yet some changes have been made. After Ibn Saud defeated the Ikhwan, he promoted clerics who endorsed a more inclusive version of Wahhabism that recognized more liberal Sunnis as being Muslim and accepted the idea of relations with infidels. Over the decades, the positions of official clergy have grudgingly softened further still, and the Wahhabi tent is now broad enough to include firebrands as well as clerics who are comfortable engaging with the West and modern ideas.

Meanwhile, although Saudi Arabia finances preachers, mosques and madrassas around the world, and although Salafism has become common among Muslims globally, Saudi Arabia's own influence in the movement has become diluted. Its Umm al-Qura seminary in Madinah remains one of the principle centres of Salafist learning for international students, but its graduates have no greater clout than those of institutions in other countries.

"The Salafi scene has become so fragmented and diverse across the world that the Saudis don't control it any more. When people go to study Salafism, they don't go there, and what they study is a Salafism over which the Saudis have no control," said Stephane Lacroix, author of books on Salafism and Saudi Islam. Among militants, Saudi religious influence is even less pronounced. Jihadists often turn to texts written by long-dead Wahhabi scholars and they often adopt a Saudi style of oratory in their religious speeches, but they mock the kingdom's modern clergy as puppets of a corrupt, pro-Western regime. —Reuters

UKRAINE KIDS TAUGHT TO AVOID EXPLOSIVES

By Sergei Volskiy

"A bomb can be planted inside", a Ukrainian soldier warned students as he pointed to a stuffed animal at a high school in Mariupol, a strategic port city in Ukraine's war-scarred east. School No. 5 is located in the city's eastern district, some 10 km west of the front line in a 19-month conflict between Ukrainian troops and pro-Russian insurgents. The neighbourhood is still full of unexploded landmines and booby traps, which have been the cause of most casualties since a tenuous ceasefire was adopted in September. It is the first lasting truce in a conflict that has killed more than 8,000 people and injured nearly 18,000.

Pro-Russian rebel leaders have repeatedly threatened to seize the southeastern city of 500,000, the only major metropolis in the region still under Kiev's control. In January, the area was the stage of heavy shelling, killing more than 30 civilians and wounding more than 100 others. One of the shells landed near School No. 5 and injured a child. But deadly threats in Mariupol are often more covert, concealed in the ground or in unexpected objects such as stuffed animals.

"Almost every day, civilians step on the landmines that can be really hard to identify," said the soldier who only gave his first name, Dmytro. "Even soldiers have trouble spotting them. Our goal is to teach children how to react", he said, adding that this included warning students against taking walks in the forest and touching objects that would have seemed harmless before the war.

The UN children's agency UNICEF said in March that at least 42 children had been killed and 109 injured by landmines and unexploded ordnance in eastern Ukrainian since the war began. Once opposed to military presence on its grounds, the adminis-

tration of School No. 5, which has 1,200 pupils, now regularly hosts Ukrainian soldiers to raise students' awareness about the dangers in their environment. "This school is on the outskirts of the city, in the dangerous area," said teacher Anna Yermoshkina.

"We are too close to the front line, that's why these lessons are very important."

Sixteen-year-old student Mykhailo, one of the school's 1,200 students, worried about the frequency of landmine explosions in the area. "Tractor drivers hit mines

here and there, this happens quite often," he said. Indeed farmers, along with fighters and mine-clearers, are the main victims of the scattered landmines and booby traps, according to both Ukrainian authorities and the Moscow-backed rebels. —AFP



Students attend a class on safety with Ukrainian servicemen in a school of the southern industrial city of Mariupol, Donetsk region on Nov 12, 2015. —AFP

MY LOYALTY WASN'T REWARDED: MOYES

LONDON: Former Manchester United manager David Moyes revealed yesterday that he had rejected job offers from other clubs prior to his dismissal by Spanish side Real Sociedad last week. In his first job since being sacked by United in April 2014, Moyes led La Real to a 12th-place finish in La Liga last season, but was dismissed after a run of six defeats in nine games and replaced by Eusebio Sacristan. "I am disappointed to have left Real Sociedad," Moyes said in a statement released by the League Managers' Association (LMA), which represents football managers in England. "I made a firm promise to Real Sociedad to honour my contract and it is disappointing not to be able to fulfil this commitment, especially when I have turned down a number of job opportunities in recent months. "I would like to thank the club and the president for giving me the opportunity to manage in Spain, at a club with such a rich history of employing British managers. "I would also like to thank the players, staff and my assistant, Billy McKinlay, for their support and the wonderful people of San Sebastian." — AFP

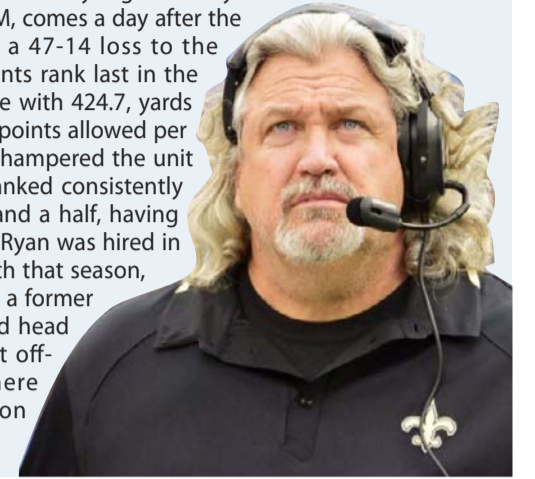


CALIFORNIA COURT TOSSES STERLING CASE

LOS ANGELES: A California court on Monday ruled that the sale of the Los Angeles Clippers last year was legal, quashing former owner Donald Sterling's attempt to reverse the deal triggered by controversy over his racist remarks. A three-justice panel of California's Court of Appeal ruled that Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Michael Levanos had not erred in approving the \$2 billion sale of the team to former Microsoft chief executive Steve Ballmer. The sale came following a threat by the NBA to take control of the franchise after Sterling was banned for life for making racist comments which were secretly recorded by a former girlfriend. Shelly Sterling, the 81-year-old tycoon's estranged wife, took control of the family trust and oversaw the sale following the controversy. Donald Sterling had attempted to argue the deal was invalid as he had already revoked the trust before the sale in July 2014. But in an 18-page ruling, Justice Madeleine Flier said Sterling's claim was of no importance. "Assuming Donald effectively revoked the trust on June 9, 2014, Donald fails to demonstrate such revocation precluded the probate court from authorizing the trustee to sell the Clippers in accordance with the terms of an agreement established prior to Donald's revocation," Flier wrote. Flier said Sterling's wife, Shelly Sterling, had acted in the best interests of the trust's beneficiaries when she sold the team for an amount higher than she and her advisers thought possible. "The amount caused Donald to congratulate (Shelly)," Flier noted. The \$2 billion price tag was around \$400 million more than the sale had been expected to raise. — AFP

SAINTS FIRE DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR RYAN

METAIRIE: Saints coach Sean Payton says Rob Ryan has been fired as defensive coordinator and senior defensive assistant Dennis Allen will assume Ryan's duties. The move, announced Monday night on Payton's weekly radio show on WWL-AM, comes a day after the Saints allowed 526 yards in a 47-14 loss to the Washington Redskins. The Saints rank last in the NFL in yards allowed per game with 424.7, yards allowed per play with 6.7 and points allowed per game with 31.5. Injuries have hampered the unit lately, but New Orleans has ranked consistently low defensively for a season and a half, having finished last year ranked 31st. Ryan was hired in 2013 and his unit ranked fourth that season, but has struggled since. Allen, a former NFL defensive coordinator and head coach, was hired by this past off-season by New Orleans, where he'd previously been a Payton assistant. — AP



MCILROY TARGETS DUBAI WIN TO CLINCH TOUR TITLE



SHANGHAI: Rory McIlroy of Northern Ireland celebrates after a shot on the 18th hole during the final round of the HSBC Champions golf tournament at the Sheshan International Golf Club in Shanghai, China. — AP

DUBAI: Rory McIlroy wasn't expecting to be leading the Race to Dubai after his injury-interrupted season, but now that he has the chance to win his third European Tour Order of Merit crown, the world number three is intent on not letting the opportunity slip from his grasp. McIlroy, who leads the Race to Dubai with 3,393,923 points, did not play last week's BMW Masters in Shanghai, thus allowing the chasing pack to close on him.

His closest rival, England's Danny Willett needed to finish sole 28th at Lake Malaren to overtake him, but a tied 28th place finish gave McIlroy a slim advantage of 1,613 points going into the DP World Tour Championship, the season-ending event on the European Tour.

The 26-year-old from Holywood, near

Belfast, won both the tournament and the Race to Dubai in 2012, when he closed with five birdies in a row to beat Justin Rose, and was the European number one last year when Henrik Stenson won the DP World Tour Championship for a second straight year.

"I didn't quite think I'd be in this position, and coming into this event, especially after taking the week off last week, but a few of the guys didn't capitalise on that in China thankfully and I find myself in a position where it's totally in my hands," said McIlroy whose worst finish in six previous starts at the Earth course of Jumeirah Golf Estates is a tied 11th place finish in 2011.

"If I go out and win the tournament, I win the overall thing no matter what anybody else

does, and that's a nice position to be in. "I just want to win the tournament. I don't care who finishes second, who finishes third. If I am the champion at the end of the week, it means that I win the Race to Dubai and that's all I'm really thinking about." McIlroy, who finished tied 11th in the WGC-HSBC Champions in Shanghai despite a severe bout of food poisoning the week before last, said he felt his health, and his game, were both in great shape to close the season with a victory.

"Just been trying to put a bit of weight on to be honest," said McIlroy, who said he lost nearly 10 pounds in three days in Shanghai. "I didn't really hit a ball until reaching Dubai late Friday night. But my game feels in good shape, it really does. "I was excited, it's got better each

and every week. I felt like it was good in Turkey and I felt like going into China, I could see improvements each and every day.

"I feel like I still finished well in China. It was a good week. It could have been better. I hit the ball great from tee-to-green. On the greens was a different story, and energy levels weren't quite there. "But I felt like it was still a positive week in some ways. And now getting to Dubai and feeling at full strength and feeling 100 per cent healthy, I feel like I've got a great chance on a golf course that I've played very well at before."

Willett, who took the lead in the Race to Dubai early when he won the NedBank Challenge towards the end of 2014, has not been out of the top-two throughout the sea-

son. "It's a new experience, a new challenge. It's been a long, busy year. But one that's been very rewarding in many ways, and yeah, in a fantastic position to go out and do something pretty amazing," said the 28-year-old who needs to finish ahead of McIlroy to win his first Race to Dubai title. "I think everybody would always like to see a little bit of an underdog try and come through. We're pretty closely matched. This week there's one job to do which is win, and if you fail at winning, just try and beat Rory. "We know kind of what we've got to do, and so it's about trying not to let anything get in your way. The \$8 million DP World Tour Championship, featuring the top-60 players on the Race to Dubai, begins tomorrow. — AFP



FUZHOU: Lee Chong Wei of Malaysia hits a return against Chen Long of China during their men's singles final match at the China Open badminton tournament in Fuzhou. — AFP

ON FORM LEE COULD FACE LONG REMATCH IN HK

HONG KONG: Former world number one Lee Chong Wei looks set to cement his return to the top of world badminton if he can manage a second win in as many weeks over top seed Chen Long at the Hong Kong Open. Lee appears to be back on form after a shock victory over Chen to take the title at the China Open last week.

The Malaysian has made a number of early tournament exits as he struggled with his fitness after he returned to court following an eight month doping ban earlier this year, which saw him drop out of the world rankings. "I had a great run in the China Open, but I cannot be expected to win all the time," Lee told local media in Malaysia. "The same players will be in Hong Kong and those who lost will be out to make amends. I'd rather focus on my recovery than worry about others." Lee could meet

Chen in the quarter-finals of the Hong Kong Open, which begins Wednesday. A win over Chen would then see him meet arch rival Lin Dan in the semi-finals, if the Chinese badminton legend manages to bowl through the first rounds. Lee also dismissed the five-time world champion in a tight three-set semi-final in Fuzhou last week, slightly righting a match record that has up until now favoured Lin.

Lin has twice denied the Malaysian an Olympic gold, and with the next summer games just over eight months away 33-year-old Lee already has his sights on that so far elusive top podium position.

"Chong Wei is certainly back to his best after going through uncertain times over the last few months. This will put him in the right frame of mind ahead of the Olympic Games in Rio next year," said Malaysian

team coach Tey Seu Bock.

Women's world number one Carolina Marin will be looking to scoop up her fifth Super Series title of the year in Hong Kong. The 22-year-old Spaniard also won the World Championship in August for the second year in a row, but she was knocked out in the quarter-finals of the last week's China Open by former world number one Wang Shixian of China. India's Saina Nehwal will be hoping to clinch her second Super Series title of the year in Hong Kong after losing out to Olympic champion Li Xuerui in the final at Fuzhou.

The Indian world number two has been plagued by injury and illness in recent months and made early exits in Japan, Denmark and France, but could settle the score with Li in a semi-finals rematch. — AFP

BAE SANG-MOON STARTS 2 YEARS MILITARY SERVICE

SEOUL: South Korean two-time PGA Tour winner Bae Sang-Moon swapped his driver for a rifle yesterday, beginning two years of military service after a failed legal bid for a temporary deferment. Earlier in the year, the 29-year-old had gone to court to seek an extension of his overseas travel permit to continue playing in the United States, but the application was denied.

"I'll be back on tour in 2017," Bae told journalists before entering an army training camp in the eastern city of Chuncheon. All able-bodied South Korean men aged 18-35 are required to serve in the military for about two years.

Those between 25 and 35 who have not yet completed their mandatory service require a special permit to stay overseas and Bae's permit expired at the end of last year. The district court judging his case ruled that a conscript was not allowed to arbitrarily schedule his entry into the military-even if his professional career faces the risk of being disrupted.

He was, however, allowed to take part in the Presidents Cup last month in the western port city of Incheon on condition that he start his military service when the event was over. South Korea's armed forces rely heavily on a compulsory military service system, with conscripts-most in their early 20s-accounting for the lion's share of its 690,000 active personnel.

The country remains technically at war with North Korea as the 1950-53 Korean War ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty, and dodging military service is a serious crime punishable by imprisonment. Exemptions are very rare, although sports can offer a way out. Athletes winning an Olympic gold medal, for example, are not required to serve. — AFP



AUGUSTA: A file photo taken in April 11, 2015 shows Bae Sang-Moon of South Korea during Round 3 of the 79th Masters Golf Tournament at Augusta National Golf Club. South Korean PGA golfer Bae Sang-Moon yesterday enlisted in the army, ending controversy over his dodging the draft and vowing to return to the sport in 2017. — AFP



BOSTON: In this Monday, April 21, 2014 file photo, Rita Jeptoo of Kenya breaks the tape to win the women's division of the 118th Boston Marathon in Boston. As the world focuses on Russia and its doping scandal, running great and head of the Kenyan Olympic committee Kip Keino is preparing for the spotlight to turn to Kenya, and he is worried that his country could be facing a blanket ban from competition if it doesn't clean up its act. — AP

IAAF INVESTIGATING ALLEGATIONS OF KENYA DOPING COVER-UP

COLORADO SPRINGS: The IAAF has been investigating alleged doping cover-ups in Kenya since last March, track and field's world governing body said yesterday.

Confirmation of the investigation into Kenya by the IAAF's ethics commission came four days after Russia was suspended from international track competition for a state-sponsored doping program outlined in a report by a World Anti-Doping Agency commission.

"An IAAF staff member referred allegations of the covering up of doping in Kenya to the IAAF Ethics Commission in March of 2015," the federation said in an email to The Associated Press. Allegations have been made by German broadcaster ARD that Kenyan track officials were extorting money from athletes and coaches to cover up failed drug tests, or in return for lenient doping bans.

A Kenyan athletics coach recently told the AP he knew of three marathon runners who bribed officials to get more lenient punishments after failing doping tests. The coach, Paul Simbolei, made the larger accusations to ARD of officials demanding money or a share of an athlete's winnings in exchange for concealing doping.

Simbolei declined to name runners or officials involved, but said he expected to be formally interviewed by Kenyan police, with whom he had already spoken. "The IAAF encourages all persons with information, especially anyone with direct evidence of these matters, to provide that information and evidence to the IAAF Ethics Commission through its website," the IAAF said in yesterday's statement to AP.

Threats

Simbolei told the AP that he had received threats after speaking out, and suspected those threats were made by Kenyan track officials. The IAAF investigation into alleged cover-ups increases the possibility that Kenya, the distance running powerhouse that tied with Jamaica for the most gold medals with seven at the world championships in August, could follow Russia and be suspended. That could rule a string of Kenyan stars out of the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, which are just nine months away.

Also yesterday, the IAAF acknowledged it had previously known about a separate Kenyan corruption investigation involving a senior track official who is a member of the world body's governing council.

David Okeyo, a vice president of the Kenyan athletics federation, is being investigated by Kenyan police along with two other top track officials for alleged embezzlement of around \$700,000 of sponsorship money meant for the national federation. The other two are current Athletics Kenya President Isaiah Kiplagat and Joseph Kinyua, a former federation treasurer and the manager of the Kenyan team at the world championships in Beijing.

The IAAF previously said it been alerted this weekend to the corruption allegations against Okeyo, a member of the council which voted last week to suspend Russia. Yesterday, the IAAF told the AP that it had learned of the allegations against Okeyo earlier this year, also in March, and had informed its ethics committee then.

"We have now checked internally in the IAAF and can confirm that an IAAF Member of Staff referred the matter to the independent Ethics Commission in March of 2015," the IAAF said in an email.

That means the IAAF knew about and was looking into the corruption allegations before Okeyo became a member of its council in August, and before Kiplagat ran as a candidate for a vice president position at the IAAF that same month. The IAAF and its independent ethics commission will not comment further on either investigation until they are concluded, the federation said. — AP

RUSSIAN ATHLETES MUST BE BANNED FROM RIO OLYMPICS

BERLIN: Russia's track and field athletes should be banned from competing at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics in order to send a strong signal against doping, the Institute of National Doping Organisations (INADO) said yesterday.

"The ARAF - Russia's national federation for athletics - and its athletes must be suspended from the 2016 Rio de Janeiro summer Olympic Games. The corruption in Russian athletics deserves no less," INADO, the Germany-based umbrella organisation

with 53 members worldwide, said in a statement. "ARAF has not demonstrated that they are capable of sending a clean team to Games. A strong deterrent message must be sent that national federations cannot participate in the highest levels of competition when anti-doping has been intentionally subverted."

The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) suspended ARAF last week following allegations of widespread and state-sponsored doping

as detailed in a World Anti-Doping Agency independent commission report.

Russia has since announced a three-month road map to clean up its act, with the nation's Olympic Committee leading efforts to ensure honest athletes can compete at the 2016 Games.

Russia said on Sunday it would ask the world athletics body to allow its athletes to compete under an Olympic banner rather than the Russian flag to circumvent a ban, but the idea was quickly brushed

aside by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). "The actions by the ARAF, which deliberately flouted the rules of sport, have tainted all Russian athletes in the sport of Athletics," INADO said.

"The corruption of anti-doping uncovered by the independent commission is a tragedy for sport and for clean athletes everywhere. It reinforces the need for anti-doping work to be conducted independent of sport organisations and without government interference. — Reuters

HAGELIN'S 3-PT NIGHT LIFTS DUCKS PAST HURRICANES, 4-1

RALEIGH: Anaheim Ducks goalie Anton Khudobin made 24 saves in his first game facing his former team in a 4-1 victory against the Carolina Hurricanes. Left winger Carl Hagelin, who had made just one assist this season, assisted on Anaheim's first two goals and then scored himself with 3:49 remaining. Center Shawn Horcoff and defenseman Sami Vatanen also scored for the Ducks while Ryan Getzlaf added an empty-net goal with a minute remaining for his first goal of the season.

Canadiens 4, Canucks 3 (OT)

Center David Desharnais scored at 3:25 of overtime to give the Montreal Canadiens a 4-3 win over the Vancouver Canucks. Goaltender Jacob Markstrom stopped 32 shots for the Canucks, who squandered a 3-0 lead. Goalie Mike Condon made 23 saves for Montreal.

Right winger Adam Cracknell, center Jared McCann and left winger Daniel Sedin scored in regulation for Vancouver. Left wingers Lars Eller, Max Pacioretty and Tomas Fleischmann replied for the Canadiens.

Islanders 5, Coyotes 2

Brock Nelson, John Tavares and Steve Bernier scored in the first 12 minutes of the third period as the New York Islanders beat the Arizona Coyotes. Frans Nielsen scored in the first period for the Islanders while Kyle

Okposo had an assist on each of New York's first three goals.

Goaltender Jaroslav Halak recorded 31 saves. Martin Hanzal and left winger Mikkel Boedker scored in the final 4:15 for the Coyotes, while goalie Anders Lindback made 27 saves.

Red Wings 4, Senators 3 (OT)

Detroit winger Tomas Tatar scored at 2:04 of overtime to give the Red Wings a 4-3 victory over the Ottawa Senators. Tatar found himself alone after an Ottawa turnover and beat goalie Craig Anderson to spoil a Senators third-period comeback. Wingers Dylan Larkin, Gustav Nyquist and Riley Sheahan also scored for the Red Wings. Wingers Bobby Ryan, Mike Hoffman and defenseman Chris Wideman replied for the Senators. Red Wings goalie Jimmy Howard picked up the win with 22 saves. Anderson made 33 saves.

Panthers 1, Lightning 0

Defenseman Aaron Ekblad scored with just 20.2 seconds remaining in the third period as the Florida Panthers defeated the Tampa Bay Lightning. Ekblad scored in a mad scramble in front of the Tampa goal. Left winger Jonathan Huberdeau earned an assist.

Blues 3, Jets 2

Center David Backes scored two goals

and assisted on another to lead the St. Louis Blues to a 3-2 win over Winnipeg, extending the Jets' losing streak to six games.

