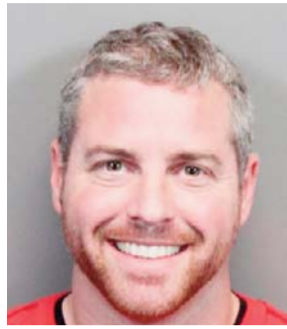




Local farmer gives away 100,000 saplings



Opaque US military justice shields child sex abuse cases



The Real Fouz: Essential factors for success



Shock as All Black legend Lomu dies aged 40



IS EXECUTES CHINESE, NORWEGIAN HOSTAGES

GROUP SAYS 'SCHWEPPE'S BOMB' DOWNED RUSSIAN PLANE



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TWO KILLED IN FIERCE PARIS POLICE RAID

PARIS: A woman blew herself up and a suspected jihadist was killed yesterday in a massive police assault in Paris targeting the possible mastermind of France's worst-ever terror attacks. Gunfire and explosions rocked the Saint-Denis area in the north of the city, near the Stade de France stadium, from before dawn as terrified residents were evacuated or told to stay home. After a siege lasting several hours between security forces and a group of people holed up in an apartment, heavily armed police arrested seven people. Five police officers suffered minor injuries.

Elite police were seen hauling away a naked suspect in the streets near where three suicide bombers blew themselves up outside the stadium at the start of Friday's attacks. After the raid, white-suited forensic experts swarmed the building where the windows appeared to have blasted out, as police tried to verify if Abdelhamid Abaaoud, the suspected mastermind of Friday's attacks in Paris that killed 129 people, had been inside.

Paris prosecutor Francois Molins said a probe into the attacks had allowed police "to obtain telephonic surveillance and witness testimony which led us to believe that Abaaoud was likely to be in an... apartment in Saint-Denis". However, Molins said it was too early to say if he was among those arrested or killed. Some of the survivors of the assault had tried to hide in the rubble of the badly damaged building, the prosecutor said.

A source close to the investigation said the dead woman might have been Abaaoud's cousin, while the Washington Post quoted senior intelligence officials as saying Abaaoud himself had died in the shootout. Molins said none of the bodies had been identified, adding only that Abaaoud was not amongst those detained.

Continued on Page 13



PARIS: Forensics officers of the French police search for evidence outside a building in the northern suburb of Saint-Denis yesterday, where French police special forces raided an apartment, in which at least two militants were killed and seven arrested. — AFP

CAIRO: Islamic State said in the latest edition of its English language magazine yesterday that it had killed a Chinese and a Norwegian captive, showing what appeared to be pictures of the dead men under a banner reading "Executed". "We condemn the killing," Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg said, while adding that the government was still seeking further verification. "We have no grounds to doubt the contents of the photos that have been published," Foreign Minister Boerge Brende added.

In September, Solberg said a Norwegian man had been held hostage in Syria since January and was believed to be in the hands of Islamic State. She said Norway did not intend to pay a ransom for his release. Solberg said the man, named by the foreign ministry as Ole Johan Grimsgaard-Ofstad, was in his 40s and had been held by several groups since he was first captured.

Continued on Page 13



An undated picture shows a picture of an explosive, apparently contained in a soda can, used to bring down a Russian airliner. — AP

News

in brief

Two die from seasonal flu

KUWAIT: Two seasonal-influenza death cases were announced by the health ministry yesterday. The deaths were mainly due to chronic diseases the two patients had before they contracted the flu, the ministry's assistant undersecretary Dr Majedah Al-Qattan told KUNA. The first death was reported on Tuesday, while the second one was announced yesterday, she added. The first case was that of a person who had a myocardial heart failure and angina pectoris, while the second case was that of a 68-year old who suffered from diabetes, high blood pressure and kidney problems.

Two Saudi police shot dead in east

RIYADH: Two Saudi policemen were shot dead yesterday when they came under fire in the kingdom's east, where most of the minority Shiite community live, the interior ministry said. The pre-dawn attack happened near a farm in the Saihat area of Qatif, on the Gulf coast. A ministry spokesman said the suspect or suspects in the "terrorist crime" had not immediately been identified. Hussein Al-Nemr, who lives in the area, said the early morning shooting happened near a highway checkpoint. He passed it later but could see no signs of what happened. It is the latest incident in Eastern Province as police continue to hunt suspects on a list of 23 wanted people issued in 2011 after Shiites began protests.

Woman elected head of UAE advisory parliament

ABU DHABI: A woman was elected yesterday as the first female to lead the UAE's Federal National Council, the half-elected parliament that serves as an advisory body, state news agency WAM reported. Amal Al-Qubaisi, previously FNC deputy speaker, was elected as speaker after the new council convened following October polls. Local media said she was not challenged for the post. Eight women in total were appointed as members of the 40-seat council, which has a purely advisory role and whose seats are shared equally between elected and appointed members. This year, 224,000 people had the right to vote out of a citizen population of just under one million. That compared with 129,000 in 2011 and just 6,000 in the UAE's first election in 2006. The electoral roll is drawn up by the rulers of the seven sheikhdoms that make up the United Arab Emirates, who also appoint the remaining FNC members.

MPs LOWER MINORS' AGE TO 16 IN NEW LAW

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly yesterday approved a new law for delinquent juveniles in which the age of minors was lowered from 18 to 16 years in a bid to help authorities curb a sharp increase in the crime rate. The law was approved in the first reading by 37 MPs including Cabinet ministers, opposed by seven lawmakers, while two members abstained. The second and final round of voting is scheduled to take place after two weeks.

The approval came after a large number of MPs urged the government to crack down on violence and crimes, especially drugs-related crimes, which the interior minister said was spreading among teenagers. But several lawmakers protested at lowering the age to 16, saying that it is not logical to send 16-year-olds to the gallows like adults.

In the existing juvenile law, criminal penalties are

applied to people who are 18 years and above, while special penalties are applied to those under 18. Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah said that the majority of drug crimes were committed by 17-year-old boys. He said that the government is planning to reduce the voting age from the current 21 to 18.

Several MPs also warned that terrorist organizations have started targeting teenagers and called on authorities to adopt stricter measures. MP Jamal Al-Omar warned that failure to resolve the crisis of the 120,000 stateless people or bedoons is fueling serious crimes and violence and urged a swift solution. Omar said that minors form almost half of the society and they have become a target for drug dealers, and the government has remained unable to curb them.

MP Abdullah Al-Turajji called for separating the prosecution of minors from the rest and also for doing the same at the central prison. He said that minors are

the future of any country and the crime rate among them is frightening. MP Saleh Ashour blamed families for the delinquency of their children, because some of them leave their children to maids to take care of them, while some families even travel abroad and leave their children behind in the care of maids.

In a related development, former MP Abdulkareem Al-Kandari said he plans to file a complaint at the Anti-Corruption Authority against MP Mohammad Tana, after the latter claimed that some people tried to bribe him. Tana had claimed that some people visited him at home and offered to pay him KD 2 million if he resigns from the National Assembly. He did not name the people nor provided more details. Kandari, who resigned from the Assembly last year after the Assembly refused to allow him to grill the prime minister, said that he will ask the authority to probe Tana's allegations and uncover the identity of those who offered to bribe him.

NYT'S FREIDMAN WEIGHS IN ON GLOBAL CHALLENGES

KUWAIT: There are three sets of challenges that countries should be ready to address today as the world has evolved at an ever-increasing pace, said Thomas Freidman, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and columnist at the New York Times. He was speaking yesterday at a forum titled 'The Word is Fast: How to Understand It and Thrive in it', held at the Arab Fund headquarters in Shuwaikh.

Freidman said countries should address the challenges on the basis of experiences, since globalization is tying economies more tightly together, making workers, investors and markets increasingly independent and exposed to global trends. He said the digital revolution embedded Moore's Law, according to which the speed and power of microchips will double every two years. He explained with recent examples how the increasing power of software computers and robots is requiring workers to rapidly raise their skills or risk losing their jobs.

Freidman also discussed the destabilizing consequences due to rapid population growth and shortsighted policies, discussing the implications of these challenges for the Arab world. In the area of globalization, he emphasized the pressing

imperative of removing impediments to trade and flow ideas, enabling the development of the private sector and diversifying their production base, especially for oil producing countries.

Regarding the challenge of digital revolution, Freidman emphasized the role of education reform in equipping new generations of graduates and workers with new skills and strengthening an aptitude for continual and flexible learning. He also discussed ways in which Arab countries, especially the Gulf countries, could prepare to temper the impact of the economic and social impact of heat waves that are forecast to pose a serious threat to outdoor human life in a generation's lifetime. Aptitude and social skills are still very well emphasized in many schools today, and this is very important, Friedman added.

The forum was organized by the IMF Middle East Center for Economics and Finance (CEF) jointly with the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development. Freidman was joined onstage by CEF Director Oussama Kanaan, while a considerable number of businessmen and people from all walks of life were present at the event.



KUWAIT: Author and columnist Thomas Freidman (left) and CEF Director Oussama Kanaan are seen at a forum at the Arab Fund headquarters in Shuwaikh yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAITI ECONOMIST RECEIVES HIGHEST PALESTINIAN AWARD



RAMALLAH: Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has honored the eminent Kuwaiti economist Dr Mirza Hassan with the Palestinian state's highest recognition, the Star of Palestine, for his role in development in the Arab world namely Palestine.

Dr Hassan, Dean of the board of directors of the World Bank Group received in a ceremony late Tuesday the Palestinian state's Highest award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to supporting the economy and development in Palestine and the Arab region as a whole. Hassan had presented several services to lift suffering of Palestinian people through social and development programs during his work in the bank. — KUNA

RAMALLAH: Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas honors Kuwaiti economist Dr Mirza Hassan with the Star of Palestine award. — KUNA

GCC TO DEVELOP PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRIES TO FACE CHANGES

DUBAI: Developing and investing in the field of petrochemicals industries is important for the GCC countries to adapt to the current economic situation in the world and achieve sustainable development, stressed UAE Minister of Energy Suhail Al-Mazrouei.

In his speech at the 10th session of the forum of the Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association (GPCA) yesterday, the minister noted that the GCC states must cooperate to remain among the top producers of petrochemicals to ensure economic variety. The GCC succeeded in seizing a large part of petrochemical industries' share in international markets in the past 50 years, said the official, adding that they must also pay attention to the growing needs of their foreign customers in the field.

Meanwhile, Chairman of the Board of GPCA Rashid Al-Shamsi said that the annual three-day meeting is a great opportunity to share experience and learn of the recent international developments in the industries to keep up with the high competitive levels. He also noted that the production rate of the GCC states in petrochemicals has risen by three folds, reaching 136 million tons in 2014, while the sales rate was recorded at \$87.4 billion.

Shamsi also said that petrochemical companies must switch from producing

tradition products into more specialized substances in order to face the effects of the drop in oil prices and to provide products that could boost the value of local markets and exports.

In the same context, Governor and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA) Abdullatif Al-Othman stated that despite being pioneers in the field, the Gulf states are still importing petrochemical products including tires, engine fuel, personal care products and home supplies.

GPCA, the first such industry association in the Middle East, has grown from strength to strength since its inception in March 2006, steering the regional industry towards a whole new era of co-operation. As the Gulf's representative body, GPCA aims to enhance the role of the region in international debate and policy making vis-a-vis petrochemicals and chemicals, to facilitate regional co-operation, and to ensure that growth is both sustainable and socially responsible.

GPCA's mission is to offer its members networking opportunities through various platforms to meet and share knowledge; exchange insights and expertise and advocate the development, growth and prosperity of the petrochemicals and chemicals industry and related businesses in the Gulf. — KUNA

EU, GCC HOLD DIALOGUE TO BOOST ECONOMIC RELATION

BRUSSELS: The 6th annual dialogue between the 28-member European Union (EU) and the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) started yesterday with the focus of discussions expected to be on the impact on the economies of the two sides due to the drop in oil prices.

Elena Flores, director for international economic and financial relations in the European Commission, who is leading the EU side at the Dialogue, said there are various instances of dialogue between the Gulf countries and the EU.

"With this dialogue here we want to address macro-economic issues including fiscal and monetary structural reforms. This dialogue is very interesting as it allows people to speak very openly about shared problems, shared difficulties. We have common challenges like oil prices," she told the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA), ahead of the meeting.

"For Europe it has been so far helpful for growth but it is something that we cannot cash

it like forever. So we also need to prepare to know what we can expect developments in the medium term," said Flores who hails from Spain.

"For the Gulf countries this is an issue about diversification in the economic base which is also something for Europe in different ways but we also need to diversify because markets are changing," she said. "I expect a fruitful discussion. I expect real exchange and for sure to learn something about each other. The GCC is an important partner for the EU," she added.

The Dialogue is co-chaired from the GCC side by Ahmed Mohammad Al-Marzouqi, director for international cooperation economic and trade agreement department in the Qatari ministry of economy and commerce. Qatar holds the current GCC Presidency. The Kuwaiti delegation is led by Sami Al-Saqabi, Assistant under secretary for economic affairs in the ministry of finance. The GCC includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE. — KUNA

KUWAIT TO DISPATCH AID TO GAZANS: KRCS

KUWAIT/BEIRUT/HATAY: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) declared yesterday preparing a convoy of relief aid destined for the Palestinians in Gaza Strip. The assistance supplies will be dispatched via Rafah checkpoint in coordination with the Egyptian authorities.

The cargo includes 5,000 good parcels, 10,000 school bags, medical equipment and 10,000 mattresses, KRCS Chairman Dr Hilal Al-Sayer said.



HATAY: Kuwaiti surgeons perform an operation on a Syrian refugee in the Turkish city of Hatay. — KUNA

Noting that the society has dispatched a chain of such convoys to the Palestinians, he affirmed that many families in the occupied territories live in "tragic conditions. He indicated that the aid would be dispatched within the coming days. Such tangible humanitarian overtures "are made with support from His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-

Sabah to aid our brothers in Gaza strip, and in continuation of the Kuwait policy of relieving brothers and friends," Dr Sayer said.

Relief aid

Meanwhile, the KRCS continued with its process of handing out humanitarian and relief aid, mainly involving food and medicine, to thousands of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. The KRCS delivered the packages to refugees in the towns of Kab Ilyas in the Bekaa Valley and Deda in north Lebanon, said KRCS envoy Amad Al-Faqan. He said the packages were hand delivered to the refugees. The number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon has reached more than one million most of them in northern Lebanon.

Surgeries

Separately, Kuwait's Shifa humanitarian team has conducted 62 surgeries for Syrian refugees in the southern city of Hatay, close to the Syrian borders, this week. The team concluded its mission Tuesday after conducting 62 surgeries for Syrian refugees, said Dr Talal Al-Fadhalah, team coordinator. He added that the team carried out five surgical operations, mostly plastic surgeries, and 14 surgical interventions for Syrian patients yesterday. The team conducted 12 and 10 surgeries on Monday and Sunday respectively. The wounds were caused by shrapnel, severe burns and complete disfigured eye lids, ears, lips and necks, said Al-Fadhala. Shifa humanitarian team, sponsored by Kuwait's Zakat (alms) House, carried out its mission in cooperation with doctors from the LEAP Global Missions and Interplast-Germany. — KUNA

SOLIDARITY PEOPLE, GOVERNMENTS TO FEND OFF ENEMIES: MINISTER

KUWAIT: The people's solidarity with their governments will be the first line of defense against any threats and enemies, said Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

Sheikh Salman's statement came during his reception of Egyptian military expert and head of the Egyptian army's center for strategic studies former Major General

Hussameddine Suwailem yesterday, the Information Ministry said in a press release.

The meeting focused on bolstering cooperation among Arab states within the youth level. It also touched on issues connected with spreading moderation and means to combat extremism ideologies. Sheikh Salman and the Egyptian military expert also touched on the recent development in the Arab region during their meeting. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah meets head of the Egyptian army's center for strategic studies former Major General Hussameddine Suwailem. — KUNA



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KUWAIT: Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah (fourth from left) speaks during a press conference following the inauguration of the 40th Kuwait Book Fair yesterday. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah tours the exhibition with Saudi Ambassador Abdulaziz Al-Fayez (left).



Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah is seen with Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates Rahma Al-Zaabi at the event.

KISR ADOPTS USE OF SMART MARINE MONITORING DEVICE

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) has initiated the use of a smart buoy device that can track the condition of environmental marine life along Kuwait's coastal waters. The device is capable of collating a number of variables such as the Gulf water temperatures, the height of waves, and the level of oxygen in the water, said KISR Director Naji Al-Mutairi. With such information and similar ones, it will be possible to predict some changes in the marine ecosystem such as the phenomenon of dead fish washing ashore, he said.

This device can provide information about marine life and water conditions in the sea at different water depths, transmitting that information directly to KISR's computers for instant analysis, said Yousif Al-Asiri, a KISR coastal environment researcher.

The device is also able to help researchers learn more about causes of sea pollution, and can provide them with the speed of winds and relative humidity and barometric air pressure at any given location, said Faisal Al-Halil. He added that the device is equipped with a GPS system and an internal memory capability that can send information to KISR every 15 minutes about sea conditions. — KUNA



KUWAIT: KISR's Director Naji Al-Mutairi launches the smart marine-monitoring device. — KUNA



United States Ambassador Douglas Silliman speaks to Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah at the exhibition.



Visitors check books on display at the fair.

KUWAIT BOOK FAIR SHOWS STATE SUPPORT TO CULTURE: MINISTER

KUWAIT: The Kuwait Book Fair is a cultural event that reflects the state's high interest in culture, said Information Minister and Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Chairman of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah. The 40th Kuwait Book Fair is sponsored by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, implying the Premier's staunch belief in the role of culture in Kuwait, Sheikh Salman added in a press statement after opening the event.

The Fair includes many pavilions where more than 500 publishers are offering about 10,000 book titles, the minister said. Sheikh Salman lauded youth effective participation in the fair with their writings, as well as their organizing efforts, expressing pleasure to see many students at the fair.

The minister hoped that the fair would fulfill its role for backing culture in Kuwait, also through a multitude of lectures on youth, toleration and moderation. Sheikh Salman thanked event officials for their hard efforts, and welcomed exhibitors from Arab and other friendly countries for their participation.

major issues, and poetical and literary events. According to the NCCAL official, the council's strategy focuses on encouraging children and the young to read. "We are looking forward to launching a national program for reading by next year in coordination with the Ministry of Education," he said.

Major event

In a similar statement, NCCAL Secretary General Ali Al-Yoha underlined the importance of the event as one of the major Arab book fairs. He added that they are marking the 40th anniversary of the fair. Yoha noted that a huge section of the Kuwaiti society is interested in reading, with a strong individual purchasing power.

The fair includes various cultural activities, covering plastic art and photography in addition to discussions on

Arabic language

Sheikh Salman had stated at the event's inauguration that the Kuwaiti Book Fair is a significant cultural mark "on the Arab cultural map," and affirmed that holding of the annual exhibition "bolsters our efforts to promote the Arabic language and the reading culture in the society." "We are in bad need for boosting the culture role for enlightening peoples vis-a-vis the aggression of dark thoughts that utterly contradict tolerance and the values of religions and humanity," he said.

VISITORS HAIL INVENTIONS FAIR

KUWAIT: Deputy Chairman of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Abdulwahab Al-Wazan emphasized the importance of the 8th International Invention Fair of the Middle East (IIFME), currently held in Kuwait. Without inventions, there will be no real economy, Wazan told KUNA on the sidelines of the fair. He expressed the KCCI support and welcome to Kuwait's organization and hosting of such kind of international events.

Former Kuwaiti minister of state for public works Fadel Safar echoed a similar view. He pointed out that the International Invention Fair is a source of pride for Kuwait it hosts over 160 brilliant inventors from 30 countries who compete to serve humanity. Safar also stated that inventions displayed are greatly diverse and include products to develop various sectors.

Meanwhile, head of Qatar delegation to the fair Mohammad Al-Kowari said that his country seeks to draw upon Kuwait's experience on organizing such events to support the young inventors and help them meet and promote their work for business and industry leaders.

The 8th International Invention Fair is one of the most significant and largest specialized exhibitions of inventions in the Middle East, and deemed as the second largest international exhibition all over the world.

Being part of the efforts of the International Exhibition of Geneva it is also deemed as an opportunity for revealing the culture of invention to societies and strengthening the existing relationships among the inventors, companies and corporations.

Organizing the international exhibition in the Middle East represents a significant aspect of the implemented achievements by the Scientific Club of Kuwait and the sponsoring authorities for this exhibition. It is a great time to promote inventions, increase interest, appreciate the ideas and make an investment in the ideas and inventions and people. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Deputy Chairman of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Abdulwahab Al-Wazan tours the inventions fair. — KUNA

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KUWAIT: Kuwaiti farmer Nasser Al-Azmi is pictured with representatives from state departments, volunteers and people who came to collect the saplings. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



People check Moringa saplings given away by Kuwaiti farmer Nasser Al-Azmi.

LOCAL FARMER GIVES AWAY 100,000 MORINGA SAPPLINGS

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: For the third year in a row, Kuwaiti farmer Nasser Al-Azmi is giving away 100,000 tree saplings as part of an effort to encourage a 'greener' Kuwait. Last week he distributed saplings in Adailiya and yesterday handed out hundreds more in Rawda. Last year, he distributed around 100,000 free saplings and in his first year around 16,000 saplings.

Nutritional value

Azmi said he choose distribute Moringa saplings this year in view of the plant's significance as a major sources of vitamins and nutritional supplements. "I plan to distribute 100,000 saplings of Moringa every year for free," he said, noting that the saplings would be distributed in various

areas such as Adailiya, desert and camping areas, Rawda, Yarmouk, Sabahiya. Salwa and the areas to the north, west and south of Kuwait.

"This year, we gave away four saplings per citizen regardless of age because we wish to increase the number of citizens keen on planting such trees," he said, pointing out that he had planted some crops that had been impossible to be grown in Kuwait such as coffee, cardamom, tea and saffron. Azmi also expressed plans to plant cocoa, red banana and all types of spices and plants used as herbal medicines.

National projects

Azmi added that he fully supports national projects such as 'the national wood', rehabilitating Kuwaiti islands and



Kuwaiti farmer Nasser Al-Azmi

the Quran park. "However, we are still looking for buildings to launch these initiatives and ideas and have a great deal of trust in our officials and fellow-citizens," he added.

Furthermore, Azmi added that one of his ideas was to grow various plants at Kubbar island and that he had accordingly cooperated with eight ministries and bodies including the information, defense, interior and health ministries in addition to the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources (PAAAFR), the Environment Public Authority (EPA), Kuwait Municipality and some volunteers. He added that saplings had been already planted there two years ago and the results were still being observed by EPA with the aim of increasing vegetation and reducing temperature rates as well as work as sand barriers.



Kuwaiti farmer Nasser Al-Azmi (second from left) with officials.



Two women and a child choose their saplings.



Two youngsters inspect the saplings.

CGAPS' CONFERENCE CALLS FOR AIDING SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN GCC STATES

KUWAIT: Participants in the 'Foundations of Social Development and the Demands of the Industrial Transformation of the GCC' Conference recommended setting up a program that aids social development in the GCC states' communities. The conference is organized by the Center for Gulf Arabian Peninsula Studies (CGAPS) from November 16-18 under the slogan of 'A Reading into Reality and the Future.' The participants highlighted the importance of having laws and regulations that support social

and industrial advancement in the GCC countries.

Professor of literature and criticism at the Faculty of Dar Al-Uloom at Cairo University Dr. Mohammad Hassan Abdullah called for supporting women novelists in the Gulf region, pointing out that females have an aptitude to story-telling more than their fellow males. Women fiction should be reflections of private lives, experiences and observations in captivating literary forms.

Professor of Arabic Language at Kuwait

University Dr Abdugader Rebai, meanwhile, said that having different cultural institutes in the region, made the GCC countries a hub of Arab culture. He clarified that Al-Arabi magazine issued by the Kuwait Ministry of Information is a fine example of a magazine of cultures that embraces many literary forms. The CGAPS' conference has covered various sessions and has seen the participation of a number of specialists and professors from Kuwait and abroad. — KUNA

US EMBASSY STATEMENT ON RESPONDING TO EMERGENCY EVENTS

KUWAIT: The United States Embassy in Kuwait has issued the following message to US citizens, containing instructions on how to respond to emergency events that might arise.

Security Message for US Citizens Responding to Emergency Events Such as an Active Shooter:

This security message to US citizens concerns how to respond to emergency events, including an active shooter.

In light of the recent terrorist attacks in Paris and out of an abundance of caution, the US Embassy reminds US citizens to review the July 29, 2015 Worldwide Caution for guidance on the continued threat of terrorist attacks, demonstrations, and other violent actions against US citizens and interests overseas.

If confronted with an active shooter attack, quickly determine which of these three actions is the most reasonable to protect your own life; doing nothing is not one of them.

RUN

- This comes down to awareness of your surroundings; if an attack begins, and you see an accessible and relatively safe escape route, take it immediately.

- If you are carrying anything that may slow your escape, drop it immediately.

- If possible, help others escape with you.
- Once clear of the scene, do not allow others to blindly enter the area where the active shooter is located. Alert the authorities as soon as possible.

HIDE

- If it is absolutely impossible to run, attempt to locate a hiding place where it is less likely that an active shooter will locate you. Remember to silence any cell phones or other devices that may make noise or light and give away your location.

- Do your best to locate a hiding place that conceals you from view of the active shooter and provides some sort of substantial object that provides protection in case someone fires shots in your direction.

- If you are hiding in a room with a locking door, lock it and barricade the door with furniture or whatever else may be available for such use. The hiding place should also not

restrict your options for movement.

- Minimize noise and try to remain calm if the active shooter is near your location. If you are on the telephone with law enforcement authorities and cannot speak, leave the line open to allow those on the other end of the line to hear what is going on near you.

FIGHT

Fighting is an absolute last resort and only if your life is in imminent danger. If you must resort to this course of action, commit with every fiber in your being, be as aggressive as possible, and use whatever improvised weapons are available to incapacitate the active shooter.

- See the State Department's travel website for the Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and Kuwait Country Specific Information.

- Contact the US Embassy in Kuwait.

The US Embassy is located at Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa Street, Block 6, Plot 14, Bayan, Kuwait. If you are a US citizen in need of emergency assistance in Kuwait, you may reach the US Embassy by calling +965-2259-1001. After regular business hours, please request the duty officer at this number.

- Call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday (except US federal holidays).
- Follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

This message may be accessed on the Embassy website, <http://kuwait.usembassy.gov>.

Please note that the Consular Section is closed for US and most local holidays. The current holiday schedule for 2015 is posted on <http://kuwait.usembassy.gov/holidays.html>.