Backes' second goal 4:24 into the sec-

ond period came when he took a pass from left wing Alexander Steen and flipped a backhand past goalie Michael Hutchinson. — Reuters

NHL Results/Standings

NY Islanders 5, Arizona 2; Anaheim 4, Carolina 1; Montreal 4, Vancouver 3 (OT); Detroit 4, Ottawa 3 (OT); Florida 1, Tampa Bay 0; St. Louis 3, Winnipeg 2.

Western Conference						Metropolitan Division										
Central Division						Atlantic Division										
W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS	NY Rangers	Washington	NY Islanders	New Jersey	Pittsburgh	Philadelphia	Carolina	Columbus			
Dallas	14	4	0	65	47	28	14	2	57	32	30	11	4	50	37	23
St. Louis	12	5	1	50	43	25	10	6	1	44	40	21	6	10	2	35
Minnesota	10	3	3	48	43	23	10	7	0	36	37	20	6	12	0	45
Nashville	10	3	3	50	38	23	6	8	3	33	50	15	12	0	45	62
Chicago	10	7	1	49	44	21	6	10	2	35	53	14	6	12	0	45
Winnipeg	8	9	2	50	62	18	6	12	1	45	72	13	6	12	0	47
Colorado	7	9	1	49	45	15	6	12	0	47	58	12	6	12	0	47
Pacific Division						Eastern Conference										
Los Angeles	11	6	0	43	36	22	Atlantic Division									
Vancouver	7	6	6	55	50	20	Montreal	14	3	2	67	42	30			
Arizona	9	8	1	50	54	19										
San Jose	9	8	0	45	43	18										
Anaheim	6	8	4	33	46	16										
Calgary	6	12	1	45	72	13										
Edmonton	6	12	0	47	58	12										

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



RALEIGH: Anaheim Ducks' Andrew Cogliano (7) has his shot blocked by Carolina Hurricanes goalie Eddie Lack (31) during the second period of an NHL hockey game, Monday, in Raleigh, NC. — AP

RUSSIAN DISQUALIFIED AFTER WINNING MARATHON IN JAPAN

MOSCOW: A Russian marathon runner has been disqualified and faces further sanctions after winning a race in Japan at a time when his country is under suspension from global track and field, the IAAF said yesterday. Viktor Ugarov won the Kanazawa marathon on Sunday, two days after Russia was provisionally suspended from competition by the International Association of Athletics Federations following allegations of state-sponsored doping.

"The event organizer is disqualifying his record and no appearance or prize money will be paid," the IAAF told The Associated Press by email on Tuesday, adding that it would write to the Russian federation seeking disciplinary proceedings against Ugarov.

Ugarov's winning time of 2 hours 17 minutes, 19 seconds was briefly listed on the IAAF website as a new personal best. The IAAF called the listing a "technical issue" and later removed it from the site.

Russian athletics federation general secretary Mikhail Butov told the AP by telephone that he had not heard that Ugarov had competed in Sunday's race but said the case would be looked into. "We couldn't physically inform each athlete, so it's probably more of a problem for the organizers



KANAZAWA: In this Sunday, Nov. 15, 2015 photo, runners start the Kanazawa marathon in Kanazawa, central Japan. A Russian marathon runner has been disqualified and faces further sanctions after winning the race in Japan at a time when the country is under suspension from global track and field. Viktor Ugarov won the Kanazawa marathon on Sunday, two days after Russia was provisionally suspended from competition by the IAAF following allegations of state-sponsored doping. — AP

who allowed the athlete to take part in the competition," Butov said.

The Russian federation said on its website: "Athletes who break the suspension and those who compete abroad are in danger of sanctions from the ARAF, including suspension." In a separate case, the Japanese athletics federation said Russian Olympic bronze medalist Tatyana Arkhipova was prevented from taking part in Sunday's Saitama marathon because of Russia's suspension.

Under the terms of Russia's ban, Russian athletes can only compete within Russia in domestic events until the suspension is lifted. Russian officials have promised reforms and said they want to be able to compete again within three months, in time for the world indoor track and field championships in Portland in March.

Also yesterday, a Russian Paralympic runner received a nine-month suspension after testing positive for a cannabis-related substance. The International Paralympic Committee said Alexander Zverev's ban runs through May 5. Zverev won a silver medal in the 400 meters at the 2012 Paralympics in London. He competed in the T13 classification for partially sighted athletes. — AP

FEMALE FOOTBALL CHIEF SAYS FIFA NOT READY FOR A WOMEN HEAD

LONDON: Touted as the possible first female leader of world soccer body FIFA, Sierra Leone's Isha Johansen said the time was not right for her to aim for the top job now but she would not rule out a shot at the presidency in the future.

FIFA was thrown into turmoil in May by US indictments of 14 football officials for alleged corruption and President Sepp Blatter has been suspended ahead of February elections when five candidates will vie for the leadership and to clean up the game.

Johansen, 51, president of the Sierra Leone Football Association, is one of only a handful of women to ever head football associations among FIFA's 209 member countries.

She said it was a shame that no women were in the running for the FIFA presidency next year but she said this could change in the future as women took a greater role in the sport.

"If I can successfully accomplish the things I want to do I can see no reason why I would not want to go for the top job eventually," Johansen said in an interview yesterday.

"Women definitely should try to aspire to high places ... but I was too new in my role to consider this now," she added, speaking on the sidelines of the Trust Women conference on women's rights run by the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Studies have repeatedly shown that increasing the percentage of women on corporate boards can improve financial performance, corporate social responsibility, and increase the number of women in other high-level positions.

Never a career option

Johansen said she had not set out for a career in football but fell into the role as the daughter of a professional banker who co-founded one of

Sierra Leone's most famous clubs, East End Lions FC, and with two sports mad brothers.

She is now owner and CEO of Sierra Leone National Premier League club, her country's top professional football league. She is also the founder of football club FC Johansen that she set up as a humanitarian project in 2004 to inspire young footballers and is now in the premier league. Johansen said the success of FC Johansen gave her the confidence to run for president of the Sierra Leone Football Association in 2013, winning the post and vowing to bring discipline, sanity and integrity to football in her country.

"(Football) was never a career option," Johansen said. "I didn't see myself coming and a lot of people didn't see me coming .. and those that did thought it was a big joke."

Over the years she has faced verbal and physical abuse for taking such a high profile role in a

sport dominated by men and in a country where sexism is rife. Her 18-year-old son has had to endure similar abuse on social media, she said.

But Johansen said this had not deterred her from her task of leading football in Sierra Leone where she has tried to tackle mismanagement and corruption head on.

"Sexism plays a large part but it is good governance that I am driving and it makes it hard work being a woman," she said. Johansen said she hoped getting more women into leadership roles in public and private sectors would inspire a new generation of women and that she personally would be a role model for other women to go into football administration.

"The power of football to break barriers is enormous," she said. "We have to try to elevate our young girls to a status both mentally and physically through the power of football!" — Reuters

BENGALS SLUMP TO FIRST DEFEAT AGAINST TEXANS

LOS ANGELES: Relief quarterback T.J. Yates tossed the game-winning touchdown pass to DeAndre Hopkins in the fourth quarter as the Houston Texans handed the Cincinnati Bengals their first loss of the season with a sloppy 10-6 road victory on Monday.

Cincinnati (8-1) could not overcome numerous errors, with tight end Tyler Eifert suffering three key drops and quarterback Andy Dalton struggling to find his rhythm against relentless Texans pressure at Paul Brown Stadium. "This was a big game for us, especially when you beat a team like Cincinnati," Texans coach Bill O'Brien told reporters. "Those guys in that locker room understand what we can do." Houston (4-5) lost starting quarterback Brian Hoyer late in the third quarter due to a possible concussion and Yates came in to complete 5-of-11 passes for 69 yards. Cincinnati had one last chance when it took over at its own 19-yard line with 3:54 remaining.

Dalton converted a third-and-18 on a pass to receiver A.J. Green to keep the drive alive. Then, on fourth-and-six, Green appeared to make a first-down catch but fumbled and the ball was recovered by Texans safety Quintin Demps. "You play all the way to the whistle," said Texans defensive end J.J. Watt, who had two tackles and a sack. "That's the way you have to play against an 8-0 team. This was an incredible

team win." The game featured a sloppy first half in which there were six punts, nine penalties and both quarterbacks led their teams in rushing. The second half was not much better. Early in the third quarter, Dalton's deep ball intended for receiver Marvin Jones was tipped and intercepted by Texans cornerback Johnathan Joseph.

Joseph, a former Bengal, has intercepted Dalton in four consecutive games between the teams. Hoyer was escorted to the locker with the Texans trailing 6-3 late in the third quarter. Yates subsequently orchestrated a nine-play, 79-yard drive, with his 22-yard pass to Hopkins putting Houston ahead for good.

Hopkins managed to get two feet down inbounds while falling backwards to make the score 10-6. "Hop's a go-to guy for us," O'Brien said. "That was a great catch and throw." Dalton had another rough night under the prime-time lights, going 22-of-38 for 197 yards and an interception. Punter Shane Lechler was a weapon for the Texans, helping them flip field position on several occasions. Lechler averaged 46.8 yards on eight punts, including one 64-yarder. "We've got to clean those things up," Bengals coach Marvin Lewis said. "A.J. won't fumble the ball and Tyler Eifert won't drop balls (like he did tonight). We'll make plays and catches like we have been and continue to get better at it." — Reuters



DHAKA: Australia's captain Mile Jedinak (21) vies for the ball with Bangladesh football player Mohammad Ziban (C) during the Asia Group B FIFA World Cup 2018 qualifying football match between Bangladesh and Australia at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in Dhaka yesterday. — AFP

CAHILL SCORES HAT-TRICK AS AUSTRALIA THUMP BANGLADESH

DHAKA: Veteran forward Tim Cahill scored his second international hat-trick as Australia set aside security worries to thrash Bangladesh 4-0 yesterday in a one-sided World Cup qualifying match in Dhaka.

Cahill completed his hat-trick inside 37 minutes after the start and captain Mile Jedinak scored the other goal as the visitors sealed victory in the first half in front of a boisterous near-packed crowd at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The build-up to the match was overshadowed by security concerns after Western nations alerted their citizens about a terrorist strike in the Muslim majority nation, prompting the Australian cricket team to postpone a two-match Test series in October.

Tensions also rose after a spate of killings of foreigners, policemen and a blast at a Shiite shrine that left two people dead-attacks claimed by Islamic state group. The government said the group does not have any presence in Bangladesh.

Australian football officials also flagged their concerns to world football governing body FIFA and the Asian Football Confederation. The match was given the go-ahead after Bangladesh assured the visitors of "unprecedented" security.

Ahead of the match, all the shops and markets at and around the stadium were shut down, traffic was halted on key roads and each of about 20,000 spectators were body-searched before they were allowed to enter the stadium.

Much needed victory

The victory was much needed for Australia who started the match one behind group leader Jordan. Forfeiting the match due to security concerns would have cost the Socceroos three crucial points.

"We came here to win the game. It was difficult conditions for us tonight," Australia coach Ange Postecoglou said after the match. "In the first half it was good but the second

half we were a little scrappy. In the end I was happy with the performance with the players, three points for us and with it we go home," he added. Cahill who turns 36 next month won a second consecutive start. He opened the score in the sixth minute with a neat header and then completed the hat-trick with a scrappy goal in the 33rd minute and a tap in the near post in the 37th minute. The three goals took his record Socceroos' goal tally to 45. He also scored in the team's 3-0 win against Kyrgyzstan in Canberra last Thursday.

Captain Mile Jedinak made the score 4-0 with a simple header into an empty net from close range in the 43rd minute.

Australia rested brilliant Aaron Mooy and Massimo Luongo in the second half, allowing Bangladesh some space in the midfield and the hosts made good use of it to avoid conceding further goals.

With the defeat, Bangladesh remained at the bottom of their group with just one point from seven matches. — AFP



CINCINNATI: Houston Texans defensive end J.J. Watt (99) sacks Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Andy Dalton (14) in the second half of an NFL football game in Cincinnati, Monday. The Texans won 10-6. — AP

VIVA ANNOUNCES CAMPAIGN TO WIN TICKETS FOR MAN UTD VS CHELSEA

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announces its Manchester United draw campaign, which started on 10 November and will end on 12 December 2015.

This golden opportunity allows soccer fans to enter the draw and win one of the three tickets to watch the upcoming match between Manchester United vs Chelsea live from Old Trafford stadium in Manchester city, on 28 December 2015. To enter this

draw, please visit VIVA's website and fill in the following information: full name, civil ID number and mobile number. Draw will be held in presence of a representative from the ministry of commerce and industry.

To find out more about VIVA's new pre-paid 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, or call VIVA's 24 hour call center on 102.

CAMERON JOINS FANS FOR FRENCH ANTHEM RENDITION

LONDON: British Prime Minister David Cameron will join football fans singing the French national anthem as they pay tribute to the victims of the Paris attacks prior to England-France friendly. The words to 'La Marseillaise' will be shown on the big screens inside London's Wembley Stadium as supporters unite in solidarity after Friday's attacks, which left 129 people dead and over 350 injured. Cameron had not been scheduled to attend the game, but a source said that he had changed his mind in light of the horror that struck the French capital while France played a friendly game against Germany. Asked if the British leader would join England fans in singing the anthem, his spokesman said: "The prime minister will take part in any tributes." France's players, including Lassana Diarra, who lost a cousin in the attacks, were escorted by armed police as they took a walk around Wembley beneath grey skies on the afternoon of the game. The players had trained inside the stadium on Monday evening, when armed police were again in attendance.

English fans awoke to find the words to 'La Marseillaise' plastered across their newspapers, with tabloids The Sun and The Daily Mirror normally bastions of footballing patriotism-printing them on their back pages. The Sun instructed readers to "sing for France", while inside, France's record goal-scorer

Thierry Henry said: "Tonight at Wembley, the whole world will be French."

Suicide bombers targeted Paris's Stade de France during France's 2-0 victory over Germany on Friday, leaving four people dead including three attackers. Diarra's cousin, Asta Diakite, died in a shooting on Paris's rue Bichat, while the sister of Diarra's France teammate Antoine Griezmann escaped unhurt from the assault on the Bataclan concert hall. France and England's football associations decided that Tuesday's game should go ahead, prompting an unprecedented security operation involving armed police patrols and "extensive searches".

Fans have been encouraged to arrive early and not to bring bags with them. There will be no tickets on sale at the stadium. Football Association president Prince William, who initially had no plans to go to the game, will now attend to show "solidarity to the people of France".

Tricolore mosaic

FIFA presidential candidate Prince Ali bin al Hussein of Jordan also revealed that he will attend. "I am continuing with my plans to attend the match, which were set some weeks ago, and to show solidarity with the people of France and the victims of terror everywhere," he said in a statement.

Wembley's bars will shut five minutes

before kick-off to encourage fans to observe tributes including a minute's silence, the laying of flowers by team captains Wayne Rooney and Hugo Lloris and the singing of 'La Marseillaise'. Breaking with convention, the French anthem will be played after 'God Save the Queen' in order to create a stand-alone moment of solidarity. England's fans sitting in the ground's east stand will be provided with materials to form a mosaic of the Tricolore during the French anthem. Players from both teams will wear black armbands. The minute's silence before Ireland's Euro 2016 play-off win over Bosnia-Herzegovina in Dublin on Monday was marred by shouts from some visiting fans, but England manager Roy Hodgson does not expect a repeat at Wembley. "We hope the ceremonies will be respected," he said. "If there's one thing that I truly wish for, it is that we show the respect I'd expect every single Englishman to show."

The FA has confirmed that the giant arch over Wembley will continue to be lit in the red, white and blue of the French Tricolore leading up to the match. France's motto - 'Liberte, Egalite, Fraternite' - is being shown on screens outside the ground.

An online petition calling for the proceeds from the game to be donated to the charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) had garnered more than 145,000 signatures by today. — AFP

Win a ticket
to your favorite game
Manchester United Vs Chelsea



Feared Australian
paceman
Johnson retires



Cahill scores
hat-trick as
Australia thump
Bangladesh



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THIMPHU: Footballer Mohammed Muntari (R) from Qatar scores the first goal during the FIFA 2018 Asian Group C qualifying match between Bhutan and Qatar at The Changlimithang Stadium in Thimphu yesterday. — AFP

QATAR FIRST TO QUALIFY FOR ASIAN CUP

IRAN THRASH GUAM DESPITE VISA WOE

SINGAPORE: Qatar became the first side to book a spot at the 2019 Asian Cup and the next round of 2018 World Cup qualifiers on a busy yesterday that showcased the politicking and problems the sport faces in its largest region.

With the Asian Football Confederation reeling from Monday's news that one of its pillars, Nepal's Ganesh Thapa, had been banned for 10 years for taking money during FIFA elections, Asia's best tried to switch focus back to onfield events but other issues were evident.

Qatar, the 2022 World Cup hosts, were 3-0 winners over Bhutan at Changlimithang Stadium in the Thimphu mountains and they secured top spot in Group C when Hong Kong and China then played out a 0-0 draw in a politically tense clash. Home fans booed during the playing of China's national anthem and held up defiant banners at the Mong Kok Stadium, where there was a heavy police presence with organisers wary

of trouble following last year's pro-democracy rallies.

The draw left Hong Kong in position to grab second place in the group behind Qatar who have won all six matches. The eight group winners and four best runners-up will qualify for the Asian Cup and the third round of World Cup qualifying in the continent and most of the fancied sides, bar China, look set to complete the straightforward task.

Cambodia, whose domestic champions Phnom Penh Crown FC have been hit by a match-fixing scandal which has led to seven players being suspended, were beaten 2-0 by Japan, who stayed clear in Group E.

Syria kept pace in second spot, one point back, after they struck in the 93rd minute to beat Singapore 2-1 at the citystate's National Stadium, where security was increased because of the attacks in Paris on Friday. Syrian coach Fajr Ibrahim opted for a traditional national team tracksuit during the post-match news confer-

ence after donning a white T-shirt of a smiling President Bashar al-Assad on Monday.

GUAM CRUSHED

Yesterday's 14-match schedule in Asia was kicked off by Iran beating US territory Guam 6-0 away despite four of their players and two members of staff being refused visas to enter the tiny island. East Timor were also short-handed, with seven nationalised Brazilians absent after complaints from rivals about their eligibility. They were trounced 10-0 by Saudi Arabia in Dili as the West Asians stayed top of Group A.

United Arab Emirates remained on their tails in second place after they beat Malaysia 2-1 in an empty stadium in Kuala Lumpur as the hosts served out a punishment for crowd trouble in their previous home defeat by the Saudis.

Elsewhere, Asian champions Australia put aside secu-

rity concerns in Dhaka to beat Bangladesh 4-0 in Group B, while South Korea crushed Laos 5-0 in Vientiane to make it six wins from six in Group G, which still contains Kuwait despite the country serving a FIFA ban.

The heavy defeat capped a bad week for Laos, whose football federation president Vipheth Sihachakr was banned for two years on Monday and fined after accepting payments during the 2011 FIFA elections.

Indonesia, also serving a FIFA ban for political interference like Kuwait, have been kicked out of competing in Group F, where Iraq kept up their pursuit of leaders Thailand with a 2-0 win in Taiwan.

AFC President Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa, who is standing for the FIFA Presidency in February elections, is the man currently charged with clearing up the problems in Asian football. His Bahrain team lost 2-0 in North Korea which all but ended their bid to reach Russia 2018. — Reuters



DUBLIN: Bosnia and Herzegovina goalkeeper Asmir Begovic saves an attempt on goal by Republic of Ireland's Daryl Murphy during the Euro 2016 play-off second leg soccer match between Ireland and Bosnia in Dublin, Monday. — AP

IRELAND REACHES EURO 2016 WITH 2-0 WIN OVER BOSNIA

DUBLIN: Jon Walters was the toast of Lansdowne Road as his brace against Bosnia-Herzegovina in a 2-0 victory fired Ireland to next summer's European Championship Finals in France. The Stoke City striker missed Friday's play-off first leg through suspension but he more than made up for that with a goal in each half that saw Martin O'Neill's men progress 3-1 on aggregate.

"There was a whole team of heroes out there - we got there in the end. It is the best moment of my career in any shirt to qualify for the European Championship finals is unbelievable," the hero of the night told Sky Sports. Bosnia manager Mehmed Bazdarevic will be bitterly disappointed with his side's poor showing, but for Ireland it was the most complete performance of a roller coaster campaign, on the most crucial night. The hosts were simply better in every department, bullying the visitors in the first half and taking their chances when they arrived. "I couldn't be more proud of this team," said O'Neill. "I hold the players in the highest esteem. They don't have everything, but courage and determination are things they have in abundance."

With an away goal advantage, Ireland could have set out to merely defend, but O'Neill sent out a team to attack with Walters starting while retaining the set piece skills of Robbie Brady who scored in Zenica at left back. Bazdarevic made three changes to his team with Sead Kolasinac, Ongjen Vranjes and Haris Medunjanin starting as he returned to a typical 4-2-3-1 formation, with Edin Dzeko spearheading the attack. Ireland came into the game on the back of eight home games without defeat, with last month's victory over Germany the standout

result, but few of the home crowd expected anything less than a tense night. How wrong they were.

While Bazdarevic vowed to attack, Bosnia's first half performance was marked by indiscipline with Emir Spahic, in particular, fortunate to remain on the field. Robbie Brady and Jeff Hendrick were central to the best of Ireland's play, with much of the attacking play directed at Bosnia's right wing. Though Brady's crossing was erratic, he continued to worry the Bosnian defence with Asmir Begovic and Ervin Zukanovic both required to make last ditch clearances from his deliveries.

DZEKO OFF TARGET

Miralem Pjanic wasn't influencing things as he would have liked for the visitors, while Dzeko was also a fringe figure with just one off target shot to show at the break.

Spahic was the first to go into the referee's book when he snapped into a tackle on Hendrick, and he was soon followed by Senad Lulic, protesting what was a questionable penalty award against Zukanovic, who handled Murphy's cross. Walters, increasingly central to O'Neill's set up, was nerveless as he calmly found the bottom left of the goal, giving his former Stoke City team mate Begovic no chance.