We strongly recommend that US citizens traveling to or residing in Kuwait enroll in the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). STEP enrollment gives you the latest security updates and makes it easier for the US Embassy to contact you in an emergency. If you don't have Internet access, enroll directly with the US Embassy.



KUWAIT: The Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) began usual training exercises for its personnel to assess their physical fitness level. The exercises are meant to enable KFSD men to handle the difficulties of risky missions. — By Hanan Al-Saadoun

DOMESTIC HELP OFFICES CHALLENGE LAW IN COURT

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: A lawyer has claimed that some items of law 68/2015 regarding domestic helpers are unconstitutional, adding that there are many defects in the law, and filed a case at the constitutional court. Faisal Al-Enezi was speaking during the 'domestic help' conference in the presence of a large number of domestic help office owners. He said there are several items in the law that will harm office owners and take away their rights.

Enezi went over the items he believes are unconstitutional, saying that article 3, item 2, which speaks about the condition of issuance and renewing licenses of bringing domestic help from abroad, says owners should have a general secondary certificate, be fit and should not have a handicap that keeps them from working. He said this article is unjust, especially that there are offices with financial deposits, translators and many companies have owners without degrees.

Monopoly

Enezi said although the law has been issued, no new license was issued for those who meet the conditions, adding that there is a mystery in this issue and domestic help office owners are targeted to monopolize this profession by one company. He said if this unconstitutional law is implemented with its unfair articles, licenses of many offices will be revoked, and the cost of bringing in a maid will reach KD 2,500, adding that the explanatory memo of the law did not clarify the reason behind requiring to have a general secondary certificate.

Enezi said many MPs, since the Assembly was established, do not have a general secondary certificate, and the candidacy conditions do not include a school certificate, only that the candidate should be able to read and write, and they have the trust of legislating laws.

Meanwhile, former director of the domestic help offices union Hashim Majid said law 68/2015 has several unfair items against domestic help office owners and citizens, while it caters to domestic helpers only to appease human rights organizations, and is not complete and fair to all. He

said the new condition in the new law - the secondary school certificate - is unconstitutional, as the legislators made it retroactive to issue new licenses or renew old ones, and this also is a violation of the rights of license owners because it threatens to revoke many licenses.

Majid spoke about another item, which is the increase of the probation period of domestic helpers to six months instead of the previous 100 days, which makes office owners incur losses. He said the guarantee includes being unhealthy, pregnancy, security restrictions and absconding, and the problem is in escaping, as workers escape to

the embassies of their countries, and in this case the office should not pay anything to their sponsors or their tickets back home.

Wafra farms

The government approved that the process of compensating Wafra farm owners whose properties will be removed to make way for the GCC railway project, and who will be paid cash compensations for licensed buildings and plants. Farm owners will not be given alternate lands, as the farmlands are considered state property.



PEOPLE RESCUED OFF OUHA ISLAND

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Kuwait Coastguard officers rescued a number of people whose boat sank north of the Ouha island. The men, Iranian, were taken to safety and said to be in good health condition. No injuries were reported in the incident.



COMPANIES COMPLAIN AGAINST FISH FARMS

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Several fish companies have complained against officials at the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources for not implementing the law on violating fish farming companies in Sulaibiya agricultural area, attempting to find a loophole for them and delaying the reclamation of fishing areas. The complaint was filed at the Public Anticorruption Authority. The department concerned with the allocated areas has sent more than 10 letters and reports demanding to take the necessary action and take back five areas from five companies for lack of seriousness in establishing fish projects to have food security in the country. The statement sent to the Public Anticorruption Authority includes all correspondence between concerned departments, violations and lack of implementing the law for more than three years. They said these were paper companies and did not do anything since they were established.

Terror funding

The criminal court will give its verdict against people accused of financing and fighting with the Islamic State (IS) group and Nusra Front on December 16. Meanwhile, the court deferred a state security case against Shiite cleric Hussein Al-Maatouq until January 27. Maatouq denied all charges of instigating strife, false news and contempt of court.

Absconding complaints

As part of the coordination between the Manpower Public Authority and Interior Ministry, the committee that decides on absconding complaints held its first meeting to discuss and study the mechanisms of absconding complaints between the authority and the interior ministry by studying statistics, deciding on registered cases and searching for the possibility of finding friendly solutions in some cases. Deputy General Manager of the Manpower Public Authority Abdullah Al-Moutah said weekly meetings will be held by the committee to study cases and decide on them, adding that the release of oppressed workers is near.

KUWAIT URGES IRAN TO COOPERATE WITH IAEA

NEW YORK: Kuwait has reiterated its call for the Islamic Republic of Iran to be fully transparent in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In a statement read out at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly on Tuesday, Kuwait's Diplomatic Attache Farah Al-Gharballi congratulated Iran and the major powers on the nuclear deal.

The deal would help ease tension and boost security and development in the region, she said. She stressed Kuwait's support to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes as per the non-proliferation treaty (NPT).

Gharballi stated that Kuwait hopes the nuclear agreement would encourage Iran to sign the convention on nuclear safety and to benefit from the expertise of the IAEA to enhance the safety of its nuclear facilities that overlook the Arabian Gulf.

Meanwhile, the Kuwaiti diplomat urged the IAEA and the international community to press Israel to sign the NPT and to allow inspection of its nuclear facilities by international teams. She pointed out that Kuwait has recently donated \$3 million to the IAEA: \$1.5 million to support the IAEA initiatives for the peaceful use of nuclear energy, \$1 million to ReNual Project for renewing the agency's eight Nuclear Applications Laboratories in Seibersdorf, Austria, and \$500,000 for Monaco Lab. Kuwait has also donated \$10 million to the international low-enriched uranium bank, she disclosed. — KUNA

KUWAIT FINDER SHOWCASED IN ABU DHABI CONFERENCE

ABU DHABI: The Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) exhibited yesterday a technical project related to collecting large-sized, rapidly changing data in 'Esri Middle East and North Africa User Conference' hosted in Abu Dhabi. PACI Director General Musaad Al-Asousi said in remarks to KUNA that the steering committee offered a special invitation to PACI to brief the participants in the event about its experience in the 'Kuwait Finder' application, besides another informative projects based on it.

The organizers gave priority for the presentation for the Kuwaiti project, for it is one of the pioneer projects in the Middle East, especially technical wise, as a number of experts in the field and participants in the event have acknowledged, he said. The idea of the project developed following the launching of maps and location application 'Kuwait Finder' before four months, as PACI started collecting information and data about the traffic and congestion points, he added. Users of Kuwait Finder do not need to exit the program in order to view Kuwait's map, as it is downloaded in the application, he said.

The importance of this project is reflected in connected data from the application to population data in order to facilitate resolving any problems related to population dis-

tribution, in cooperation and coordination with various governmental bodies and institutions, including the ministries of Interior, Education, besides Public Authority for Housing Welfare, he added.

The data base collected by PACI in the latest few months through this project is considered a great gain to all of the governmental bodies desiring to benefit from it in resolving problems of traffic jam, population density, and distribution of public buildings and facilities, mentioned. PACI is fully ready to cooperate with various governmental institutions and bodies by offering the results and findings of this project to offer sufficient information in establishing developmental or residential new projects, he said.

Then new version of Kuwait Finder which was launched before few weeks is considered as a quantum leap as it allows the users to navigate the application according to the quality of service they wish to receive, and not only depending on the name or address of commercial facilities, he affirmed. The 'Esri Middle East and North Africa User Conference' which kicked off on November 16 and ends today, gathers a number of companies and international institutions specialized in technical geography and information systems. — KUNA

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Crime

Report

14 ARRESTED FOR E-CRIMES IN KUWAIT FOR INDECENT VIDEOS ON YOUTUBE

KUWAIT: After an Iraqi born resident was arrested for uploading videos with indecent words to YouTube, e-crime detectives have now arrested an additional 14 others, the majority of whom are citizens. All have been detained in connection with the same videos after being named by the prime suspect, who appeared on the videos encouraging young people to abuse drugs and compete in exchanging rap-like insults using very indecent words and phrases.

Fights in Jahra, Salmiya

A search is on for three citizens, all siblings, for allegedly assaulting a juvenile and stabbing him during a fight in Jahra, said security sources. Case papers indicate that a citizen reported that three of his neighbors had assaulted his son and stabbed him to the shoulder. The man said that he took his son to Jahra hospital for treatment before reporting to the police. A case was filed and the suspects are being summoned. In another fight, four male citizens were arrested in Salmiya for fighting, said security sources noting that one of them sustained a head injury and was rushed to Mubarak hospital for treatment while the other three were arrested.

Missing girl arrested

A 21-year-old girl was recently arrested in Sharq, said security sources, noting that the girl had been reported missing by her family. Case papers indicate that the Iranian girl stepped out of a taxi before reaching a checkpoint in Sharq, which raised suspicions of policemen, who chased her on foot. After catching the woman, police checked and found that she had been reported missing.

Caught at checkpoint

A citizen was recently arrested for attempting to flee a checkpoint in Salmiya, said security sources noting that on searching the man's vehicle, deceives found 32 illicit pills. A case was filed pending further investigations. In another incident, a citizen was recently arrested after he was stopped for a traffic violation. On checking, police found that the man was wanted for a KD 45,000 financial claim, said security sources. The man was referred to relevant authorities.

Office mate insulted

A female citizen recently filed a complaint against a coworker, claiming that the woman had insulted her over some unsettled old issues. The complainant said that the suspect had called her several times using foul language with her. A case was filed pending summoning the second party for further investigations.

Fake detective robs man

An Asian reported that someone had stopped him in Ardhya industrial area claiming to be a police detective and asking to see his ID. The man added that the suspect assaulted him and snatched away his wallet and mobile phone before he fled the scene. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

Ranch guard hanged

A citizen reported that he found his ranch guard hanged by the neck to a rope tied to the ceiling of his room, said security sources. The citizen said that on calling the guard several times without receiving an answer, he drove to his ranch in Kated area where he found the guard's corpse hanging from the ceiling. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

Driver insults policeman

A traffic policeman recently filed a case against a citizen who had violated traffic laws, said security sources. In his complaint, the traffic policeman said that while patrolling in Farwaniya, he spotted a vehicle parked in a no-parking zone with the driver sitting inside. He added that he used the loudspeaker to ask the driver to move away to avoid being fined and that, instead, the man got angry and stepped out insulting and shouting at him. A case was filed.

Drunk doctor arrested

A consultant doctor was recently arrested on arrival at Kuwait International Airport while heavily drunk, said security sources. Case papers indicate that the doctor apparently got frustrated with the long queue at customs and so started shouting and refused to calm down when asked. Instead, he started insulting the policeman, who detected the smell of liquor on the man's breath. The doctor was then arrested and referred to Jleeb Al-Shuyiukh police.

Woman swindled

A female citizen of Arab origins reported that a 'former' compatriot of hers had swindled her out of KD 10,000 claiming to sell her a land plot in her original home country. The woman said that after paying the money, she had some relatives inquire about the land and found out that it was in a desert area and was not worth what she paid. She added that the suspect had refused to return her money or even some of it before he vanished. —Al-Rai and Al-Anbaa



Al-Anbaa

SOCIALIZING WITH TWO MATCHES

By Dr Saleh Al-Ojairi

Kuwaitis used to mainly depend on fishing and trading in pearls as the main source of income, to the extent that 1912 was called the 'affluent year,' when Kuwaitis had the largest pearl harvest ever. However, this national industry was ruined in the early 1930s when the Japanese started producing artificial pearls as well as cultivating natural ones by inserting glass powder into living shells, which annoyed them and made them coat these alien bodies with the raw substance of pearls, creating fine ones. This method helped make sure that all shells would include pearls in them, and thus the pearl market collapsed and prices deteriorated drastically.

This shift led to a period of devastating economic depression that coincided with the international econom-

ic depression towards the end of the 1930s, and Kuwaitis had a very hard time providing for their families. However, Kuwaitis managed to overcome this terrible period in their history by socializing, bonding closer and assisting each other, especially those worse off.

Kuwaitis managed to overcome this terrible period in their history by socializing, bonding closer and assisting each other

By recalling memories about that period from the corners of my mind, I remember that we ran out of matches and my mother gave me an empty matchbox and asked me to go to the neighbors asking them to lend us only two matchsticks, which I did. This is how we used to socialize and coalesce together in times of distress. If only people would comprehend and realize the message and learn the moral lessons of those long forgotten habits and traditions. —Translated by Kuwait Times

NO TOLERANCE REGARDING PUBLIC HEALTH: OBAIDI

KUWAIT: Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi stressed that the ministry give no tolerance towards medical errors, adding that he was in his position to protect the health of both citizens and expatriates, and develop health services in Kuwait.

"The issue of medical errors is one of my top priorities and any related complaint filed to my office about medical or nursing negligence will be immediately referred to the ministry's legal affairs department for investigation," Obaidi explained, noting that neutral committees are formed to investigate such complaints. "A patient is always presumed right until investigations are concluded," he underscored.

Moreover, Obaidi underlined that medical errors happen everywhere



Dr Ali Al-Obaidi

worldwide because "those who work make mistakes and those who do not, never make any." "This does not mean tolerating medical errors," he remarked, pointing out that each death case while patients are hospi-

talized is subject to investigation by a specialized committee to determine the cause of death and whether they happened due to natural causes, or resulting from health complications so that any staff member proved responsible could be held legally accountable. "According to the Journal of Patients' Safety reports in 2013, 440,000 have died in the United States, and 40,000 died in the United Kingdom because of medical errors," he added, noting that around 17,000 also died in Germany in 2010 for the same reasons. Responding to a question about being the first member of the cabinet to file his disclosure statement, Obaidi stressed that such a step was his duty because he had 'nothing to hide.' —Al-Rai

DEPENDENTS' RESIDENCY RENEWAL LIMITED TO SPONSOR'S RESIDENCY VALIDITY: MAARAFI

KUWAIT: Director of the Interior Ministry's Residency Affairs Department Major General Talal Maarafi stressed that starting from January 10, 2016, the renewal validity of expatriates dependents' residency visa (article 22) would be tied to the validity of those of their own sponsors. "This means that if an expat's residency is valid for one year, he can only renew those of his wife or kids for a single year," he explained.

Responding to a question on whether expats' residency or visit visa fees would increase, Maarafi stressed that a proposal in this regard was already submitted to the parliament for approval, adding that such fees will not be increased by a ministerial decision.

Legalizing status

Furthermore, Maarafi said that expats who are already in violation or



Major General Talal Maarafi

residency laws, regardless of for how long, can apply to the residency affairs requesting legalizing their stay in Kuwait without being deported, provided they were not wanted for any other legal claims or security restrictions. "This applies for holders of articles 17, 18, 19, 20, 22 and 33 residency visas," he underlined.

Moreover, Maarafi said that visiting Syrians who had been stuck in Kuwait after their visit visas expired would be granted two-month temporary residency visas provided they file applications in this regard to the office of the ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Citizenship and Passports Affairs Major General Sheikh Mazen Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah. "This procedure will protect violating expats from being blacklisted.

In addition, Maarafi said that a study had been made and submitted to the ministry's information technology department concerning renewing residency visas and issuing visit visas online through the ministry's website. Finally, Maarafi highlighted that a domestic worker's residency will not be transferable to work as drivers before working for at least five years for the same sponsor. —Al-Anbaa



Al-Qabas

KUWAIT: CAPITAL FOR TOLERANCE

By Khalid Al-Tarrah

Kuwait became a center for international humanity and will become the Islamic Culture Capital in 2016, but it is not the international tolerance capital, although tolerance is a basic pillar for humanity and forgiveness characterizes Islam, and this calls for review and work to celebrate international tolerance. Nov 16 was International Tolerance Day, during which voices get higher and united in order to instill tolerance as a philosophy of life.

Kuwait does not live in isolation from the world, as it has suffering, like the rest of the world's people, especially since forgiveness has gone absent from Kuwait society, which characterized Kuwaiti people ever since the establishment of the state, as tolerance values used to dominate the society in all fields of life.

Tolerance is one word but carries many meanings, and has goals that can create social and cultural transformation in principles that may remove heinous appearances and abnormal behaviors such as hatred, aggressiveness, violence and extremism for the sake of greater sovereignty for humanity.

We are in need of marking tolerance years and not just a day in order to spread and instill tolerance in the society, because we lost with great regret many of those meanings, values and ethics, and instead of instilling forgiveness in the society, society became divided for many reasons, and trends of the fabric of Kuwait society shredding started to show up every now and then.

We must be united in order to instill and support the method and values of tolerance, be together as spectrums and groups of one society that went through hardships since its establishment, and maybe the most notable are the ordeals of invasion and bombing of the Imam Sadiq Mosque. We should not add to the moves of some people more that they got, but this does not mean that some people's sectarian, tribal or group alignment is correct behavior; rather the right thing is peaceful coexistence under positive variation and non-exclusion of other opinions under the justice of law.

We, until Kuwait becomes the capital of world tolerance, look for a generous pardon for the Twitter youth and state security prisoners, so that we go above wounds and tragedy, and we all, government and people, speak in the name of forgiveness and reconciliation. The World Tolerance Day should remind us of our injustice to the history of this country and society too.

—Translated by Kuwait Times



Al-Jarida

WARS WILL NOT TERMINATE IS

By Hassan Al-Essa

The Western press has recently reflected Western leaders' general tendency to wage a complete war against the Islamic State (IS) group in retaliation for the recent Paris blasts that I hope nobody would immediately describe as the 'Paris Foray' the way they did with 'Manhattan Foray'. There are strong calls by rightist powers, such as the Republican party in the US, for immediate land military offensives in Syria after creating a no-fly zone to the north of Syria to be used to shelter refugees in order to eventually rid European countries from the headache caused by those fleeing Assad's hell and IS butchers.

Very few of those sounding the drums of a global war against IS realize that such wars will not be the perfect remedy, because for most of them, the problem was narrowed down to that terrorist group headquartered in Syria and Iraq that managed to establish an Islamic state on vast territories in those

Agreeing that IS, Al-Qaeda and others are symptoms of reality in the Arab and Muslim world and that the real disease lies in a cancer-like dominating culture is not new.

two failing states. Such narrow-minded view sees that IS ought to be narrowed down and terminated in its cradle to end Arab and Muslim terrorism in Western countries. It seems that the Western public opinion does not care about continuity of terrorism in Arab countries because the Paris blasts made them totally forget about those in southern Lebanon and about hundreds others and mass killings in Syria and Iraq by the very same IS members or the avenging Shiite militia fighting them.

Agreeing that IS, Al-Qaeda and others are symptoms of reality in the Arab and Muslim world and that the real disease lies in a cancer-like dominating culture is not new. IS and Al-Qaeda spread in our countries and their extension amidst the second generation of Muslim migrants in the West cannot in any way be confronted with fighter planes and huge armies. They are mere symptoms and what really needs to be fought is the historic legacy and Arab regimes' totalitarianism with assistance of some Western countries. This is the real huge cancerous tumor that needs to be removed and Western armies will not do any good nor be able to remove it.

—Translated by Kuwait Times



ABU DHABI: Indian Finance Minister Arun Jaitley was given a tour around the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque by authorities at the United Arab Emirates. He was accompanied by Indian Ambassador to the UAE T P Seetharam, Indian Consul General Anurag Bhusan, prominent businessman Yusufali MA and other members of Indian delegation.



Bobby Jindal drops out of US presidential race

US MUSLIMS FACING BACKLASH AFTER PARIS ATTACKS

US MILITARY SHIELDS CHILD SEX CASES

MILITARY JUSTICE SYSTEM OPAQUE

WASHINGTON: Child sex offenders are the largest category of inmates in US military prisons, yet a full accounting of their crimes and how much time they're actually locked up for is shielded by an opaque system of justice, an AP investigation has found. Of the 1,233 inmates confined in the military's prison network, 61 percent were convicted of sex crimes, according to the latest available data, obtained through the federal open records law. Children were the victims in over half of those cases.

Since the beginning of this year alone, service members victimized children in 133 out of 301 sex crime convictions, with charges ranging from rape to distributing child pornography. Child sex assaults in the military have received scant attention in Washington, where Congress and the Defense Department have focused largely on preventing and prosecuting adult-on-adult sex crimes.

Daniel E DeSmit, a Marine Corps chief warrant officer, spent at least \$36,000 viewing and producing child pornography over the span of six years. In emails examined by Navy criminal investigators, DeSmit described his preference for sex with prepubescent girls as "the best experience". A military judge in January found DeSmit, 44, guilty of a litany of sex offenses and sentenced him to 144 years behind bars. But he'll serve just a fraction of that. In an undisclosed pretrial agreement, the Marine Corps slashed his prison term to 20 years. When the AP asked for the investigative report into DeSmit's case, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service rejected the Freedom of Information Act request on privacy grounds. The report was released only after the AP appealed.

The military justice system operates independently of state and federal criminal courts. The US Constitution mandates a presumption of openness in civilian courts — trials are open to the public, as are court filings, including motions and transcripts, with exceptions for documents that have been sealed. Anyone can walk into a county or US courthouse and ask to read a case file, on demand, without providing a reason. That openness is designed to provide accountability.

But visibility into military trials is minimal. Court records are released only after many Freedom of Information Act requests, appeals and fees, and often months of waiting. While military trials are technically "open", as are civilian trials, they take place on military bases, which are closed to the public.

"I can sit at my computer in New Haven and find out what was filed five minutes ago in a case in federal district court in Seattle," said Eugene Fidell, a former Coast Guard judge advocate who teaches military justice at Yale Law School. "But to get copies of motions filed last week in a general court-

martial at Fort Lewis would take months if not years, while the Freedom of Information Act wheels ground along."

Intolerable Crimes

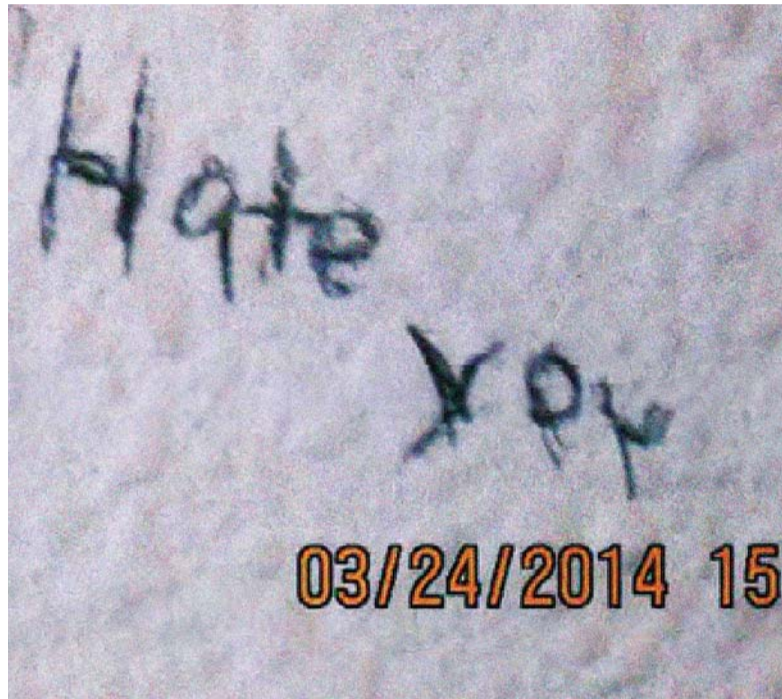
Under military law, children are defined as "any person who has not attained the age of 16 years". Victims aged 16 and 17 are counted as adults, which is consistent with age-of-consent laws in most states. Asked why the biggest group of inmates is behind bars for sex crimes against kids, Defense Department officials said judges and juries view these crimes as intolerable and are more likely to impose harsher prison terms. They also said military prosecutors pursue verdicts in cases their civilian counterparts would never take to court — and the confinement numbers reflect that commitment.

Air Force Col Chuck Killion, director of the Air Force judiciary, said that since 2008 the Air Force has secured convictions in 199 out of 223 child sexual assault cases — an 89 percent rate. "It's not as if there are child sex crimes being swept under the rug somewhere," Killion said. "We simply don't do that."

But the Defense Department does not make it easy for the public to learn about child sex cases. After DeSmit's conviction in January, the Marine Corps summed it up in two sentences. "At a General Court-Martial at Okinawa, Japan, Chief Warrant Officer 4 D E DeSmit was convicted by a military judge alone of conspiracy to commit sexual assault and rape of children, aggravated sexual abuse of a child, sexual abuse of a child, and possession of child pornography. The military judge sentenced the accused to 144 years of confinement, a reprimand, and dismissal," a summary of the court-martial released by the Marine Corps reads.

And that's all the service would have said publicly, had the AP not pressed for more information, including NCIS's 198-page investigation of the allegations against DeSmit. The most significant detail missing from the Marine Corps' brief public summary was the pretrial agreement. DeSmit had struck a deal with the military, according to court records. He pleaded guilty to 18 counts, including conspiracy to commit rape of a child. His prison sentence was limited to 20 years, not 144 as the Marine Corps had said publicly.

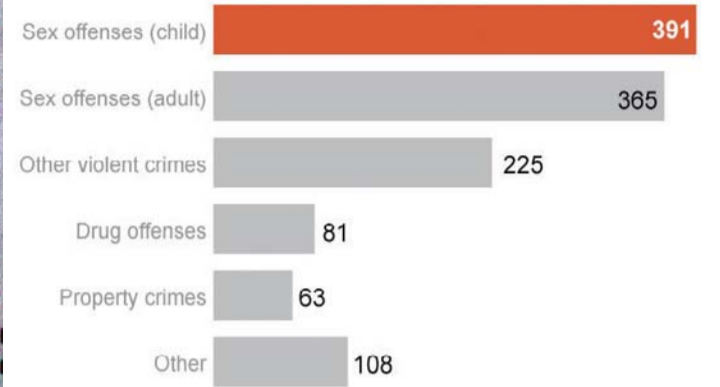
And he will do even less time if he is eventually paroled. In the military justice system, DeSmit is eligible to be considered for release from prison after serving one-third of his term. DeSmit is one of dozens of sex offenders who have benefited from pretrial deals, according to the AP's analysis of the summarized results of courts-martial released by the military services. Since the beginning of July alone, 31 soldiers, sailors and Marines were convicted of sex crimes against children. Twenty of those cases had pretrial agreements. —AP



This image from evidence gathered by the Naval Criminal Investigative Service during its investigation of Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Darren Yazzie shows a message written by his victim on a bedroom wall. Yazzie was convicted in Jan 2015 of rape of a child and sentenced to 17 years confinement. —AP

Child sex crimes top military offenses

Of the 1,233 inmates in U.S. military prisons, those convicted of sex crimes against children make up the largest single group of offenders, an AP investigation finds.