Medunjanin had Bosnia's best chance of the half but he failed to control his volley after Dzeko's cushioned knockdown. Ireland lived more dangerously in the first ten minutes of the second half with Clark, first, required to clear Medunjanin's in-swinging free kick, and then Lulic should really have tested Randolph following good work by Edin Visca on the right wing. — AFP

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risk breaking EU rules

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Qantas upgraded
from junk to BBB-

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EGYPT HITS 2-YEAR LOW AS RUSSIA BLAMES BOMB FOR PLANE CRASH

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TOKYO: A woman takes a look at orange on sale at a shop in Tokyo yesterday. One good sign in this week's data on the gross domestic product (GDP - the total value of a nation's goods and services) is that consumer spending remains relatively strong. —AP

BAHRAIN PLANS MORE SUBSIDY CUTS, NEW CHARGES REVENUES HIT BY SLUMPING OIL PRICES

ABU DHABI: Bahrain is planning more subsidy cuts and intends to impose charges for government services next year in order to boost revenues hit by slumping oil prices, the kingdom's minister for industry and commerce told Reuters yesterday. Like other Gulf oil-exporting states, Bahrain has for many years subsidized goods and services such as food, fuel, electricity and water, keeping prices ultra-low in an effort to maintain social peace.

But since its oil income began to plunge last year, the government's budget deficit has widened

and the subsidies have become much harder for Bahrain to afford. "We have already started cutting subsidies and we are now looking at others - electricity, fuel, those are next year," Zayed bin Rashed Al-Zayani said on the sidelines of an investor conference in Abu Dhabi. "It is being studied now," he said, adding that none of the oil-producing countries was immune to low prices. He did not provide details, saying the government would release them next year.

Governments around the Gulf have begun

restraining expenditure and studying whether to cut subsidies, but most do not face as much pressure as Bahrain, which lacks the huge financial reserves of its neighbors. Bahrain's revenues have dropped 60-70 percent because of low oil prices, Zayani said. Last month, Bahrain more than doubled prices of beef and chicken as it removed meat subsidies; local citizens but not foreigners will receive some compensation in the form of cash handouts. In April, the government raised the price of natural gas sold to industry.

The kingdom is also looking at boosting revenues by imposing charges on government services that are currently free or carry minimal fees, Zayani said, adding that each ministry would do this independently. As part of efforts to diversify its economy beyond oil, Bahrain will in the first quarter of 2016 unveil a new short-and medium-term industrial strategy, now in the final stages of planning. "We are looking at more export-based industries to create employment and that can be accommodated with our current resources," Zayani said.

Dual-tranche bond

Also, the Kingdom of Bahrain has begun marketing a dual-tranche US dollar-denominated benchmark-sized bond, according to a source. The issuer is seeking to sell a January 2021 bond at a yield in the high 5% region, and a January 2026 bond at 7% area. Bank ABC, BNP Paribas, Citigroup, HSBC and JP Morgan are running the 144A/Reg S transaction, which is expected to be as early as yesterday's business. Bahrain is rated BBB- by Standard & Poor's and Fitch. —Agencies

GREECE SECURES DEAL TO UNLOCK 12 BILLION EURO BAILOUT FUNDS

ATHENS: Greece announced yesterday it has struck a deal with its international creditors to unblock some 12 billion euros in much-needed bailout loans. "We have reached agreement on everything, including the 48 additional measures" that should allow the 12 billion euros (\$12.8 billion) to be paid out on Friday, Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos told reporters after marathon talks. "This is good news," Eurogroup chief Jeroen Dijsselbloem said in a statement released in Brussels, adding that the funds would be paid once the Greek parliament adopts fresh reforms on Thursday.

"Upon the completion of the agreed conditionality and the implemented legislation, the Eurogroup stand ready to support the disbursement," he said. Greece in July accepted a three-year, 86-billion-euro (\$93-billion) EU bailout that saved it from crashing out of the euro-zone, but the deal came with strict conditions. Athens has since adopted a number of the unpopular reforms but creditors have wanted it to do more. Dijsselbloem, the Dutch finance minister, said that "substantive agreement has been reached on all outstanding issues" regarding

the current steps that Athens must take. The agreement covers streamlining home foreclosures, which the government

was reluctant to accept in order to ensure a safety net for more vulnerable households. A Greek government source said the com-

promise reached will protect around 60 percent of indebted households from having their primary residence seized. The Greek government had sought to protect more than 70 percent of families at risk of losing their homes, while creditors had initially been willing to exclude no more than 20 percent from seizure. The protections against home seizures come with strict conditions, with a review of procedures planned for 2019, the source said.

The government is to submit the agreed measures to parliament later for a vote tomorrow, the minister said. Euro-zone officials are also expected to approve the agreement later, ahead of a Friday decision to unlock the funds. The funds include 10 billion euros to recapitalize beleaguered Greek banks. After storming to power at the beginning of the year on a program to free Greece from the restrictions of bailout programs, Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras reversed course and accepted a new financial lifeline. He won fresh elections the deal triggered, calling the bailout agreement a "painful compromise" and a "tactical retreat" that enabled the country to avoid bankruptcy and stay in the euro. —AFP



ATHENS: Greek Finance Minister Euclid Tsakalotos arrives for a press conference at the Ministry in Athens yesterday. —AFP

SAUDI SHURA ENDORSES A TAX PLAN ON UNDEVELOPED LAND

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's Shura Council, the body that advises the government on legislation, endorsed a tax on undeveloped land aimed at encouraging development and solving a housing crisis, the state-affiliated Al Riyadh newspaper reported yesterday. Fees will be imposed as a percentage of the land's value, the legislative body decided, rejecting a cabinet proposal to limit fees to 100 riyals per square meter, the newspaper said. The legislation will be passed to the king this week for his approval, it said, and the cabinet will set the date of implementation.

Much urban land in the kingdom is owned by wealthy individuals or companies which prefer holding it as a store of value, or trading it for speculative profits, to the process of developing it. The tax could change that and spur home building activity. The government has been considering for years whether to use taxes to push owners into developing or selling such land. Many less well-off Saudis cannot buy their homes or afford rising rents. After social discontent prompted unrest elsewhere in the Arab world in 2011, the then King Abdullah announced a \$67 billion plan to build 500,000 homes over several years, but bureaucracy as well as land shortages have delayed the scheme. —Reuters

News

in brief

South Africa, US agree on terms for poultry imports

CAPE TOWN: South Africa has signed an agreement with the United States to resume import of 65,000 tons of chicken each year, which had become bogged down over health concerns, the government said on Tuesday. The veterinary trade protocol comes after the US threatened to suspend trade benefits for South African farm products earlier this month, in retaliation against the clamp down on poultry imports. South Africa has been concerned that an outbreak of avian flu in the United States which killed nearly 50 million birds could pose animal and human health risks to Africa's most advanced economy. "We are on track to resolving the outstanding issues related to beef and meat. The chicken protocol shows we are moving in the right direction," South Africa's Department of Trade and Industry spokesman Sidwell Medupe said, adding that outstanding issues will be finalized by Dec 31. The pact the two countries signed is part of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), a US program designed to help African exporters. The agreement would see the United States emerge as one of the top poultry exporters to South Africa.



Iran plans to increase the production of natural gas

DUBAI: Iran plans to increase its production of natural gas to more than 1 billion cubic meters (bcm) a day in the next two and a half years, Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh was quoted as saying yesterday. Speaking at a news conference ahead of next week's meeting of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) in Tehran, Zanganeh also said Iran was ready to export gas to neighboring Iraq. "According to our plans, in the next two and a half years the country's gas production will increase to more than 1,000 million cubic meters a day," Zanganeh was quoted as saying by the Oil Ministry's news agency Shana. "We are ready to export gas to Iraq ... the total will be more than 50 million cubic metres a day," he added. Iran's gas production, excluding flared and re-injected gas, more than doubled to 160.5 bcm by 2012 from 75 bcm in 2002. Iran has huge gas reserves. It exports small quantities to Turkey but has been unable to increase production quickly enough to meet its own demand and northern Iran relies heavily on gas imports from Turkmenistan, especially for heating in winter.



Hefty fine on MTN remains: Nigeria telecoms regulator

ABUJA: Nigeria's telecoms regulator has said a \$5.2 billion fine imposed on South Africa's MTN remains valid until talks with the company are concluded. Africa's biggest mobile phone operator was handed the penalty for failing to deactivate 5.1 million unregistered SIM cards in breach of a Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC) order. MTN said on Monday the initial deadline for payment that it had won a respite on the payment until the outcome of talks. The NCC confirmed the deadline extension and that MTN had admitted the breach in a letter and "pleaded for leniency." "The Commission has acknowledged this and is looking into their plea without any prejudice to the fine," it added. "The fine remains but the appeal and other engagements with MTN may affect the payment deadline." The fine on MTN Nigeria was imposed "in the interest of the public which has been at the receiving end of security challenges," the NCC added. "National interest is paramount because when lives are lost they cannot be replaced," the regulator said in its first formal statement on the issue. At least 17,000 people have been killed since 2009 and 2.6 million forced from their homes in Boko Haram violence that has increasingly hit Nigeria's neighbors Cameroon, Chad and Niger.

China inks \$15 billion Argentina nuke deal

BEIJING: A Chinese state-owned company will finance and build two nuclear power plants in Argentina, the enterprise said, in a deal estimated to be valued at nearly \$15 billion. China National Nuclear Corp will work with Argentina's state-owned company Nucleoelectrica to build the South American nation's fourth and fifth reactors, CNNC said Monday in a statement posted on its website. The agreement was reached over the weekend at the G20 summit in Turkey. The Argentine government estimates the project will require \$15 billion in financing, Economy Minister Axel Kicillof said in a statement issued by the country's Ministry of Planning announcing the deal. China will provide a portion of the financing for the projects through investment and bank loans at preferential rates, according to the official statement. One reactor will use Canadian heavy-water technology, while the other will feature China's locally developed Hualong One reactor, CNNC said.



NORD: A plane of the low cost airline carrier EasyJet takes off at Lille-Lesquin airport in France. British no-frills airline Easyjet said yesterday that annual net earnings jumped more than a fifth, buoyed by keen demand for city break holidays and business travel, alongside lower fuel costs. — AFP

EASYJET'S PROFIT SOARS

UK NO-FRILLS AIRLINE PLACES \$3.6 BILLION AIRBUS ORDER

LONDON: British no-frills airline Easyjet yesterday ordered 36 Airbus A320 jets worth \$3.8 billion (3.5 billion euros) at catalogue prices, after posting record annual profits on keen demand. Easyjet said in a results statement it will purchase 30 next-generation fuel-efficient A320neo aircraft, converting options that had been announced back in 2013, and has added another six firm orders for current-generation A320s. The 36 popular single-aisle Airbus airplanes, which have 186 seats, are for delivery between 2018 and 2021. Easyjet, which is based in Luton north of London, added that it would take more options for 30 A320neo aircraft, taking its

total number of options to 100.

"Due to our continued robust trading, high demand for easyJet flights and the number of profitable opportunities we see in our markets, we are pleased to have secured an agreement with Airbus to take delivery of an additional 36 A320 aircraft," the airline said in the statement. "These aircraft will offer increased flexibility in fleet planning, including the faster replacement of some of our A319 aircraft, lower overall unit costs and ensure Easyjet can continue to grow past 2019 to support increasing total shareholder returns." Easyjet's vast Airbus order was unveiled alongside news of soaring annual profits.

Pre-tax profit leapt 18 percent to a record £686 million, buoyed by keen demand for city break holidays and business travel, and lower fuel costs. Pre-tax earnings, which rose for the fifth year in a row, were in the middle of the group's forecast range. "Our outlook for the longer term is positive," said chief executive Carolyn McCall. "We expect demand in our markets to be sustained and for Easyjet to continue to be a winner in its markets." She added: "We continue to invest in profitable growth, ensuring our digital advantage and giving our customer good value fares." Net profits meanwhile rallied 22 percent to £548 million in the year to the end

of September, compared with 2013/2014.

Passenger numbers rose six percent to 68.6 million people, and revenues swelled 3.5 percent to £4.686 billion. "Our markets are strong, with favorable economic and consumer trends," the airline said in the statement. "Our core leisure customer is part of a market that is growing strongly every year as people take more holidays and city breaks, complemented by a business travel market that prizes both flexibility and value." The single aisle A320neo is designed to produce fuel savings of some 20 percent per seat compared with current generation jetliners and they have greater range. — AFP



PORTO: A woman waits for costumers to buy her wares at the Silo car boot flea market in Porto, Portugal has experienced zero growth in the third quarter after a 0.5% rise in GDP in the first two quarters, due to a decrease in investment, the National Statistics Institute (Ine) said. — AFP

FOUR EURO-ONE NATIONS RISK BREAKING EU RULES

GOVTS URGED TO KEEP BUDGET SHORTFALL BELOW 3% OF GDP

BRUSSELS: Italy, Lithuania, Austria and Spain risk breaking European Union rules with their 2016 budget plans, the European Commission said yesterday, while France might also not meet some of the fiscal targets set out by EU finance ministers. It said, however, that the costs of Europe's migrant and refugee crisis would be treated as a special case. The Commission, the EU executive arm, checks draft budget plans of euro-zone countries every year to see if they are in line with the Stability and Growth Pact, which sets rules for EU budgets.

The rules say a government has to keep the headline budget shortfall below 3 percent of GDP and strive to balance its books in structural terms - excluding one-off revenues and spending and the effects of the business cycle. To be in line with the rules, each year governments must reduce their structural deficit by at least 0.5 percent of GDP until they are close to balance or in surplus. The Commission pointed the finger this year at Italy, Lithuania, Austria and Spain. "The draft budgetary plans of these countries might result in a significant deviation from the adjustment paths towards the medium-term objective," it said.

France's 2016 draft budget was broadly compliant, the Commission said, because the headline deficit was as required. But France is under a disciplinary EU process, called the exces-

sive deficit procedure, for having a budget gap higher than 3 percent of GDP. EU finance ministers set annual fiscal consolidation targets for countries under this procedure. The Commission said Paris was at risk of missing these targets. "In the case of France, while the recommended headline deficit target is projected to be met in 2016, the (draft budget) contains risks as regards compliance ... as the fiscal effort is projected to fall significantly short of the recommended level, according to all metrics," the Commission said.

It said that it asked the French authorities to take the "necessary measures within the national budgetary process" so that the 2016 budget is in line with EU rules. Without changes in current policies, France is also expected to have a deficit above the 3 percent limit in 2017, in breach of agreed targets, the Commission estimated. Brussels' analysis of France's budget was carried out before the Paris attacks of last weekend. Spain, which faces elections in December, was in bigger trouble. "The draft budget plan... was found to pose a risk of non-compliance with the requirements for 2016. In particular, neither the recommended fiscal effort nor the headline deficit target for 2016 is forecast to be achieved," the Commission said confirming an opinion issued in October.

It said it had asked Madrid to make

sure the budget would comply with EU rules and asked for an updated draft as soon as possible. Italy's draft budget plan is also at risk of non-compliance with EU fiscal rules, the Commission said in a statement, urging Italy to take "the necessary measures within the national budgetary process to ensure that the 2016 budget will be compliant". The Commission will decide in May whether Italy can be granted some budget leeway for investments and structural reforms.

Migrant impact

It also said that the budget costs of the migrant crisis would be treated as an exceptional circumstance and not counted into the deficit calculations, but concessions will be made only after actual expenses are properly assessed. Italy, Greece, Austria and Germany are all dealing with hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers from the Middle East and Africa who are fleeing conflicts and poverty in their countries. The Commission said it would monitor the situation closely to determine what was eligible and ensure that it did not impact 2015 and 2016 budget enforcement. Overall, the aggregate euro zone budget deficit is to shrink to 1.7 percent in 2016 from 1.9 percent in 2015. Debt is also to fall slightly to just below 90 percent of GDP. The Commission said this represented a neutral fiscal stance. — Reuters

INVESTOR SENTIMENT REBOUNDS IN GERMANY AFTER CONSECUTIVE FALLS

BERLIN: Investor sentiment in Germany rebounded in November after seven consecutive falls thanks to still resilient economic data from Europe's top economy, a leading survey said yesterday. The investor confidence index calculated by the ZEW economic institute rose to 10.4 points from just 1.9 points a month earlier, the think tank said in a statement. "The outlook for the German economy is brightening towards the end of the year," said ZEW president Professor Clemens Fuest in a statement. "Economic pessimism appears not to have increased after the terror attacks in Paris," he added, pointing to data received since Friday night's jihadist killings, the worst ever terror attacks on French soil.

"The currently high level of consumption in Germany, the recent decline in the external value of the euro, and the ongoing recovery in the United States are likely to bolster the robust development of the German economy." For the survey, ZEW questions analysts and institutional investors about their current assessment of the economic situation in Germany, as well as their expectations for the coming months. The sub-index measuring financial market players' view of the current economic situation in Germany was largely unchanged, declining slightly by 0.8 points to 54.4 points, ZEW said.

Carsten Brzeski, chief economist at ING-DiBa, said the data was a sign of "some light at the end of the tunnel". He said ahead of the next European Central Bank rate-setting meeting, "the hope for new ECB action in December and consequently a weaker euro have clearly improved investors' optimism". The Germany economy was currently mainly consumption-driven, amid low global oil prices, Brzeski added. "Consumers see their disposable income increasing and backed by strong employment figures, higher nominal wages and low interest rates are finally spending it," he wrote in a note. — AFP

FRANCE WARNS 'IT WILL NOT MEET EU DEFICIT TARGETS'

PARIS: France warned yesterday it won't meet its EU deficit obligations as it steps up spending on security in the wake of the Paris terror attacks. With the government planning to hire an additional 8,500 law enforcement officers, France's EU-agreed spending limits "will certainly be exceeded as these resources ... won't be taken from other budgets," Prime Minister Manuel Valls told France Inter radio.

"We have to do this and Europe should understand this," he said. "It is also time that the EU, the European Commission, understand today that this battle concerns France, and also Europe." France has already stepped up strikes on Islamic State, which claimed the Friday attacks, bombing the group's stronghold of Raqqa in northern Syria, and has asked for military support from its EU partners. EU defense ministers quickly backed the request for military assistance and commission officials signaled leniency on budget rules.

"The rules of the stability pact do not stop member states from defining their priorities. We understand that the priority is security," EU Economic Affairs Commissioner Pierre Moscovici told a news conference. The EU's stability pact obliges member states to keep their public deficits under 3.0 percent of gross domestic product. Euro-zone states with excessive deficits are subject to fines if they are not making substantial efforts to bring them back down. France, which hasn't been able to bring its public deficit back under the three percent limit since the global financial crisis struck in 2008, had agreed with the EU to reduce the deficit to 3.8 percent of GDP this year, 3.3 percent in 2016 and 2.7 percent in 2017.

Moscovici, the former French finance minister, said the tough budgetary rules imposed by Brussels after the euro-zone debt crisis were "neither rigid nor stupid, they are capable of dealing with situations." "It is in that spirit that we are in discussions with the French government," President Francois Hollande also announced Monday that France would hire additional law enforcement officers as it seeks to confront the increased security threat, and cancelled the elimination of 9,200 posts in the military that the country had been scheduled to make by 2019. — AFP

GLOBAL SHARES, DOLLAR RALLY; MARKETS SHRUG OFF PARIS ATTACKS

LONDON: Global shares gained convincingly yesterday, clawing back all the ground lost the previous day as investors bet that Friday's attacks on Paris would have little lasting impact on the economy.

made after the Paris attacks and subsequent French air strikes in Syria fading. Having hit a six-week high on Monday, the widely tracked CBOE volatility index, or "fear gauge", fell almost 10 percent.

that killed more than 120 people. "European equity markets are catching the tailwind from the US after a strong close yesterday," said B Capital Wealth Management Managing Director Lorne Baring.

Copper plunges Copper prices plunged to a fresh six-year low below \$4,600 per ton yesterday as technical dealings in Shanghai and worries about

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report. Table with columns: Index, Change, Closing, Last Closing, High, Low, Volume, Value (KWD), Number of Trades. Includes sections for Oil & Gas, Industrials, Consumer Goods, Health Care, Consumer Services, Telecommunications, and Banks.



TOKYO: A man scratches his head as he looks at an electronic stock board of a securities firm in Tokyo yesterday. Asian stock markets bounced back yesterday as investors looked past the last week's attacks in Paris. — AP

demand from China, the world's top consumer, triggered another round of selling in London. The dollar's appreciation has also buffeted industrial metals as a stronger US currency makes greenback-denominated commodities more expensive for buyers.

six-week low struck the previous day on risk aversion. Shanghai stocks climbed 1.4 percent, while Japan's Nikkei added 1.6 percent, brushing a three-month peak.

The yen, which usually moves in the opposite direction to Japanese shares and which tends to be sought in times of geopolitical tension, edged towards a three-month low against the dollar.

GOLD SLIPS; FED IN FOCUS GOLD EASES BACK TO \$1,080/OZ

LONDON: Gold prices slipped yesterday, heading towards near six-year lows as the dollar rose and stocks rebounded from losses associated with Friday's attacks in Paris.

previous day as investors bet that the attacks on Paris would have little lasting impact on the economy. European stocks rose more than 2 percent.

Spot gold was down 0.2 percent at \$1,080.71 an ounce at 1032 GMT, while US gold futures for December delivery were down \$3.30 an ounce at \$1,080.30.

That has led to gains in the dollar, which hit a seven-month high against the euro yesterday. "We believe that gold will face further headwinds in the next few weeks as an extension of euro zone quantitative easing is announced in December, thus pushing up the dollar against the euro and other major currencies, and as the market fully prices in a mid-December Fed rate rise,"

BRENT OIL EASES FOCUS RETURNS TO GLOBAL OVERSUPPLY

LONDON: Oil prices eased yesterday, reversing the previous day's gains, as the risk premium stemming from the Paris attacks faded, and the focus returned to the global oversupply in crude and petroleum products.

around put options - which give the holder the right, but not the obligation, to sell Brent futures - at \$40 a barrel. "The well-supplied crude market, record-high inventories in OECD (countries that are part of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) and lack of a material threat to the oil facilities in the Middle East from the military escalation against IS in Syria are going to prevent geopolitical premiums building in oil prices," BMI Research said.