SOURCE: Defense Department

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FOR SYRIAN REFUGEES IN US, FEAR GIVES WAY TO HOPE

SACRAMENTO, California: They share a small two-bedroom apartment in Sacramento with few possessions, but for Syrian refugee Mohammad Abd Rabboh, his wife and two daughters, there is finally freedom from fear. Just six weeks after arriving in the United States, the girls are in school and no longer screaming in the night. Their mother, Dania, is not afraid for the first time in years to go outside. "We witnessed things that are difficult to describe," Rabboh, 36, told Reuters, speaking in Arabic through an interpreter. "You walk in the street and someone falls dead right in front of you."

There is a story that could be easily lost in the US political backlash against Syrian refugees that has been stirred by reports one of the militants involved in last Friday's deadly attacks in Paris may have hidden among the migrant flow. The family's experience - terror and danger at home, followed by profound relief and a sense of security in the United States - is emblematic of what refugees go through, immigration experts say.

The Rabbos are among a small group of about 1,700 Syrian refugees already admitted to the United States, including 179 in

California, 189 in Texas, 179 in Michigan, and 111 in Pennsylvania. US President Barack Obama has pledged to take in 10,000 Syrian refugees next year, following the rush of hundreds of thousands of Syrians into Europe from a country beset by civil war between President Bashar Al-Assad's government and rebels, and advances by the Islamic State militant group.

But Obama's plan faces stiff resistance from Republicans in Congress and on the presidential campaign trail following the killing of 129 people in Paris in an attack claimed by Islamic State. Governors of some 26 US states, most of them Republicans, have said they would not accept new arrivals, citing security concerns. Relief agencies worry about the fallout from such concerns and whether it will make parts of the United States less hospitable to arriving refugees who do make it the country.

"We have to be vigilant but we also need to have our heads on our shoulders and not just be ruled by fear," said Debra DeBondt, who heads the refugee agency Opening Doors, which last year helped settle 400 mostly Middle Eastern refugees, including five Syrian

families, in Sacramento. Kamal Mahrous, who moved his family to Houston from Damascus last January after spending a year in Egypt and undergoing an FBI security check, said being Muslim was not synonymous with being a member of Islamic State or the Al-Qaeda-linked Nusra Front. "We are Syrian people," he said. "We are not ISIS, not Jabhat al-Nusra, not the Assad regime. We are people."

No More Nightmares

The Rabboh family fled its home in the old quarter of the besieged city of Homs in western Syria amid devastating violence more than three years ago, only to begin what Rabboh calls "years of suffering" in Jordan before a relief agency brought the family to Sacramento on Sept 29. Their apartment contains a couch and loveseat, small dining table and three beds, two pushed together in a bedroom for Sally, 7, and Leen, 5. Atop the refrigerator is a box of Froot Loops cereal. In the kitchen, Rabboh assembles the parts he needs to put together a hookah to share tobacco with guests on a tiny balcony.

Sally, wearing a pink fleece jacket emblazoned with the words "Girl Champion", is

already picking up English, and says she wants to be a doctor when she grows up. For four years, her parents say, she woke up screaming every night, wetting the bed in her terror. Two weeks after resettling in the United States, the night terrors stopped, along with the bedwetting. "She feels relaxed here - safe," Dania, 29, said of the second-grade student. Leem, whose name means "soft" in Arabic, was too small to remember the fear and violence that marred their lives in Homs. But while the family tried to shield Sally from the war, that soon became impossible, Dania said.

"She remembers everything," said Dania, who had been studying English literature until the streets of Homs became too dangerous for her to venture out to class. "She says: 'Remember, Mommy, when they knocked at the door? Remember when they shot the bullets?'"

The tiny Syrian community in Sacramento is working to integrate the Rabbos into the city. The California capital, a metropolitan area of about 2 million people, has taken in more than 1,000 refugees, mostly from Afghanistan and Iraq, over the past year. The 15 families of Syrian descent already living in Sacramento

when the refugee crisis began have been working with the broader Middle Eastern and Muslim communities to find apartments and donate furniture and clothing for refugee families, said a Syrian-born physician helping to resettle families.

Once here, they face challenges beyond learning English and looking for work, said the physician, who asked to be identified by only his first and middle names, Mohammad Jaber, out of concern for relatives in Syria. "So many things that we take for granted, people cannot imagine how to do," he said. "Even something as simple as making a doctor's appointment." As he helps others resettle, the physician also worries about his brother, who is still in Syria with two young children, and trying to get out.

Rabbob, an inventor who holds three patents on machines that make candy wrappings, faces a steep learning curve in the United States. His first priorities are to learn English and look for work. But being in America has given him optimism about his family's future for the first time in years. "When I came here, the first day, I didn't feel like a refugee anymore," he said. "I felt like an American citizen." — Reuters

PUTIN, SISI AGREE 'CLOSE' SECURITY COOPERATION

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Egyptian counterpart Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi yesterday agreed "close cooperation" between their security services after Moscow said a bomb brought down its passenger jet over Sinai. "In the context of the efforts to find the criminals involved in the terrorist act against the Russian airliner, close cooperation was agreed on between the security services of Russia and Egypt," the Kremlin said in a statement after the leaders spoke by phone.

The intention is to put in place "additional measures to assure the maximum security of air traffic between the two countries in order to reestablish it as soon as possible," the statement said. Moscow on Tuesday said for the first time that the Airbus plane that crashed shortly after take-off from the Sharm el-Sheikh resort on Oct 31 was destroyed by a bomb but Egypt has not confirmed the attack.

Cairo has insisted it is waiting for the results of an Egyptian-led probe before giving a definitive verdict on what caused the crash that killed all 224 people on board. Egyptian authorities, however, said on

Tuesday that they were enhancing security in airports around the country over the possibility the plane was "targeted by a terrorist attack". Moscow suspended all flights to Egypt on Nov 6 citing the need to bolster airport security, but at the time it played down growing Western suspicions that a bomb had blown its plane out of the sky.

Putin has pledged to find and "punish" those responsible for the attack - the bloodiest against a Russian target since the Beslan school massacre in 2004 - and his security service has offered a \$50 million reward to help find the culprits. While Moscow has not explicitly blamed any specific group for the attack, jihadists linked to the Islamic State (IS) group have claimed responsibility and Russian jets stepped up air strikes against IS targets in Syria after confirming the bombing.

Moscow launched a massive operation to repatriate tens of thousands of stranded holidaymakers after cutting air links with Egypt and Russia's state tourism agency told TASS news agency that the last of those planning to come back were to return home yesterday. — AFP



SOUTH MERIDEN, Connecticut: A member of the Ahmadiyya community of Connecticut walks past the Baitul Aman mosque, where police and the FBI had been investigating reports of multiple gunshots fired at the mosque during the weekend. — AP

SPY POLLARD SET FOR US RELEASE 3 DECADES ON

WASHINGTON: The United States turns the page on one of the most contentious chapters in its relations with ally Israel when it releases convicted spy Jonathan Pollard tomorrow. Pollard, now 61, an American born in Texas to a Jewish family, has languished for nearly 30 years in prison for passing US secrets to Israel - but more than that, his lengthy incarceration has hung over Israeli-US affairs for three decades.

A US court jailed Pollard, a Stanford University graduate and former US Navy intelligence analyst, for life in 1987 after he pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to deliver

intelligence to Israel. "The feeling amongst Israelis is that he was given a very harsh sentence and harsh treatment," added Arbell. "Perhaps at a certain point he will be allowed to travel and perhaps travel to Israel, but I don't think that it is going to happen any time soon."

Classified Information

Having joined the US Navy, Pollard eventually received sufficient security clearance to access Top Secret and Sensitive Compartmented Information. Pollard made contact in June 1984 with an Israeli colonel, Aviem Sella, who was pursuing graduate studies at New York University, and offered to provide him with classified information. He soon began supplying a stream of intelligence to the Israelis, reportedly thousands of documents.

Pollard is also alleged to have passed classified information to South Africa, and to have given his then wife Anne documents on China for use in her personal business. Washington later accused Pollard of causing considerable harm to US interests during the Cold War, although the full scope of his take has never been publicly disclosed. He claimed only to have passed information vital to Israel's security that had been withheld by the Americans, but security experts feared the information might have ended up in the hands of the Soviet Union, at the time Washington's archrival.

"US presidents wanted to set an example that spying on a friendly country should not be tolerated. There was no substantial damage for the US from the actual spying," Michael Brenner, director of the Center for Israel Studies at American University, told AFP. "For American Jews, it touches on the very sensitive nerve of potential 'dual loyalty' among US Jewish citizens, while for Israel it is a story about the loyalty of relations with its most important partner."

US MUSLIMS FACING BACKLASH AFTER PARIS

ISLAMOPHOBIA ON THE RISE

HARTFORD, Connecticut: Muslims around the US are facing backlash following the deadly attacks in Paris, including vandalism to mosques and Islamic centers, hate-filled phone and online messages and threats of violence. Advocacy leaders say they have come to expect some anti-Muslim sentiment following such attacks, but they now see a spike that seems notable, stirred by anti-Muslim sentiment in the media.

"The picture is getting increasingly bleak," said Ibrahim Hooper, a spokesman for the Washington-based Council on American-Islamic Relations. "There's been an accumulation of anti-Islamic rhetoric in our lives and that I think has triggered these overt acts of violence and vandalism." He said the rise in the level of anti-Muslim sentiment is reflected by some Republican presidential candidates, governors and others speaking out in opposition to the US accepting more Syrian refugees.

Hooper said the council is seeing an increase in anti-Muslim incidents since Friday's attacks in Paris that killed 129 people and wounded more than 350. In Connecticut, the FBI and local police are investigating reports of multiple gunshots fired at the Baitul Aman mosque in Meriden hours after the attacks. Leaders of the mosque don't know the motive of the shooter or shooters, said Salaam Bhatti, a spokesman for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in New York, to which the mosque belongs. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is a movement within Islam.

Bhatti said the shooting has not rattled mosque members. He said many are from Pakistan, where conditions for the Ahmadiyya movement are much worse. "It's a teachable moment," Bhatti said. "As we do raise awareness of attacks in mosques, we will see mosques do not respond in violence. Islam teaches us to teach peace."

At the University of Connecticut, authorities are investigating after the words "killed Paris" were discovered on Saturday written beneath an Egyptian student's name on his dorm room door. Muslim leaders also have reported recent vandalism, threats and other hate crimes targeting mosques in Nebraska, Florida, Texas, Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, Ohio, New York and other states.

After the Paris attacks:

The Omaha Islamic Center in Nebraska reported that someone spray-painted a rough outline of the Eiffel Tower on an outside wall. The Council on American-Islamic Relations has called for the FBI and local police to investigate the incident as a possible hate crime, and they're doing just that, according to Nasir Husain, general secretary of the center. Muslims in the central U.S. city are afraid, he said.

In a suburb of Austin, Texas, leaders of the Islamic Center of Pflugerville on Monday discovered feces and torn pages of the Quran that had been thrown at the door of the mosque. Muslim leaders also encouraged authorities to investigate the act as a hate crime.

In a suburb of Houston, Texas, authorities on Tuesday arrested a man accused of threatening on social media to "shoot up a mosque." He was charged with making a terroristic threat, a felony. — AP



JERUSALEM: A file picture taken May 12, 2008 shows a poster of Jonathan Pollard, a Jewish American who was jailed for life in 1987 on charges of spying on the United States, during a demonstration. — AFP

SEIZING TAEZ WOULD PAVE LOYALISTS' WAY TO CAPITAL

DUBAI: Months of fighting in Yemen are coming to a head with an offensive by pro-government forces to retake the strategic province of Taz and pave the way towards the rebel-held capital. This week, government forces backed by a Saudi-led coalition, launched an all-out offensive to push the Iran-backed Shiite rebels out of the southwestern province, and to relieve loyalists besieged in its capital. The fighting, which has killed dozens on both sides, risks worsening an already dire humanitarian situation for the 700,000 inhabitants of Taz city, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) told AFP.

Stretching to the strategic Bab el-Mandab strait at the mouth of the Red Sea, the province could be "the key for the liberation of other provinces, including Ibb and Baida" in central Yemen and opening the way to the north, including Sanaa, said analyst General Thabet Hussein Saleh. Regaining Taz would be of "strategic importance to secure the southern provinces" and Aden, the country's second city, said Saleh, deputy director of the Yemen National Centre for Strategic Studies. The emergence of hard-to-control armed groups, mostly claiming to be jihadists, is feeding a feeling of insecurity, mainly in Aden. President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi, who fled Sanaa in March after escaping from house arrest under the rebels, known as Houthis. He took refuge in the port city, which became the country's temporary capital. Shortly thereafter, he fled to asylum in Riyadh, capital of neighbouring Saudi Arabia, after the insurgents seized Aden. But loyalist forces and southern fighters, backed by coalition air and ground support, pushed the rebels out of Aden and four other southern provinces in the summer.

Loyalists Face 'Difficulties'

Hadi returned to Aden this week to supervise the operation in Taz, which General Saleh said "faces difficulties". The rebels and their allies, forces loyal to ousted president Ali Abdullah Saleh, "control most of the province of Taz, while the (pro-Hadi) Popular Resistance is weak," General Saleh said. The province is "large, with the Houthis and their allies controlling most of it," while loyalists are holding most of the

provincial capital against a Houthi siege, he said.

The Popular Resistance in Taz is "not as organized as it is in the south" said Saleh, adding that the city is "still divided, with some supporting the Houthis and Saleh." "We are advancing on three fronts to break the siege of Taz" city, said General Fadhel Abbas, commander of the major Al-Anad air base. He spoke of a "collapse among the ranks of the Huthis, with some surrendering." — AFP



DABAB, Yemen: Armed Yemeni tribesmen from the Popular Resistance Committees, supporting forces loyal to Yemen's Saudi-backed President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi, flash their guns in this district in Taz province on Tuesday. — AFP

national defense information to a foreign government. Almost 30 years to the day of his arrest on Nov 21, 1985, Pollard will walk out of a prison in Butner, North Carolina, on parole. He was granted Israeli citizenship in 1995.

His official release date is Saturday, but he will be freed a day earlier in accordance with prison policy, an official told AFP. The move allows Pollard, who became very religious behind bars, to observe the Jewish Sabbath. "In the context of 67 years of a very special relationship, this is the first case of espionage charges against a US national for the state of Israel in the US, somebody from the US defense establishment, from the intelligence community, also an American Jew," Dan Arbell, from the Center for Israeli Studies at American University, told AFP. "The American defense establishment over the years has been very sensitive about the information Mr. Pollard allegedly passed on to those he reported to."

Reveiled by many Americans, he is a largely popular figure in Israel. While behind bars, he became an icon of the Israeli right and many Israelis embraced his cause, while the Israeli government has long demanded his release. As his health deteriorated, Arbell said, calls for his release within Israel intensified - but the US



ORLANDO, Florida: In this Nov 14, 2015 photo, Republican presidential candidate, Louisiana Gov Bobby Jindal, addresses the Sunshine Summit. — AP

BOBBY JINDAL DROPS OUT OF US PRESIDENTIAL RACE

WASHINGTON: Republican Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal announced yesterday he was bowing out of the 2016 presidential race, saying "this is not my time". "I've come here to announce that I'm suspending my campaign for president of the United States," Jindal told Fox News. "It's been an incredible honor to run for president of this great country," he added in a post on Twitter.

Jindal's campaign failed to gain traction this year. He languished near the back of the big Republican pack seeking the GOP nomination, a group that included several politicians - and political neophytes - with higher profiles. He often polled at under one percent support, and his campaign faced financial pressure as it approached the all-important two month stretch before the first state-wide vote in the nomination race, on February 1 in Iowa.

Jindal, the 44-year-old son of immigrants from India, is the third Republican to drop out of the contest, after former Texas governor Rick Perry and Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker. His departure leaves 14 Republicans in the nomination hunt, including billionaire frontrunner Donald Trump, retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson, Senator Marco Rubio and former Florida governor Jeb Bush.

Jindal has always pegged himself as a rebellious outsider, insisting that

America needed to pick a president who was not cloistered inside the Washington power bubble. He abhors big government, and constantly vowed on the campaign trail to slash federal programs and spending. At the most recent Republican debate, where he was on stage with three fellow low-polling candidates ahead of the main showdown, he insisted: "There's only one of us who's actually cut government spending - not two, there's one - and you're looking at him."

An extremely fast-talking policy expert, Jindal has an encyclopedic command of the issues, and as a candidate he never hesitated to lash out at the policies of President Barack Obama or Democratic frontrunner Hillary Clinton. He said he hoped the Republican nominee would have the "courage and smarts" to make changes to the status quo in Washington. "The reality is, we cannot afford to go towards socialism," he told Fox. "We cannot afford Hillary Clinton, four more years of a weak foreign policy," he added. "Our country deserves better than that."

Tributes poured in from rivals in the race, including Senator Ted Cruz, who said Jindal's "focus on substantive policy matters advanced the debate that our party must have on the issues most important to American voters." — AFP

REPUBLICANS CLASH OVER REFUGEES AS 2016 LOOMS

HARDLINERS ACCUSED OF BEING INTOLERANT

ATLANTA: Some Republicans are pushing back against aggressive opposition in their party to Syrian refugees resettling in the US, in fresh evidence of a rift that threatens to complicate the party's outreach to minorities heading into the 2016 presidential contest. These Republicans have joined Democrats who liken the refugee backlash to the US government turning away Jews fleeing Nazi Germany and placing Japanese in internment camps during World War II. While conservatives cite security concerns following the Paris attacks that may have involved Syrian refugees, others in the party fear the party's position in Congress and state capitals across the country reeks of xenophobia.

"A refugee is someone who has a credible fear that they're going to be killed," said Alfonso Aguilar, a Republican who served in the George W Bush administration and now leads the Latino Partnership for Conservative Principles. "To close the door reminds me of FDR not letting Jews land in the US during the years of Nazi Germany. Where are they going to go?"

Aguilar said moderate voters who hold outsized influence in general elections could view Republican opposition as extreme and intolerant. He warned that could haunt the Republican Party in next fall's general election. But Republicans pressing for a pause in the refugee influx see a need to be mindful, too, about fears of an attack on US soil days after the deadliest assault in France in 70 years.

A number of presidential candidates, governors and Senate Republicans have issued calls to delay or stop accepting Syrian refugees, pointing to indications that one of the perpetrators in Friday's attacks might have entered France with a Syrian passport. Legislation introduced by Kentucky Sen Rand Paul, a Republican presidential candidate, could allow Republicans to block President Barack Obama's goal of bringing 10,000 more Syrian refugees to the US during the current budget year.

"Filling our country up with people who have a completely different belief system ... and expecting they won't rise up against their benefactor is foolish," Rep Steve King of Iowa, a leading immigration hardliner, said in an interview Tuesday. He added that no refugees should be permitted into the US from Syria "unless they be Christian refugees that are facing genocide". That's exactly the kind of message Republican leaders hoped to avoid after a disastrous 2012 election in which minority voters shunned Republican candidates in near-record numbers. While there are few Muslim voters in America, the pointed Republican resistance against Muslim refugees comes as party leaders try to win over other minority groups.

'Ugliness'

The Republican National Committee outlined a series of recommendations after the last presidential



LINCOLN, Nebraska: Nebraska Gov Pete Ricketts speaks at a news conference on Tuesday. Ricketts sent a letter on Nov 16 to refugee resettlement agencies in the state urging them not to pursue resettlement of Syrian refugees in light of the terrorist attacks in Paris. — AP

contest calling for a more welcoming and inclusive tone on divisive issues such as immigration. "The perception that the (Republican Party) does not care about people is doing great harm to the party and its candidates on the federal level, especially in presidential years," the RNC's Growth and Opportunity report found. "It is a major deficiency that must be addressed."

One of the report's authors, RNC committeeman Henry Barbour, said Tuesday that it's "common sense to tap the brakes" on Syrian refugees given security concerns, but "people need to be careful with their tone". "This is about safety," Barbour said. "This isn't about keeping out this religion or that religion."

Former New Hampshire Republican Party chairman Fergus Cullen said there is "a little bit of ugliness" around the refugee debate. "A specific group of refugees is being treated differently because of their country of natural origin and faith," he said. "This is inconsistent with America's history and our founding creed. That is alarming." It's not exactly like rounding up Japanese Americans into internment camps during World War II, Cullen continued, "but it's the same line of thinking" that feeds "immigrant bashing".

The US has admitted fewer than 2,200 Syrian refugees since Oct 1, 2011, and the process for entering this country as a refugee is lengthy. Obama

administration officials insist the vetting is good and there is no need to back down from the goal of admitting 10,000 more refugees this year. The administration announced that goal earlier in the fall after a photograph of the body of a little Syrian boy washed up on a beach sparked calls for compassion, including from some congressional Republicans. Sen Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, a Republican candidate for president, was one of those who supported accepting more Syrian refugees. This week, he called for a "timeout" in such admissions.

Many Republican candidates, already skeptical if not hostile to welcoming refugees, came out even stronger in recent days. Donald Trump said the US should increase surveillance of mosques, consider closing any tied to radicals and be prepared to suspend some civil liberties. Ben Carson said, "Until we can sort out the bad guys, we must not be foolish." Regarding Syrians already in the US, he added: "I would watch them very carefully."

Tea party leader Mark Meckler said there should be no room for debate. "Anybody who takes a soft stance on this is out of touch with the electorate and out of touch with the common sense," he said, condemning those Republicans calling for tolerance. "I think that's absurd and shows why people from that wing of the party are now the fringe." — AP

BUSH TO KEEP GITMO JAIL OPEN IF ELECTED

CHARLESTON, South Carolina: Republican Jeb Bush was to pledge yesterday that if elected president next year he will keep open the disputed US military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, as long as the fight against Islamic militants lasts. Bush, looking to show he is capable of being commander in chief in the face of multiple threats abroad, will lay out a national security strategy in a speech that he retooled in order to take account of the Paris attacks that killed 129 people last Friday.



FLORENCE, South Carolina: Republican presidential candidate, former Florida Gov Jeb Bush, speaks during a campaign stop Tuesday. Bush called the struggle against the Islamic State group "the war of our time". — AP

The Bush campaign provided details of his plan in advance of the speech at The Citadel, a military college in Charleston. "This brutal savagery is a reminder of what is at stake in this election. We are choosing the leader of the free world," he will say, according to excerpts released early yesterday. Bush was to vow to restore \$1 trillion in cuts to the US military that President Barack Obama agreed to as part of a budget-cutting deal with Congress, which in the excerpts Bush labels "completely arbitrary".

He also would add 40,000 personnel to the US Army and 4,000 to the US Marines, and would bolster US relations with key allies from NATO nations to the Middle East and Asia.

To counter Islamic State militants specifically, Bush would embed US special operations forces with Iraqi forces to help identify enemy targets. He would build an anti-militant international coalition and include regional partners. He is not calling for a massive reintroduction of US troops to Iraq. According to the excerpts, Bush traces the roots of the current Middle East crisis to "the underlying conflicts in Syria and Iraq," which he says spiraled out of control as Democratic President Obama and Hillary Clinton, then secretary of state and now a Democratic presidential candidate, failed to act.

Iraq is a sensitive subject for Bush, given the dismay some Americans feel over the rationale for the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq ordered by his brother, former President George W Bush. Bush's plan to counter Islamic State includes a provision that if elected in Nov 2016, he would maintain the Guantanamo prison that his brother used to house terrorism suspects and which President Barack Obama is trying to close by the time he leaves office in Jan 2017. — Reuters

ONLY HALF OF US BLACKS CONFIDENT OF LIVING TO 35

MIAMI: Only half of African-American youths are confident of living to 35, said a study yesterday that lays bare the toll of the racial divide in the United States. The figure is even lower, at 38 percent, for Mexican-born youths living in the United States, said the study in the December issue of the Journal of Health and Social Behavior. Among whites, the number who felt "almost certain" to survive to age 35 was far higher - 66 percent.

Whites and Cuban-Americans were by far the most optimistic about the future, the study found. "Whites are not subject to the racism and discrimination, at institutional and individual levels, experienced by immigrants and US-born racial and ethnic minorities that undermine health, well-being and real and/or perceived life chances," said Tara Warner, an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

"Such experiences - including fear of victimization and/or deportation - can

be a source of chronic stress for racial and ethnic minorities, as well as immigrants, that further undermines well-being, even among youth," Warner said in a statement. The study, "Adolescent Survival Expectations: Variations by Race, Ethnicity, and Nativity," is described by its authors as the first to document patterns of survival expectations across racial, ethnic, and immigrant groups. The data comes from a national US survey involving 17,100 people aged between 12 and 25.

Lead author Warner and co-author Raymond Swisher, a sociology professor at Bowling Green State University, narrowed their research to people who self-identified as white, black, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban or Asian. "Our most surprising finding is that foreign-born Mexican young people are the most pessimistic about their future survival - even more pessimistic than their black peers," said Warner. "This pessimism remains

even after accounting for a number of risk factors known to undermine survival, such as lack of routine healthcare, exposure to neighborhood poverty, and experiences with violence."

Researchers found that US-born Cubans were even slightly more optimistic than young whites. That could be linked to their relative economic advantages compared to other minority peers, said Warner. "US-born Cubans also have higher aspirations and expectations, even compared to whites, for significant events, including attending college and getting married," Warner said. Understanding youth outlook is vital because it affects how they plan for the future and may lead to violence, experts say. "If young people don't expect to live very long, they may engage in risky behaviors that help make those survival expectations a reality," Warner warned. "We should be thinking of ways to change that." — AFP

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RELIGIOUS SISTERS POSE AS PROSTITUTES TO SAVE SEX SLAVES

LONDON: An army of religious sisters who rescue victims of human trafficking by posing as prostitutes to infiltrate brothels and buying children being sold into slavery, is expanding to 140 countries, its chairman said yesterday. John Studzinski, an investment banker and philanthropist who chairs Talitha Kum, said the network of 1,100 sisters currently operates in about 80 countries but the demand for efforts to combat trafficking and slavery was rising globally.

The group, set up in 2004, estimates one percent of the world's population is trafficked in some form, which translates into some 73 million people. Of those, 70

percent are women and half are aged 16 or younger. "I'm not trying to be sensational but I'm trying to underscore the fact this is a world that has lost innocence ... where dark forces are active," said Studzinski, a vice chairman of US investment bank The Blackstone Group. "These are problems caused by poverty and equality but it goes well beyond that," he told the Trust Women Conference on women's rights and trafficking hosted by the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Detailing some cases involving trafficking and slavery, Studzinski said the treatment of some victims was horrific.

He told of one woman enslaved as a prostitute who was locked up for a week without food, forced to eat own her faeces, when she failed to have sex with a target of 12 clients a day. In another extreme case, one woman was forced to have sex with a group of 10 men at the same time. Studzinski said the religious sisters working to combat trafficking would go to all lengths to rescue women, often dressing up as prostitutes and going out on the street to integrate themselves into brothels.

"These sisters do not trust anyone. They do not trust governments, they do not trust corporations, and they don't

trust the local police. In some cases they cannot trust male clergy," he said, adding that the low-key group preferred to focus on their rescue work rather than promotion. "They work in brothels. No one knows they are there." The sisters were also proactive on trying to save children being sold into slavery by their parents, setting up a network of homes in Africa as well as in the Philippines, Brazil and India to shelter such children.

He said the religious sisters of Talitha Kum raised money to purchase these children. "This is a new network of houses for children around the world who would otherwise be sold into slavery. It is

shocking but it is real," he said. Studzinski said the network of religious sisters, that was in the process of expanding, also targeted slavery in the supply chain with sisters shedding their habits and working alongside locals for as little as 2 US cents an hour to uncover abuses. He said Talitha Kum, which translated from Aramaic means arise child, was now being hired by companies to see what is going on with respect to the supply chain and expanding globally would help address this issue. "You can't generalize about trafficking and slavery as no two countries are the same," Studzinski said. — Reuters



HALIFAX: Air France Flight 55 taxis to the terminal at Halifax Stanfield International Airport yesterday. The flight was on its way from Washington, DC to Paris when it made an emergency landing in Halifax after the airline received anonymous threats. — AP

AIR FRANCE FLIGHTS TO PARIS DIVERTED OVER BOMB SCARE

AIRLINE RECEIVES ANONYMOUS BOMB THREATS

LOS ANGELES: Two Paris-bound Air France flights from the United States were diverted Tuesday and landed safely after the airline received anonymous bomb threats, the carrier said. Flight 65 from Los Angeles and Flight 55 from Washington were "subject to anonymous threats received after their respective takeoff," the airline said in a statement. The incidents took place just days after last week's terror attacks in Paris that left 129 people dead and sowed fear in the French capital and beyond. Air France said both planes landed safely and were undergoing safety checks. "As a precautionary measure and to conduct all necessary security checks, Air France... decided to request the landings of both aircraft," the carrier said. "Local authorities are carrying out complete inspections of the aircraft, the passengers and their luggage."

Air France said authorities were also tracking the "source of the telephone calls." It was unclear if the same person had called in both threats. The flight from Dulles International Airport outside Washington with 262 people on board was diverted to Halifax, Nova Scotia and landed at around 10:15 pm local time (0215 GMT, Wednesday). The flight from Los Angeles

transporting 497 passengers and crew landed safely in Salt Lake City, Utah. "Several law enforcement agencies are working to determine the nature of the threats which caused the aircraft to divert," FBI agent Todd Palmer, of the Salt Lake City division, told CNN.

A man on board the plane that landed in Halifax told the network that passengers were informed that they were being diverted about two and a half hours into the flight "due to operational issues." He said there was no panic on board and everyone disembarked calmly. "Upon landing, one of the flight attendants said it was a security issue that needed to get addressed," said the man identified as Yianni. A passenger on board the Los Angeles-Paris flight said "everything was going swell" for the first two hours until flight attendants began quickly clearing the dinner trays.

German friendly canceled

On Tuesday, a bomb threat also forced the cancellation of Germany's friendly against the Netherlands. Germany's interior minister, Thomas de Maiziere, took the decision to call off the international friendly, based

on a "concrete threat," two hours before kick-off in Hanover. German Chancellor Angela Merkel was rushed back to Berlin, and thousands of fans had to be evacuated from the stadium. Both the German and Dutch team buses were turned back, as they were five minutes from the stadium when the game was called off. Despite a thorough search, no explosives were found at the HDI Arena.

It was the second high-profile friendly to be canceled in the wake of Friday's attacks in the French capital, following an earlier decision by Belgian authorities to postpone the country's game against Spain in Brussels amid security fears. The Islamic State group, which claimed responsibility for the attacks in Paris, has threatened further attacks against France. It also warned in a new video on Monday that countries involved in air strikes against IS targets in Syria would suffer the same fate. France and Russia have vowed merciless retaliation for the Paris attacks and last month's bombing of a Russian airliner, also claimed by the Islamic State group, which have galvanized international resolve to destroy the jihadists and end Syria's more than four-year civil war. — AFP

70 YEARS AFTER NUREMBERG TRIALS, GERMANY TRIES TO RIGHT WRONGS

BERLIN: Seventy years after the trials of top Nazis began in Nuremberg, Germany is racing against time to prosecute the last Third Reich criminals to make up for decades of neglect. The cases aim to bring to justice "even the most minimal participant" in the crimes under Hitler, but also to "allow the last survivors to speak", historian Werner Renz said. The approach is intended to serve "judicial, pedagogical and social" purposes in a nation still working to atone for past atrocities.

Around a dozen investigations are currently under

way against former SS officers, just months after the so-called "Bookkeeper of Auschwitz" Oskar Groening was sentenced to four years in jail as an accessory to murder in 300,000 cases in which Hungarian Jews were sent to the gas chambers between May and July 1944. A 91-year-old woman and two men, aged 92 and 93, who worked at Auschwitz could still face trial next year for their alleged part in exterminating Jews. Two of the elderly accused could, unusually, have their cases heard by a juvenile court due to their young age at the time of the acts in question. "It is too late for

those who actually took the decisions, so we have to stretch the notion of guilt to a ridiculous point to try the lackeys," renowned French Nazi hunter Serge Klarsfeld complained before the Groening trial.

'Second guilt'

Whether or not the cases go to trial depends on preliminary assessments by the courts—a high hurdle given the amount of time that has passed and the advanced age of the suspects. Case in point: the investigation into the Nazi massacre of 642 civilians in the French town of Oradour-sur-Glane in June 1944, which was thrown out last year due to lack of evidence against the suspects. The attempt to prosecute the last surviving officer believed to be behind atrocities in the Italian village of Sant'Anna di Stazzema in August 1944, which claimed the lives of 560 people, fell apart in May due to the suspect's poor health.

And in January 2014, a German court halted proceedings against 92-year-old former SS officer Siert Bruins accused of the murder of a Dutch resistance fighter. The presiding judge ruled after four months of hearings that because crucial evidence had been lost since the killing and key testimony was unavailable, it had been impossible to convict Bruins of murder. Yet even the abandoned cases point to a new zeal by the German justice system, driven by a younger generation of prosecutors and judges. It was also spurred by case law established in "work carried out after reunification on crimes by former East Germany" which posed similar legal problems, said law professor Christoph Safferling of the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. Taken as a whole, however, the record is damning: looking only at Auschwitz, where 1.1 million people died, fewer than 50 of the 6,500 SS officers who worked there and survived the war were ever convicted. The late German writer and Holocaust survivor Ralph Giordano called it his country's "second guilt". — AFP



This picture taken on October 2, 1946 shows Nazi leaders accused of war crimes during world war II as they listen to the verdict of Nuremberg trial. — AFP

TURKEY DETAINS 8 EUROPE-BOUND IS SUSPECTS 'POSING AS REFUGEES'

BRITISH 'TERROR SPONSORS' HELD IN HUNGARY

ISTANBUL: Turkish police detained eight suspected members of the Islamic State jihadist (IS) group, state media said yesterday, adding they were planning to sneak into Europe posing as refugees. Counter-terror police detained the suspects in Istanbul's Ataturk Airport after they flew in from the Moroccan city of Casablanca on Tuesday, the official Anatolia news agency reported.

The police found a hand-written note on one of the suspects detailing a migration route from Istanbul to Germany via Greece, Serbia and Hungary, including smuggler boats across the Mediterranean Sea, as well as several train and bus journeys. The eight men told police that they were just tourists who had been planning to spend a few days in Istanbul and had booked rooms at a hotel, but no reservations were found under their names. Turkey is the main launching point for migrants coming to Europe, and currently hosts over two million Syrian refugees.

More than 650,000 migrants and refugees, have reached the Greek islands so far in 2015 using the eastern Mediterranean route, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said earlier this month. The Paris attacks however threw a security spotlight on the migrant flow, after the discovery at the scene of one of Friday's attacks of a Syrian passport registered in the Greek island of Leros on October 3. Turkey was long criticized by its Western allies for failure to take robust action to stem the flow of IS militants across its porous border. But Ankara has stepped security measures in recent months after a series of deadly attacks blamed on the extremists, including a twin suicide bombing in Ankara that killed 102 people last month.

'Terror sponsors' held

Meanwhile, two British nationals banned from travelling abroad after serving jail terms for financing terrorism have been apprehended in

Hungary on a train headed for Romania, Hungarian police said yesterday. The two men, named as Jonathan K., 40, and Trevor B., 44, were intercepted on Saturday on an international train at Lokoshaza, a crossing point on the Romanian border. According to a Hungarian police statement, the pair each served two jail terms totaling five years in Britain.

After their release in 2009, both were barred from leaving Britain without permission. The two men were taken into custody by Hungarian police because they did not have legal documents entitling them to stay in the EU member state. One of them presented a British driving licence and the other just a Koran. Only after their detention did it emerge that both were subject to a European arrest warrant, police spokeswoman Viktoria Csizser-Kovacs said. "The men will appear shortly at a court in Budapest to decide on the extradition," Csizser-Kovacs said. She added that it was unclear what their intended final destination had been, although it was possible they were on their way to Syria via Bulgaria and Turkey.

Denmark raises threat level

Meanwhile, Danish police yesterday raised the country's threat level by one notch to the next-highest level, citing the elevated risk of a terrorist attack after last week's Paris attacks. "Following the terrorist attacks in Paris, the Danish police is now raising its internal preparedness level" to "significantly heightened preparedness," it said in a statement. Police cited the "uncertain situation in a number of European countries." However, it said the Danish intelligence service PET had "not changed its assessment of the terrorist threat against Denmark, which is still considered serious." The Danish public would not see any difference in their daily lives as a result of the change, police said. — Agencies



MADRID: Tourist guide Pilar walks down the central street through the ruins of Belchite village, in Aragon. In the lead-up to the forty years since Franco's death, historians still working to demolish the myths that the Spanish dictator himself had created by constantly rewriting history to perpetuate his rule. (1939-1975). Franco ordered that the ruins be left untouched as a "living" monument of war. — AFP

FRANCO DEMYSTIFIED 40 YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH

MADRID: Forty years after the death of Francisco Franco, historians still work to demolish myths that the Spanish dictator spun about himself to hold on to power for decades. "Franco lied about almost everything," British historian Paul Preston, the author of what is considered to be the definitive biography of Franco said by telephone from London. "One of his biggest lies was that he saved Spain from World War II, whereas he constantly tried to participate" on the side of the fascists, added Preston, professor of Spanish Studies at the London School of Economics.

Franco came to power after his side won Spain's 1936-39 civil war with the help of Germany's Adolph Hitler and Italy's Benito Mussolini. He then ruled Spain with an iron fist until his death on November 20, 1975. "Spain was a weakened, defeated country, and more of a problem than a solution for Hitler, who was irritated by what Franco demanded" to enter World War II, said Spanish historian Carlos Gil Andres. Although Franco did not bring Spain officially into World War II on the side of Nazi Germany, he allowed volunteers to join the German army to fight against Soviet Communism in a so-called "Blue Division".

"When 47,000 men go fight on the Russian front on the side of the Blue division, we can't say Spain is not at war," said Julian Casanova, one of Spain's leading historians who edited an anthology on Franco. He said "at least" 50,000 people were executed by the Franco regime in the decade that followed the civil war and hundreds of thousands of others were taken prisoner as Franco consolidated his grip on power.

'Very anti-Semitic'

Preston portrays Franco in his biography as

a "lowbrow" man who was "rather mediocre", and who displayed "enormous egocentrism" and "a calculated cruelty" fuelled by a ferocious hatred of separatism, communism and Freemasonry which he sought to eliminate from Spain. But Preston also writes that Franco was "cunning" and equipped with great intuition to adapt to changing circumstances. The regime and its ally, Spain's Roman Catholic Church, portrayed Franco as a "saviour of Western Christian traditions", a "master strategist" who "never made a mistake" and the author of an "economic miracle".

Among the false claims by the regime which are still widely believed by many is that Franco was "a savior of Jews" during World War II. "Franco was not like Hitler, he did not want to annihilate the entire Jewish race but he was very anti-Semitic. He adopted a softer approach towards Jews when it started to look like the Axis powers could lose," said Preston. The Spanish government published a brochure in 1947 which said Franco offered to let Jews move to Spain, said Preston. "A pure lie. What he offered to most was to allow them to travel through Spain, but in a very limited way," he said.

'Most corrupt regime'

"My entire life is work and reflection," Franco said in 1946, a statement that contrasted with his love of golf, fishing and hunting trips where government contracts were distributed among supporters. Spanish historian Angel Vinas dismantles the image of Franco as an "austere and spartan" leader in his book "The Other Face of the Caudillo". "While soldiers died in the trenches, suffering hunger and lice, he was becoming a millionaire," he said. — AFP

SURROGATES FEEL HURT BY INDIA'S BAN ON FOREIGN CUSTOMERS

NO MORE VISAS FOR 'REPRODUCTIVE TOURISM'

NEW DELHI: For thousands of childless couples the world over, India has been the go-to destination to fulfill their dreams of becoming parents, thanks to its well-trained doctors, well-appointed fertility clinics and vast numbers of poor women willing to serve as surrogate mothers. Not anymore. The Indian government recently banned surrogate services for foreigners and ordered fertility clinics to stop the practice of hiring Indian women to bear children for them. It's said to be intended to protect the women from exploitation, though some who have worked as surrogates say the ban actually hurts them.

"Becoming a surrogate mother is our one chance to build a house, or get a new roof. We earn more from one surrogacy than from 10 years of working as domestic help," said Tina Rajesh Chavan, speaking over telephone from Anand, a major hub of fertility clinics, in the western Indian state of Gujarat. India was among the few countries in the world that allowed surrogacy - where a woman could be hired to carry the child of a couple through a process of in-vitro fertilization and embryo transfer. India's home ministry has ordered Indian embassies abroad not to grant visas to couples visiting the country for surrogacy, or "reproductive tourism" as the practice has come to be known.

Though laws governing surrogacy have yet to be passed, the government outlined its position in an affidavit placed before the Supreme Court on Oct 28. It said India "does not support commercial surrogacy and the scope of surrogacy is limited to Indian married infertile couples only, and not to foreigners." A previous order had already barred gay and unmarried couples and single people from hiring surrogates. A government official, who spoke on condition of anonymity as he was not authorized to speak to the media, said the tightening of rules concerning surrogacy was to protect poor women from being exploited in the absence of legal safeguards.

Money for surrogacy

Chavan, who served as a surrogate mother for two foreign couples, said her earnings through the two surrogate pregnancies ensured that her three children were able to complete their high school educations. "Were it not for the surrogacy money, I would have had to pull them out of school," the 35-year-old said. She currently works as a nanny helping parents look after their newborn surrogate babies during the time they are waiting to obtain visas for the infants. "This ban does not help anyone. It has closed the door for poor people like us to earn a little money," Chavan said.

She said she made 500,000 rupees (\$7,700) for each surrogacy. That's typical for Gujarat, where the industry is most organized, but women in other states may be paid as little as 150,000 rupees (\$2,300). Some women's rights activists say India's burgeoning surrogacy business should be regulated, not outlawed. Banning it, they say, will only drive it underground. "In the last decade, fertility clinics that



ANAND: A couple from Britain hold their baby, born on Oct 17 by a surrogate, in Anand, India. — AP

carry out surrogacy have come up everywhere - in the major metros as well as in small towns. And with it, there is a growing tribe of agents - men who procure poor women to serve as surrogates," said Manasi Mishra, a New Delhi-based researcher and author of two government-funded reports on surrogacy in India.

"These men are not going to give up their professional business. The whole practice will go underground, and it will be very hard to check the exploitation of the women hired as surrogates," Mishra said. Since India legalized commercial surrogacy in 2001, thousands of fertility clinics have mushroomed across the country, making it a \$1 billion to \$2.3 billion business annually. Although there are no official figures available, a 2012 UN report said there were around 3,000 fertility clinics in India.

The clinics have attracted couples from Britain, the United States, Australia, South Africa and Japan. A surrogate pregnancy costs around \$20,000 to \$35,000 in India, compared to around \$150,000 in the United States, where surrogacy is permitted in many but not all states. Other countries that allow surrogacy include Russia, Georgia and Ukraine. Thailand also had been a popular destination for those wanting a baby through surrogacy, but after recent scandals involving foreign clients, the country passed a law in August banning commercial surrogacy.

Activists in India say while the industry has proliferated, a lack of safeguards has led to rampant exploitation of thousands of poor, illiterate women

by touts, agents, unscrupulous doctors and the owners of fertility clinics. They say women may be paid far less than promised, with agents getting much of the cash and clinics taking deductions for everything from food to medical tests. Multiple embryos may be implanted without the woman's knowledge.

Almost all babies are delivered by cesarean section, no matter whether it is medically necessary. "Most often, the woman doesn't even know what she is signing, except that her womb will be used to carry a baby," said Ranjana Kumari, director of the New Delhi-based Centre for Social Research. The surrogates are supposed to be at least 21, but agents persuade families to let girls as young as 16 become surrogate mothers, providing them with fake certificates showing them as older than their real age.

Kumari said strong regulation of the industry "would benefit all the concerned parties - the commissioning parents, surrogate mothers, and the child born of such an arrangement." After long years of deliberation, India has reached the final stages of readying a law governing surrogacy for Indian couples. The legislation would bar the use of agents, require couples seeking surrogacy to pay all of the surrogate's expenses, and allow only women between the ages of 21 and 35 to act as surrogate mothers. It also says that women who have had more than five live births cannot serve as a surrogate. The Indian Council of Medical Research is seeking public comment on the proposed legislation before Parliament votes on it. — AP

ITALIAN SHOT IN LATEST ATTACK ON FOREIGNERS IN BANGLADESH

DHAKA: An Italian doctor working as a missionary was shot and wounded in the neck during an attack by three assailants in northern Bangladesh yesterday, police and a doctor said, in the latest in a series of attacks on foreigners. The assault on the doctor, identified by Italian newspapers as Piero Parolari, in the Muslim-majority country follows the killing of another Italian and a Japanese citizen in attacks claimed by Islamic State at the end of September and early October.

The latest attack took place in Dinajpur district, 414 km north of the capital Dhaka, where Parolari has been carrying out missionary work and medical services among the poor for the last 10 years. Police had earlier said he had been stabbed. Parolari had been moved to a hospital in Dinajpur town, according to Dinajpur Sadar police station. Dharani Kanto, an auto rickshaw driver, told Reuters that he had taken Parolari to hospital. "No one was attending to him, so with the help of two other people I rushed him to the hospital," Kanto said.

The attackers fled on a motorcycle, and fired shots to frighten off people chasing them, a senior police official

said. Bangladesh has suffered a rising tide of Islamist violence over the past year. Four online critics of religious militancy have been hacked to death, among them a US citizen of Bangladesh origin. And, on Sept 28, an Italian aid worker was shot in Dhaka's diplomatic quarter by three gunmen on a motorcycle. A few days later a Japanese man was also shot. Islamic State also claimed responsibility for the bombing of a Shiite shrine in Dhaka last month that killed one person and wounded dozens.

The government has rejected the Islamic State claims and has blamed the rising violence on political opponents. Humayun Kabir, a Deputy Inspector General of police for the northern region, told Reuters that security in the area had been tightened. He linked the attack on the Italian missionary to death sentences handed down to the leaders of two opposition parties who have been found guilty of committing war crimes during the 1971 war of independence. "The motive of the attack was to create a destructive and unstable situation in the country to prevent on going trial of war criminals," Humayun said. — Reuters

SEXUAL ABUSE OF BOYS ON THE RISE IN PAKISTAN

ISLAMABAD: The number of young boys being sexually abused in Pakistan has increased this year, a new watchdog report said yesterday, with more boys between the ages of six and 10 victims than girls. In total the number of boys being abused increased by 4.3 percent in the first half of 2015 compared to the same period last year, according to the study from Sahil, a non-government organization (NGO) working against child sex abuse.

The report said that 178 boys aged six to 10 were abused compared to 150 girls of the same ages. "The reason for this is that more boys go out of home to play in the streets and are easily trapped," Mumtaz Gohar, a spokesman for Sahil said. "Many families also prefer not to report offences against the girls because of defamation issues," he said. The number of women involved in sexual assaults has increased alarmingly, with the report saying that 102 cases from January to June in 2015 involved "female abettors"-five times as many as the same period in 2014.

The report showed a decline of 221 in

overall abuse cases involving children of all ages, with roughly nine children a day being sexually abused over the first six months of 2015 in Pakistan. The figure for the first six months of 2015 was 1,565 compared with 1,786 for the same period last year. Sex is a taboo subject in the deeply conservative Muslim-majority country. Activists working to fight child abuse have said the problem is widespread but difficult to quantify because victims are often unwilling to speak out.

Last year Sahil charted more than 3,500 registered cases in total, with a spokesman saying the true figure could be as high as 10,000. Earlier this month Pakistan took a step towards punishing those guilty of abusing young girls with life imprisonment or even death after an influential parliamentary committee voted to amend current laws. The amendment only appears to address the sexual abuse of girls aged under 14, not boys. In August, a huge scandal emerged involving at least 280 children who lawyers said were filmed being sexually abused, with their parents blackmailed over the footage. — AFP

BANGLADESH OPPN LEADERS TO HANG FOR WAR CRIMES

DHAKA: Bangladesh's Supreme Court yesterday rejected final appeals from two opposition leaders against death sentences for atrocities committed during the 1971 war of independence, rulings that are likely to spark protests by their supporters. Muslim-majority Bangladesh has seen a rise in Islamist violence in recent months, with two foreigners and four secular writers and a publisher killed this year. Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mujahid, 67, secretary general of the Jamaat-e-Islami party, was found guilty of five charges including torture and the murders of intellectuals and minority Hindus while he commanded Al Badr, an auxiliary force of the Pakistani army, during the war to break away from Pakistan.

Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury, 66, former legislator from former premier Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), was convicted in October

2013 on charges of genocide, religious persecution, abduction and torture during the war. "The entire nation is happy with the verdicts," Attorney General Mahbub Alam told reporters outside the packed court amid tight security. The rulings mean the two could be hanged at any time unless they seek mercy from the president.

Mujahid, social welfare minister from 2001 to 2006 under Khaleda, would be the first former minister and the third to be hanged while Chowdhury would be the first BNP leader to go to the gallows unless they are granted clemency. "It is up to them whether they want to seek mercy or not," defense counsel Khandaker Mahbub Hossain told reporters. Just a few hours before the rulings, an Italian priest and doctor was wounded in the latest attack on foreigners in Bangladesh. Islamic State militants have claimed responsibility for

earlier attacks on foreigners.

The government, however, rejected Islamic State's claim and blamed the growing violence in Bangladesh on its domestic political opponents linked to Islamist parties. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina opened an inquiry in 2010 into abuses committed during the war that Islamists and Khaleda's party have denounced as part of a politically motivated campaign to weaken the opposition. Two Jamaat leaders have been executed, one in December 2013 and another in April. They declined to seek clemency from the president.

Extra security forces have been deployed in Dhaka and other parts of the country as similar judgments in the past triggered violence that left around 200 dead, mainly Jamaat activists and police. Jamaat called a nationwide strike on Thursday in protest. Hundreds of people came out on Dhaka's streets to cheer the verdicts while there have been no reports of violence so far. The government ordered the blocking of Facebook and online messaging and calling services WhatsApp and Viber for security reasons, a telecom regulatory official said.

US lawmakers and international human rights groups say the tribunal's procedures fall short of international standards. The Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, set up by the US Congress, has expressed "serious concerns" over the death penalties. Defense counsel for Mujahid were intimidated and arrested, the commission said this week citing reports, while premier Hasina's reported call to "try the war criminals quickly" raised concerns over whether due process had been observed.

No Peace Without Justice, a non-profit organization based in Italy, has called the tribunal's proceedings "a weapon of politically influenced revenge whose real aim is to target the political opposition". The government denies the accusations. East Pakistan broke away to become independent Bangladesh after the war between India and Pakistan. About three million people were killed. — Reuters

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KOLKATA: Indian youth march in a silent rally to protest against Friday's Paris attacks, in Kolkata, India yesterday. Multiple attacks across Paris on Friday night have left more than one hundred dead and many more injured. — AP

SE ASIA FACES THREAT OF ISLAMIC STATE-STYLED TERROR ATTACKS

INDIA WARNS OF IS THREAT, TIGHTENS VIGIL AT EMBASSIES

KUALA LUMPUR: Southeast Asia faces the threat of Islamic State-inspired attacks designed to "glamorize terrorism," a Malaysian minister said yesterday, voicing fears of battle-hardened fighters returning from Syria to launch Paris-style attacks. In September, Malaysian police thwarted a plot to detonate bombs in Kuala Lumpur's vibrant tourist area of Bukit Bintang. Other recent plots frustrated by Malaysian security forces included plans to raid army camps and seize weapons.

"I think the Paris situation can also be transplanted here, in Southeast Asia, where we also have fertile ground for recruitment of such operatives who will receive directives from Syria to carry out attacks," Nur Jazlan Mohamed, Malaysia's deputy home minister, said in an interview. "Such attacks, they hope, will glamorize terrorism and therefore attract more people to join their cause," he said, singling out tourist and entertainment centers in the region as a favored target. Terrorism is high on the agenda of world leaders gathered in Manila for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in the wake of the deadly attacks in Paris that killed at least 129 people.

And the minister's comments follow news of the execution this week of a Malaysian businessman in the Philippines by Abu Sayyaf, and Islamist militant group that had past links to Al-Qaeda but has more recently shown support for Islamic State. Estimates suggest that more than 500 Indonesians, over 40 Malaysians and a handful of Singaporeans have gone to fight in Syria and Iraq. Hundreds of others were arrested or detained before they could leave the country. In Malaysia, 150 terror suspects have been arrested

since Islamic State rose to prominence in 2013.

IS franchise

Counter-terrorism will doubtless be on the agenda when Southeast Asian leader gather in Kuala Lumpur next week for a regional summit, and security has been ratcheted up in the Malaysian capital. "We have upgraded our security information at immigration to make sure there are no suspicious foreigners coming into country and activated anti-terrorism unit locally," Nur Jazlan said. Enforcement officials and security experts fear Malaysian militants hiding in Southern Philippines are trying to bring together groups in Malaysia, Indonesia and Philippines to form a regional branch of Islamic State.

Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), the al Qaeda linked group that carried out the Bali bombings in 2002 that killed over 200 people, that could be used to build a network. JI has been most active in Indonesia, but has had cells in several other Southeast Asian countries, whereas there is an array of smaller Islamist militant groups, like Abu Sayyaf, operating more locally in the region. "These groups are just looking for an umbrella organization and IS is becoming that organisation for these disparate and separate groups to get together," said Nur Jazlan.

Sidney Jones, the head of the Jakarta-based Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict and an regional expert on terrorism issues said there is increasing pressure from Indonesian and Philippine supporters of IS to declare a province of IS in Southeast Asia that would cover Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore. "So far Indonesian would-be terror-

ists have been pretty incompetent and their Philippine counterparts have been mostly interested in money," she said. "If we got a few experienced professionals coming back from Syria to train local groups, that could be the game-changer."

India warns, tightens vigil

In another development, India has warned of Islamic State using regional militant groups to mount strikes in the country, and has increased security around the diplomatic missions of the United States, France and Britain among others, a government advisory said. The federal interior ministry said in the note issued to state police chiefs that Friday's attacks in Paris in which 129 people were killed showed the intentions of Islamic State to expand its arc of operations beyond Syria and Iraq. Despite India's large Muslim population, Islamic State has only been able to draw a handful of recruits from the country, although security officials say they don't have a full picture, and that there could be more youth getting radicalized.

But some of the world's deadliest militant groups, including the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba that carried out the Mumbai 2008 attacks, operate in India, and the fear is Islamic State might turn to them to target foreign interests in the country. "Though ISIS/ISIL has not been able to establish any significant presence in India, its success in radicalizing some youth, attracting certain section of the local population/Indian diaspora... or the possibility of piggybacking on terrorist groups operating in India have opened up the possibility of ISIS sponsored action on Indian territory," the note said. — Agencies

FRESH FIGHTING IN MYANMAR'S NORTH DESPITE HISTORIC POLL

TAUNGGYI: Fresh fighting has broken out between the military and rebel groups in Myanmar's north, forcing hundreds of civilians to flee less than two weeks after a historic poll victory for opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi. Thousands of people have been displaced in the past month by ongoing clashes between the Shan State Army-North and government forces, with the Myanmar military launching air strikes targeting ethnic insurgents. "We didn't dare stay as helicopters kept coming to attack," said a 41-year-old teacher, who escaped the area with 15 other people in her car. "People were so frightened," she said at a monastery in Lecha town-some 100km from the fighting.

The army confirmed there was ongoing fighting in Kachin and Shan states, areas of the country that have been plagued by armed ethnic conflicts for the some 70 years since the country formerly known as Burma gained independence from Britain in 1948. Last month, President Thein Sein's quasi-civilian government inked ceasefires with a clutch of ethnic armed groups, but several major conflicts persist in the war-torn nation. The Shan State Army-North and the Kachin Independence Army both refrained from inking the deal and have been engaged in ongoing clashes with

government forces for months.

As fighting continued in the run-up to November's landmark vote, authorities cancelled elections in seven national parliament constituencies-all in Shan-as well as suspending voting in swathes of northern Kachin state and Karen state in the east. "There has been continuous fighting for two whole nights... Schools are closed. I left my husband behind to look after our house. I'm really worried about him," said Pa Latt, 35, who was also sheltering at the Lecha monastery with her two sons. "I dare not to go back because we are so frightened. Helicopters are still flying around."

The Myanmar military launched an operation targeting Shan rebels on November 10, after insurgents attacked a police station and military outpost, leaving a number of soldiers dead and others injured, according to a government statement which gave no further details. The Shan State Army-North said the military has since launched air strikes in the area. "They are using military planes and helicopters," Major Sai Kham, a spokesman for the Shan rebels said. More than 100,000 thousand people have been displaced across swathes of northern Myanmar since a ceasefire between Kachin rebels and the army collapsed in 2011. — AFP

AUSTRALIAN BUSHFIRES LEAVE FOUR DEAD IN 'DAY FROM HELL'

PERTH: At least four people died in bushfires raging in parts of Western Australia, authorities said yesterday, with a shocked local community lamenting the "day from hell". Several fast-moving blazes, sparked by lightning, were burning around Esperance some 750 kilometres southeast of Perth, with hundreds of firemen working round the clock in searing temperatures to put out the first serious fires ahead of the Australian summer.

"Sadly, police have confirmed four fatalities," state Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner Wayne Gregson said, adding that two women and two men, in two separate cars, died trying to escape the flames. It is not known if the vehicles crashed or caught fire. "I can also record that at this stage there are three houses or buildings unconfirmed as being lost in those fires around Esperance," said Gregson.

One of the men who died was reportedly a local farmer who had been driving to neighboring properties to warn people before making his own escape. The other victims were said to be foreign backpackers but police would not confirm this. Authorities advised local residents of an immediate threat to lives and homes. "The bushfire is moving in a north-easterly direction. Flames are up to two meters high," the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) said in an advisory.

"Homes in Salmon Gums and Grass Patch are under threat by fire now," A bushfire emergency warning was also in place for people in the Stockyard Creek and Mullet Lakes areas around Esperance, with a fire contained but not controlled. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull said the government was ready to offer assistance. "Summer can be a very challenging and dangerous time in Australia as we know and this is a tragic event," he said.

"We are obviously ready to provide assistance whenever required." Bushfires are common in Australia's hotter months. "Black Saturday", the worst firestorm in recent years, devastated southern Victoria in 2009, razing thousands of homes and killing 173 people.

Devastating, absolutely terrible

Esperance Shire President Victoria Brown said the remote coastal community was in shock. "It was the day from hell, it was devastating," she told national radio. "They got many of the fires out, but there were a few still burning, and they combined into an inferno. This is going to have a massive impact on our community. It is the biggest fire we've had to deal with in this region." DFES regional superintendent Trevor Tasker said the Salmon Gums fire, whipped up by wind, was the worst he had ever seen and the devastation had left him shocked. In some areas it was "just total destruction", he told the ABC. "It's heart-breaking. Where there should be lush crop there's just blackened ground," he said.

Esperance resident Kerry Greg said he broke down in tears when he heard about the fatalities. "Can't believe it. It's just devastating, absolutely terrible," Greg, who runs a local service station, told the Nine Network. "The town's rallied together really, really well. I think everyone's glued to their tellyes." Salmon Gums farmer and bushfire brigade volunteer Mic Fels echoed similar sentiments. "It's just devastating. You know, the bizarre range of feelings that you have. We got our family out of the house when we realized that our property was in the line of the fire yesterday," he told ABC radio. "The kids are crying. You're chucking all the things in the car you can think of, like favorite teddy bears and our accounts and photo albums." — AFP



Photo shows smoke filling the horizon in the Merivale fire, east of Esperance some 750 kilometers southeast of Perth. — AFP

PHILIPPINES AND VIETNAM BOOST TIES AS CHINA SEA FEUDS FESTER

MANILA: The Philippines and Vietnam have signed a strategic partnership deepening security ties in the face of Beijing's increased assertiveness in the disputed South China Sea. Philippine leader Benigno Aquino and Vietnamese President Truong Tan Sang expressed concern over tensions in the strategic sea which Hanoi calls the East Sea-home to some of the world's most important shipping lanes. "Mr President (Aquino) and I shared our concerns over the recent developments in the East Sea, or the South China Sea, affecting trust, peace, security and stability in the region," Sang said.

He added that the pact marked a "new era for cooperation" between

the two countries. Aquino said the deal would "deepen our cooperation, particularly in the areas of economic, agricultural, defense and maritime engagement-areas that are truly vital to the strategic interests of both our nations". "In terms of defense relations, we welcome the active engagement and cooperation between or respective defense and military establishments," he said. Aquino cited a football game between Filipino and Vietnamese naval personnel on a disputed island last May as proof of growing "camaraderie" between the two nations' military forces.

He said the two countries agreed to increase bilateral trade beyond the end of his term next year. The

two countries had previously targeted to grow two-way trade to \$3 billion by 2016. A copy of the pact was not made available. Aquino also said he and Sang had discussed the Philippines' case before a United Nations-backed tribunal questioning the legality of China's sea claims. Manila hopes it can encourage other nations involved in territorial disputes with Beijing to join their claim at the Hague-based tribunal. The Philippines and Vietnam both have competing claims with China over the South China Sea, which is believed to sit on top of vast oil and gas reserves. China claims almost the entire sea, even waters close to its neighbors' coasts.

Aside from the Philippines and

Vietnam, other claimants to the sea include Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan. Earlier this month, China and Vietnam sought to cool tensions, pledging to solve their disputes after Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Hanoi, the first time in 10 years a Chinese president had made a trip to its southern neighbor. With the signing of the agreement, Vietnam becomes the Philippines' second strategic partner after Japan, which is sparring separately with China over a chain of islands and rocks in the East China Sea. The agreement with Vietnam was signed as the United States announced it was ramping up maritime support to its Southeast Asian allies. — AFP



MANILA: Leaders and their spouses wave as they pose for a group photo at the welcome dinner for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Manila yesterday. — AFP

FILIPINA GIVES BIRTH IN APEC TRAFFIC CHAOS

MANILA: A Filipina gave birth on a Manila sidewalk after getting caught in traffic chaos caused by a regional gathering of world leaders, police said yesterday. The sprawling Philippine capital is renowned for its daily tailbacks, but the ongoing Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit has taken the city's congestion to infuriating new heights. Police have shut down key thoroughfares in the metropolis to ensure quick and safe travel for world leaders during the summit, causing gridlock and forcing many commuters to make long walks home. In one incident earlier this week a pregnant woman trapped in traffic went into labor and gave birth with the help of two police officers, Senior Superintendent Wilben Mayor, the national police spokesman said yesterday.

"It was a special situation but the important thing is the baby is alive and they (the officers) were able to perform their duties," he told a news conference. Fellow commuter Angel Ramos-Canoy

uploaded a picture and an account of the emergency delivery on her Facebook wall that quickly went viral. It showed a policewoman and a second woman in civilian clothes holding a newborn partly wrapped in white cloth, an umbilical cord still attached. Mayor said he did not have details on when or where the incident took place. Local media said the unidentified woman gave birth to a baby boy on Monday morning.

In her Facebook post, which can no longer be seen on her wall, Ramos-Canoy wrote how she and other stranded commuters used umbrellas to give the woman some privacy as she gave birth. "All we can do is to give shade through our umbrellas," she wrote. Mayor said the policewoman who helped deliver the baby was also a midwife, while the male officer was a trained nurse. They summoned an ambulance to take the woman to hospital, but delivered the baby themselves because the emergency vehicle could not get through the traffic jam, he added. — AFP



People gather at the Place de la République Square on Tuesday in Paris to pay tribute to victims of the attacks claimed by Islamic State which killed at least 129 people and left more than 350 injured on Nov 13. — AFP

IS EXECUTES CHINESE, NORWEGIAN HOSTAGES

Continued from Page 1

China's Foreign Ministry also said in September that one of its citizens appeared to be in Islamic State captivity. In the previous issue of the magazine, Dabiq, Islamic State showed pictures of two men who it said were Norwegian and Chinese, wearing yellow suits and with shaved heads. It said their governments had "abandoned" them, but that they were "for sale" and ransom payments could secure their release. It identified the Chinese man as Fan Jinghui and said he was a 50-year-old freelance consultant from Beijing. It identified Grimsgaard-Ofstad as a candidate for a master's degree in political science born in 1967. In its latest issue, it did not give any details about how, when or where they were killed.

Dabiq also carried a photo yesterday of a Schweppes drink it said was used to make an improvised bomb that brought down a Russian airliner over Egypt's Sinai Peninsula last month, killing all 224 people on board. The photo showed a can of Schweppes Gold soft drink and what appeared to be a detonator and switch on a blue background, three simple components that if genuine are likely to cause concern for airline safety officials worldwide.

"The divided Crusaders of the East and West thought themselves safe in their jets as they cowardly bombarded the Muslims of the Caliphate," Dabiq said in reference to Russia and the West. "And so revenge was exacted upon those who felt safe in the cockpits." Western governments have said the plane was likely brought down by a bomb and Moscow confirmed on Tuesday it had reached the same conclusion, but the Egyptian government says it has still not found evidence of criminal action.

Islamic State also published a photo of what it said were passports belonging to dead Russians "obtained by the mujahideen". It was not immediately possible to verify the authenticity of the published photos. The group, which has seized large swathes of Syria and Iraq, said it had exploited a loophole at Sharm el-Sheikh airport, where the plane originated, in order to smuggle a bomb on board. The airport is widely used by budget and charter airlines to fly tourists to the

nearby resorts on the Sinai coast.

Islamic State said it had initially planned to bring down a plane belonging to a country participating in the US-led coalition bombing it in Syria and Iraq, but it changed course after Moscow started its own air strikes campaign in Syria. "A bomb was smuggled onto the airplane, leading to the deaths of 219 Russians and five other crusaders only a month after Russia's thoughtless decision," it said.

Egypt's interior minister told a news conference in Sharm el-Sheikh on Tuesday that there was "no information" about security lapses at the airport. Islamic State's Egyptian branch, Sinai Province, claimed responsibility for the attack the day it happened but Egyptian officials were quick to dismiss talk of a bomb as premature.

Egypt is battling an Islamist insurgency in the Sinai, a strategic peninsula bordering Israel, Gaza and the Suez Canal. But Islamic State said the airline attack was primarily planned as a response to Russian and Western air strikes. "This was to show the Russians and whoever allies with them that they will have no safety in the lands and airspace of the Muslims," the group wrote. "That their daily killing of dozens in (Syria) through their air strikes will only bring them calamities."

Russia, an ally of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, launched air strikes against opposition groups in Syria including Islamic State, on Sept 30. Since the attacks on Paris, both Russia and France have stepped up the tempo of air strikes. The downed aircraft, an Airbus A321 operated by Metrojet, had been carrying Russian holidaymakers from the Egyptian resort to St Petersburg when it broke up over Sinai.

On Tuesday, Russian President Vladimir Putin vowed to hunt down those responsible for blowing up the plane and offered a \$50 million reward for information leading to those responsible. "We will find them anywhere on the planet and punish them," Putin said of the plane bombers at a sombre Kremlin meeting. Alexander Bortnikov, the head of Russia's FSB security service, said traces of foreign-made explosive had been found on fragments of the downed plane and on passengers' personal belongings. He said the bomb probably contained around 1 kilogram (2.2 pounds) of TNT. — Agencies

TWO KILLED IN FIERCE PARIS POLICE RAID

Continued from Page 1

Abaaoud is an Islamic State fighter who was previously thought to be in Syria after fleeing raids in his native Belgium earlier this year.

Residents of the Paris suburb, some of whom were evacuated in their underwear, said they had been caught in a terrifying exchange of fire. Hayat, 26, had been leaving a friend's apartment where she had spent the night when the shots erupted. "I heard gunfire," she said. "I could have been hit by a bullet. I never thought terrorists could have hidden here."

"We could see bullets flying and laser beams out of the window. There were explosions. You could feel the whole building shake," said Sabine, a downstairs neighbor from the apartment that was raided. She told Europe 1 radio that she heard the people above her talking to each other, running around and reloading their guns. Another local, Sanoko Abdulai, said that as the operation gathered pace, a young woman detonated an explosion. "She had a bomb, that's for sure. The police didn't kill her, she blew herself up..." he told Reuters, without giving details. Three police officers and a passerby were injured in the assault. A police dog was also killed.

A man arrested during the assault told AFP he had loaned his apartment to two people from Belgium as a favor to a friend. "A friend asked me to put up two of his friends for a few days," Jawad Bendaoud said. "I said that there was no mattress, they told me 'it's not a problem', they just wanted water and to pray," Bendaoud said before being handcuffed and led away by police.

Until yesterday morning, officials had said Abaaoud was in Syria. He grew up in Brussels, but media said he moved to Syria in 2014 to fight with Islamic State. Since then he has travelled back to Europe at least once and was involved in a series of planned attacks in Belgium

foiled by the police last January. Two police sources and a source close to the investigation told Reuters that the St. Denis cell was planning a fresh attack. "This new team was planning an attack on La Defense," one source said, referring to a high-rise neighborhood on the outskirts of Paris that is home to top banks and businesses.

Seven jihadists were killed or blew themselves up in Friday's attacks on the stadium, a concert hall, bars and restaurants that were claimed by the Islamic State group operating in Iraq and Syria. All of those killed in the attack have now been identified, the government said. Police are hunting for two other individuals, including 26-year-old Salah Abdeslam, suspected of taking part in the attacks with his suicide-bomber brother Brahim. In Belgium, where some of the attackers lived, it emerged prosecutors had questioned the two Abdeslam brothers before the attacks "but they had showed no signs of being a potential threat".

The attacks are unprecedented in France, which was shaken to its core for the second time in a year after 17 people were shot dead by jihadists at Charlie Hebdo magazine and a Jewish supermarket in January. President Francois Hollande praised security forces for their role in the "particularly perilous and taxing" operation which he said proved France was involved in a "war against terrorism". Hollande told a gathering of mayors that municipal police would be given more weapons and equipment. But he urged the nation not to "give in to fear" or excessive reactions in the wake of the attacks. "No anti-Semitic or anti-Muslim act can be tolerated," he said.

Meanwhile, the body representing Muslims in France said it would ask all 2,500 mosques in the country to condemn "all forms of violence or terrorism" at Friday prayers. France is still under a state of emergency which lawmakers are likely to vote to extend. — Agencies



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

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YOUSUF S. AL-ALYAN

Editor-in-Chief
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EDITORIAL : 24833199-24833358-24833432
ADVERTISING : 24835616/7
FAX : 24835620/1
CIRCULATION : 24833199 Extn. 163
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COMMERCIAL : 24835618

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Focus

MILITARY 'PREZ'
RULES OVER CAR

By Christian Panika

Small and wiry with a bin Laden-style beard, General Mahamat Al Khatim is absolute master of a vast region in northern Central African Republic, far from the reach of the capital Bangui. Al Khatim, whose public appearances are a show of power and wealth in one of Africa's poorest and most battered nations, is one of the warlords who emerged from the Seleka ("Alliance") of mainly Muslim rebels that toppled president Francois Bozize in 2013. Known as "the president" across territory south of the border with Chad, the general's trips through Kobo, his dusty "capital", are spectacular. Nobody would dare not to turn out and applaud, despite being regularly robbed by his men. Preceded by about 100 motorbikes with at least three precarious riders apiece, some of them armed, the strongman drives past in the back seat of a flashy new 4x4, deigning occasionally to wave to his subjects.

"Sometimes he goes by with no greeting... If you are caught ignoring the cortege, the ex-Seleka will slap a fine on you. It can vary from 100,000 to 200,000 CFA francs (about \$163 to \$326)," Kobo resident Jeremie Ndomlane told AFP in Bangui by telephone. When "the president" salutes the national colours, the citizens of Kobo stand still for more than 600 m all around. "Woe to those who pretend to take no notice," said Gaston Mbatindje, a trucker. "The fine can rise to 500,000 CFA francs."

Another resident, Martin Oualata, explains that in front and behind Al Khatim's vehicle, "roll at least 10 pick-up trucks fitted with heavy machine-guns and carrying men in military uniform with new red berets" and AK-47 assault rifles. The drive-by winds up with "Muslim women in vehicles, always new ones, waving handkerchiefs and scarves, ululating to end the procession," he adds. Al Khatim lives in a luxury villa fenced off with barbed wire near the entrance to Sido on the northern border with Chad.

Coffers of 'the President'

The location is ideal to watch over all traffic coming or going from Kobo and the town of Batangafo further south. Motorists, passengers and merchandise: nothing escapes the attention of the warlord's men. His armed followers serve as soldiers, police, paramilitary gendarmes and customs officers who exact taxes that go straight into the coffers of "the president". A former mercenary from Chad, Mahamat Al Khatim was one of the men who brought General Bozize to power in March 2003, in one of the many coups that have swept the country since independence from France in 1960, along with rebellions and army mutinies.

Bozize trusted Al Khatim enough to appoint him military security chief at the presidential palace in the capital Bangui, close to the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo. The devout Christian head of state and his palace governor from the Muslim minority got along fine until the issue of celebrating the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan arose in 2012. Al Khatim "tells everyone who will listen how that year... he and his fellows asked Bozize to help them organize the Muslim feast. Bozize gave each of them 10,000 CFA francs, which annoyed them. After that, they took their weapons and bags to go and join the Seleka rebellion," a resident says.

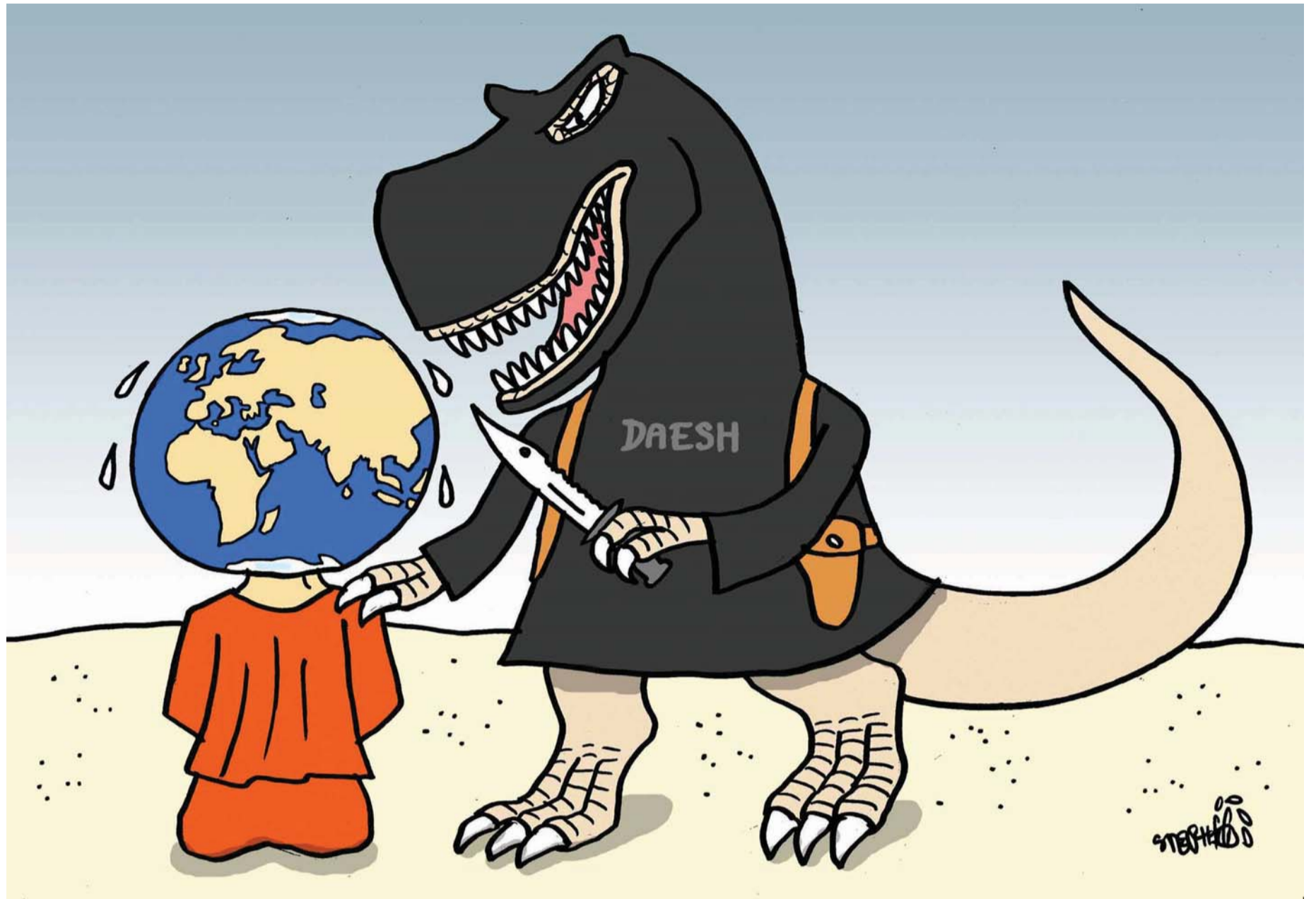
'Declaration of War'

His fighters, members of the Central African Patriotic Movement (MPC), are mostly former cattle farmers of the Fulani ethnic group. Residents say that the men are ready to disarm. They fear what they call the "space trucks", their name for French Rafale combat aircraft that bombed them near Batangafo last year, killing several of their number.

Meanwhile, the gunmen have forged their own illicit interests, according to a local man who listed racketeering, hold-ups, cattle rustling and the theft of oxen, chicken, goats and motorbikes. "We're waiting for them to be disarmed to deal with them round a bend in the road," said Isaac, a Kobo youth. The MPC is one of the branches of the ex-Seleka coalition - dissolved by the man it placed in power for 10 months, Michel Djotodia - that have turned tracts of the country into lawless zones, including parts of Bangui under transitional rule.

The mostly Muslim fighters clash with anti-balaka ("anti-machete") vigilantes formed by the Christian majority, yet sometimes make deals with them to disrupt an electoral process from which they are barred. At Sibut in the centre of the country, another former Seleka chief, General Arda Hakouma has just warned that plans by the interim regime to rearm the regular army amount to "a declaration of war". —AFP

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FRENCH LEADERS REPOSITION FOR PRESIDENTIAL RACE

By Paul Taylor and Emmanuel Jarry

While France mourns the death of a wave of Islamist attacks on Paris, President Francois Hollande and his two likely main challengers are calibrating their response with one eye on the 2017 presidential election. Hollande, 61, a Socialist who is deeply unpopular due to high unemployment and economic stagnation, is using the advantages of incumbency to reinvent himself as a decisive war leader and a compassionate father of the nation.

Nicolas Sarkozy, 60, his centre-right predecessor, is hesitating between statesmanlike support for national unity at a time of crisis and the itch to criticise a successor he has always belittled as weak and irresolute. Paradoxically, hard right National Front (FN) leader Marine Le Pen, 47, initially softened her shrill anti-Islamist, anti-immigration rhetoric, apparently convinced that events were turning voters in her direction anyway. It didn't last long.

In what many have called France's "9/11 moment", Hollande won a standing ovation from a rare joint session of parliament on Monday after declaring that France was "at war" with Islamic State militants, and would wage a merciless campaign against them while beefing up its internal security. The respected centre-left daily Le Monde headlined it "Hollande's security U-turn".