"Unless the geopolitical tensions, which have obviously risen since Friday, are going to be manifested in physical supply destruction in the Middle East, I think sentiment should remain more bearish than bullish." Brent crude futures were down 13 cents at \$44.43 a barrel by 1122 GMT, having closed up 2 percent on Monday. Front-month US crude futures were down 34 cents at \$41.40 a barrel. The premium of Brent futures over their US equivalent narrowed to around \$1.94 a barrel, from closer to \$4 at the start of the month. Many speculators are preparing for further price falls. Most open interest in options expiring in December is clustered

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

'SHADOW BANKING' HITS \$80 TRILLION: REGULATOR

ZURICH: The value of non-bank "shadow banking" rose to some \$80 trillion (74 trillion euros) last year, according to a report by the Financial Stability Board (FSB), which advises G20 states on banking reform and oversees regulation of the global financial system. The report, issued ahead of the upcoming G20s summit in Antalya, said shadow banking activities grew by \$2 trillion across 2014 on a broad measure, representing some 80 percent of global GDP and 90 percent of global financial system assets.

The FSB, an international body that monitors and makes recommendations about the global financial system to the

G20, was set up six years ago after the implosion of Lehman Brothers and publishes annual reports into the parallel banking system under its remit to promote internationally transparent financial stability. Shadow banking involves credit intermediation outside traditional banking, including hedge and investment funds.

The Switzerland-based body, chaired by Mark Carney, governor of the Bank of England, is also tasked with identifying potential weak points in the global financial system. The FSB said it has devised a monitoring framework to track shadow banking developments to

enable the identification of systemic risks, "initiating corrective actions where necessary." The organization said this year it has added a more narrowly-focused "economic function" overview of shadow banking for its annual monitoring of the non-bank financial sector in order to devise policy responses aimed at risk mitigation.

The FSB, which works in conjunction with national and international financial regulators, estimated that under the new, activity-based, narrow measure of shadow banking, the sector was worth \$36 trillion in 2014, from \$35 trillion in 2013 - equivalent to some 30 percent of

overall non-bank financial sector assets and 60 percent of the GDP of the 26 participating jurisdictions.

'Facilitate growth'

By comparison, the traditional banking sector was last year worth \$135 trillion, 6.4 percent up on 2013, adjusted for exchange rate effects. For Carney, "non-bank financing is a welcome additional source of credit to the real economy. The FSB's efforts to transform shadow banking into resilient market-based finance, through enhanced vigilance and mitigating financial stability risks, will help facilitate sustainable economic growth."

But at the same time he stressed the FSB needed to be vigilant in looking to transform shadow banking into a robust source of market finance and at a level of risk which would not destabilize the financial system. Glenn Stevens, chairman of the FSB Standing Committee on Assessment of Vulnerabilities said: "The annual shadow banking monitoring exercise is an important mechanism for identifying potential financial system vulnerabilities in the non-bank sector. "The activities-based approach in this year's report enhances our understanding of the evolving composition of this sector and potential risks." —AFP



MIAMI: Judith Jean-Noel looks in a mirror as she shops for ear rings at the green market in downtown Miami. —AP

ASDA LAGS BRITISH SUPERMARKET RIVALS, DISCOUNTERS MARCH ON ALDI AND LIDL'S UK MARKET SHARE PASSES 10%

LONDON: Industry sales figures underlined Asda's position as the weakest performer among Britain's largest supermarket groups yesterday, showing it remained under severe pressure from the growth of discounters Aldi and Lidl. Germany's Aldi and Lidl notched up a combined 10 percent share of the British grocery market for the first time. All of Britain's big four supermarkets-market leader Tesco, Asda, the British arm of Wal-Mart, Sainsbury's and Morrisons-have been damaged by a price war, waged to try to stem the loss of shoppers to discounters, and by the impact of commodity-led deflation.

Market researcher Kantar Worldpanel said Asda's sales fell 3.5 percent in the 12 weeks to Nov 8, with its market share falling 0.7 percentage points year-on-year to 16.4

percent. Sales fell 2.5 percent and 1.7 percent at Tesco and Morrisons respectively. In contrast, sales at Aldi and Lidl soared 16.5 percent and 19.0 percent respectively. "The discounters show no sign of stopping and with plans to open hundreds of stores between them, they'll noticeably widen their reach to the British population," said Kantar Worldpanel's Fraser McKevitt. Analysts say Asda has particularly suffered because it has more overlap with Aldi and Lidl in its northern England heartland. Some also see Asda as most vulnerable to improvements at Tesco and Morrisons, both of which have appointed new bosses to lead turnarounds.

'Nadir'

In August, Asda boss Andy Clarke described a 4.7 percent slump in second-quarter sales as the firm's

"nadir" and talked of "green shoots" in the early weeks of its third quarter. However, industry data has indicated little improvement. Asda's third quarter to Sept. 30 results will be reported later. Though Asda's sales are falling it has not reported the profit declines and asset write-offs suffered by all its listed British rivals. Last month, however, parent Wal-Mart did warn on profit blaming higher spend on wages and e-commerce and price cuts. Clarke, the longest serving boss of Britain's major supermarket chains, launched a five-year strategy in 2013 focused on lower prices, while eschewing the money-off vouchers touted by its rivals. Seeking to improve trading, Clarke refined that strategy last month, saying he would accelerate investment in large stores and put expansion on hold

elsewhere.

Last week Asda said it would not participate in the Nov. 27 "Black Friday" promotional day. Kantar Worldpanel said sales growth in the overall UK grocery market was just 0.5 percent, held back by a 1.7 percent fall in prices over the period. Of Britain's "big four" grocers, Sainsbury's has shown the most resilience to the discounters. It sales rose 1.5 percent over the 12 weeks and it registered the first market share gain among any of the "big four" since October 2014, - up 0.2 percentage points to 16.6 percent, regaining its status as Britain's number two supermarket. "This is the fifth consecutive period of clear out-performance by Sainsbury's and this seems to have coincided with Tesco's trading form weakening," said analysts at Jefferies. —Reuters

EGYPT HITS 2-YEAR LOW AS RUSSIA BLAMES BOMB FOR PLANE CRASH

SAUDI STOCK SLIP 0.6%; REAL ESTATE SHARES RETREAT

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Egyptian stocks fell to a two-year low yesterday after the Kremlin said a bomb brought down a Russian passenger plane in Egypt. Saudi shares fell after a legislative body endorsed a tax on undeveloped land. The crash of a Russian aircraft on Oct. 31 in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, which killed all 224 people on board, was "a terrorist act," Russia's foreign minister said. The accusation is likely to hit Egypt's tourist industry, a mainstay of its economy. "The market is reacting badly to Russia's statement on the Sharm crash," said Simon Kitchen, head of strategy at EFG-Hermes. "The short-term outlook is poor ... but the market is trading well below long-run price to book multiples, suggesting deep value."

All but two shares fell on Cairo's benchmark index, which slipped 1.1 percent to its lowest since December 2013. The index has now fallen seven of the past eight sessions. Meanwhile, Saudi real estate shares led losses after a proposal to tax undeveloped land.

Saudi real estate developers hold significant amounts of land and could face taxes in the short term, unless lenders can loosen their stance on construction loans - a process that faces delays and hurdles in Saudi Arabia.

"The tax will put pressure on the real estate market, which will lower prices of empty land and make housing more affordable," said Abdullah Alawi, assistant general manager and head of research at Aljazeera Capital. "This should shift more funds towards the stock market." Saudi investors generally store wealth in undeveloped land and the stock market, so tax in one will make the other more attractive. The real estate sector's measure slipped 1.0 percent. A wider benchmark declined 0.6 percent.

UAE extends gains

Elsewhere, UAE's two main benchmarks rose as bargain hunters took steady oil prices as an opportunity to increase risk exposure. Dubai's measure climbed 0.5 per-

cent, extending gains from Sunday's 11-month low. Shares in Drake & Scull rose 4.1 percent, recovering from Monday's record low, after reporting a third-quarter profit slump. "There are some opportunities, with stocks under-performing and quality names are doing much better than others," said Ali Adou, portfolio manager at Abu Dhabi's investment firm TNI.

Adou said UAE markets should be differentiated from other Gulf bourses because they depend less on oil and should gain from a push for economic diversification. Abu Dhabi's benchmark climbed 1.5 percent with telecom operator Etisalat the main support with a 2.9 percent gain. Most Gulf markets are in line with the MSCI emerging market index, which is down 13.9 percent so far this year, as a slump in oil prices and worries of global growth sparked selling. Brent crude slipped 0.72 percent to 44.25 dollars per barrel at 1230 GMT, down 62 percent from its June 2014 peak. —Reuters

WARBA BANK LAUNCHES NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH MOHAMED NASER AL-SAYER GROUP GREAT DISCOUNTS ON TOYOTA CARS

KUWAIT: Warba Bank has launched a new partnership with Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer Group, Toyota car dealership in Kuwait. This partnership comes about to provide the Bank's customers with exclusive offers on a variety of Toyota cars including new models, discounts and other unique benefits. Through this partnership with Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer Group, Warba Bank strives to widen the scope of customers' options desiring to purchase their favorite models of Toyota cars. Customers can purchase any car they like from the new 2015 and 2016 models.

This offer from Toyota for Warba Bank's customers will be valid till December 31st 2015. The Bank will continue to exert efforts for providing customers with the best financial services and solutions easily and in Sharia Compliant manner. Through this new partnership with Toyota Al-Sayer, Warba Bank seeks to satisfy customer needs. It provides them with benefits and exclusive offers that commensurate with their expectations and alleviate their financial burdens through car financing service.

The partnership between Warba Bank and Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer Group is a great addition to a series of partnerships recently established by Warba Bank with leading agencies for global car brands operating in Kuwait. These partnerships aim at providing customers with exclusive

offers to the Bank's customers for better serving them and widening the scope of their choice in having modern cars which represent a basic, vital and indispensable commodity in our daily life.

In addition to the Auto Financing Service, Warba Bank will continue to present its integrated, Islamic Sharia compliant financing solutions such as the personal financing services to "Murabaha" customers reaching KD 70 thousand with repayment period of up to 15 years. The Bank continues in introducing innovative and comprehensive banking solutions and new services for getting closer to its customers, supporting their desires and expanding the Bank's financing portfolio and market share through its distinguished solutions fulfilling the financing needs.

For more information on Warba Bank new offer with Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer Group on Toyota Cars and other services, please contact our Call Center on 1825555, visit any of the Bank branches, Bank offices at car dealers. Our staff are there all time to provide services and advices to the customers and to explain the key benefits of our financing solutions. Customers are also invited to follow Warba Bank on social media platform Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to find out our latest offers and services and to provide any suggestions.

WARBA BANK PARTNERS WITH 'GAC MOTORS'

KUWAIT: Warba Bank constantly works on providing the best services and financing solutions to its customers under the rules of Islamic Sharia. The Bank aims at offering the broadest available options to customers for purchasing new cars and providing them with best offers along with various car brands in partnerships with several car dealers and agencies in Kuwait giving customers a unique opportunity to buy their favorite cars at cash price.

Within this context, Warba Bank has recently launched a new partnership with the Chinese car manufacturer 'GAC Motors' through its agent in Kuwait, Mutawa & Alkazi. GAC Motors maintains significant capabilities in the field of car manufacturing with luxury specifications that position the Company at competitive edge in the global market. Through this partnership, Warba Bank's customers are now able to purchase their favorite cars from 'GAC Motors' with a financing service for up to five years at the cash price. Moreover, customers will receive distinctive advantages including eleven-year warranty, free car registration at Traffic Department and free three-year service offered by Muatwa Alkazi Company.

Through this exclusive partnership in the Kuwaiti market with GAC Motors, Warba Bank strives to meet the expecta-

tions of various customer categories and enable them to purchase cars without charging them with additional burdens. Customers can avail from these special benefits and services to ensure their car safety for a long period.

Warba Bank has recently launched several partnerships with global car brand makers under the "Installment at Cash Price" Campaign to offer customers a Sharia compliant distinctive service in the auto financing sector which represents one of the most vital financing types for a daily indispensable basic commodity. In addition, customers are provided with best offers and discounts.

Through Auto financing Service, Warba aims at satisfying customer needs easily without forcing them to transfer their salaries; thus making Warba the Bank of First Choice for customers to attain the best in line with their financial abilities. It is worth mentioning that Warba Bank's offer with 'GAC Motors' will continue till December 31st, 2015. To learn more about the "Auto Financing" Service from Warba Bank, the latest offers and services or even propose a suggestion, customers can contact the Call Center at 1825555, head to our representatives at the said car showrooms or follow us on social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram).



NORTH KINGSTOWN: A worker pulls a line of shopping carts toward a Wal-Mart store in North Kingstown, R.I. —AP

WAL-MART TOPS PROFIT FORECASTS

NEW YORK: Walmart reported improved customer traffic and an uptick in a key sales figure as it topped earnings expectations in the third quarter, even as a stronger dollar pressured its performance overseas. The world's largest retailer also forecast a fourth-quarter earnings range that largely exceeds analyst expectations and narrowed its full-year outlook after cutting it in August. Its shares edged up more than 2 percent in premarket trading yesterday. Wal-Mart's net income fell 11 percent to \$3.3 billion in the quarter ended Oct 31, but its earnings per share of \$1.03 per share topped Wall Street expectations.

The average estimate of 13 analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research was for earnings of 97 cents per share. Revenue slipped to \$117.42 billion from \$119 billion. On a constant currency basis, revenue totaled \$122.4 billion. Nine analysts

surveyed by Zacks expected \$117.82 billion. The retailer has been pressured on a number of fronts so far this year. A strong U.S. dollar has affected results. The company is also facing increasing competition from Amazon.com and dollar stores, and its profits has been squeezed by pay raises for workers and efforts to improve its stores.

Sales at US stores open at least a year rose 1.5 percent in the third quarter, the fifth straight quarterly increase. This figure is a key gauge of a retailer's health because it excludes results from stores recently opened or closed. Traffic climbed 1.7 percent. Wal-Mart Stores Inc.'s international segment reported net sales dropped 11 percent to \$29.81 billion. Net sales were \$34.7 billion on a constant currency basis. For US stores, quarterly net sales gained nearly 4 percent to \$72.71 billion. —AP

APPLE PAY EXPANDS AS IT VIES FOR BROADER ACCEPTANCE



CUPERTINO: In this Oct. 16, 2014 file photo, Apple Pay is demonstrated at Apple headquarters in Cupertino, Calif. Apple's year-old mobile-payments service is expanding to more countries, banks and merchants, as it faces growing competition and some challenges before it becomes as commonplace as plastic cards. Apple Pay is available in Canada starting yesterday and in Australia on Thursday. — AP

NEW YORK: Apple's year-old mobile-payments service is expanding to more countries, banks and merchants, as it faces growing competition and some challenges before it becomes as commonplace as plastic cards.

Apple Pay is available in Canada starting Tuesday and in Australia on Thursday. Those are two countries where "tap" payments - tapping a phone or chip-embedded card to the store's payment machine - are already more common than in the US. In those countries, however, Apple Pay is limited initially to American Express cards.

In the US, where Apple Pay started in October 2014, the service will expand Tuesday to more than 100 additional card issuers - mostly smaller banks and credit unions. Apple Pay already accepts Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover cards from most major banks. In the UK, Tesco and TSB banks will join Apple Pay today.

The developments come a few months after Google launched its own tap-and-pay service, Android Pay, while

Samsung started Samsung Pay. Both are for Android phones, while Apple Pay requires iPhones.

GRADUAL EXPANSION

Jennifer Bailey, Apple's vice president for Apple Pay, said the company is starting with American Express in Canada and Australia because it's both the card issuer and the payment-network operator, so coordination is easier. With Visa and MasterCard, individual banks issue the cards, and each bank has its own way of verifying a customer's identity when setting up Apple Pay, for instance. Meanwhile, Apple is working with makers of various payment machines to bring tapping capabilities to additional merchants, small and large. When Apple Pay launched, the U.S. had 200,000 tap-capable machines. That's expected to surpass 1.5 million this year. The growth includes about 100,000 small to medium-sized merchants each month, Apple said.

Apple said Tuesday that Cinnabon will add Apple Pay to all its U.S. locations next year,

while Domino's company-owned pizza stores will get it by year's end. Earlier, Apple said Starbucks will conduct a pilot this year, with a broader rollout next year, while KFC will launch next spring.

Despite the momentum, several million more U.S. retailers still have older machines that lack the right technology.

PAYING AT RESTAURANTS

Even if a merchant has the equipment, it's often located behind a counter, out of arm's reach. At sit-down restaurants, a customer needs to get up to make the tap, as opposed to leaving a card with a waiter, at least in the US (In Canada and many European countries, it's common for staff to bring a portable card machine to your table.)

Addressing that will require a combination of approaches, Bailey said. She said Chili's is installing tablets at tables so people can order and pay right there, starting in the spring. The restaurant-reservation service OpenTable already lets diners use its app to pay at some restau-

nants. Other U.S. restaurants, she said, will embrace portable card machines.

"You'll see restaurants really look to innovate," Bailey said, adding that restaurants can squeeze in more customers with faster payments, and customers are happier if they don't have to wait for the check.

THE US IS BEHIND

Americans are used to plastic cards, and many people aren't drawn to the increased security that these services provide because banks typically waive liability for fraud. But the dynamics could change with the growing use of plastic cards embedded with security chips. Chip transactions take longer than a traditional magnetic swipe, making the convenience of tapping seem more attractive.

Because other countries have had chip transactions longer, they are further along in accepting tap payments, Bailey said. She expects US shoppers will come to accept tap payments, too, now that chip cards are becoming standard. — AP

THE JOURNEY TO TRUE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

By JyotiLalchandani

Business leaders are increasingly being challenged to move their enterprises to the next level by employing digital technologies to create new ways of operating and growing their businesses. At IDC, we refer to this progression as 'Digital Transformation' (DX), a continuous process by which enterprises adapt



to or drive disruptive changes in their external ecosystems of customers and markets.

By embarking on the DX journey, enterprises are able to leverage digital competencies to deliver products and services that seamlessly blend both digital and physical attributes into the wider customer experience, while simultaneously improving operational efficiencies and organizational performance. Given the key role that both technology and information must play in this transformation, it makes sense for the CIO to be heavily involved throughout. But will CIOs be given the chance, and if so, will they seize the opportunity?

Digital transformation is a foregone conclusion for most, if not all, businesses. The choices at this point in time are to entrench and hope for the best; develop digital transformation competencies and become a disruptor; or split the difference and become a follower. Given these choices, IDC believes that CIOs should look to align their IT activities with the pre-requisites for true digital transformation by improving the customer experience and pursuing digitally enabled products and services. They should shift their focus away from short-term internal operations to longer-term external projects, and also look to reduce the amount of time they have to spend on driving IT service availability, cost reductions, and business process optimization.

Innovation activities

In this regard, it is critically important that CIOs look to maximize the time spent on innovative activities aimed at creating new IT services, improving the time to market, and increasing revenue.

A common misconception is that the DX journey is solely for private sector organizations. But this couldn't be further from the truth. For government entities, IDC defines DX as a "fundamental and continuous process of change to operating and programmatic models that leverage digital and tangential technologies to drive innovation in engage-

ment and service delivery to citizens, businesses, and other government agencies, while also improving government efficiency and effectiveness."

Eventually, all government programs and agencies will go through one or more digital transformation efforts. Whether these efforts will be successful and the results beneficial to both the target audience and the government will be dependent on how well aligned government efforts are with the overarching program objectives and how well the agency in question is able to select appropriate business outcomes based on the level of engagement and the level of government.

Broadly speaking, I expect there to be three main focus areas for government departments within the UAE - improving the citizen experience, driving the concept of 'government as a platform', and enhancing the role of Smart Cities. Citizens and residents are demanding a consistent experience across omni-channel platforms so they can choose the one channel that is most convenient for them based on their individual context. The challenge is to optimize the composite outcomes of many often uncontrollable external factors that result in the citizen/resident experience.

Many government agencies are expected to consider a series of cross-departmental digital platforms by 2020, covering services such as payments, messaging, and appointment bookings, as well as behind-the-scenes platforms to keep information secure. As such, IDC firmly believes that government organizations must start to think about purchasing more from the cloud - buying insights instead of tools, using existing social media platforms and mobile apps, and plugging and playing services from private partners to verify the identity of citizens/residents from end to end.

World of digital transformation

Smart Cities are typically designed to enable economic development and foster environmental and social sustainability in a way that eases the stresses caused on the city's infrastructure and resources by urban population growth, increasing global competition for skilled workers, and the impact of severe weather patterns and climate change. Smart Cities are on a journey from siloed initiatives to platforms that can optimize the efficiency and effectiveness of city assets, and the role of these cities in driving true digital transformation throughout the wider populace must be central to any successful government DX initiative.

The world of digital transformation can be split into resisters, explorers, players, transformers, and disruptors, and simply dabbling in digital initiatives will not get you where you need to be in order to compete with the lean and lethal digital startups ready to grab your market share. An optimized, end-to-end digital transformation strategy can help your organization work faster, lead smarter, and win the talent wars, enabling you to outwit your competitors and deploy technology solutions that reduce the risk and increase the reward. With that in mind, why wait any longer?



VILLEPINTE: (Above and bottom) Men look at drones during the 19th worldwide exhibition of internal State security (MILIPOL) in Villepinte, suburbs of Paris, yesterday. — AFP

DEADLY PARIS ATTACKS MAY RENEW ENCRYPTION DEBATE

APPLE, GOOGLE MUST BUILD 'BACKDOORS' IN THEIR ENCRYPTION SYSTEMS

NEW YORK: The deadly attacks in Paris may soon reopen the debate over whether - and how - tech companies should let governments bypass the data scrambling that shields everyday commerce and daily digital life.