Borrowing from his right-wing opponents' programs, Hollande announced a big increase in law enforcement spending and recruitment, a constitutional amendment to give the state more emergency powers to fight terrorism, and measures to strip dual nationals convicted of national security offences of French citizenship. And he stepped up air strikes on Islamic State targets in their Syrian

stronghold city of Raqqa, while urging the United States and Russia to join forces with France to fight the common enemy instead of leading rival coalitions in Syria. "Public opinion will not be content with compassion. It will judge the president on his actions," said Frederic Dabi, deputy director of the IFOP polling institute. "He ticked the right boxes in his Versailles speech in terms of authority, firmness and martial tone. He did the job. He showed once again he can handle outside events."

Action Trumps Talk

In such exceptional circumstances, the government has the monopoly on action while opposition politicians can only talk. Hollande invited Sarkozy and Le Pen to briefings at the Elysee presidential palace, playing the card of national unity. Sarkozy emerged saying France needed to change its foreign and security policies, working with Russia in the Syrian conflict and drastically toughening internal security, notably by placing 11,500 Muslims who are on a "radicalisation" watch-list under house arrest with electronic tags.

He then appeared to wobble when his parliamentary floor leader said there was no need for a constitutional amendment, only for Sarkozy to say the next day he was open to the idea, first proposed by his political mentor, former prime minister Edouard Balladur. Le Pen has steadily risen in opinion polls and was expected to make big gains in regional elections next month even before Friday's attacks on Paris restaurants, a music hall and a sports stadium prompted politicians to suspend campaigning. She resisted the temptation to crow "I told you so" when the gunmen and suicide bombers turned out to be second-generation Arab immigrants, and when one of them was found to have entered Europe recently with Syrian

refugees. In her first reaction, she praised Hollande's "positive shifts" on working with Russia and strengthening the police and gendarmerie after 12,500 job cuts under Sarkozy's rule. But in a television interview on Tuesday evening, Le Pen dismissed Hollande's proposals as "baby measures" and said the government should resign if it had any sense of honour. Victims of past Islamist attacks had "died for nothing" because successive governments had "done nothing", she said.

"The whole theme of the last three days - the fact that most of the assassins came from immigration to France, the failures of security surveillance and judicial follow-up - plays into the hands of the FN," said Pascal Perrineau, a professor of French politics at Paris Sciences-Po university. "Sometimes contamination with the National Front's discourse goes as high as the president. He talked about closing borders and stripping dual nationals of their citizenship," Perrineau said. But voters, he added, were looking for reassurance and experience in times of crisis, and neither of those were Le Pen's strengths.

Short-Lived Bounce

Hollande, whose approval rating had sunk to 13 percent, the lowest in the history of France's 57-year-old Fifth Republic, enjoyed a brief bounce after his widely praised handling of a previous set of deadly Islamist attacks on the satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo and a Jewish supermarket in Paris in January. The president led a million-person march with world leaders in support of freedom of speech after overseeing decisive police intervention that saved dozens of lives then, and striking a tone that embodied national dignity and determination. The uptick did not last long. The Socialists suffered heavy losses in municipal elections in

March. The economy has since begun to pick up slowly, and unemployment finally seems to have peaked, but Hollande has drawn scant political benefit. He has said he will seek re-election in 2017 only if his government has succeeded in reversing the rise in jobless rolls.

In the three-horse presidential race that was shaping up before the Paris attacks, many analysts were predicting the left could be eliminated on the first round, as Socialist Lionel Jospin was in 2002, leaving a run-off between Sarkozy and Le Pen. Her father was beaten in the second round by then-President Jacques Chirac.

Another such outcome no longer looks quite as likely. "You could expect the extreme-right and the left to benefit from the situation in the first instance - the far-right because the issues are its traditional strengths, and the left because it has finally embraced the issue of security," said Jean-Daniel Levy, head of politics at pollster Harris Interactive. The coming weeks will give Hollande more opportunities to display statecraft. He has visits to Washington and Moscow planned for next week, billed as an effort to persuade the two biggest global powers to make common cause against Islamic State.

And by invoking the European Union's mutual assistance clause and declaring that security spending comes before EU budget rules, Hollande offered something to pro-Europeans, sovereignists and leftists alike. But voters are ultimately likely to judge him on his economic results, and the Paris attacks could weaken a feeble recovery, making it harder to seriously reduce jobless queues. "Economic concerns will return to the fore" once the threat of terrorism has receded, said Gael Sliman, president of the Oxoda polling institute. —Reuters

BOASTFUL JIHADIST MASTERMINDED PARIS ATTACKS

By Philippe Siuberski

Belgian jihadist Abdelhamid Abaaoud, the suspected Paris attacks mastermind targeted in a French police raid yesterday, was a schoolyard bully who had recently taunted the West from an Islamic State base in Syria. Abaaoud, a 28-year-old from Brussels of Moroccan origin, has been linked to a series of Islamic extremist plots and recruitment efforts in Europe over the past two years and had bragged of how he had avoided arrest. French police said two suspected jihadists were killed, including a woman who blew herself up, and five people were arrested during a shootout with police in north Paris yesterday in an operation aimed at Abaaoud.

Abaaoud has in the past boasted of a close call he had when he passed through a European checkpoint as police studied a photo of him. "The Kuffar (unbelievers) were blinded by Allah. I was even stopped by an officer who contemplated me so as to compare me to the picture, but he let me go, as he did not see the resemblance!" Abaaoud told the Islamic State magazine Dabiq. "This was nothing but a gift from Allah," said a bearded Abaaoud who appears in an accompanying photo holding up a Holy Quran in one hand and a black Islamic State flag in the other in front of a US-made Humvee. Other pictures show him cracking a wide smile, wearing a turban-style scarf, woolen hat or military cap, as he poses with guns or alongside a comrade.

'A Little Jerk'

He also bragged about escaping from Europe after Belgian police shot dead two of his fellow militants as they broke up a cell planning terror attacks on security personnel earlier this year, after which he hailed them as martyrs. Mocking the "bloated image" of "crusader intelligence", he gloated: "My name and picture were all over the news yet I was able to stay in their homeland, plan operations against them, and leave safely when doing so became necessary."

As early as last year Abdelhamid Abaaoud was already known to security forces after appearing, laughing, in an Islamic State video at the wheel of a car dragging mutilated bodies behind it. It was after the break-up of that terror cell in the eastern Belgian city of Verviers in January, shortly after the Charlie Hebdo attacks in Paris, that Abaaoud's name began to widely circulate.

In February, Abaaoud, who was reported at one time to be in Greece, claimed responsibility for the plot against police officers and said he had joined the Islamic State group in Syria. Abaaoud - who hails from Molenbeek, a grimy Brussels district dubbed an extremist "hotbed" - was sentenced in absentia to 20 years in prison in July for running a

network to recruit jihadists to Syria. Abaaoud then boasted in videos about planning attacks in Europe.

Born in Molenbeek in 1987, he goes by the nom de guerres Abou Omar Soussi, after the name of the family home in southwest region of Morocco, and Abou Omar Al-Baljiki, meaning Abou Omar the Belgian. "He was a little jerk," recalled a former classmate from Brussels who told the Belgian newspaper La Dernière Heure that Abaaoud used to harass fellow pupils and teachers and also got into trouble for stealing wallets. Abaaoud apparently knows Salah Abdeslam, who also has roots in Molenbeek and who is wanted for allegedly taking part in the Paris attacks, and has appeared in Belgian police files linked to Abdeslam's brother Brahim, who police say blew himself up outside a bar in Paris.

'Destroyed Our Lives'

After the cell in Verviers was smashed, the father of

Abdelhamid Abaaoud said his son had wrecked their lives. In 2014, Abdelhamid convinced his younger brother Younes, then 13 years old, to join him in Syria and the boy was dubbed the "world's youngest jihadist" by some newspapers. "Why in the name of God, would he want to kill innocent Belgians? Our family owes everything to this country," Omar Abaaoud, whose family moved to Belgium 40 years ago from Morocco, said in January after the Verviers plot.

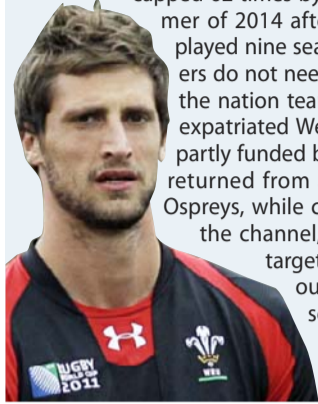
"Abdelhamid has brought shame on our family. Our lives have been destroyed... I never want to see him again," the father of six from Molenbeek was quoted as saying by Belgian media. He added: "We had a wonderful life, yes, even a fantastic life here. Abdelhamid was not a difficult child and became a good businessman. But suddenly he left for Syria. I wondered every day how he became radicalized to this point. I never got an answer." —AFP



An undated picture from the Feb 2015 issue 7 of the Islamic State (IS) group online English-language magazine Dabiq shows 27-year-old leading Belgian IS militant Abdelhamid Abaaoud, also known as Abu Umar Al-Baljiki. —AFP

CHARTERIS TO LEAVE RACING AT END OF SEASON

LE PLESSIS-ROBINSON: Wales second-row forward Luke Charteris confirmed yesterday that he will leave Racing 92 at the end of the season, when he is out of contract, in order to better pursue his international career. "I love Paris and Racing 92, but I have to leave next year because if I want to play for the national team, I must be playing in Wales or England," said the 32-year-old, capped 62 times by Wales. Charteris arrived at Racing in the summer of 2014 after two years at Perpignan, having previously played nine seasons at Newport-Gwent Dragons. Welsh players do not need to necessarily play in Wales to be eligible for the national team, but coach Warren Gatland has encouraged expatriated Welsh players to return home on dual contracts partly funded by the Welsh Rugby Union. Flanker Dan Lydiate returned from a sojourn at Racing on such a contract with Ospreys, while centre Jonathan Davies was the latest to cross the channel, re-signing for Scarlets from Clermont. Other targets for a dual contract are winger George North, out of contract at Northampton at the end of the season, as well as other England-based players including Jamie Roberts, Bradley Davies, James Hook and Matthew Morgan.



DINAMO ZAGREB CHIEF EXECUTIVE ARRESTED

ZAGREB: Zdravko Mamic, the chief executive of Croatian soccer team Dinamo Zagreb, was arrested yesterday for inflicting financial damage on the club through dubious transfers, according to Croatian state television and a police source. State television said Mamic was arrested over 80-million-kuna (\$11-million) worth of damage suffered by the club related to suspect player transfers. A police source confirmed the reason for the arrest and said several other people were also detained. State TV said four other people were held. Mamic's lawyer declined to comment on the matter. Dinamo Zagreb said on its website that an anti-corruption police unit had entered the club premises early on Wednesday. The Croatian soccer federation (HNS) said on its website that police had also raided its premises. State news agency Hina reported that HNS's Chief Executive and former Dinamo official Damir Vrbancic had been arrested at Zagreb airport as he returned from Russia where Croatia played a friendly on Tuesday. Neither the HNS spokesperson nor Vrbancic's lawyer were immediately reachable for comment. Zdravko Mamic and his brother Zoran, who is Dinamo's coach, were previously detained in July for questioning over embezzlement and tax evasion, before being released. — Reuters

DAVID BECKHAM IS SEXIEST MAN ALIVE

LOS ANGELES: David Beckham was declared "sexiest man alive" by People magazine Tuesday, joining an elite club including last year's winner, Chris Hemsworth, and a handful of other above-average men. The announcement was made on ABC's late-night TV show "Jimmy Kimmel Live," where the magazine cover sporting Beckham's face was revealed. "It's the best moment of my career, I can't believe it," Beckham joked to the crowd, speaking remotely by video. "I would obviously like to thank my parents for bringing me into this world. I would like to thank my hairdresser, my stylist, Photoshop," he said. The 40-year-old retired football legend's identity was only revealed after host Jimmy Kimmel made his audience guess this year's winner. "Has Taylor Swift ever made a song about you?" one person demanded. "Have you ever had a man bun?" another asked. By the time Beckham's identity was divined, the audience knew he was a married athlete with children, had an accent and two tattoos, had never been to jail, and yes, formerly sported a man bun. Beckham was given a small facial mirror as his reward. "I never feel that I'm an attractive, sexy person," Beckham told People magazine. "I mean I like to wear nice clothes and nice suits and look and feel good, but I don't ever think of myself that way." —AFP



JONNY WILKINSON TELLS ENGLAND TO 'RESET BAR'

LONDON: England great Jonny Wilkinson said on Tuesday the "bar had to be reset at all levels" if the national side were once again to become a global force. Last week saw Stuart Lancaster stepped down as England coach after the team became the first World Cup host nation to be knocked out of the tournament in the initial group phase last month.

Lancaster's exit led England's Rugby Football Union to initiate a worldwide search for a new head coach.

But Wilkinson, the drop-goal hero of England's extra-time World Cup final win over Australia in Sydney back in 2003, said there was more to making the national side successful again than just a change of coach. Former fly-half Wilkinson said current England squad members would need to demonstrate "a desire which is almost impossible to keep down".

The 36-year-old was speaking at Buckingham Palace after he was formally upgraded to a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) — one rank below a knighthood in the British honours system.

Wilkinson, who received his latest honour from Prince William, the second in line to the British throne, added that closing the gap between Europe's elite and the southern hemisphere teams who filled all four semi-final places at the World Cup would require "resetting the bar at all levels, from grass roots up".

He added: "But that bar has to be high, and then you have got to ensure that the enjoyment that goes with it is even higher too, so that kids want to go out there and do it, so kids see this as normal.

"So, 'normal' for kids, and for players in the Premiership league, 'normal' becomes what we used to see as 'exceptional,'" explained Wilkinson, England's record points scorer, who retired from all professional rugby union last year after helping club side Toulon complete a French Top 14 and European Cup double.

Wilkinson, now a kicking coach at Toulon and a media pundit, said he had no definite ideas on who should succeed Lancaster. "I still look at it from a player's perspective," explained Wilkinson, who quit Test rugby in 2011. "I don't see myself as a coach, I see myself as a player who doesn't play any more." — AFP



VITROLLES: In this Nov. 22, 2009 file photo, New Zealand rugby legend Jonah Lomu, center, former All Blacks winger, runs with the ball as Montmelian's Sylvain Maulet, left, and Kevin Zhakata try to stop him during their Federale One rugby union match between Marseille-Vitrolles and Montmelian in Vitrolles, southern France. New Zealand Rugby Union said yesterday All Blacks great Jonah Lomu has died. He was 40. — AP

EUROPEAN CUP ORGANISERS VOW POSTPONED MATCHES TO GO AHEAD

PARIS: European Cup organisers moved yesterday to appease fears over the re-scheduling of pool games postponed in the wake of the Paris terror attacks after some club owners voiced doubts that the matches could be squeezed into an already-congested fixture list.

The Toulon-Bath match was one of those postponed last weekend, and the English club's chairman, Bruce Craig, suggested that the match might never be played, ruling out a Wednesday fixture.

His counterpart at reigning three-time champions Toulon, Mourad Boudjellal, also struggled to find an obvious window.

The most opportune time could be during the Six Nations, but both teams would be stripped of a raft of players on international duty for what could be a crucial match in a pool that also includes three-time winners Leinster and Wasps, who upset the form book by beating the Irish province on Saturday.

The European Professional Club Rugby (EPCR) said it was "continuing to work with the Ligue Nationale de Rugby (LNR), Premiership Rugby and the PRO12, as well as the relevant clubs, to consider all possible fixture permutations with the aim of coming up with a workable solution as to how the Stade Francais Paris v Munster Rugby match, in addition to the five games from Round 1 of the tournaments, can be rescheduled in an already crowded rugby calendar.

"EPCR, the three leagues and the clubs are in agreement that all postponed fixtures - including the RC Toulon v Bath Rugby Round 1 match - will be played, and an announcement regarding the new dates will be made as soon as possible."

Bath first-team coach Toby Booth said he was desperate for the match against Toulon to go ahead. "We want to do whatever we can to get this fixture played," Booth told the BBC. "We are desperate to play it and we are looking forward to pitching ourselves against the best in Europe.

"It is very tough as we know to rejig things in such a congested schedule, but I am sure we will come to some sort of conclusion." Stade Francais decided Tuesday to postpone their pool match against Munster

on Sunday so as not to add to the workload of officials in Paris in the wake of the coordinated terror attacks last Friday that left at least 129 dead. That postponement followed those of Toulon-Bath and also Oyonnax-Ulster, Racing 92-Glasgow and Bordeaux-Clermont. — AFP

ALL BLACKS LEGEND LOMU DIES AGED 40

WELLINGTON: New Zealand rugby legend Jonah Lomu, who revolutionised wing play to become the sport's first global superstar, died yesterday in Auckland at the age of 40, prompting a global outpouring of grief. Lomu had suffered from kidney disease for two decades and had a transplant in 2004 but former All Blacks doctor John Mayhew said his death was a complete shock. "It was totally unexpected," Mayhew said. "Jonah and his family arrived back from the United Kingdom last night and he suddenly died this morning."

Lomu, who was awaiting another transplant and undergoing dialysis treatment, had undertaken commercial obligations at the recent Rugby World Cup in England, won by New Zealand. His death took the rugby-mad country by surprise and triggered a flood of messages of condolence from around the world. New Zealand's parliament expressed their sorrow before they began proceedings on Wednesday.

"Anyone who was living in New Zealand in the 1990s would not have failed to notice the massive impact Jonah Lomu had not only on sports fans but the wider community in this country," Sports Minister Jonathan Coleman said. "He was a man who came from humble beginnings in Mangere, South Auckland and rose to become rugby's first global superstar."

World Rugby Chairman Bernard Lapasset led the international tributes: "Jonah's contribution to rugby cannot be overstated," he said in a statement.

"He was the first superstar player and, through his sheer brilliance and love of the game, he brought much joy to the rugby family and took our sport to a new level of profile." Lomu's record of 37 tries in 63 tests was an impressive haul, all the more so considering he played much of his career with nephritic syndrome, the disease that attacked his kidneys. New Zealand Rugby, who arguably owe part of their huge commercial success over the last 20 years to Lomu's performances at the 1995 World Cup, said they were "shocked and saddened" by Lomu's death. "We're lost for words and our heartfelt sympathies go out to Jonah's family," chief executive Steve Tew said. "Jonah was a legend of our game and loved by his many fans both here and around the world."

ILLNESS

Born to Tongan parents in South Auckland, Lomu spent some of his childhood back in the Pacific Island nation after a cousin was hacked to death in a street attack.

He was then sent to Wesley College where he quickly found his niche on the sports field and was timed running under 11 seconds in the 100 metres. All Blacks coach Laurie Mains plucked him out of sevens rugby in 1994 but Lomu found his transition from the loose forward position he played at secondary school to the wing a challenge. He was dropped after his first two tests against France in 1994 but barely made the Rugby World Cup squad for South Africa the following year after being deemed not fit enough for the fast-paced

game the coach wanted to play. He proved almost unstoppable at the tournament, however, electrifying the rugby world with seven tries-four in the semi-final against England alone, including one when he trampled over fullback Mike Catt that left many speechless. The pace and power displayed by the 1.95m tall and 119kg Lomu changed the wing position forever, with the traditional lightweight flyer gradually all but disappearing from the test game. The impact he made at the tournament catapulted the quietly-spoken Lomu to worldwide fame and was one catalyst for the rugby turning professional shortly afterwards. The ravages of Lomu's disease had begun to affect him and his performances went downhill from 1998, although he still made the 1999

World Cup squad and scored eight tries. He played his last test against Wales in 2002.

Lomu's health deteriorated from that point and he had a transplant in 2004 when a friend donated one of his own kidneys for the procedure. By the time of the 2011 Rugby World Cup in New Zealand, when Lomu featured heavily in the opening ceremony, the kidney had begun to fail and he was forced back onto dialysis. "Jonah Lomu was a player who changed the face of modern rugby," the International Olympic Committee president Thomas Bach said. "He was an icon not just for New Zealand fans but for all rugby fans around the world. It is sad that he did not live to see the sport return to the Olympics Games next year in Rio de Janeiro." — Reuters



LOS ANGELES: Rugby player Alev Kelter poses for a portrait at the USOC Rio Olympics Shoot at Quixote Studios yesterday in Los Angeles, California. — AFP

RAIDERS LINEBACKER ALDON SMITH SUSPENDED FOR A YEAR

ALAMEDA: Oakland Raiders linebacker Aldon Smith was suspended Tuesday by the NFL for one calendar year because of violations of the league's substance-abuse policy, a person with direct knowledge of the decision said.

The penalty is effective immediately, said the person, who was speaking on condition of anonymity because the decision hadn't been formally announced.

Smith, 26, was released by the San Francisco 49ers in August after several run-ins with the law before landing across the bay with the Raiders. Smith went through the locker room and told teammates goodbye Tuesday. The Raiders had no official word on Smith's status, and agent Doug Hendrickson didn't immediately respond to phone or text messages.

Smith becomes the first player suspended for a full year since Cleveland's Josh Gordon in February - also for substance abuse. It's unclear for which infraction Smith is being suspended. The Niners released him Aug. 7 following his fifth run-in with the law a night earlier on an off day from training camp. The franchise parted ways with one of football's most menacing pass-rushers after Santa Clara police accused him of drunken driving, hit and run and vandalism.

Smith was in a contract year. He started seven games and played in nine for the Raiders, finishing his second straight suspension-shortened season with 28 tackles and 3.5 sacks.

He missed the first nine games of the 2014 season while serving an NFL sus-

pension for violations of the league's substance-abuse and personal-conduct policies. The NFC Defensive Player of the Year while with San Francisco in 2012, Smith signed a one year contract with Oakland just two days before the season opener. The deal could have earned him as much as \$8 million with bonuses and incentives. The Raiders practiced at their facility earlier in the day and players were filing into the locker room when news of Smith's suspension broke. Smith pulled quarterback Derek Carr into an adjacent room and the two spoke at length before Smith returned to the locker room and began saying goodbye to several other teammates, including wide receiver Michael Crabtree, who played with him in San Francisco. Sobriety test, Raiders

coach Jack Del Rio said in September that the team had done its homework on Smith's situation and was well aware of the potential risks when signing him. Still, it's a big blow to a team still hoping to make a playoff run.

Smith was coming off one of his best games of the season in Oakland's 30-14 loss to the Minnesota Vikings on Sunday when he had one sack and three quarterback hurries.

Police said in the August incident that Smith collided with a parked vehicle while parking his car, then caused further damage to the parked vehicle with his car door. The scene was only a couple of miles from 49ers team headquarters, at or on the street of Smith's former luxury apartment complex. Authorities said

Smith left without reporting the collision or providing any identifying information. He later returned and was contacted by officers. Smith displayed "objective symptoms of being under the influence of an alcoholic beverage" and officers conducted a field sobriety test, police said.

Smith was drafted seventh overall in the first round by San Francisco in 2011 out of Missouri. He emerged as one of the NFL's top defenders in 2012 with a franchise-record 19 1/2 sacks during the team's run to the Super Bowl. Smith finished with 8 1/2 sacks and 34 tackles in 11 games in 2013.

Smith is the first player suspended for a full year since Cleveland's Josh Gordon in February also for substance abuse. ESPN first reported the suspension. — AP

OLYMPIC ATHLETE CALLS ALL SPORTS TO BE INVESTIGATED

COLORADO SPRINGS: While the World Anti-Doping Agency geared up to suspend Russia's anti-doping operation, calls for further investigation into that country's entire sports program came from athletes and leaders outside of track and field who fear their sports have been tainted, too.

In one case, a Winter Olympian sent a letter to a WADA representative Tuesday asking for a more thorough look into Russian sports. "A full investigation should be carried out into the failed testing of Russian athletes from ALL sports," said the letter, provided to The Associated Press on condition the athlete's name and country be withheld because of the sensitivity of the subject.

The athlete was reacting to the report released last week by a WADA-appointed independent commission that detailed corruption inside Russia's anti-doping program and its track team. The report made clear, however, that Russia shouldn't be singled out as the only country with anti-doping issues, nor should track be singled out as the only sport with those problems.

"We made that as clear as we possibly could," said the report's author, Dick Pound, who spoke to WADA's executive committee Tuesday. "Anyone paying the slightest bit of attention to that report will know exactly what we're saying."

In an interview with AP on Tuesday, U.S. Biathlon CEO Max Cobb expressed similar concerns. "The way I read the report, the testing that took place (at the Olympics) in Sochi is, at least suspect, and perhaps completely worthless," Cobb said. "That raises huge questions." Russia led all countries with 33 medals at the Sochi Games. The country has vowed a top-to-bottom cleanup of its anti-doping program and its track team, but Cobb doesn't

think the country can be trusted to do the work itself. "They can be involved, of course," Cobb said. "But the process needs to be more independent." Some WADA leaders want to see outside anti-doping agencies monitor Russia's programs and their paths back to compliance.

On Wednesday, though, WADA's focus will be on the Russian anti-doping lab (RUSADA), which is expected to be suspended during the Foundation Board meeting. "Everybody in the world expects that to happen," Pound said. "It would be astonishing if it didn't."

WADA leaders will also look at expanding their reach, getting into more compliance issues in an attempt to prevent doping scandals instead of simply cleaning up the mess afterward. The agency's budget is about \$26 million a year - half from the International Olympic Committee and half from governments around the world, some of which are reluctant to pay what they already contribute. Money would have to be shifted, or more money brought in, to expand compliance.

Pound's commission was the first of its kind from WADA, which was founded in 1999. He called the recommendations in the report - most notably, the potential banning of the Russian track team from the Rio Olympics - "a real deterrent." "Nothing attracts your attention like a deadline, then having to explain to your countrymen why you're not at the Olympics," he said. But he also was pointed in recommending WADA get more aggressive in chasing down cases across all sports and countries. "The urgency is obvious," he said. "But whether you can generate the resources and fieldwork teams necessary to do the investigations is a matter for the executive committee to think about. It's not inexpensive to do this." — AP



MOSCOW: Security guards are seen through the glass window displaying the Olympic Rings at the Russian Olympic Committee building in Moscow yesterday. — AFP

RUSSIAN TRACK TEAM CAN STILL MAKE IT TO RIO

COLORADO SPRINGS: The author of the report that detailed anti-doping corruption in Russia believes the country that spent \$51 billion on hosting the Sochi Olympics should be able to fix its system in time to get the track team to next year's Summer Games.

Remaking Russia's attitude toward doping could take longer, but Dick Pound doesn't think that's the most urgent matter. "I don't think you'll get the culture fixed in nine months but you can do actions that will come to the same result," Pound said Tuesday, after addressing the World Anti-Doping Agency's executive board. "In a sense, I don't care whether you're there with clean athletes if the only reason is fear of getting caught, as opposed to thinking that's the right thing to do. Listen, Russia built Sochi in seven years. This is child's play."

Sochi was a mere dot on the map before it landed the right to host the Olympics. Spearheaded by President Vladimir Putin, the country built up the city and hosted last year's Games. Pound's independent commission con-

cluded the government must have known about rampant doping schemes in Russia's system. The commission recommended decertification of Russia's anti-doping lab and anti-doping agency (RUSADA). A vote by WADA's Foundation Board to suspend RUSADA comes Wednesday and Pound said "everyone in the world expects that to happen, and it would be astonishing if it didn't." The question is whether the lab, the anti-doping agency and the track team, provisionally suspended by the sport's ruling body (IAAF), can all fall into compliance in less than nine months, before the start of next year's Summer Games in Rio de Janeiro.

NEGATIVE

Pound said the political powers have to lead the effort. "They have to say, 'Look, RUSADA is independent, the lab is independent and anybody who doesn't make that happen is in trouble,'" Pound said. "Same with the coaches. They say, 'Folks, the old Soviet system is over. And if that's your method of coaching, don't let the

door hit your butt on the way out."

Pound called Russia's initial reaction to the report "negative," but has noticed a change of tone since. Leaders of the Russian and International Olympic Committees met last weekend to start making a roadmap that would bring the Russian track federation into compliance. No timelines have been set. On Monday, a group of anti-doping leaders sent WADA a letter asking them to bar Russians from the Olympics, saying less than nine months isn't enough time to ensure the program is clean. "We're not convinced there's enough time between now and then for them to clean their act up," said David Kenworthy, the chairman of the Institute of National Anti-Doping Organizations.

Pound didn't necessarily agree, but said time is of the essence. "They've got to bite the bullet and go full speed ahead to get all this stuff done in time for Rio," Pound said. "If they start fighting over it, fine, take your time. All the time you want. But, by the way, you're not going to get to work on your suntan next summer." — AP



MOSCOW: Russia's Olympic Committee (ROC) president Alexander Zhukov speaks to the media at the end of a ROC executive board extraordinary meeting in Moscow yesterday following the IAAF's decision to temporarily suspend Russia's athletics team after a damning report into endemic state-sponsored doping in the country. — AFP

LEOB AND AL ATTIYAH FACE TO FACE AT WTCC

QATAR: All expectations say that the mission will be difficult in front of the world champion for rallies Sebastien Leob - France, this was confirmed by Leob with his Citroen, he said that "this race will be so difficult compared to Dakar rally but I am still optimistic, absolutely we will deal with carefully with the unexpected circumstance which may accompany the event. Sebastien (9 titles world championship) has shifted to WTCC in 2014.

As for the superman of the Qatari sport Nasser Bin Saleh Al Attiyah 4 titles with Chevrolet he said that it is hard mission for Sebastien in the last round of WTCC, he said that, we have prepared ourselves well for better competition especially Losail international circuit hosts such event for the first time, and we want to be the first to be triumphed in this circuit, Chevrolet won 6 races before in its first participation in WTCC 2009 and scored the title in 2010 & 2011, WTCC in Britain in 2010 and Scotland in 2011.

QMMF: The entry will be free of charges. Al Attiyah: WTCC is a unique event.

Meanwhile, Nasser Al Attiyah FIA - Vice President QMMF president stated that no doubt that WTCC is a unique event due to the good competitive style, no one can predict the winner as the championship include a large number of motor sport champions, a number of them moved to Formula1 and some of them came here, such action indicated that the championship attracted the best riders all over the world, this round will be a focus media point as it will be covered by Euro sport, the championship nowadays is followed up by more than 560 million viewers in 70 channels around the world, moreover, WTCC came in the second position after Formula 1, on the basis of the above, QMMF announced that Losail interna-



Nasser Al Attiyah FIA - Vice President QMMF president.

tional circuit will be opened free of any charges for audience in order to let them enjoy this international event.

Al Attiyah said that he is so happy for hosting this championship for the first time in Qatar under the spot lights, also he said that "I am happy to see one of our most prominent champions - Nasser bin Saleh Al Attiyah - Qatar competes in this event.

It is worth saying that WTCC is considered one of the most important championships that is organized under FIA, It has started in 2000, Europe had organized it the first 4 years, then China in 2005 then Argentina, Thailand, Japan, Morocco then Qatar at Losail International circuit for 2 days, 18 riders will take part in this round.

STENSON TARGETS HAT-TRICK OF WINS IN DUBAI

DUBAI: The European Tour enters its final event of the season with this week's DP World Tour Championship, which will crown two champions on Sunday - winner of the \$8 million tournament, and the Race to Dubai.

Henrik Stenson is the two-time defending champion of the tournament, which begins Thursday at the Earth course of Jumeirah Golf Estates, while Rory McIlroy will try to win the Race to Dubai, and with it the honour of being called the number one European player, for a second straight season.

Stenson, who is searching for his first win of the season, is currently ranked 16th in the Race to Dubai, but that looks certain to improve. The world number six is a combined 56-under par for his last three visits to the Earth course, and has figured out a good game plan to tackle the Greg Norman-designed lay-out.

"I'm excited about the opportunity to make it three in a row. It's not going to be easy, I know that much," said Stenson, who will try to make it back-to-back wins for Sweden after Kristoffer Broberg's triumph in Shanghai.

"I've got 59 other players who want to stop me dearly and I'm just going to go out and try and make the same plan and hopefully play somewhat close to what I've done the previous two years, and we'll see if we can give it a shot." Also in the reckoning for the title will be the in-form Justin Rose, who holds the course record of 62 and who has finished second here twice. The world number five from England, who can also win the Race to Dubai, said: "I have always enjoyed finishing the season here in Dubai. 'It's a course that has been good for me and I really enjoy playing. I've played well here the last few years and I come in here with the exciting chance of trying to win the Race to Dubai."

Close battle

It is a close battle for the Race to Dubai, with seven players - McIlroy, Danny Willett, Rose, Shane Lowry, Louis Oosthuizen, Branden Grace and Korean rookie An Byeong-hun - all



GREENSBORO: In this Sunday, Aug. 23, 2015 file photo, Davis Love III tees off on the third hole during the final round of the Wyndham Championship golf tournament at Sedgefield Country Club in Greensboro, N.C. The first golf lesson Davis Love Jr. gave to his son was to swing hard and keep his feet on the ground. Davis Love III passed that down to his own son, using different equipment. — AP

in with a chance on Sunday. However, only McIlroy and the second-ranked Willett are in control of their own destinies, meaning if they win the tournament, it doesn't matter where everyone else is finishing. And with just 1,613 points separating them, whoever has a better finish between McIlroy and Willett, is guaranteed to win the Race to Dubai, and along with it a bonus of \$1.875 million.

Willett had a chance to catch up with McIlroy in last week's BMW Masters in Shanghai, but instead of finishing solo 28th or better, he finished tied 28th. McIlroy will have the advantage of being fresh for the tournament since he did not play the BMW Masters, and has a phenomenal record at the Earth course, where the only time he did not finish

inside the top-five in six starts was in 2011, when he was tied 11th.

The other battle in the Race to Dubai is the honour of being called the Rookie of the Year. An (seventh in the Race to Dubai), England's Matt Fitzpatrick (14th) and India's Anirban Lahiri (19th) are in contention for the Sir Henry Cotton Rookie of the Year award.

Only the top-60 players from the Race to Dubai qualify for the DP World Tour Championship, but with Sergio Garcia (27th) deciding not to play this week and South African George Coetzee (32nd) still recuperating from his broken ankle, No. 61 Stephen Gallacher of Scotland and No.62 Alejandro Canizares of Spain have got into the field. — AP

LACKLUSTRE ITALY HELD AT HOME BY STUBBORN ROMANIA

BOLOGNA: Italy conceded a late goal to draw 2-2 with Romania in an international friendly on Tuesday, as doubts remained about their title-winning credentials ahead of Euro 2016.

The home side fell behind to Bogdan Stancu's eighth-minute opener during an uninspiring first half, but equalised after 55 minutes when Claudio Marchisio scored a penalty after Eder had been brought down by Dragos Grigore.

Romania have not lost since June 2014 and, despite going 2-1 behind when sub-

stitute Manolo Gabbiadini scored his first Italy goal with a close-range header in the 65th, they extended their unbeaten run when Florin Andone equalised in the 88th minute after an error from goalkeeper Salvatore Sirigu.

The visitors, urged on by pockets of Romanian supporters around the ground, poured forward in the dying stages as they looked to secure an unlikely victory, but a shell-shocked Italy held on to avoid their second defeat in a week.

"We are disappointed that we didn't

win because of a goal conceded two minutes from time," Antonio Conte told Rai Sport. "We were tense at the start because we conceded so early and then as time wore on shook it off.

I'm convinced the lads gave their all, played with intensity, tempo and did everything needed to win."

The Italian defence was exposed in Friday's 3-1 friendly loss away to Belgium, and Antonio Conte's side were again uncertain from the start. Gianluigi Buffon made a smart save to thwart Gabriel Torje

early on but the Azzurri fell behind moments later when Stancu stole the ball after a defensive mix-up between Matteo Darmian and Andrea Barzagli on the edge of the box and rifled home.

Italy have often been drab and uninspiring under Conte's leadership and, without midfielders Andrea Pirlo, Daniele De Rossi and Marco Verratti, they appeared to lack the tools to take control of the game and to fashion dangerous chances.

The contest was transformed in the

frantic 10-minute spell at the start of the second half with Marchisio's penalty and Gabbiadini's maiden international goal.

However, Andone's late equaliser coming after Sirigu had parried Vlad Chiriches's header into the forward's path was a fitting end to a troubling international week for Italy.

"I was already angry with the result in Belgium and once again we failed to get the result we deserved," said Conte. "Hopefully it can be a learning experience." — Reuters

US HELD IN QUALIFIER, WINS FOR MEXICO AND COSTA RICA

PORT OF SPAIN: The United States were held to a frustrating 0-0 draw by Trinidad and Tobago on Tuesday but the point was enough to keep them top of their World Cup group and on course for a place in the final round of regional qualification.

Gyasi Zardes hit the bar with a header shortly after the break and Jermaine Jones saw his shot parried onto the woodwork by keeper Jan-Michael Williams late in the second half as the U.S. dominated possession and created the best chances.

"All in all, a draw on the road is okay," US coach Jurgen Klinsmann told reporters. "It keeps us at the top of the group as we move towards Guatemala in March. As expected, it was a tricky game. There were chances on both sides, I think we had the better of them... We should have put one away."

The US went into the game in Port of Spain on the back of a 6-1 home demolition of St Vincent and although the draw kept them level on four points with Trinidad and Tobago at the top of Group C, they have a vastly superior goal difference. Guatemala continued to pile on the misery for St Vincent with a 4-0 win, a result that leaves the tiny island rooted to the bottom of the four-team group, from which the top two will advance to a final six-nation 'Hexagonal' pool.

The US are considered one of the giants of the North, Central American and Caribbean (CONCACAF) region along with Costa Rica and Mexico, and will look to seal a berth in the next round

with matches against Guatemala and St Vincent in March. Mexico are also sitting pretty after they beat Honduras 2-0 to record their second win from as many matches under new coach Juan Carlos Osorio. Substitutes Jesus Corona and Jurgen Damm scored second-half goals to lift El Tri clear at the top of Group A.

The result was a major setback for Honduras, who qualified as one of the four teams from the region for the 2014 World Cup in Brazil but are still pointless after losing their opening fixture to Canada. Canada drew 0-0 with El Salvador in the other Group A game on Tuesday to sit second in the table on four points, three ahead of their opponents with Honduras rooted to the bottom.

"It was tough out there," Canada's Marcel de Jong said. "It wasn't our best match but we showed we can fight as a team. "We are happy with a point in an away game, an undefeated streak. Keep this up (and) we can make it a tough game for Mexico."

The only other team to have won their opening two games is Costa Rica, who scored two goals inside three minutes midway through a rain-drenched second half in Panama on the way to a 2-1 victory. The home side halved the deficit moments later but were unable to find an equaliser in a bad tempered match that had six minutes of injury time thanks to repeated stoppages.

Costa Rica are top of Group B, with Panama and Jamaica, who beat Haiti 1-0 in Port-au-Prince, equal second on three points each. — Reuters



AUBURN HILLS: Detroit Pistons' Marcus Morris (13) drives against Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James (23) during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Tuesday, in Auburn Hills, Mich. — AP

PISTONS RALLY FOR 104-99 WIN OVER CAVS DESPITE JAMES' 30

AUBURN HILLS: Andre Drummond had 25 points and 18 rebounds, and made some crucial free throws when he was fouled intentionally, helping the Detroit Pistons rally to a 104-99 victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers on Tuesday. LeBron James scored 23 of his 30 points in the first half, but the Pistons double-teamed him on a couple of big possessions down the stretch and Cleveland couldn't convert. The Cavs lost their second straight after winning eight in a row. Drummond's free throw with 2:07 left gave the Pistons a 98-97 advantage, and Detroit was able to hold on. It was 102-99 with 13.8 seconds remaining after Reggie Jackson made two free throws for the Pistons. J.R. Smith then missed a contested 3-pointer from near the top of the key.

WARRIORS 115, RAPTORS 110

Stephen Curry scored 37 points to lead defending champion Golden State to its 12th straight win to open the season, a hard-fought victory over Toronto. Klay Thompson added 19 points and Andrew Bogut scored 13 for the Warriors, off to the best start since Dallas won the first 14 games in 2002-03. Golden State needs three wins to equal the NBA record of 15-0 held by the 1948-49 Washington Capitols and the 1993-94 Houston Rockets. It didn't come easy as Toronto fought back from an 18-point deficit and trailed by one late in the game with the ball. But Kyle Lowry was called for an offensive foul and Curry hit two free throws to help seal it. Lowry and DeMar DeRozan scored 28 points apiece for the Raptors, who have lost five of seven following a 5-0 start.

NUGGETS 115, PELICANS 98

Danilo Gallinari scored a season-high 32 points for the Nuggets and New Orleans' Anthony Davis hurt his left shoulder in the first quarter as Denver defeated the down-trodden Pelicans. Jameer Nelson scored all 16 of his points in the last 14:10 of the game, helping Denver secure its fourth victory in five games. Will Barton added 17 points and Gary Harris 16. Ryan Anderson scored 24 and Eric Gordon 19 for the injury-riddled Pelicans, who were able to stay within single digits most of the game before fading in the final minutes.

NETS 90, HAWKS 88

Brook Lopez had 26 points and Thaddeus

NBA Results/Standings

Washington 115, Milwaukee 86; Brooklyn 90, Atlanta 88; Detroit 104, Cleveland 99; Minnesota 103, Miami 91; NY Knicks 102, Charlotte 94; Denver 115, New Orleans 98; Golden State 115, Toronto 110.

Eastern Conference

Table with 5 columns: Team, W, L, PCT, GB. Rows include Boston, Toronto, NY Knicks, Brooklyn, Philadelphia.

Central Division

Table with 5 columns: Team, W, L, PCT, GB. Rows include Cleveland, Chicago, Indiana, Detroit, Milwaukee.

Southeast Division

Table with 5 columns: Team, W, L, PCT, GB. Rows include Atlanta, Miami, Washington, Orlando, Charlotte.

Western Conference

Table with 5 columns: Team, W, L, PCT, GB. Rows include Oklahoma City, Denver, Utah, Minnesota, Portland.

Pacific Division

Table with 5 columns: Team, W, L, PCT, GB. Rows include Golden State, Phoenix, LA Clippers, Sacramento, LA Lakers.

Southwest Division

Table with 5 columns: Team, W, L, PCT, GB. Rows include San Antonio, Dallas, Memphis, Houston, New Orleans.

Young hit two free throws with 1.4 seconds left to give Brooklyn a victory over Atlanta. After a timeout, Young knocked away Thabo Sefolosha's inbound pass to Al Horford as time expired. Young finished with 16 points and 11 rebounds. Jarrett Jack and Shane Larkin each had 14. Horford scored 18 points for the Hawks. Paul Millsap had 17 and Kyle Korver added 13.

TIMBERWOLVES 103, HEAT 91

Andrew Wiggins scored 24 points and Zach LaVine added 17 as Minnesota overcame a triple-double by Miami's Hassan Whiteside to beat the Heat. Shabazz Muhammad scored 16 and Karl-Anthony Towns had 14 points and 14 rebounds for Minnesota, which snapped a four-game slide. Whiteside had 22 points, 14 rebounds and 10 blocks - his second triple-double - for Miami, which was outscored 41-22 in the fourth. Luol Deng scored 20 points, Goran Dragic had 16 and Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh each scored 10 for Miami.

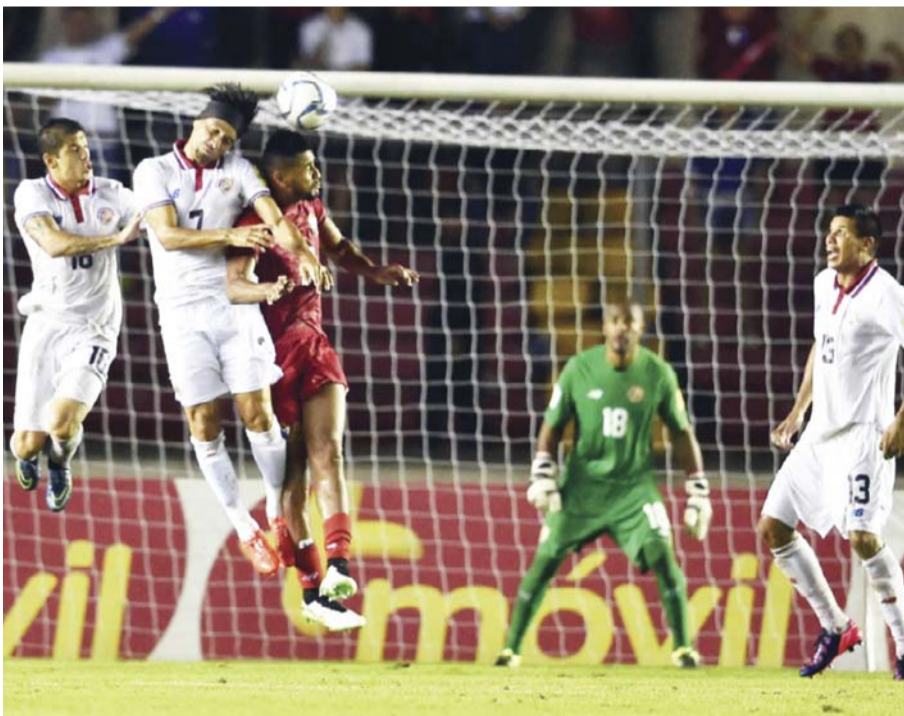
KNICKS 102, HORNETS 94

Rookie Kristaps Porzingis scored a season-

high 29 points and grabbed 11 rebounds as New York beat Charlotte. Less than a week after he just missed beating the Hornets when his 3-pointer was ruled after the buzzer, Porzingis couldn't be denied by Charlotte defenders or the clock in the 20-year-old Latvian's biggest moment in the NBA. The slender, 7-foot-3 forward who was thunderously booed when the Knicks drafted him with the No. 4 pick had fans chanting "Por-zing-is! Por-zing-is!" in the fourth quarter, shortly after his three-point play gave the Knicks a 93-81 lead. Carmelo Anthony added 18 points and 11 rebounds for the Knicks. Arron Afflalo scored 16. Kemba Walker scored a season-high 31 points for the Hornets.

WIZARDS 115, BUCKS 86

John Wall had 19 points, nine assists and six rebounds as Washington beat Milwaukee. Otto Porter also scored 19 to help the Wizards win by double digits for the first time this season. Washington had six players in double figures. Milwaukee was led by Khris Middleton, who scored 14 points in the team's worst loss of the season. — AP



PANAMA CITY: Panama's Anibal Godoy (3-L) and Costa Rica's Christian Bolanos (2-L) head the ball during their Russia 2018 FIFA World Cup Concacaf Qualifiers football match in Panama City, on Tuesday. — AFP



SAN PEDRO: Mexico's Raul Jimenez controls the ball during the Russia 2018 FIFA World Cup Concacaf Qualifiers football match, in San Pedro Sula, on Tuesday. — AFP

MESSI LOOKING SHARP BUT STILL A CLASICO DOUBT

BARCELONA: Barcelona forward Lionel Messi is looking sharp in training but remains a doubt for Saturday's 'El Clasico' against Real Madrid, team mate Luis Suarez said. Messi is in a fitness battle having returned to training on Monday following a knee injury he picked up at the end of September.

"Whether he plays or not is down to the coach, the medics and how he feels but he has been looking sharp in training. However, it is

the type of injury where there are risks for the future," Suarez told a news conference on Wednesday. "Messi is a player that makes a difference in all games and in Clasicos he has always made a big impact but we will have to see if he is ready."

In the absence of the four times World Player of the Year, Suarez and Neymar have excelled and propelled Barca to a three-point lead over Real at the top of La Liga. Still Suarez

is in no doubt over the value of Messi for the club.

"Leo is above any other player due to what he has achieved and what he is still doing," said Suarez. "Ney is amazing, behind Messi and could easily be the second best in the world. At the moment he is playing incredibly and it is great to see."

"We knew that we were going to be without Leo and that we had to be strong both

physically and mentally. We have lost some points as have Madrid but we are happy because we have picked up good results without the best player in the world." While Barca are looking for a seventh straight win between La Liga and the Champions League, Real need to battle back after defeat away to Sevilla before the international break when they were weak defensively.

"You never know what can happen in these

types of games and when you start as favourite it can often go wrong," said Suarez. "We will have to be fully concentrated. Just because Madrid lost their last game is not so important as they have great players."

"The league will not be decided by this game if we open up a six or four point lead as there is still a long way to go. It is not easy to win a league and there are also other teams like Atletico (Madrid)." — Reuters

FIFA OPEN DISCIPLINARY CASE AGAINST BANNED KUWAIT

SINGAPORE: Kuwait look set to be kicked out of World Cup qualifying after failing to resolve a case of government interference in their local football association before Tuesday's World Cup qualifier against Myanmar.

The Kuwait Football Association were suspended from FIFA last month because of the issue, three days after they drew 0-0 at home

to Lebanon in a World Cup qualifier. They had been scheduled to play Myanmar on Tuesday in their sixth fixture in Asian qualifying Group G but the FIFA ban prevents them from taking part in international competition.

"The 2018 FIFA World Cup qualifier between Myanmar and Kuwait, scheduled for 17 November 2015, did not take place," world

governing body FIFA said in a statement. "The matter has been referred to the FIFA Disciplinary Committee for its consideration. Further information will follow in due course."

Kuwait are currently second in Group G with 10 points, level with Lebanon and eight behind leaders South Korea. Only the eight group

winners and four best runners-up will progress to the 2019 Asian Cup and third round of 2018 World Cup qualifying in the continent.

Indonesia were also banned for government interference in the running of the local football association in May and immediately kicked out of Group F of joint World Cup and Asian Cup qualifying. — Reuters

GERMANY GAME AGAINST NETHERLANDS CALLED OFF OVER BOMB FEARS

HANOVER: A soccer game between Germany and Netherlands which German Chancellor Angel Merkel was due to attend in Hanover was called off two hours before its scheduled start on Tuesday over fears of a planned bombing.

The match was due to have been held four days after the deadly attacks in Paris on Friday, when suicide bombers targeted the soccer stadium where Germany were playing France. "We had received specific indications that an attack with explosives was planned," Hanover Police President Volker Kluwe told NDR state broadcaster. "We took them seriously and that is why we took the measures."

"We do not know if these people, who had planned something for the stadium, had planned something else so we try to have a presence throughout the city," he said. Police vans with loudspeakers ordered fans to leave the Hanover stadium and heavily armed officers positioned themselves outside the arena.

Police also evacuated Hanover's TUI multi-purpose arena where a concert was about to start while officers checked cars and pedestrians in the city centre and sniffer dogs were deployed.

A train on its way to southern Germany was also stopped at Hanover station with police removing a suspicious package before giving the all-clear for the train to continue its journey. There were no arrests made and no explosives were found, Lower Saxony Interior Minister Boris Pistorius said. Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere said the threat was credible and cancelling the game was the right thing to do, but did not provide any details.

Trust

"I understand the question but I will not answer it," he told a hastily convened news conference when asked what had

forced the decision. He said divulging details could undermine security at other events.

"I am asking for an advance of trust from the German people. We will have such cases in the future, maybe not Hanover but somewhere else," he said. After Friday's attacks in Paris security measures in Hanover had been tight. In a show of solidarity, Merkel was set to attend the soccer match with Vice Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel and several government ministers.

Interim German Football Association President Reinhard Rauball said he called up the team in the bus some five kilometres (3 miles) from the stadium, telling them the game was cancelled.

Both the German and the Dutch teams were then rushed to a secure undisclosed location before the hosts left individually for their homes and the visitors for the airport.

"That we would go through this twice in four days is not something I could imagine," Rauball, visibly shaken, told reporters. "It is a sad day for Germany and a sad day for German football."

Two Dutch government ministers who were due to attend the match - Defence Minister Jeanine Hennes and Health and Sport Minister Edith Schippers - were also returning home.

World champions Germany had not initially wanted the game to go ahead after having played in Paris on Friday as a wave of attacks hit the city, killing 129 people. The contingent of 80 Germans, including players, coaches and staff, spent the night holed up in the changing rooms of the Stade de France stadium, before heading for the airport on Saturday morning.

The players, coaches and the national football association decided to go ahead with the Hanover game in a gesture of solidarity with France. — Reuters



LONDON: England's Ross Barkley fights for the ball against France's Lassana Diarra during the international friendly soccer match between England and France at Wembley Stadium in London, Tuesday. France is playing England at Wembley on Tuesday after the countries decided the match should go ahead despite the deadly attacks in Paris last Friday night which killed scores of people. — AP

ENGLAND BEAT FRANCE 2-0 ON NIGHT OF SOLIDARITY AT WEMBLEY

LONDON: England beat France 2-0 in an emotional friendly at Wembley on Tuesday when more than 70,000 fans paid tribute to the victims of the Paris attacks with English fans roaring out a spine-tingling rendition of the visitors' national anthem.

The supporters of both teams also impeccably observed a minute's silence to honour the victims ahead of a match that will be remembered more for the symbolic nature of the occasion than for most of the action on the pitch.

Played just four days after the Islamic State's assault in Paris left 129 people dead, the English fans, along with the away supporters, showed remarkable dignity and respect.

The players were led on to the field by Prince William and the team managers-England's Roy Hodgson and France's Didier Deschamps-who carried wreaths while fans waved the tricolour.

"It was a very poignant occasion and we achieved all the things we wanted to achieve in the remembrance. An act of defiance was better than the other alternative," said Hodgson.