So far, there's no hard evidence that the Paris extremists relied on encrypted communications - essentially, encoded digital messages that can't be read without the proper digital "keys" - to plan the shooting and bombing attacks that left 129 dead on Friday. But it wouldn't be much of a surprise if they did.

So-called end-to-end encryption technology is now widely used in many standard message systems, including Apple's iMessage and Facebook's WhatsApp. Similar technology also shields the contents of smartphones running the latest versions of Apple and Google operating software. Strong encryption is used to protect everything from corporate secrets to the credit-card numbers of online shoppers to intimate photos and secrets shared by lovers.

That widespread use of encryption, which was previously restricted to more powerful desktop or server computers, is exactly what worries members of the intelligence and law enforcement communities. Some are now using the occasion of the Paris attacks to once again argue for restrictions on the technology, saying it hampers their ability to track and disrupt plots like the Paris attacks.

"I now think we're going to have another public debate about encryption, and whether government should have the keys, and I think the result may be different this time as a result of what's happened in Paris," former CIA deputy director Michael Morell said Monday on CBS This Morning.

The last such debate followed 2013 disclosures of government surveillance by former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden. Since then, tech companies seeking to reassure their users and protect their profits have adopted more sophisticated encryption techniques despite government opposition. Documents leaked by Snowden also shed light on NSA efforts to break encryption technologies.

In response, law-enforcement and intelligence officials have argued that companies like Apple and Google should build "backdoors" into their encryption systems that would allow investigators into otherwise locked-up devices. The Obama administration continues to encourage tech companies to



include such backdoors, although it says it won't ask Congress for new law that requires them.

Backdoors

"The Snowden revelation showed that backdoors can be destructive, particularly when they're done in secrecy without transparency," says Will Ackerly, a former NSA security researcher and the co-founder of Virtru, which provides encryption technology for both companies and individual people.

On Monday, Attorney General Loretta Lynch said the government continues to have "ongoing discussions" with industry about ways in which companies can lawfully provide information about their users while still ensuring their privacy. Last week in Dublin, Apple CEO Tim Cook noted that "there's no such thing as a backdoor for the good guys only. If there's a backdoor, anybody can come in." In other words, any shortcut for investigators could also be targeted by cybercriminals eager to hack major corporations - a la the devastating cyberattack on Sony late last year - or to target individuals for identity theft or extortion, as reportedly occurred following the disclosure of records from the infidelity dating site Ashley Madison.

In the same speech, Cook said Apple will resist attempts to weaken encryption in iMessage. A draft law recently introduced in Britain would require telecommunications companies to provide "wider assistance" to police and intelligence agencies in the interests of national security.

Like iMessage, Facebook's WhatsApp encrypts all communications from "end-to-end" - a technique that blocks anyone outside the conversation from reading or seeing what's being sent.

Although Facebook can't see the content of the messages, it does track who is talking to whom and stores their phone numbers - information that can be valuable for law enforcement officials trying to sniff out terrorist plots and fight other criminal activity.

Steven Bellovin, a Columbia University professor and computer security researcher, says he isn't surprised by the effort to bring back discussion on encryption backdoors. But he adds that it's way too early to tie it to the Paris attacks. "We don't know how these people were communicating and with whom," he said. "If they were communicating with home-grown software and there's some indications of that, then a mandatory backdoor is not going to do any good." — AP

AL-SAYER MEDICAL COMPANY AND WORLD LEADING COMPANY KERR HOLD WORKSHOP INTRODUCING LATEST COSMETIC DENTISTRY PRODUCTS

KUWAIT: Al-Sayer Medical Company one of the Al-Sayer Group Holding Companies and the official agent of Kerr Dental in Kuwait, held scientific lecture and workshop about cosmetic dentistry. Large number of dentists from the government and private sectors in Kuwait attended this event. The lecture was delivered by the famous Italian dentist Prof Angelo Boteniano, one Stylo-Italiano scientific committee, renowned dentistry society in Europe and the world which specializes in research and development of the most innovative techniques in treatment and aesthetic dentistry.

Apart from lecture the workshop was a grand success, which displayed the latest dental high equality products offered by Kerr, the world famous dental company. The event received great appreciation as the dentists showed immense interest in the new innovative products from Kerr while they got a great opportunity to see and review firsthand the latest techniques in cosmetic dentistry.

Dr Hossam Afifi, General Manager of Al-sayer Medical Company said "our organization conduct such scientific lectures and workshops



on regular basis in dentistry in cooperation with most famous world dentist comes in line with our interest in supporting extensive efforts serving dentistry at the Ministry of Health which always seeks to improve its services to both citizens and expatriates in the State of Kuwait."

At Al-Sayer Medical we are most dedicated to provide the best medical products of best quality for the Kuwaiti market representing various world famous medical companies in dental, pharmaceuticals, medical and surgery equipment and accessories, and medical equipment, medical furniture, physical therapy



and rehabilitation supported by best before and after sale services in addition to best scientific support for all users of our products including doctors through such scientific lectures and workshops to provide highest level possible of customer service", with focus on leveraging its success factors including the profession-

al team, market and business expertise, the solid infrastructure, and most important the delivery of advanced pharmaceuticals and cutting-edge medical technologies and supplies, Al-Sayer Medical Company is well placed to take significant role in the improvement of Kuwait healthcare system" concluded Afifi.



PORTO NOVO, BENIN: Philomene Ahouansou cooks beans and rice by the roadside using a solar-powered cooker in Porto-Novo — AFP photos



PORTO NOVO, BENIN: Executive director of the charity Autre Vie (Another Life) Romuald Djivoessou poses with a solar-powered cooker in Porto-Novo.

BENIN TACKLES CLIMATE CHANGE WITH SUNSHINE AND COCONUTS

PORTO-NOVO, Benin: Philomene Ahouansou cooks beans and rice in three giant steel pots by the roadside in Benin's capital, Porto-Novo. It's a scene that's common throughout the country. But instead of a wood-fuelled stove, she's using a solar-powered cooker run on coconut husks, which it's hoped will prevent deforestation and reduce greenhouse gas-producing smoke. The device-called "Mivo", which means "Take it easy" in the local Fon language-has been marketed by a charity called Autre Vie. For the last three years, the organization has been trying to turn Beninese away from their reliance on charcoal or wood, which is used in four out of five households for cooking. "When I heard the advert on the radio, I went straight to the Autre Vie offices to buy three," said Philomene.

"There's no smoke getting in your eyes, it's not too hot, you don't have to ventilate it so the fire takes hold. You can work with it all day," she added. "We leave the trees in peace" -The cooker-a metal cylinder with a ceramic bowl on top for the fuel-works on the convection principle. A fan-made from recovered computer parts-is fixed on one side to a power cable and plugged into a solar panel with

a rechargeable battery. The light from the sun powers the fan, sending a constant stream of hot air to allow cooking.

LED lightbulbs can be attached to the solar panels to give light to customers without electricity, allowing them to stop using dangerous and noxious oil lamps. "I used wood before. It cost me a lot of money, 25,000 CFA francs (\$42, 38 euros) a month," said Philomene. "Coconut husks now cost me 5,000 CFA francs a month." Most people, like Philomene, cite financial reasons for buying the cooker but they also now know it's more environmentally friendly. "We leave the trees in peace in the forest. That gives us rain and when it rains things grow. So, it protects us," she said. With every purchase, Autre Vie tells customers about climate change. "We cut down trees illegally for charcoal," said young mother Chimene Agossou, who lives in a household of 13 that switched to cooking with sunshine and coconuts two years ago. "When we extract the coconut oil we're left with the husks. That's not killing the forests."

Inspired by blacksmiths

Romuald Djivoessou made his first prototype of the cooker 10 years ago



PORTO NOVO, BENIN: Workers make solar-powered cookers at a factory in Akpro-Misserete, outside of Porto-Novo.

after seeing blacksmiths burn coconut shells in the forge to melt iron. He honed the design over the years with the help of craftsmen and academics. "This cooker is going to reduce deforestation and as a result greenhouse gases," said the talkative engineer who runs Autre Vie. "For a family of four, a bag of shells lasts six months. With charcoal you need a bag

and a half every month. You have to cut wood." Forests cover only 17 percent of Benin yet some 70,000 hectares (173,000 acres) of forests are disappearing every year, according to Benin's forest and natural resources directorate. Charcoal production is blamed for part of it. One study estimated that between 2009 and 2010, charcoal production doubled. — AFP

STRIDING OUT TO SUPPORT A CAUSE

KUWAIT: Landmark Group the region's leading retail and hospitality conglomerate, witnessed a positive response for its sixth annual 'Beat Diabetes' Walkathon 2015 from its supporters, sponsors and residents of Kuwait as over 5000 participants turned up to show their support and care towards the cause. Saibal Basu, Chief Operating Officer, Landmark Group Kuwait who led the Kuwait walkathon, said: "We would like to thank all our sponsors who have been a big reason behind this success for their support year after year."

Our Partners - Al Ghanim / Xerox, Fitness First, Bahrah Trading Co, One Touch.

Media Sponsors - "Al-Rai, Al-Qabas, Al-Seyassah, Al-Anba, Kuwait Times, Arab Times, Al-Jarida, The Times, Al-Yaqza, Ahlan, Student Talk, The Talk, Al-Hadaf, Bazaar, Mondanete, Sarab, Layalena, Styles, Business Islamica, Executive Woman, City Pages, Lana, Kidzine, Wave Line. Bikers Association - Kuwait Dragon Riders, Bikers in Kuwait Encounter, Filipino International Triathletes and other entities



who extended their support towards the campaign."

"I would also like to thank each and every person who joined us at the walk to spread the message and support the campaign. Now in its sixth edition, the walkathon has touched the lives of millions of people across seven nations." Landmark Group is the only retail and hospitality conglomerate to lead diabetes related educational and community-focused activities across six GCC countries and India. In November 2014, Landmark Group's walkathons held across Kuwait, UAE, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and India drew an overwhelming response.

A STINKING SEAWEED MENACE SPURS INVENTION IN CARIBBEAN

KINGSTON: An unwelcome visitor sailed onto Caribbean beaches this year: huge rafts of seaweed. The seaweed, called sargassum, has swept into the region in part as a result of changing weather conditions, turning many once-postcard-perfect beaches a dull pondscum brown as it decomposes and releases a rotten egg stench. "It's a dirty horrible brown lace that just washes ashore," said Noorani Azeez, CEO of the Saint Lucia Hotel and Tourism Association. "The foul stench of the seaweed is really an inhibitor to going (to the beach) with your family."

The phenomenon has repeated itself across the Caribbean, with hardly any islands immune. It has created havoc for the tourism-dependent economies and disrupted other industries such as fisheries as fishermen struggle to navigate seaweed-choked waters. In the Dominican Republic, the largest power company was forced to scale down operations as 570 metric tons of the seaweed clogged its sea water cooling system.

Even local wildlife has been affected, with reports of juvenile sea turtles struggling to climb over small mountains of the stuff to get to

the ocean after hatching. But Caribbean are finding ways to cope, and some entrepreneurs are even developing ways to turn what they initially thought of as a scourge into a business opportunity. The seaweed is an ochre-colored floating algae with small air-filled bladders that keep it afloat. Although some sargassum washes up naturally on beaches in the region, researchers and other observers say that in 2011 the Caribbean began to see a huge influx of the weed washing up on the region's beaches.

The trend has continued, with a spike in 2014 and again in 2015. "We think this event is related to climate change in some respects," said Jim Franks, a senior research scientist at the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory at the University of Southern Mississippi in the United States. Franks has been studying the phenomenon and believes that the sargassum influx may be caused by factors including warmer water and an increase in nutrients. Instead of coming from the Sargasso Sea, an area near Bermuda where the seaweed normally occurs, Franks' theory is that the influx may come from a bloom in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, near the equator. — Reuters

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KIB INAUGURATES 27TH BRANCH AT REMAL MALL IN FAHAHEEL

Kuwait International Bank (KIB) inaugurated its 27th branch at Remal Mall in Fahaheel, under the patronage of Sheikh Fawaz Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Ahmadi Governor and Sheikh Mohamed Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, KIB Chairman, in addition to Mr. Mohammad Al Saqqa, Acting CEO and a number of KIB managers.

Ahmadi Governor, Sheikh Fawaz Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, praised the Kuwaiti banks

for their active role in the social responsibility field, and wished further progress and prosperity for the banking sector in general, especially KIB. Al-Khaled stated: "It gives me great pleasure to inaugurate KIB's new branch at Remal Mall in Fahaheel, which is KIB's second branch in Fahaheel and the fifth in this province, hoping for further expansion for KIB and other Kuwaiti banks to accomplish their vision in providing their outstanding services

all over the province."

On the other hand, KIB Chairman, Sheikh Mohamed Al-Jarrah, said that the inauguration of the new Fahaheel branch is in line with the bank's expansion strategy that aims at translating its robust position in the Islamic banking industry and its ongoing endeavor to reach its customers and be closer to them wherever they are. He added that choosing Fahaheel location, which falls under Ahmadi

Province, is a strategic decision that came as a result of its vital significance with its high population and dynamic purchase power.

Jarrah affirmed on KIB's constant strive to offer a comprehensive suite of innovative services and products provided by proficient and friendly team who are keen to serve both individual and corporate clients and ensure they are getting a pleasant and convenient banking experience. He also added that the bank is loy-

al to its futuristic expansion strategy aiming at satisfying its customers' growing needs and meeting their expectations.

The brand new branch is equipped with state-of-the-art technologies and qualified staff to offer a full range of services and products in line with the Islamic Sharia principles, which include but not limited to: saving and current accounts, financing, transfers and many more.

INDIAN PROPERTY SHOW THIS WEEKEND IN KUWAIT

Kuwait's popular web portal IndiansinKuwait.com has announced the return of its flagship property show 'IJK Property Show-2015' to be held in Kuwait on Friday, November 20th and Saturday 21st at Crowne Plaza Hotel, Farwaniya from 10 am to 8 pm. The property show will feature large number of builders from India and will showcase the latest investment opportunities in Indian real estate sector to the Indian community in Kuwait.

With a tag line 'Convert your dreams into Reality', buying a home which seemed to be a dream for NRIs in Kuwait could now become reality, thanks to the wide variety of handpicked homes from across India. This show will be the platform for showcasing the finest of assets, developers and locations where the Indian Real Estate caters to all the aspirations, likewise for the NRI home seekers and investors. This property exhibition will display property options ranging from the affordable to super luxury residential units which could be owned across options like plots, apartments, land and villas.

Projects

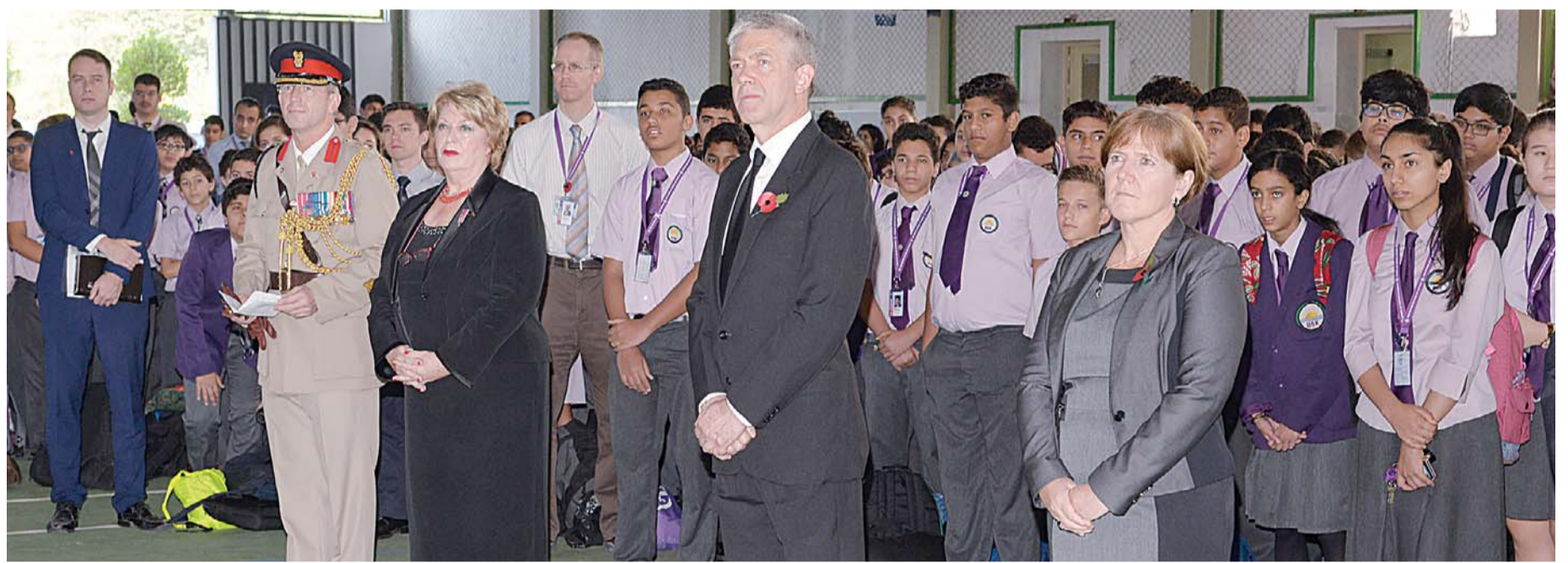
A large number of projects from India will be at your disposal from reputed builders Noida, Delhi, NCR, Gurgaon, Faridabad, Udaipur, Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Panvel, Pune, Hyderabad, Goa, Bangalore, Udipi, Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, Trichy, Kochi, Kottayam, Calicut, Trissur, Kollam, Thiruvananthapuram and many other places from All Over India. The show enables the buyers to understand the pulse of property scenario back home. Participants from Tier II cities in this exhibition will give the NRIs an advantage of investing in the emerging cities. This exhibition will showcase projects across India starting from 15 lakhs Indian Rupees to reach out to the common people in Kuwait.

Sponsors

Title Sponsor is L&T Realty. Platinum Sponsors are Lotus Greens and Godrej Properties. Gold Sponsors are Purvankara, Chevron Builders, Krishna Enterprises, SNN, Expat, Right Choice, Asten, IKP Developers, SIS, Artech, Baashyaam, Ajmera, Boopathy Homes India Pvt Ltd. & many more builders from different parts of India.

This is the fifth time, Kuwait's popular web portal for the Indian expats, IndiansinKuwait.com, in association with Lemonade International an Event Management and Marketing Company is organizing Indian property exhibition for the benefit of the community in Kuwait.

The entry to the two day exhibition will be free and there is assured gift for every pre-registration, sponsored by Tik Tok and Schneider, which you can do online to confirm your assured gifts. For Pre-Registration visitors can click <http://www.indiansinkuwait.com/Campaign/IJKPSNov15/>. One lucky winner stands a chance of winning 2 free air tickets to India.



BSK HOSTS REMEMBRANCE COMMEMORATION



Remembrance Day - also known as Poppy Day, Armistice Day (the event commemorates) or Veterans Day - is a day to commemorate the sacrifices of members of the armed forces and of civilians in times of war, but specifically since the First World War, 1914 - 1918. It is observed on November 11 to recall the end of World War I on that date in 1918. Major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918 with the German signing of the Armistice. It is traditional to sell red poppies in the two weeks approaching Nov 11, the first official British Legion Poppy Day being held in Britain on Nov 11, 1921. The poppy's significance to Remembrance Day is a result of Canadian military physician John McCrae's poem In Flanders Fields. The British

School of Kuwait (BSK) held its annual Remembrance Commemoration with Guest of Honor Colonel David Parry, Defense Attache at the British Embassy, and attended by secondary students and their teachers at morning assembly. The VIP party included BSK Senior Management Team members Madame Vera Al-Mutawa MBE, Paul Shropshire, Mark Brisbane, Joanne Wild and Emma Bowie who placed wreaths and poppies on the cenotaph which had been specially constructed by Steven Hart of the Design Technology team. The ceremony included readings from Head Boy, Hashem El-Nashar and Head Girl, Sina Abouzahr; Siegfried Sassoon's Aftermath from Mike Hewlett and a personal account from BSK Director of Media, Kefah Al-Mutawa, a Kuwaiti POW, to mark the forthcoming silver anniversary

of the Liberation of Kuwait. The Exhortation and Dedication was delivered by Colonel Parry while one of the BSK musical ensembles, under the baton of Director of Music Simon Amura, provided the music which included The Last Post, the Reveille, Nimrod from the Enigma Variations and Pavane by Peter Warlock. The ceremony brought to a conclusion a series of BSK events held to support the British Legion including a Poppy Appeal and a visit to the British Embassy gardens for a group of history students to participate in a ceremony for children. The wearing of the poppy represents the support and empathy that is felt for all those who have made any sacrifice in past or present conflicts in order that future generations might not need to experience the same horrors of war.



'CANADIANS IN KUWAIT' HOLDS THANKSGIVING

Canadians In Kuwait (CIK) a social networking organization for Canadian expat community based in Kuwait celebrated the Thanksgiving Dinner for its members and guests with a grand event with pomp and color at Safir Hotel - Fintas. Ishtiaq Malik - CIK President welcomed the dignitaries, members and guests on behalf of CIK.

Ambassador of Canada - Martine Moreau addressed the audience by greeting Canadian community in Kuwait with season's greetings

and appreciated CIK for holding this event.

CIK President thanked special guests Joey Hood - Deputy Chief of Mission at American Embassy, Tammy Ames - Counselor Commercial in Embassy of Canada, Randy Williams - President AUSA Kuwait Chapter, Scott Beverly - Chairman ABCK, Ibrahim Alhamad - President AusBG, Lieutenant-Colonel Brook G Bangsoll - Commanding Officer.

CIK president said that since its inception

CIK's mission is to promote Canada's national traditions and events in Kuwait. He also advised the community to respect the Kuwait rules and regulations and follow them. CIK shares Canadian culture with other expats communities in Kuwait, utilizing the talent and efforts of its members. CIK conducts several events successfully for its members to enjoy their time in Kuwait. The membership to CIK has grown substantially. CIK website is proven to be very informative with weekly

news updates and is beneficial to its members.

Ishtiaq Malik appreciated the CIK Executive Board for their extra ordinary efforts, energy and enthusiasm towards CIK. Reza Mehrabi - Managing Finance, Keith Edwards - Secretary, Tracey Mackenzie - Membership, MOE - Events Planner, Tammy Ragany - Events Planner, Christophe Holdrinet, George Apostolou, Zeina Nehme and Sussan Stanley.

Sponsors were thanked for their generous support to make the event successful:

CANON - Dherar Hamad, Kuwait Times - Adnan Saad, KARZ Supermarket - Moussa Hamad, Royal Digital Computer Center - Imran Nasim, Crowne Plaza Hotel - Leo Perera, Movenpick Hotel Al Bida'a - Mario Basil and Safir Hotel Fintas - Murli, Cedric, Raja and Ahmad Shalaby. Canadian Community in Kuwait enjoyed the gathering with their families and friends.



A view of the audience



Professor Mousa Khadada, Head of Chest Department - Mubarek Hospital - Professor in Kuwait University



Dr. Mona Al-Ahmed, Head of Department of Allergy, Al-Rashed Allergy Center Kuwait

WORLD COPD DAY: EXPERTS WARN DISEASE ON THE RISE IN KUWAIT LIFE-THREATENING DISEASE CAN BE PREVENTED

On World COPD Day on 18th November 2015, experts are urging Kuwait residents to educate themselves about chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and understand the risk factors with the hope of slowing the increasing incidence of this life-threatening disease.

That was the message from the Kuwait National Respiratory Forum, a special conference hosted by AstraZeneca Gulf that brought together experts in respiratory medicine to look for ways to tackle COPD

and other respiratory diseases across the region.

COPD is a term for a number of conditions including emphysema and chronic bronchitis. Emphysema affects the lungs' air sacs and chronic bronchitis affects the airways. People with COPD can have one or both of these conditions, which cause breathing difficulties such as breathlessness and chronic cough, and is responsible for three million deaths each year worldwide.

Major problem

Professor Moussa Khadadah, Professor of Medicine at Kuwait University and Head of Respiratory Unit at Mubarak Hospital said COPD represents a major public health problem in countries like Kuwait. "COPD has a major personal, social and economic impact," Professor Khadadah said.

"The prevalence of COPD in MEA is at least 3.6 percent of the population and the rate goes up each year. Fortunately it is largely preventable - if people know the causes," he said.

The primary cause of COPD is tobacco smoke through tobacco use or second-hand smoke.

"Daily activities, such as walking up a short flight of stairs or carrying a bag of shopping, can become very difficult as the condition gradually worsens," Professor Khadadah said.

"Unfortunately, there is no cure for COPD, but there are lots of treatments available to help manage the condition and improve symptoms. People experiencing any unusual breathing should see their doctor for a lung test," Professor Khadadah advised.

Diagnostic test

COPD is confirmed by a diagnostic test called spirometry that measures how much air a person can inhale and exhale, and how fast air can move into and out of the lungs.

The Kuwait National Respiratory Forum is the first of a series of events held across the region and hosted by AstraZeneca Gulf as part of its commitment to improving outcomes for people with respiratory diseases living in the Gulf region.

TEXTILES, WEAVING TECHNIQUES SIMILAR IN KUWAIT, PERU: SHEIKH SALMAN

Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah said Monday there was a resemblance between textiles and weaving in Kuwait and Peru. Cultural exchange and interaction between nations will promote their relationship, Sheikh Salman told KUNA after the inauguration of the 1st Peru Textile exhibition, co-organized by Embassy of Peru, Sadu House and Peru-Kuwait friendship committee.

"We want culture to be the link among peoples in order to strengthen the principles of humanity and peace," said Sheikh Salman, who also heads the National Council for Culture, Art

and Letters (NCCAL). He thanked Sheikhha Altaf Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, Sadu House Honorary President, for sponsoring this heritage.

Sheikha Altaf said the exhibition was part of her program which was about how Culture of Textile could be used to exchange art and culture among peoples. She said this program paved way for the Embassy of Peru to show the country's different types of textiles and weaving.

She said textile of Peru was similar to the Sadu in terms of design and color despite the huge geographical distance between Peru and Kuwait. "Culture and Arts speak a universal language, which is the lan-



Ambassador of Peru to Kuwait Heli Pelaez Castro

guage of humanity, expression and creativity," added Sheikhha Altaf. The exhibition includes



Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah

clothes, accessories and bags, in addition to paintings and some house accessories. —KUNA



Sheikha Altaf Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah



Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah is seen at inauguration of the 1st Peru Textile exhibition. —KUNA photos



RUNQ8 BACK FOR 5TH AND BIGGEST YEAR

REGISTRATION OPEN FOR ONE OF KUWAIT'S BIGGEST CHARITY SPORTING EVENTS

Back for its fifth year, RunQ8 is preparing for its biggest year yet, with an anticipated 2200 participants set to cross the starting line on November 28th; all in the name of a good cause. The annual 10 km charity race, organized by the non-profit Fawzia Sultan Rehabilitation Institute (FSRI) with support from the Ministry of Interior, aims to raise awareness and funds for its Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center (CERC).

Programs

CERC is FSRI's non-profit pediatrics facility, providing specialized and multi-disciplinary treatment and support for children with disabilities, who could not otherwise get access to the care they need. The Center provides comprehensive programs that include physical therapy, speech therapy, psychology and occupational therapy. All proceeds from the race will go towards enabling CERC to continue providing highly specialized quality care to the children in Kuwait.

Dr Elham Al-Hamdan, President and Medical Director of FSRI, commented: "We are looking forward to this year's race, and we

know that this will be our best race yet. Last year we had such a great turnout, and the money that was raised went towards improving the lives of so many families, providing their children with the life changing treatment they so urgently needed. This would not have been possible without the overwhelming support we received from both our participants and our partners."

The majority of the raised funds from RunQ8 are used to help children and families that have been unsuccessful in obtaining the treatment and support they need elsewhere, providing them access to much needed treatment at a subsidized lower cost, or even for free in some cases. Last year the race saw the participation of more than 1800 people from across the community in Kuwait.

Supporters

"When we first founded this race we didn't realize the extent to which this race and its cause would resonate with the community. We are grateful to all those who continue to support RunQ8, and make it bigger and better every year," Dr Elham added, "So whether you want to run, walk, jog or stroll, you can

still take part in the race. You don't even need to cross the finish line; just as long as you take part and contribute to this great cause. At the same time, it is an exciting event for those who wish to run a chipped competitive race!"

This year, the race is sponsored by a number of local organizations, including RunQ8's Founding Partner Agility, Burgan Bank, Al-Ruwayeh and Partners (ASAR), Diyar United Company (DUC), Openware, Jumeriah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa, Royal Pharmacies and the Athlete's Foot. In addition to the support of media partners: Al-Jarida, Kuwait Times, Good Health Arabia and Gabeeb. RunQ8 also welcomes all organizations wanting to contribute and support its efforts, with opportunities for sponsorship still available.

The race is open to people of all ages and fitness levels - although participants under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. Participants can register for the race via the official website: runq8.org. You can also follow both @runq8official and @fsri on Instagram, and RunQ8 on Facebook for all updates and news about the race.

ABK TO MARK CHILDREN'S DAY AT DISCOVERY MALL

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced it is holding a special film-themed event to honor Universal Children's Day at the Attraction 5D Cinema in Discovery Mall on Friday, 20 November, 2015. The cinema will be open from 10 am to 11 pm for all Isave and Bedayati cardholders. ABK is treating children to the most recent 5D movies which displays the latest form of theatrical effects that include rain, snow, bubbles, wind, and lightning, in addition to detailed movements like water drizzle, air blast and vibrations. Children will enjoy free beverages and snacks when entering the theatre, along with a free pass to the movies. Three 5D movies will be displayed per hour.

The United Nations General Assembly's Universal Children's Day takes place annually on November 20. First created in 1954, it was established to encourage all countries to institute a day, firstly to promote



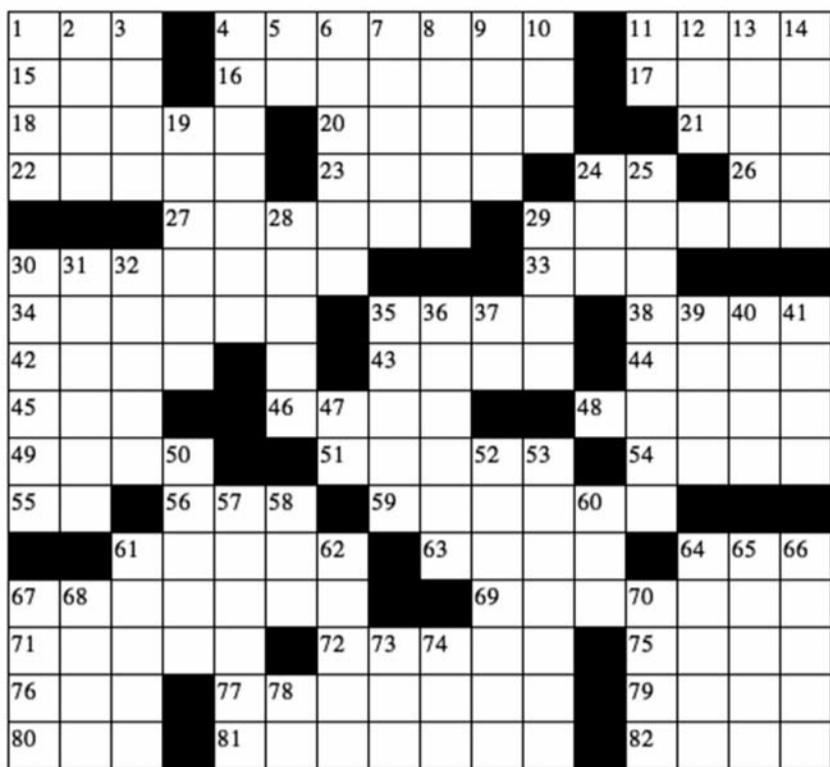
FREE ACCESS TO A VIRTUAL 5D REALITY EXPERIENCE FOR ABK BEDAYATI & ISAVE CARDHOLDERS

Date: November 20, 2015
Location: ATTRACTIONS Co., Discovery Mall

mutual exchange and understanding among children and secondly to initiate action to benefit and promote the welfare of the world's children.

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

CROSSWORD 1083



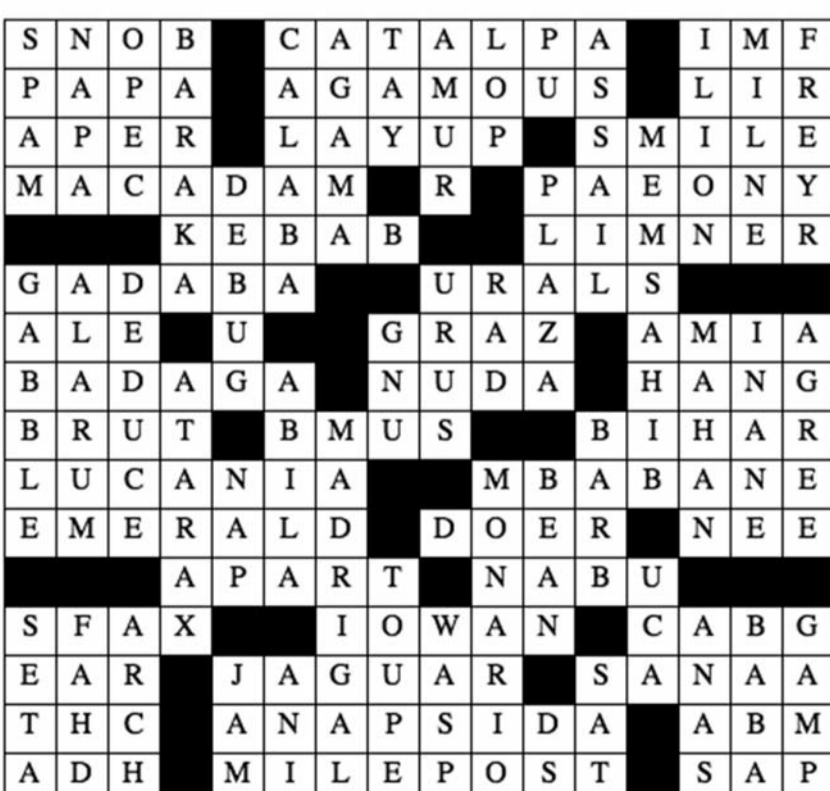
ACROSS

1. (usually followed by 'to') Naturally disposed toward.
4. A dehydrogenated analogue of cortisol (trade names Orasone or Deltasone or Liquid Pred or Meticorten).
11. A hormone produced by the anterior pituitary gland that stimulates the adrenal cortex.
15. The longer of the two telegraphic signals used in Morse code.
16. An employee of a bank who receives and pays out money.
17. A member of the Siouan people formerly living in the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
18. Lower in esteem.
20. Minute floating marine tunicate having a transparent body with an opening at each end.
21. The 13th letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
22. An Indian side dish of yogurt and chopped cucumbers and spices.
23. The chief solid component of mammalian urine.
26. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
27. Not made explicit.
30. Relating to or associated with Arabia or its people.
33. A federation of North American labor unions that merged with the Congress of Industrial Organizations in 1955.
34. The quarter of many North African cities in which the citadel is located.
38. A small island.
42. (computer science) A unit for measuring the execution speed of computers.
43. A South American shrub whose leaves are chewed by natives of the Andes.
44. Horny plate covering and protecting part of the dorsal surface of the digits.
45. A lyric poem with complex stanza forms.
46. A commercial leavening agent containing yeast cells.
48. Swelling from excessive accumulation of serous fluid in tissue.
49. A transparent optical device used to converge or diverge transmitted light and to form images.
51. An indehiscent fruit derived from a single ovary having one or many seeds within a fleshy wall or pericarp.
54. A Kwa language spoken in Ghana and the Ivory Coast.
55. A colorless and odorless inert gas.
56. A sweetened beverage of diluted fruit juice.
59. Bulbous herb of southern Europe widely naturalized.
63. French filmmaker (1908-1982).
67. A mountainous island in eastern Indonesia.
69. Speaking softly without vibration of the vocal cords.
71. Australian shrubs and small trees with evergreen usually spiny leaves and dense clusters of showy flowers.
72. A member of a seafaring group of North American Indians who lived on the Pacific coast of British Columbia and southwestern Alaska.
75. An important seaport on the Island of Cebu in the Philippines.
76. Devoid of warmth and cordiality.
77. A family of birds coextensive with the order Rheiformes.
79. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
80. An American doctorate usually based on at least 3 years graduate study and a dissertation.
81. A Dravidian language spoken in southern India.
82. A small cake leavened with yeast.

DOWN

1. The sixth month of the civil year.
2. A metabolic acid found in yeast and liver cells.
3. Of or relating to or characteristic of Thailand of its people.
4. A large group of islands in the south Pacific including Melanesia and Micronesia and Polynesia (and sometimes Australasia and the Malay Archipelago).
5. An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.
6. An ancient city on the Nile in Egypt.
7. An African river that flows northwest into Lake Chad.
8. Treated with oil.
9. Type genus of the Nepidae.
10. A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
11. Before noon.
12. A rotating disk shaped to convert circular into linear motion.
13. 100 thebe equal 1 pula.
14. (Old Testament) The minister of the Persian emperor who hated the Jews and was hanged for plotting to massacre them.
19. English historian noted for his constitutional history of medieval England (1825-1901).
24. (folklore) Fairies that are somewhat mischievous.
25. A nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (trade name Clinoril).
28. Formerly a term of respect for important white Europeans in colonial India.
29. An amino acid that is found in the central nervous system.
31. Someone who takes spoils or plunder (as in war).
32. Made of wood of the aspen tree n.
35. Lean end of the neck.
36. Male cat.
37. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
39. A branch of the Tai languages.
40. Capital and largest city and economic center of Peru.
41. A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
47. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
50. A dress worn primarily by Hindu women.
52. Tiny lobster-like crustaceans usually boiled briefly.
53. Any of various plants of the genus Althaea.
57. Go ashore.
58. The compass point midway between northeast and east.
60. Being one more than two.
61. A resin used in adhesives and paints.
62. Ash-colored or anemic looking from illness or emotion.
64. A drama set to music.
65. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
66. A popular island resort in the Netherlands Antilles.
68. (used of count nouns) Every one considered individually.
70. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
73. Belonging to or on behalf of a specified person (especially yourself).
74. An agency of the United Nations affiliated with the World Bank.
78. (astronomy) The angular distance of a celestial point measured westward along the celestial equator from the zenith crossing.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

It's time to face your own ghosts before jumping in to tackle the issues of your friends and family. Your role within your peer group can become quite muddled over the months ahead if you don't conquer your fear of getting lost in the crowd. You may be searching for happiness through your relationships, but serenity of mind and heart cannot be found until you first find peace within yourself. Imagine that you could be a caterpillar one moment and a butterfly the next.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Your rigidity can get the best of you today unless you notice the warning signs in time. Observe your tendency to grow agitated while you are defending your position or arguing your point of view. Stop long enough to reconsider your priorities before you engage in any unnecessary power struggles. Your conclusions will help you decide if you need to hold your posture or if you benefit more by letting it go. Out with the old, in with the new.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Your long-held beliefs could be the source of duress today. It's not that the waves of self-doubt are threatening to your well-being, it's just that dancing at the edge may bring up old fears that stand in the way of your creativity. Although your past might be holding you back now, give yourself permission to have fun interacting with others, anyhow. You won't fall over the cliff as long as you stay conscious of the present moment. Counting your blessings inspires you to greater heights.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Maintaining your individual perspective while still remaining receptive to the opinions of others is more complicated than you think. Contrary to your current logic, your uncertainty is not a sign of instability. Instead, it may be more representative of your resiliency, allowing your emotions to move in their naturally fluid manner. Still, it's critical to keep up your regular routine because it's unhealthy to let your needs get washed away in the tides of everyone else's feelings. Paradoxically, building a strong foundation is possible even while going with the flow.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

A sudden epiphany may surprisingly open new doorways in your quest for love and romance. But this newly found awareness won't necessarily make life easier, for you can plainly see where your pride gets in your own way. You are known for your generosity of spirit and have plenty of affection to bestow on others. Rest assured that you can improve your most important relationships by sharing what's on your mind with an open heart. Giving the gift of yourself is a perfect place to start.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You don't feel like following the rules at work today because you're afraid that you might lose the substantial progress you've already made. Usually, your mental flexibility allows you to incorporate new information and make rational choices based upon what you learn. But if you spend time fighting the inevitable now, you may end up missing important facts which can return to bite you later on. Take a deep breath and make a different plan. Luckily, falling back on your innate need for methodical analysis will serve you well.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You might find yourself trapped in a difficult situation today, but this dilemma has probably been brewing for quite a while. However, your frustration reaches a climax now as you realize there isn't an easy way out. Unfortunately, a sudden breakthrough won't necessarily bring you a fast solution. Just keep moving toward your own vulnerability so you come out the other side even stronger. Your emotional authenticity saves the day.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You could be somewhat disconnected from your innermost feelings but, oddly enough, this disassociation won't necessarily make you uncomfortable today. Think of it as a short vacation from your personal world of intensity. You haven't lost anything essential; whatever passion you're missing now will return shortly. There's no reason to panic if you just observe your process and maintain your wicked sense of humor.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Although you may be over the rainbow with optimism today, you still have much to gain by taking life more seriously. Keep the communication channels wide open, even if something pops up on your radar screen that is less than positive. Don't remain silent just to preserve a cavalier appearance. It's more crucial to talk about what is real now than what is possible. Honesty is the best policy for all parties involved.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your tail is dragging today, especially if you haven't been taking proper care of yourself. Your energy is running on empty and the stresses you are currently juggling may seem like just too much to manage. Although your discomfort might be physical, the solution will be found in the spiritual realms now. Rest while you can, for you're going to need all your strength to face the challenges in front of you. Pray now, work later.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Your moods continue to shift throughout the day and your current changeability takes its toll on those closest to you. Still, it's critical to keep expressing your feelings today, regardless of the resistance you might receive from others. Let your fluctuating needs register on the surface, for everyone will see through your attempts to hide them, anyway. Transparency works in your favor when you're telling the truth right from the start.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

A vaguely familiar issue is back for another round of contemplation now. Handling this blast from the past may be rather stressful, for you're not in the mood to talk about your feelings today. The good news is you don't need to say anything at all. This emotional journey is about facing your shortcomings, examining your fears and learning from your mistakes. A little bit of courage goes a long way to pave the road to a brighter future.

WORD SEARCH

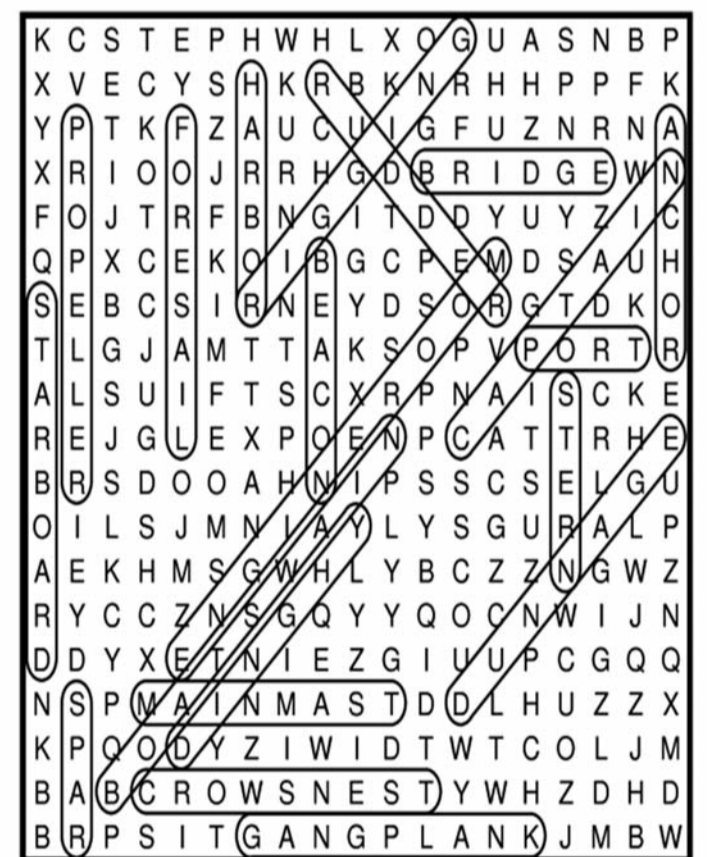
COLONIAL AMERICA WORD SEARCH PUZZLE



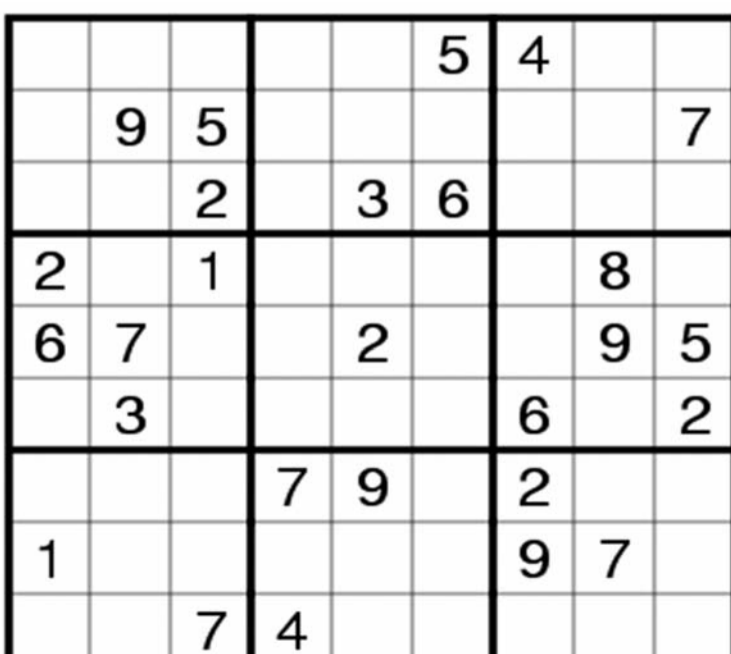
- APOTHECARY
- BENEDICT ARNOLD
- BLACKSMITH
- FARMING
- GREAT AWAKENING
- JAMESTOWN
- MERCANTILISM
- MILLINERY SHOP
- NEW ENGLAND
- PATRICK HENRY
- PILGRIMS
- PURITANS
- QUAKERS
- REVOLUTION
- SERVANTS
- SHIPYARDS
- TOBACCO
- WHEELWRIGHT
- WILLIAM PENN
- WILLIAMSBURG

Yesterday Solution

SOLUTION TO NAUTICALLY YOURS PUZZLE



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Jihadist thriller pulled from cinemas after Paris attacks

A film about a wave of jihadist attacks on Paris due out today has been pulled from cinemas, with the release of a string of others also touching on terrorism now being questioned. "Made in France", about a series of simultaneous attacks on the French capital, had already been dropped by distributors in the wake of the Charlie Hebdo and kosher supermarket shootings in January. Its hard-hitting poster shows a Kalashnikov assault rifle—the weapon used by gunmen in Friday's bloodshed—superimposed on the Eiffel tower, with the tagline, "The threat comes from within" in reference to the sort of homegrown extremists now known to have been behind both attacks on the French capital this year.

The plot of the thriller has eerie parallels with reality, with an extremist cell planning a series of shootings and bombings across Paris "that will shake France" and the world. "We are at war", their leader says, in a chilling counterpoint to President Francois Hollande's words to parliament on Monday. The film's producers ordered the posters be taken down from the city's metro system the morning after the attacks but insisted yesterday it would be wrong if this "brilliant picture" was never shown in cinemas. Director Nicolas Boukhrief told AFP he made the film as an antidote to the "poison" of jihadist propaganda, aiming it at alienated youth in the country's sometimes troubled suburbs.

"History has caught up with the film," said the former journalist, whose father is Algerian, and who began investigating how young people on tough housing estates had become radicalized after Mohamed Merah killed seven people including three Jewish schoolchildren in the 2012 attacks on Toulouse and Montauban in southern France. "The young people in the film are French," he said, "just like the Kouachi brothers" who carried out the Charlie Hebdo



killings and most of the attackers so far identified from Friday's bloodshed.

Cinema 'must open dialogue'

Doubts were also raised about the release of three other French films which touch on the sensitive subject of terror and jihadist brides. "Les Cowboys", which tells the story of a French father's search for his daughter after she runs off

with her Islamist boyfriend to a training camp in Pakistan, was due to be released next week, with "Taj Mahal", about a young girl caught in the 2008 attack on Mumbai, to hit the screens a week later. But the makers of both films told AFP Tuesday they were convinced the openings should go ahead as planned.

"Les Cowboys" producer Alain Attal said it was wrong to call into question whether the film-shot by Thomas

Bidegain, who wrote the Oscar-nominated "A Prophet" should be released because it might upset or offend. "This film is not about what happened (in Paris)... this terrible thing which has happened in front of our eyes and which is traumatizing us. "No, we should not be doubting ourselves. We cannot let guys in cars with Kalashnikovs change the way things are," he argued. Bac Films, distributor of "Taj Mahal", was equally adamant. "In the face of unspeakable terror and religious obscurantism, the cinema is there to open a dialogue," boss Mathieu Robinet told AFP.

'People need to talk'

He said it was important that the story of an 18-year-old French girl stuck alone in her room in the Indian hotel as gunmen roam its corridors was seen right now. "I think people need to talk (about the attacks) and they will need to do so for some weeks yet—just look at what is happening on social media. We need to know who these people are, and this film gives an opening to that." A fourth French feature film has also been caught up in the fall-out from the attacks.

After the January attacks, director Bertrand Bonello had admitted he was "troubled" about links being made with his film, "Paris is a Party", about a group of apolitical young people who bomb the city, which has just been finished. Bonello, best known for "Saint Laurent", his biopic of the fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent, told the Le Monde daily Monday that it was "too complicated" to talk about how and when the film would be released in light of Friday's events. — AFP



I Killed The Prom Queen

Aussie metal band released from Malaysia immigration lock-up

Australian metalcore band I Killed The Prom Queen has been released from a Malaysian immigration detention centre after being held for performing without valid permits, one of its members said. Guitarist Jona Weinhofen said on Twitter the band was freed without charge. "Freedom," he tweeted Monday. "A lot of press is stating we were deported. For the record we were released with no action against us." He added that the head of Malaysia's Immigration Department apologized, but said the band would not likely be back in Malaysia any time soon.

"Sorry Malaysia but after this horrible experience I don't think we will return in a hurry," he tweeted. AFP was unable to reach immigration officials for comment. Weinhofen had earlier tweeted that the show promoter failed to obtain valid visas. He did not say if the band would head home, but

Australian broadcaster ABC reported the group was expected to arrive home yesterday. The five-member outfit, in Malaysia as part of a Southeast Asian tour, were detained late Saturday by immigration officials.

The band was scheduled to perform its next gig in Indonesia on Sunday. Metalcore is a fusion of hard core punk and heavy metal. I Killed The Prom Queen features prominently on the Australian live music scene and has toured the United States and Japan. Foreign musical acts deemed to offend Islamic sensibilities regularly run into difficulties in Muslim-majority Malaysia. American pop star Beyonce has cancelled two shows in recent years, while R&B singer Erykah Badu had a show axed by authorities in 2012 after a photo appeared showing her with the Arabic word for "Allah" painted on her body. — AFP

Teen sensation Alessia Cara on quest to show she's real

Alessia Cara is quickly emerging as a breakout teen star but the singer is determined not only to avoid the pitfalls of celebrity, but to serve as a champion for those who feel out of place. The 19-year-old won unexpected fame from her bedroom in suburban Toronto starting five years ago as she posted cover songs on YouTube, turning her rich soul voice on hits from artists including Lorde, Amy Winehouse and Taylor Swift, who recently invited her to perform at a concert. The covers, accompanied by tongue-in-cheek but strikingly accurate impressions of famous singers, led to a record deal with Def Jam, a prominent label best known for hip-hop, and Cara has spent the last two years writing an album.

Despite her fan base among teens, Cara picked the mature-sounding "Here" as the first single off "Know-It-All," her debut album released on Friday. On "Here," set to an Isaac Hayes soul sample also used in the 1995 song "Glory Box" by English trip-hopsters Portishead, Cara sings with poise of her dread at a party "under clouds of marijuana" and loud but dull music. "Excuse me if I seem a little unimpressed with this / An anti-social pessimist, but usually I don't mess with this," sings Cara, in a voice that brings memories of Winehouse.

Cara insisted on "Here" as the first single, even though "everybody said it's not really safe enough for radio." "I said I didn't care," she told AFP after an album release party held, appropriately, at YouTube's studio in New York. "It showed a side of my personality and it was a good introduction to me as an artist," she said. "I didn't want to be placed in an automatic category of 'teen pop star'... the usual stupid comparisons. I wanted to steer away from that and show people that I'm real."

'Terrified' of fame

The song built slowly into a viral hit after its release in April, fueled by its popularity online. "Here" has been streamed more than 65 million times on Spotify and viewed more than 21 million times on YouTube. Cara credited the song's success to fans who quietly nodded to the message of social isolation at parties, a theme comparatively rare for mainstream teenage pop. "They feel like I've given them a voice or a platform to say 'We feel the same way. We're not feeling it either,'" she said. Cara-fast-talking and quick-witted when discussing her music despite her young age has kept up her flow of covers, recently uploading a version of fellow young Canadian singer Justin Bieber's "Love Yourself." While not mentioning Bieber or other tabloid-headlining stars by name, Cara said she was determined not to wade too far into the minefields of celebrity life.

"I'm not interested in the whole fame side of things and I'm not interested in the spotlight," she said. "I know a lot of artists say that, but I do mean it. I'm terrified of it. I think you've just got to keep the right people around you and hope for the best, and just hope you don't wind up like some other people who have unfortunately fallen to their demise a little bit," she said with a laugh. Yet Cara cites as a model a musician who had a notoriously troubled and brief life—Winehouse. Cara said that Winehouse offered an emotional poignancy with her tales of heartbreak, which the Canadian teenager had not felt directly. "That's when I realized the power of music. I could feel something I've never gone through before." — AFP



Canadian singer Alessia Cara performs at a release party for her debut album, 'Know-It-All,' in the studio of video site YouTube in New York City on November 13, 2015. — AFP



Julia Roberts

Roberts mines trauma in gritty thriller 'Secret in Their Eyes'

Oscar-winning actress Julia Roberts may be best known for her trademark big smile, but in her latest film "Secret in Their Eyes," she taps into a much less glamorous side of herself to play a traumatized police officer. In the film, out in US theaters tomorrow, Roberts plays Jess, a police officer who arrives at a murder scene, only to find that the victim is her daughter. The discovery transforms her from an extroverted joker into a withdrawn, broken individual.

The role was "hugely difficult but really a great opportunity to show such a giant distance in the life of one person," Roberts told Reuters. "I don't think I've ever had a chance to cover so much time with one character," the actress said. The film is a remake of the Argentine 2009 movie "El Secreto de Sus Ojos," which won the best foreign film Oscar. Roberts, 48, has carved a career of often edgy female characters, from the promiscuous Daisy in "Mystic Pizza" and prostitute Vivian in "Pretty Woman," to the feisty trailblazing lead of "Erin Brockovich," the role that won her an Oscar.

In "Secret In Their Eyes," Roberts didn't shy away from appearing in frumpy clothes and minimal makeup with limp hair, saying the role was "not about the superficial." After working in the film industry across four decades, Roberts said her priorities have changed since becoming a parent to three children with cinematographer husband Danny Moder. "I think that passion for film making doesn't drive my life anymore really, but it is a great creative place that I appreciate," she said. "Danny and I being parents to these three small human beings, I think we're passionate about that and keeping them strong and happy and forward moving. It's a huge responsibility." — Reuters

Final 'Hunger Games' film hits big screen

The fourth and final film in the blockbuster "Hunger Games" series—a dystopian fantasy saga that turned Jennifer Lawrence into a Hollywood mega-star—hits the big screen this week and is expected to catch fire at the box office. "The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 2" will bring to a close one of the biggest franchises in Hollywood, which has already grossed more than \$2.2 billion worldwide, according to Lionsgate, the studio that produced the films.

Based on a best-selling trilogy of young adult novels by Suzanne Collins, the movies tell the story of Katniss Everdeen (Lawrence), the teenage heroine pitched into a deadly battle for survival in the macabre post-apocalyptic kingdom of Panem. Lawrence—who at 25 is already an Oscar winner and the world's highest paid actress—recently told reporters in Los Angeles that she found it "bizarre" to be bidding farewell to the character that catapulted her to fame.

"I think it will be pretty bizarre when the movie is finally out and... everything is officially done," said Lawrence, who took home a best actress Academy Award in 2013 for her performance in "Silver Linings Playbook." "This movie has been my life for so many years." "Mockingjay - Part 2" opens in several countries in Europe, Latin America, Asia and the Middle East today, and in the United States on Friday. After battling twice for her life in the "Hunger Games," a reality TV-

style fight to the death, Katniss is now leading rebel forces in a fight to destroy Panem's totalitarian ruler President Snow. Jeff Bock, of the box office tracker Exhibitor Relations, said he expects the movie to rake in \$800 million worldwide—a massive figure but less than the \$865 million earned by "Catching Fire," the second and most successful film in the series so far.

'She inspires me'

Hollywood veteran Donald Sutherland, who plays the tyrannical Snow, said he hopes "The Hunger Games" will give youngsters the world over hope for the future. "The intent of this-for Suzanne Collins, for me, everyone actually who was involved in this project—is that it would be a catalyst for young people all over the world, everywhere," Sutherland said at the film's world premiere in Berlin earlier this month. "That they would see in it their doom, and the possibility for a decent future." The premiere of the film in Los Angeles on Monday was scaled back in the wake of the terror attacks in Paris, with no interviews scheduled after the screening.

"Out of respect for the very recent events in Paris, we have decided to modify our red carpet and we will not conduct interviews at Monday's 'Mockingjay 2' premiere," Lionsgate said in a statement. "We will proceed with the rest

of the event as planned in honor of the incredible fans who have always supported our films with such passion." Parts of the final installment of the series were shot in Paris and Berlin. But while the cast gave no interviews, they all wore Mockingjay ribbons bearing the French flag. "Our hearts are with you France where we have so many amazing fans," actress Elizabeth Banks, who plays Effie Trinket in the movie, tweeted before the premiere.

Also appearing in the final film are Lawrence's co-stars from the start, Liam Hemsworth and Josh Hutcherson, as well as Oscar winner Julianne Moore, Woody Harrelson and the late Philip Seymour Hoffman in his final screen role. In the German capital this month, Lawrence said she was inspired by Katniss, known as the "Girl on Fire." "She is kind, she is ruthless, she is independent-minded. She is strong but merciful," Lawrence told reporters. "I wish that I could have a percentage of her courage and thoughtfulness. She inspires me in every way." — AFP



Josh Hutcherson poses for photographers at the Los Angeles premiere of 'The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 2' at the Microsoft Theater on Monday. — AP photos



Liam Hemsworth, from left, Jennifer Lawrence and Josh Hutcherson attend the Los Angeles premiere of 'The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 2'.



In this Monday, Jan 14, 2013, file photo, actor Charlie Sheen is mobbed for autographs and photos as he makes his way through Times Square in New York. — AP photos



Actor Charlie Sheen (right) has his photo taken with Al Roker on the set of the Today Show before formally announcing that he is H.I.V. positive in an interview with Matt Lauer.

Charlie Sheen says he has HIV virus

Former "Two and a Half Men" star Charlie Sheen has the HIV virus. In an interview yesterday on NBC's "Today," the 50-year-old Sheen said he tested positive for the virus that causes AIDS. But when asked by "Today" co-host Matt Lauer if he had transmitted the disease to others, he declared, "Impossible. Impossible." He said he was diagnosed about four years ago. He said one reason for going public with his condition was to put a stop to shakedown from prostitutes and others who threatened to out him. He said he had paid "enough to bring it into the millions" - perhaps as much as \$10 million - to buy their silence and now was seeking to "put a stop to this barrage of

attacks and sub-truths."

He said one prostitute took a photo of the HIV-related drugs in his medicine cabinet and threatened to sell it to the tabloids. "Are you still paying these people?" Lauer asked him. "Not after today I'm not," Sheen said. With his public pronouncement he said he hoped to reduce the stigma still felt by some diagnosed with HIV. "I have a responsibility now to better myself and to help a lot of other people," he said. "And hopefully with what we're doing today, others may come forward and say, 'Thanks, Charlie, for kicking the door open.'"

The disclosure was only the latest chapter in

Sheen's headline-seizing behavior. In recent years, drug and alcohol use led to his being kicked off CBS' "Two and a Half Men" in 2011 after an explosive meltdown that included calling the show's producer "a contaminated little maggot." His escapades also included the revelation that he spent more than \$50,000 as a client of "Hollywood Madam" Heidi Fleiss' prostitution ring. "Two and a Half Men" debuted in 2003 and starred Sheen as womanizing bachelor Charlie Harper. It made Sheen one of TV's highest-paid actors and at its peak was TV's most-watched sitcom. It ended its run earlier this year, after Ashton Kutcher stepped in for the fired Sheen.

In 2012, Sheen returned to TV in "Anger Management," an FX sitcom adapted from the movie of the same name. Sheen has been wed three times, the first time to model Donna Peele in the 1990s. He and actress Denise Richards were married from 2002-2006 and have two daughters. Sheen and real estate investor Brooke Mueller wed in 2008 and divorced in 2011; they have two sons. Sheen said he had informed her of his diagnosis. — AP

Amr Waked reflects on Paris attacks: 'We are far braver' than terrorists

Amr Waked is Egypt's biggest international star, seen most recently playing the French cop in Luc Besson's "Lucy" and as Yusuf, the Khan's Vice Regent, in Netflix TV series "Marco Polo." He is also a producer of Arab films, including political drama "Winter of Discontent," set against the backdrop of the Tahrir Square protests. Waked spoke to Variety about his reflections regarding the Paris terrorist attacks.

Reuters: Aside from the shock, what are some of your reactions and thoughts about the terrorism in Paris?

Amr Waked: Terrorism tries to collapse societies through threats that destroy confidence and courage and faith in the social fabric. And they use hate as part of their scheme to make societies not just hurt, but also self-implode. The most important thing we should be focusing on is not to cave in against fear and hate. We have much more love, and are far braver than people who are snatching an opportunity to kill civilians who have nothing to do with any conflict whatsoever.



Reuters: Does this kind of climate affect what you do as an Arab actor?

Waked: Of course it does. It affects the types of roles you get offered. It signals that I might be getting more terrorist roles, while instead I want to be playing more ordinary Muslim characters. This is what we need to put at the frontline of the media: that the vast overwhelming majority of Arabs are normal, and are fighting with all of you for the same cause.

Reuters: As a producer, you have been active in delving into the roots of political violence in Egypt. Do you feel that there is something that can be done about the type of violence we saw most recently in Paris?

Waked: It's very difficult for me to know how to stop this. But if we could manage to create an environment of true justice in the Middle East, with all its cases of injustice and conflict, I think that would be the solution. I'm not trying to blame anyone, I'm just trying to find a reason. I see plenty of desperate people in the Middle East.

Reuters: Can you elaborate a little on that?

Waked: Whether it's within the Arab world or the invasion of parts of Palestine, or revolutions, or the Sunni against Shia conflict within Muslims, all of these I think stem from a systematic injustice that generates so many difficulties and harm to citizens that they go and take risks that get them killed.

Reuters: So these factors are at the root of the problem?

Waked: I really don't know what the reason is. It's a very complex situation. I don't know what the real true motivations of these terrorists are. I find it very difficult to understand and comprehend.

Reuters: How is anyone winning like this?

Waked: I'm just looking at the human motivations that I search for as an actor. But I can't find them!

Reuters: You clearly don't think there is an easy fix. Only a fool would. But is there any hope of a solution?

Waked: I guess you keep trying to fix things until it stops. I think the Middle East needs a lot of fixing internally. The people themselves, they have tried to struggle against this environment they are living in by making revolutions, and they are still struggling. I'm not politicizing; it's a social phenomenon. The solution is to create equality across the globe, so that less people are despondent in the world. So that there is no reason for you to be disappointed in your life. I think this is what we should always be trying to do. Try to make a world that is less disappointing for our children. Well the only thing one can hope for at this stage is that instead of an escalation we could instead start seeing the first steps of a positive process. I really hope so. I have faith personally. I haven't been entirely robbed of it yet. — Reuters



This three-picture series shows US singer Barbra Streisand (left); US director Steven Spielberg (center); and Israeli-American violinist Itzhak Perlman (right). — AFP

Spielberg, Streisand to get Presidential Medal of Freedom

Movie mogul Steven Spielberg, singer-director Barbra Streisand, and songwriter James Taylor are among the 17 people to be awarded a Presidential Medal of Freedom, the White House announced Monday. "I look forward to presenting these 17 distinguished Americans with our nation's highest civilian honor," President Barack Obama said. "From public servants who helped us meet defining challenges of our time to artists who expanded our imaginations, from leaders who have made our union more perfect to athletes who have inspired millions of fans, these men and women have enriched our lives and helped define our shared experience as Americans," he added.

Among other entertainment stars to be honored are music producer Emilio Estefan and pop star Gloria Estefan, a Cuban American couple seen as trailblazers for being Spanish-language stars who successfully crossed over to the English-language market. Grammy-winner Itzhak Perlman and composer-lyricist Stephen Sondheim also will receive the honor together with the likes of Spielberg, the director and philanthropist whose films include blockbusters such as "Jaws," "Jurassic Park," "E.T.: The

Extra-Terrestrial," and the "Indiana Jones" series.

Baseball great Willie Mays will be honored alongside fellow legend Yogi Berra, who will get a posthumous award. Public servants to be lauded include the late Shirley Chisholm, who became the first black US congresswoman in 1968. She later ran for president as a Democrat, and was a professor at Mount Holyoke College. The late Minoru Yasui also is to be honored. The attorney challenged the constitutionality of a military curfew order during World War II on the grounds of racial discrimination. He was in solitary confinement during the legal process and spent much of his life appealing his wartime conviction.

"At the time of his death in 1986, he had successfully convinced a trial court to vacate his arrest, and a case challenging the constitutionality of his conviction was pending before the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit," a White House statement said. The awards ceremony will take place at the White House on November 24. — AFP

OSN signs long-term output agreement with Warner Bros International Television Distribution

In a landmark deal that underlines OSN's pre-eminent position as the home of blockbuster movies and series, the region's leading pay-TV network has signed an exclusive output agreement with Warner Bros International Television Distribution for 'first and exclusive' access to its premium content for the Middle East and North Africa.

The long-term agreement between the region's leading pay-TV/Video-on-demand provider and Hollywood's leading studio, has been extended till 2020. This means, OSN subscribers will have continued first and exclusive access to Warner Bros' diverse breadth of blockbuster movies in the shortest possible span after their theatrical release as well as its top-rated award-winning TV series. OSN aims to offer some key shows, at the 'same minute' as they premiere in the US.

OSN subscribers can access all of Warner Bros content in full HD on both OSN pay-TV channels and on catch-up basis via OSN On Demand and OSN Play, the award-winning online viewing platform, assuring convenient access to OSN's premium content anytime, anywhere.

David Butorac, CEO of OSN, said: "This is a milestone partnership that enhances our content delivery and demonstrates our focus on delivering outstanding entertainment for our subscribers. Long-term deals with the world's leading entities in the entertainment sector such as Warner Bros, enables OSN to stay ahead of the market with exclusive content. This is a significant strength that we bring to the industry, which is unbeatable."

Jeffrey Schlesinger, President, Warner Bros

Worldwide Television Distribution said: "OSN has quickly become as the top-rated and fastest growing pay-TV network in the MENA region, one of the key markets for Warner Bros. Through this deal, we will deliver our premium content spanning hit movies, popular TV series to OSN's subscribers exclusively."

OSN subscribers will have the unbeatable opportunity of accessing Warner's premium portfolio of blockbuster movies such as Gravity, Interstellar, The Lego Movie and 300: Rise of an Empire; franchises including The Hangover, Superman and The Hobbit. Viewers can also look forward to an upcoming slate of potential hits like Mad Max: Fury Road, The Man From U.N.C.L.E. and Entourage and superhero movies from the DC universe such as Batman v Superman and the entire Justice League franchise.

Khulud Abu Homos, OSN's Executive Vice President for Programming, said: "Warner Bros is a top-rated content creator and a world leader in premium and popular entertainment, with one of the largest portfolios of mega-hit movies. Through the agreement, OSN becomes the ultimate home for top-notch, exclusive Hollywood entertainment for the next five years. We will be the first to telecast blockbuster movies from Warner Bros in our region following their theatrical release, providing unmatched value for our subscribers."

OSN will also be the home of all of Warner's upcoming TV series and will continue to exclusively screen hit shows such as The Flash, Supernatural, 2 Broke Girls, Two and a Half Men and The Ellen DeGeneres Show, among others.



With radio show, Blige encourages life with 'no more drama'

R&B star Mary J Blige is hoping she can offer love and support to those who "are sitting in their car in traffic about to jump out and kill somebody or kill themselves" with a positive and inspirational radio show. The singer, who launched "Real Talk" this month on Apple Music's Beats 1 Radio, said she wants to motivate fans with her show - much like her songs have. "So many people out there are hurting and there are so many people out there that need to be reached, and there are so many people I wish I could ... give a word of encouragement to," Blige said in an interview last week. "If I can reach somebody and say, '...You're beautiful and I go through the same things, too, and right now I'm thinking the same thing' - it means so much to them."

Blige, 44, added that if she "could have had Michael Jackson on a radio station back then, or had Janet Jackson talk to me when I was growing up, it would have meant the world to me." Each episode of her show will be named after songs by Blige, whose hits include "Not Gon' Cry," "Real Love," "Family Affair" and "No More Drama." Her first show, "My Life," looked back at her groundbreaking 1994 sophomore album of the same name. "It was special to me because I got a chance to express to people that didn't know exactly what was happening during the making of the 'My Life' album and what I was dealing with," said Blige, who was battling drug addiction at the time. "Although I've come a long way and I've recovered and I'm strong and no one's going to hurt me again - or I would hope that no one hurts me again - just the feeling, just the nostalgia, just the memories are all very vivid and the same."

Uplifting and inspiring

Her next episode, debuting Saturday and called "Doubt," will include Demi Lovato, the 23-year-old singer-actress who entered rehab in 2010 to deal with an eating disorder, self-mutilation and other issues. "It's really deep, it's really heavy, but it's really uplifting and inspiring. She speaks to a whole other generation that needs help, that's committing suicide every single day," Blige said. "Hopefully it helps someone." Jimmy Iovine, who encouraged Blige to do the show, said when he worked with the singer at Interscope Records he thought she would be a great TV talk-show host.

"She's that girl. She's very powerful at articulating her truth and making people feel very comfortable when they're around her," Iovine said in an interview. "I feel that she's a natural for this and we love giving her the platform." On her show, Blige also tried to recreate her Beats 1 Radio commercial with Taraji P Henson and Kerry Washington, which went viral after it debuted during the Emmy Awards in September. — AP



This Oct 12, 2015 photo provided by Apple shows, Demi Lovato, left, and Mary J Blige, during episode 2 of Blige's new radio show, "Real Talk." — AP photos



Taraji P Henson left, and Mary J Blige, during episode 3 of Blige's new radio show, "Real Talk."



A drone hovering by a skier as he makes his way down mountainside at resort at Revelstoke, BC, Canada. — AP photos



This March 2015 image taken from a drone shows skiers making their way down mountainside at Big White Ski Resort near Kelowna, BC, Canada.



This December 2014 image taken from a drone shows skiers making their ways down a mountainside at resort at Revelstoke, BC, Canada.

Many ski areas outlining bans of drone use

If camera-toting drones follow the ubiquitous trend of skiers strapped with point-of-view cameras, could we see a deluge of aerial quadcopters at resorts across the high country? Not if ski resorts can stop it. Resorts across the US are hedging against snowy vistas clogged by drones by adopting - many in the last season - explicit bans on the wildly popular aerial cameras. "We just felt it was necessary to cover the resort and be ahead of any issues that could potentially occur," said Erica Mueller, a spokeswoman for Crested Butte Mountain Resort, which is among dozens of ski areas that recently outlined a ban on unmanned aerial vehicles.

The National Ski Areas Association in Lakewood, which represents 330 ski areas, has crafted a sample drone policy that most resorts have adopted. The idea of drones proliferating on par with the growth of helmet-mounted POV cameras raises serious concerns for the trade group, which is working with the Federal Aviation Administration and the US Forest Service to help sculpt drone policy. (The FAA recently estimated more than 1 million drones will be given as holiday gifts this season.) "This notion of drones flying all over ski areas, it's something that is on a lot of operators' minds right now. They don't want it, and I don't think their guests want it," said Dave Byrd, the director of risk and regulatory affairs for the National Ski Areas Association.

But resort operators also are imagining beneficial uses of the flying camera technology and even pondering how guests could be allowed to use drones in controlled situations. In a 15-page memo to the FAA, which offered proposed drone regulations in February but has yet to issue a final plan for incorporating unmanned aircraft systems into US air space, Byrd suggested potential regulations for broader use of drones at ski areas. After-dark searches and rescue operations could benefit from the technology. Resorts could inspect lifts and spot potential fires during wildfire season. Commercial uses could help market a resort and promote events.

Safety protocol

The FAA seems receptive, and Byrd said he thinks ski areas could be the testing ground for the agency's new regulations. "I think they see ski areas having a lot of potential for being on the cutting edge of drone use," Byrd said. "Ski areas are generally rural and far from airports, and we have a strong track record for risk management and safety protocol." The Forest Service oversees the land used by 120 ski areas in the US, including 21 of Colorado's 24. The agency is working with its ski areas to develop specific drone policies that will be reviewed annually and approved as a condition of their special use permit. Those policies give resorts the ability to approve some drone use - like during the X Games at Buttermilk, which borders the Aspen airport - for marketing or special events.

The Forest Service already requires commercial filming operations to pay a fee and secure a permit. Those filmmakers now need authorization from the FAA and must have insurance to protect the resort, said Don Dressler, who manages the Forest Service's ski area permits in the Rocky Mountain region. Resort angst over a potential drone invasion certainly wasn't helped when rotor-mounted camera maker Lily Robotics this spring announced its throw-and-go autonomous flying camera with a video taken while the lifts were turning and guests were skiing at Mount Rose in California.

That same week, GoPro founder Nick Woodman announced his company had a flying four-rotor camera in development.

Professional quality

"I was really surprised to see how quickly the general consumer was adopting quadcopters," Woodman said on stage at the tech industry's Code Conference in May. "Quads plus GoPro has been one of the most democratized combinations, enabling people to capture professional quality content and seeing themselves in their environ-

ment in a way they have never seen before." The buzz has sent ski areas scrambling. The National Ski Areas Association in June sent a letter urging Lily founder Antoine Balaresque to stop using ski resorts in its marketing and promotions. "It would be deceptive - if not dishonest - for Lily to suggest or imply that skiers and boarders will be able to use these drones at ski areas in the United States," the letter from Byrd read. "There are serious safety and risk management considerations with the operations of drones by guests at ski areas." Byrd said he never heard back from Balaresque. That same month, Byrd wrote the blanket ban on drone use.

The restriction of most drones at ski areas is opening doors for commercial outfits that have FAA permits to fly unmanned aerial vehicles. The FAA has issued permits - known as Section 333 exemptions - to 1,742 operators through the end of September. The permits require those companies to follow FAA regulations that require "all flight operations must be conducted at least 500 feet from all nonparticipating persons."

That pretty much means even permitted operators would be prohibited from flying at ski resorts. Bay Area-based Cape Productions, which officially launches next week, is working with the ski area association, the FAA and the Forest Service for a first-of-its-kind permit that would allow them to establish commercial drone filming operations for ski resort guests. The process has been tough, founder Jason Soll said. "It's been a mess of lawyers from all these different agencies trying to interpret these ambiguous laws and butting heads."

Ski industry

Still, eight resorts - including Winter Park and Copper Mountain - are interested in hosting the ski industry's first commercial drone filming service, Soll said. If he can get the FAA's OK, the idea is to establish specific zones at a ski area for filming. Those zones, with "air rails" that serve like

virtual guide wires, will keep the commercial-grade camera toting drones on specific flight paths. Not surprisingly, Soll is a fan of resorts banning consumer drones. Those UAVs, he said, are unpredictable and dangerous. The new technology behind the personal quadcopter is not safe, he said. "And ski resorts might be the most difficult place to fly them," he said.

Soll is working with ski insurance providers, resort executives, ski patrollers and risk managers. His company will carry \$5 million insurance policies at each resort. He plans to launch his service in December. "In the end, we are here to help the industry and make sure we are getting more people, especially young people, excited to go to their local ski resort," said Soll, hitting the millennial hot buttons that top today's ski industry talking points. "People should be buying videos, not drones. That's what they want in the end. I disagree with Nick Woodman and the others who think there is going to be some personal computer moment with drones, where everyone has one."

Byrd envisions a time - after the FAA issues its drone regulations, which are expected by early 2017 - when some resorts craft more permissive policies. He sees potential "drone zones," where ski areas, like Boyne Resorts' Big Sky in Montana, for example, allow customers to fly drones in controlled settings - perhaps every other Sunday in one of its four terrain parks. "Some resorts, I think they are trying to figure out how they are going to capitalize on drones," Byrd said. "There's this tension. The millennials, they want to capture everything they do and put it on social media. We are wrestling with this tension between safety for the general public and satisfying that millennial demand." — AP



In this March 13, 2015 file photo, a snowboarder and skier ride the Chondola ski lift at the Sunday River ski resort in Newry, Maine. — AP photos



This Nov 23, 2013, file photo, shows Park City from a trail at the Park City Mountain Resort, in Park City, Utah.

Ski Season around the world



In this Oct 29, 2015 file photo, snowboarders tear down a run during opening day at Loveland Ski Area in Georgetown, Colo.



This Nov 15, 2015 photo released by Killington Resort shows skiers at Killington Resort in Killington, Vt.



In this Jan 28, 2015 file photo, people cross-country ski in Lake Placid, NY.



In this Nov 10, 2015 file photo, a skier goes head over heels while doing a flip at Boreal Mountain Resort near Donner Summit, Calif.



In this Oct 29, 2015 file photo, a skier goes airborne during opening day at Arapahoe Basin in Dillon, Colo.



In this Nov 10, 2015 file photo, a snowboarder makes a hard landing after going over a jump at the Boreal Mountain Resort near Donner Summit, Calif.



In this May 19, 2012 photo provided by Jennifer Paik, maid of honor Paik, third from left, poses with bride and best friend, Joo Cha, center, and her bridesmaids at Chais wedding in Newport Beach, Calif. — AP photos



In this May 19, 2012 photo provided by Jennifer Paik, maid of honor, Paik, right, and bride and best friend, Joo Cha, pose for a photo on the day of Cha's wedding in Newport Beach, Calif.

Being a good maid of honor: 5 tips from the pros

Jennifer Paik has been a maid of honor not once, not twice, but an impressive four times, most recently for her childhood best friend's Newport Beach, California, yacht wedding three years ago. The hardest part of the gig, according to the 34-year-old New York City real estate consultant? Writing and delivering the maid of honor's wedding toast.

The first time she gave one of those speeches, at age 27, it was "terrible," too improvised. She nailed it this last time, she said, by sticking to a friend's advice: Tell stories. Her best friend loved it. "The guests could not stop laughing, and her husband still jokes that she did not shed a single tear the entire wedding except during my speech!" Paik said. Five more tips from wedding experts on how to be a good maid of honor:

1. Support the bride

While a maid of honor has many traditional duties, from helping the bride shop for a dress to organizing the bridal shower - plus holding the wedding bouquet and the groom's ring - her main role is making sure the bride is happy. So be enthusiastic! "Even if the ideas the bride has sound horrible to you and are not your style, remember that to her they're great," said wedding planner Elizabeth Brandon, owner of the Los Angeles-based Wink! Weddings. "Try to take everything with a grain of salt. This day is about her."

2. Be a buffer

Being head bridesmaid means running interference between the bride and her other bridesmaids or any meddling family members. "Be kind to your bride and help with internal squabbles among the bridesmaids," said Yolanda Crous, features and travel director of Brides Magazine. Get together with the other bridesmaids and let everyone vent, she says. "Feel free to let loose."

On the day of the wedding, ask the bride for a list of the people with whom she'd like to interact, since she'll be bombarded all day. If her new mother-in-law ticked her off during the week, steer her away from the bride, said Brandon. "You can take the mother-in-law over to that amazing cookie bar while the bride stays on the dance floor with her champagne and is happy," she said.

3. Don't go overboard planning the shower and bachelorette party

"It can be super-easy to get carried away and plan a bridal shower that you think is perfect and would make Martha Stewart proud. But if it's one the bride doesn't want, you would be in a world of trouble," Brandon said. She warned against any out-of-left-field "ta-dah!" moments, such as a surprise dance that could make a bride want to sprint for the hills. And don't be afraid to ask the bride for help if your schedule is packed. "You might say, 'Can I have a couple of bridesmaids co-host with me?'" said Brandon, who planned her own LA wedding 11 months ago. She chose her then 20-year-old sister as her maid of honor, and asked one of her best friends to organize the shower.

ding 11 months ago. She chose her then 20-year-old sister as her maid of honor, and asked one of her best friends to organize the shower.

4. Make the bridal suite fun, clean, well-stocked

On the day of the wedding, the bridal suite is home base for the bride and her bridesmaids to get ready. Have an emergency kit on hand in case she spills something, loses a button or needs a bobby pin, said Crous. "Bring some snacks," and keep the bride and bridesmaids from drinking too much, she added. Brandon suggested making "the best getting-ready music playlist ever." And tidy up afterward.

5. Keep the toast short and sweet

Finally, when it comes time to hoist the champagne and toast the bride, keep it short, said Crous, and don't embarrass her.

"Don't do the thing where you dredge up things from the bride's past to be funny," she said. "Humor is great! But be funny and kind. You're better off doing something simple and emotional and from the heart." For Paik, being there for her friend of 25 years was more than worth the effort. "Though she would be the first to describe herself as neurotic and demanding, she was the ideal bride - decisive, mindful of everyone's time and money, and flexible," Paik said. — AP



In this May 19, 2015 photo provided by Jennifer Paik, Paik, center, delivers the maid of honor wedding toast at her best friend Joo Chais wedding in Newport Beach, Calif.



Home Centre announces regional launch of latest annual catalogue

Home Centre, the region's leading name in home retail, has announced the launch of its much-anticipated 2015/16 annual catalogue. Featuring an array of new designs and concepts for home decoration, the catalogue fulfills Home Centre's promise of inspiring beautiful homes for the last 20 years.

Every year, the annual catalogue offers customers consistent newness and a guarantee of quality products at a great value. Yet again, this edition will reflect the year's global trends in home furnishing, customized and presented beautifully for regional shoppers.

The catalogue features more than 195 new inspirational styles. A distinct focus this year is on 'The Collections' - an exclusive range of discerning furniture that can weave harmony into homes with a cohesive range of furniture for the living, dining and bedroom. Creating a strong sense of design synergy for

the entire home will be simple with The Collections, as beautiful details and colour palettes find resonance from one room to the next. The Collections - Juliette, Helen and Prestige - will offer customers affordable luxury for the entire home.

The catalogue is designed to appeal to Home Centre's diverse customer base. While there are classic elegant options to choose from, those looking for glamorous, modern designs in store will not be disappointed either. In addition to furniture, customers will also get a glimpse of Home Centre's wide assortment of lighting and home accessories, as well as bath, bedroom and kitchen essentials in this edition.

Now available at all Home centre stores - Al-Rai, Shuwaikh, Awqaf and Fahaheel and The Avenues - The Mall.





Indian Hindu devotees offer prayers during the 'Chhath Puja' on the banks of the Brahmaputra River in Guwahati yesterday. Devotees pay obeisance to both the rising and the setting sun during the Chhath Festival, expressing thanks and seeking the blessings of the forces of nature, mainly the sun and rivers. — AFP

Love and life advice from Nigeria's Instagram agony aunt

A cheating husband, domestic violence, marital problems or a complicated love life are standard fare for agony aunts across the world. But in religiously conservative northern Nigeria, which has a Muslim majority, asking for advice in public has traditionally been frowned upon and problems kept within the family. Ziya'atulhaqq Usman Tahir and her Instagram page looks to be changing that with an overwhelming response that shows a true desire, if not need, for such help. From her base in the northeastern city of Bauchi, Tahir, 27, uses her [instagram.com/fatibolady](https://www.instagram.com/fatibolady) page for women to share their concerns anonymously and get advice from others.

"This is the pioneer social media platform giving women the opportunity to share their problems and get solutions for them," she told AFP by phone. "It is a social space that helps women to unwind by pouring out their anguish bottled up inside and seek honest opinions on how best to tackle such problems." The page, with posts in English and the local Hausa language, also provides a forum for debate on other social

issues, including drug addiction, child delinquency, financial problems and divorce.

Increasing popularity

It all started three months ago when Tahir, who had been writing her thoughts on "love from (a) northern perspective", decided to post the dilemma of a young girl in a doomed relationship. "She was not ready to heed to my advice so I told her I would post it for all my contacts to see and wait for their responses, which turned out to be overwhelming," she explained. "This was how it all started." Since then, the page's popularity has snowballed and now boasts more than 24,000 followers while its 400 posts have generated over two million responses.

"Due to the huge volume of posts and responses we receive we decided to post every day of the week. At least 1,000 people send responses every day," said Tahir. This innovative approach to solving "marital chaos" is a departure from the ways in which

some women in Nigeria's Muslim-majority north tackle the problems of daily life. The consumption of codeine-laced cough syrup has been used by some women to block out problems and became such an issue for the authorities that its sale and manufacture was banned. Despite the ban, Nigeria's anti-narcotics agency the NDLEA said on Thursday at least 30,000 bottles of cough syrup were consumed in the north every day.

'Tip of the iceberg'

According to Tahir, the anonymous nature of the online chats coupled with a relative rise in literacy levels and awareness among traditionally shy northern women has helped them open up. "Family problems are seen as domestic affairs which no outsiders should be involved in, which mostly leaves the woman at the receiving end," she said. "But more women are now coming out of their shells to talk about the depravity they are facing in their relationships." One of five cases of domestic violence posted on her page is in court awaiting judgment,

after followers urged the women to seek legal action, said Tahir.

She accepted it was difficult to know exactly what kind of impact the forum has had on such women but maintained the interactions were clearly of "enormous help". "I have received over 100 emails of commendation and encouragement from some of the affected women who benefited from the advice they received," she said. "I believe they are only a tip of the iceberg." With the increased interest, Tahir has brought in professionals such as gynaecologists, psychologists, lawyers and marriage guidance counselors to act as "jurors" and dispense more informed advice. "My ambition is... to have our own TV show to allow people to interact physically with a range of experts in various endeavors and get the best advice on their social problems," she added. — AFP

The largest collection of 007 vehicles in the world



A James Bond enthusiast looks at the burnt Jaguar C-X75.



British special effects coordinator Chris Corbould sits in the ejector seat of an Aston Martin.



The Aston Martin DB10 and black suit used in the filming of new Bond film Spectre join the largest collection of 007 vehicles in the world, at the London Film Museum, London, yesterday. — AP photos