France defender Laurent Koscielny, who plays for Arsenal, added: "It was important for everybody that we played, for those who were watching us and for the victims. I know the English, they have a lot of respect for the French, we saw that tonight." After kickoff, although France appeared to settle first, almost relieved the pre-match observations were over, England held the

upper hand and took a grip with goals from man of the match Dele Alli and Wayne Rooney either side of halftime.

Understandably, after a traumatic few days, France found the going tough on the Wembley turf. "The performance was not easy for us. We had a lack of aggression and concentration but I think maybe it's a bit normal," Lloris said.

OUTSTANDING ALLI

England midfielder Alli, 19, blasted the ball past his Tottenham Hotspur club goalkeeper Lloris into the top corner for his first international goal after 39 minutes.

"He was almost faultless, he was outstanding," Hodgson said of Alli, who was winning his fourth cap on his first start. Rooney, playing in what is becoming a more usual deep-lying role, doubled England's lead in the 48th minute after Alli, who started the move, found Raheem Sterling who crossed for Rooney to volley home his 51st international goal.

England striker Harry Kane twice went close to scoring, including a searing long-range drive in the second half which flew just wide. England, who played poorly in a 2-0 friendly defeat away to Spain on Friday, had not beaten France in six meetings since 1997, but the visitors never made it easy for the home side on what was obviously a difficult evening for their players.

The visitors' best chance fell to midfielder

Yohan Cabaye of Crystal Palace, one of 13 players in the 23-man France squad who are playing, or have played, their club football in England. His seventh minute shot flew just over Joe Hart's crossbar.

DIFFICULT NIGHT

The unusual nature of the occasion was clear during the game with the crowd applauding France substitutes Lassana Diarra and Antoine Griezmann when they came on in the second half. A cousin of Diarra's was killed in Friday's attacks, while Griezmann's sister escaped unharmed from the Bataclan concert venue where 89 people lost their lives.

There was hardly a foul during the game and afterwards the fans and the England team roundly applauded the France players. "It was a difficult night for everyone, especially for the French players and staff," Rooney said.

"I thought both teams handled it really well. I'm sure this will get shown round the world and show the togetherness and unity in ourselves and France and in football."

"As Didier Deschamps said, it's not about religion, it's not about race, it's about togetherness."

"Anyone can play the game of football and hopefully tonight shows whoever you are around the world, you can come together. We need to stand tall and stand together at this tough time." — Reuters



ZURICH: A combination made on October 29, 2015 shows two pictures showing FIFA president Sepp Blatter (L) on May 30, 2015 in Zurich, and UEFA leader Michel Platini on May 28, 2015 in Zurich. A FIFA appeal committee yesterday rejected a bid by long-time president Sepp Blatter and UEFA chief Michel Platini to overturn their 90-day suspensions while Swiss police pursue a criminal investigation. — AFP

BLATTER, PLATINI LOSE APPEALS AGAINST PROVISIONAL FIFA BANS

ZURICH: Suspended FIFA president Sepp Blatter and European soccer chief Michel Platini have lost their appeals against provisional 90-day bans by the global soccer body's ethics committee, FIFA said yesterday. Blatter and Platini, who had been favourite to take over in February's FIFA presidential election, were suspended on Oct 8, engulfed by a deepening corruption scandal as the sport faces criminal investigations in Switzerland and the United States. The decision by the FIFA Appeal Committee, which rejected the appeals "in full", was a further blow to Frenchman Platini's hopes of standing on Feb. 26 because the electoral committee has said his registration will not be processed while he is suspended.

The former France captain and coach, who has been UEFA president since 2007, is not allowed to campaign or engage in any football-related activities until his suspension is lifted. The only hope for Platini, who was banned with Blatter pending a full ethics committee investigation into their conduct, is to take his case to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

If he won that appeal, the electoral committee has said it would review his case but, even then, there is still no guarantee that he would be able to stand in the election as it would depend on the timing.

Buffeted by a series of scandals over the last few years, FIFA was thrown into turmoil in May by the US indictments of 14 football officials, including two FIFA vice-presidents,

and sports marketing executives for alleged corruption. Blatter, who has been at the head of FIFA since 1998, also faces criminal investigation in Switzerland over a 2 million Swiss franc (\$2.1 million) payment from FIFA to Platini. Both men have denied wrongdoing.

The payment was made in 2011 for work which Platini had completed nine years earlier, the Swiss attorney-general's office has said, adding Platini was considered to be "between a witness and an accused person."

FIFA's Ethics Committee has said it hopes to have completed the full investigation into Blatter and Platini in time for a final decision to be made on their cases by the end of their 90-day suspension period.

Both men could then face much longer bans if found guilty of contravening FIFA's code of ethics which, in Platini's case, would mean he also loses his position as UEFA president. Five candidates have been accepted for the presidential election and the job of rebuilding the sport's beleaguered governing body.

They are Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein of Jordan, Asian Football Confederation President Sheikh Salman Bin Ibrahim Al Khalifa of Bahrain, former FIFA official Jerome Champagne of France, UEFA General Secretary Gianni Infantino of Switzerland and South Africa businessman Tokyo Sexwale.

Infantino entered the race a day before the deadline in late October and is expected to withdraw if Platini is allowed back in. — Reuters

ECUADOR PUNISH BLUNDERING VENEZUELA TO NOTCH FOURTH WIN

PUERTO ORDAZ: Ecuador ruthlessly exposed Venezuela's defensive frailties on their way to a 3-1 win which kept them top of the South American World Cup qualifiers with a perfect record on Tuesday. Jefferson Montero, scorer of the second goal, was at the heart of Ecuador's best moves as they pulled the hosts apart to make it four wins in as many games in the single 10-team group. Venezuela, who have never qualified for a World Cup, are bottom of the table after losing all four games. After a lively start by the home side, Fidel Martinez had the ball in the net in the 10th minute for Ecuador, but his effort was ruled offside.

Martinez made no mistake five minutes later, however, racing through to drill past goalkeeper Alain Baroja after Venezuela lost possession in midfield. Ecuador, who fell at the group stage in Brazil last year, struck the knockout blow in the 23rd when a clearance by Baroja, under no pressure, was intercepted by Miller Bolanos. Bolanos fed Montero and the pair exchanged passes before Montero wrong-footed Baroja with a clever dummy and fired into the net.

Venezuela took control in the second half and created several openings but every time they lost the ball, Ecuador, who have already beaten Argentina away, looked like scoring. Felipe Caicedo crowned Ecuador's performance when he met Montero's cross with a powerful, looping header from just inside the penalty area to score the third on the hour. Walter Ayovi was denied a fourth when his 35-metre free kick crashed against the bar, before Josef Martinez side-footed home to reduce the arrears for Venezuela in the 84th minute. — Reuters



SALVADOR: Brazil's Douglas Costa, right, and Peru's Paolo Hurtado fight for the ball during a 2018 World Cup qualifying soccer match in Salvador, Brazil, Tuesday. — AP

Sports

Thornton, Marleau
goals lead
Sharks to 5-4
win over Bruins



England beat
France on night
of solidarity at
Wembley



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2015

PISTONS RALLY FOR 104-99 WIN OVER CAVS DESPITE JAMES' 30 Page 18



LONDON: Spain's Rafael Nadal returns to Britain's Andy Murray during a men's singles group stage match on day four of the ATP World Tour Finals tennis tournament in London yesterday. — AFP

NADAL IMPERIOUS AS MURRAY CRUMBLES

LONDON: Rafael Nadal was in imperious form as he crushed Andy Murray at the World Tour Finals yesterday with an impressive 6-4, 6-1 victory at London's O2 Arena.

The Spanish fifth seed was dominant as the British world number two's game fell apart in front of a home crowd at the 17,800-capacity venue. The first set was a high-level contest featuring impressive rallies and smart drop shots, but in the second, Murray's game fell away as Nadal turned the screw.

Whether Nadal goes through to the semi-finals depends on the result of Wednesday's second match in the four-man group, when world number four Stan Wawrinka of Switzerland takes on Spain's seventh seed

David Ferrer. Both Nadal and Murray are contesting their seventh Finals, the season-ending tournament disputed between the top eight players on a hard court. Neither has ever won the competition: Nadal finished runner-up in 2010 and 2013, while Murray reached the semis in 2008, 2010 and 2012. Nadal went into the match leading Murray 15-6 in career clashes between the two. Murray had also never beaten Nadal in their four prior encounters in Britain.

Murray's second set collapse

But the Scot won their only previous match of 2015, beating Nadal on his home soil—and his favourite clay surface—in the Madrid final.

Murray broke Nadal in the first game but the Mallorcan broke straight back thanks to some mishits from the Briton. At 2-2, Murray rummaged around in his bag, produced a pair of scissors and chopped off part of his fringe.

He then tried to get Nadal on the run with some drop shots but the Spaniard was equal to the task, responding in kind by sending his opponent scampering around the court.

At 2-3 down, Murray held off a break point twice and saved two break points at 3-4 down as Nadal's pressure began to tell. Eventually Murray cracked when serving to stay in the set. Nadal fashioned three set points and broke to love, sending the Briton

chasing round the arena and swiping at fresh air. In the second set, Murray made 16 unforced errors to Nadal's three and won just 10 percent of the points on his second serve as the Spaniard raced away with the match.

Murray lost his first service game, double-faulting twice. The Briton looked a little lost as to how the match was falling away, muttering to himself. Nadal sealed victory in an hour and 31 minutes with a forehand cross-court winner.

The match was watched by members of the Argentina rugby team, World Cup semi-finalists earlier this month, ahead of their match against the Barbarians invitational side at Twickenham on Saturday.

Murray will still be certain of finishing the season at number two, the highest year-end ranking of his career, if he beats Wawrinka in Friday's final round of group stage matches, while Nadal faces compatriot Ferrer. After the World Tour Finals, Murray will lead Britain's bid for a first Davis Cup win since 1936. Britain face hosts Belgium in the November 27-29 final on a specially-laid clay court in Ghent.

In the other group, Roger Federer has already qualified for the semi-finals, while world number one Novak Djokovic needs to beat Tomas Berdych in his last round-robin match today. Japan's Kei Nishikori could join Federer in the semis if he beats the Swiss great. — AFP

ZLATAN PLAYS 'MAGIC' MAN AS SWEDEN ADVANCE TO EURO 2016

COPENHAGEN: A stunning double from captain Zlatan Ibrahimovic gave Sweden a 2-2 draw away to Denmark as they qualified for Euro 2016 on Tuesday by winning 4-3 on aggregate against their Scandinavian rivals.

Sweden's captain has carried his side virtually single-handedly to the finals next year in France, scoring eight times in eight qualifiers and then netting three of his side's four goals as they sealed the deal in Denmark.

The final whistle sparked scenes of wild jubilation among the gold-and-blue clad players and fans as the squad rushed to celebrate with their supporters.

"They (the Danes) were going to send me into retirement, but I sent their whole country into retirement!" a jubilant Ibrahimovic told Swedish broadcaster Kanal 5 as he was engulfed by his teammates on live television.

He had silenced the home fans in the 19th minute when he ghosted out to meet Kim Kallstrom's corner, twisting athletically to sweep the ball past flat-footed goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel.

Then he punished the Danes for their failure to create chances with a beautiful curling free kick in the 76th minute to send the Swedes closer to a place in France next year.

Late goals by Yussuf Poulsen and Jannik Vestergaard provided some comfort for the home fans, but once again they struggled to create and convert chances.

With Denmark coach Morten Olsen

making four changes from the team that started Saturday's 2-1 defeat in Stockholm, the Danes looked much more muscular in midfield, but the final ball was often poor.

Striker Nicklas Bendtner had a game to forget in his home town, and was widely booed when he was replaced by Morten Rasmussen on the hour. Denmark had overrun the Swedes in the opening exchanges and should have broken the deadlock in the eighth minute, but Poulsen, Daniel Agger and Thomas Delaney all failed to find the net in quick succession.

Coach Morten Olsen all but resigned at the media conference after the game, saying: "Obviously it hurts me to finish in this way after 35 years with the national team."

Asked exactly when he would leave the post, he told reporters that it would be up to his wife to decide. For Sweden coach Erik Hamren it was a different story, and he praised his captain effusively. "I know he's not one of the family, but I love him," Hamren told reporters. Ibrahimovic gave his all, eschewing his usual array of flicks and tricks in favour of hard defensive work, inspiring his side to cover every blade of grass on the Parken pitch.

It was an effort that paid off handsomely, thanks to the striker's double, and the Swedish fans ended their evening by singing the national anthem on a drizzly Danish night, no doubt dreaming of the warmer climes of France next year. — Reuters



COPENHAGEN: Sweden's forward and team captain Zlatan Ibrahimovic (R) celebrates with his teammates as they qualify to Euro 2016 in France after the Euro 2016 second leg play-off football match between Denmark and Sweden at Parken stadium in Copenhagen on Tuesday. — AFP

BIGLIA GOAL GIVES ARGENTINA VITAL WIN

BARRANQUILLA: Argentina midfielder Lucas Biglia scored a 20th minute goal to kick-start their World Cup qualifying campaign with a 1-0 away victory over Colombia at the Metropolitan on Tuesday.

It was Argentina's first win in four qualifiers without injured captain Lionel Messi and leaves them with five points, still seven behind leaders Ecuador who beat Venezuela 3-1 away.

Surprise package Ecuador extended to 12 points their perfect start, which began with a 2-0 upset victory over Argentina in Buenos Aires last month.

Colombia, who began with a 2-0 home win over Peru, have four points following their 1-1 draw in Chile last week.

Biglia began an attack in the Argentina half, Ever Banega carried on the move with a pass out to Ezequiel Lavezzi on the right and his low cross beat David Ospina, allowing Biglia, following up, to tap into the unguarded net.

Argentina, also without forward Sergio Aguero, had chances to make the result safer but substitute striker Paulo Dybala had a goal disallowed and minutes later hit the post.

They had to overcome the heat and humidity and a noisy 45,000 crowd for a second successive victory in Barranquilla.

The Caribbean port city was where Argentina got their previous World Cup qualifying campaign off the ground with

a 2-1 win in November 2011 on the way to last year's final in Brazil.

Argentina wrested control from Colombia after withstanding early pressure and could have scored in the 12th minute but Gonzalo Higuain shot over from Angel Di Maria's cross.

They survived a scare when goalkeeper Sergio Romero misjudged a backward header from central defender Rogelio Funes Mori and had to make a diving save.

Angel Di Maria had a chance just before the interval when he had only Colombia keeper David Ospina to beat but his shot skimmed the outside of the post.

Argentina's midfield of Biglia, Banega and Javier Mascherano ensured the visitors had more territorial control in a tight second half, moving well to deny Colombia space to build moves.

"We knew it wouldn't be an easy match... Argentina occupied space well and created room for themselves to counter-attack while denying us room to get closer to their goalkeeper," substitute striker Luis Muriel told reporters.

Muriel played a key role in Thursday's 1-1 draw in Santiago in a performance Colombia were unable to repeat in Barranquilla.

The top four at the end of the 10-team, 18-match South American group in two years' time will qualify for the 2018 Russia finals with the fifth-placed team going into an intercontinental playoff. — Reuters

Kuwait Times BUSINESS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2015

Taxi owners, lenders sue
New York City over Uber

Page 23

Asian shares slip, copper
tumbles; worry takes toll

Page 24

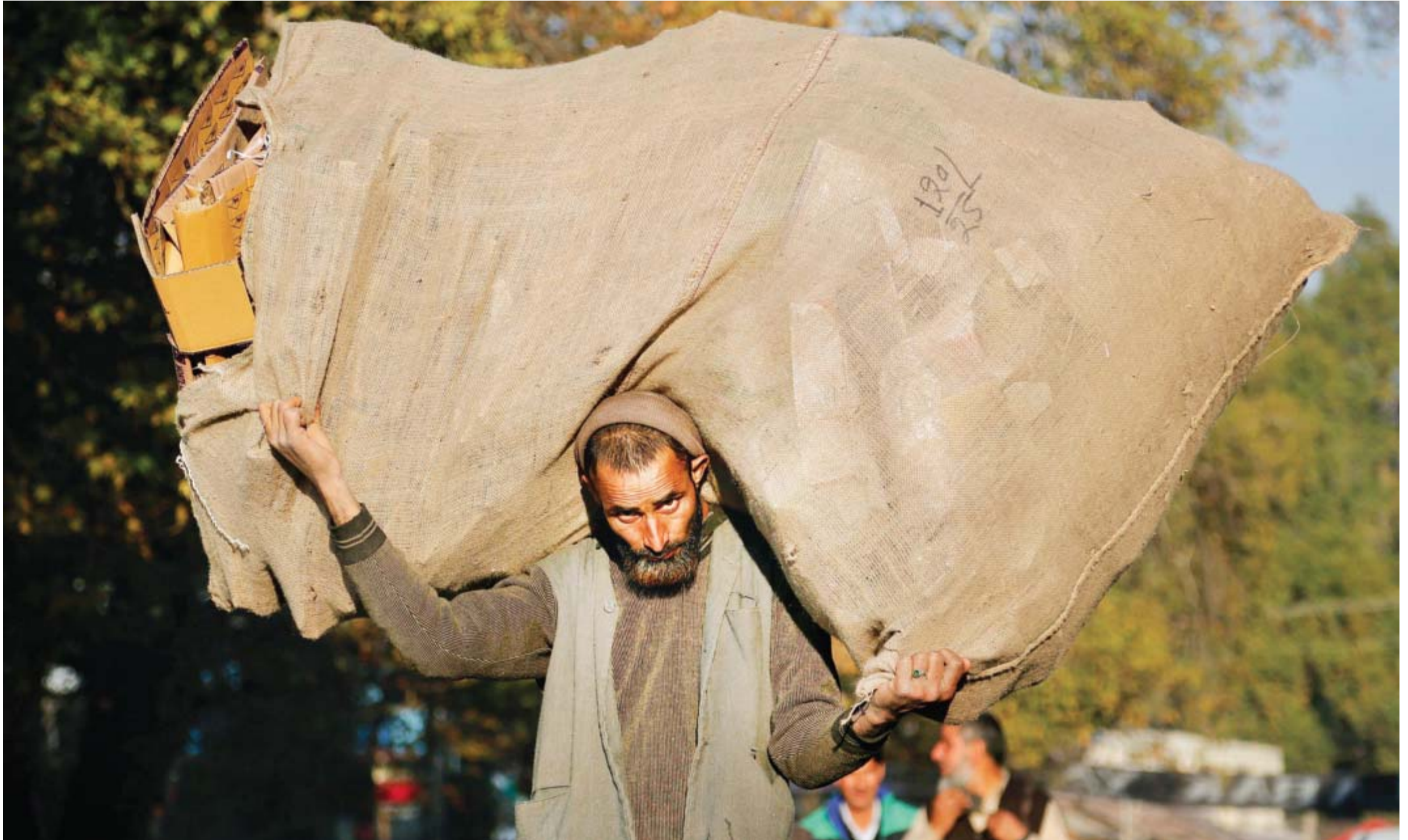
X-CITE LAUNCHES THE GREATEST RETAIL ELECTRONICS CAMPAIGN IN KUWAIT

Page 26



NBK issues KD 125 million
10-year Subordinated
Tier 2 bonds

Pages 23



SRINAGAR: A Kashmiri laborer carries a sack filled with cardboard at a busy market in Srinagar, India. — AP (See Page 26)

EGYPT INDUSTRIALISTS URGE TIGHTER IMPORTS REGULATION

AN ATTEMPT TO EASE DEMAND FOR DOLLARS; CURRENCY CRISIS EASES

CAIRO: Egypt's industrial federation has called for tighter regulations on imports in an attempt to ease demand for dollars and prevent a repeat of the currency crisis that has seen goods pile up at ports this year. Mohamed El Sewedy, head of the Federation of Egyptian Industries, said the dollar crunch had hit manufacturing, with raw materials held up at ports due to a lack of foreign currency. Manufacturing growth fell to 0.2 percent in the first nine months from 9 percent in the same period of 2014.

Goods were finally released this month after state banks supplied \$1.8 billion to clear the backlog and process new letters of credit, El Sewedy said. "All the goods that were held up

have left the ports now," El Sewedy told Reuters in an interview. Egypt, which depends on imports, has faced economic turmoil since the 2011 uprising that ended Hosni Mubarak's 30-year rule. Foreign investors and tourists, on which the country relies for foreign currency earnings, have stayed away.

The country's foreign currency reserves have fallen from \$36 billion before the 2011 revolt to about \$16.4 billion in October, leaving the central bank with little firepower to defend the Egyptian pound from mounting pressure. In February, the outgoing central bank governor imposed restrictions on the amount of dollars companies could deposit in banks. The aim was to crush the dollar black market but it

made it difficult for companies to open letters of credit. Speaking at his office overlooking the Nile, El Sewedy said the incoming central bank governor, Tarek Amer, had met with industrialists and promised to change course. "The direction is towards a policy that guarantees orderly markets without strangling the manufacturing sector and forcing some manufacturers to resort to illegitimate means to obtain their (dollar) needs," El Sewedy said. He said Amer had promised to help banks close \$4 billion in dollar overdrafts opened for clients during the crisis. About \$1 billion of this was supplied last week and El Sewedy said he expected the remainder to come very soon.

The central bank has not made any state-

ment on its shifting monetary policy or said where the dollar supplies were coming from. Amer officially begins his new role on Nov. 27 but is widely believed by bankers to be working behind the scenes. As pressure mounts on the central bank to devalue, El Sewedy said a freer exchange rate would help ensure balanced markets. "The more the rate is fair and free, the more we are able to compete," he said. Egypt is increasingly expected to shift to a more flexible exchange system, as recommended by the International Monetary Fund in September and favored by many banks and businesses. Under the outgoing governor, the central bank has allowed small and piecemeal devaluations as the pound came under pres-

sure, but the last move—unexpectedly—was to strengthen the currency.

El Sewedy said manufacturers were pushing for stricter regulations to ensure importers do not put artificially low values on customs bills to avoid duties. The practice is believed to be widespread, robbing the government of precious tax revenues while making it difficult for local products to compete on price. "If I regulate trade, the appetite for dollars ... will be reduced and become more orderly," said El Sewedy. "There is enthusiasm from the government and opposition from many people who are benefiting. We are fighting ... We will have standardized imports before the end of 2015." — Reuters

KUWAIT'S AGILITY PLANS \$1 BILLION FUNDRAISING

DUBAI: Kuwait's Agility, the largest Gulf Arab transport logistics company, plans to raise around \$1 billion to fund future growth across its business, the chief executive said in an interview yesterday. The company is focusing on diversifying its business across emerging markets as low oil prices risk delaying some projects in the Middle East, said Tarek Sultan. Agility is already present in around 100 countries and plans further expansion within the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the GCC and Africa, Sultan said. "We have corporate requirements that could be in the neighborhood of \$1 billion and our other businesses are growing as well, have their own requirements and will seek to address them on a project by project basis," he said in an interview.

United Projects for Aviation Services Company, the commercial real estate development and facilities management arm of Agility, is working on a \$1 billion shopping mall project in Abu Dhabi, Sultan said. Agility said in June it had agreed with a real estate subsidiary of National Real Estate Company to invest \$225 million in the shopping mall. Agility's bulk fuels storage, distribution and supply chain business required financing to meet plans to expand its ship capacity transporting refined products and gas, he said. Africa is one of the areas of focus for the company, with Sultan saying in February it planned to spend \$100 million this year on expansion in the continent.

He said he expected capital expenditure in Africa to be at a similar level next year, but could be higher if the pace of execution of projects it is working on accelerates. "Going forward, from an oil and gas perspective there could be fewer projects. Having said that, if you look at energy and power projects, low oil prices are conducive to building more power plants so you could see an expansion of opportunities in the power sector, especially in Africa," he said. Still, some of its projects in the oil and gas business may be hit by the slump in prices since June last year. "We do a lot of work in the oil and gas industry so our project logistics business is likely to see projects delayed," he said. —Reuters

POTATO TO WEB: NET OUTSOURCING IN PAKISTANI MOUNTAINOUS NORTH

GULMIT: When a landslide created a huge, turquoise lake that cut them off from the world, the farmers of Gulmit were left destitute and unable to sell their potatoes. Their solution: To drag their Himalayan valley in Pakistan's far north into the Internet age. In the village, which is nestled between two peaks approaching 8,000 meters high, farmers scramble to grow the produce as their ancestors did. But just a few meters away Karim Aslam is hammering at a keyboard on a computer connected to a giant satellite dish.

He downloads audio files sent from the US: English-language recordings of patients' diagnoses sent from Tennessee, which he transcribes before sending back, acting as a long-distance secretary. It was a step change for Gulmit, an idyllic village of some 3,000 people with stone walls and potato crops that stretch out over the majestic fields of northern Pakistan, near the China border. "Potatoes are seasonal. You cannot live with that the whole year, but I can live (on) my transcription job," explains Karim, who took English classes at school and found the work over the Internet by contacting a Karachi-based company that deals with US clients. He soon found his stride with the recordings. At first, he managed around 30 minutes per day, but now, he says "I am doing at least 120 to 150 minutes per day". The transcripts earn him around \$400 per month, a small fortune compared to the meager wages farmers make.

Isolated, then connected

Since the late 1990s, South Asia, with its large numbers of youths educated in



GULMIT: Local people control their sheep at the Karakoram highway in Gulmit village of Hunza valley in northern Pakistan. — AFP

English, has been home to an outsourcing boom, particularly in customer call centers. But until a spectacular landslide in 2010, this village perched 2,400 meters above sea level had remained untouched by modernity. Hemmed in by the landslide, water from the river Hunza began to rise creating the artificial Attabad lake, cutting off Gulmit from the rest of the villages of the north. The only way to cross was by hiring barges but the cost of doing so saw the potato industry collapse.

Forced by economic necessity, Gulmit

was finally connected to the web, driven by ambitious village youths eager to tap in to the digital economy and the endless possibilities of outsourced work.

The only problem was of infrastructure: Deprived of the phone network, the village did not have Internet access. So European donors, via a local NGO called Kado, funded the creation of digital training centre with 700 trainees in the surrounding area of Gojal, as well as the purchase of laptops and the installation of a satellite connection. In mid 2012, Gulmit went online. "It was amaz-

ing for us," recalls Anila Hakim, an 18-year-old villager training in IT. "At that time, we were not aware of what the current issues are all about and what is going on inside our country, or outside, so being connected to the whole world was glorious."

Return to the potato age?

But the internet gold rush may be ebbing-financing for the Kado project has ended. Karim's internet connection is the only one still working in the village.

But his satellite subscription costs a small fortune: between \$150 - 200 a month. "It's far too much," he says. If connectivity was less of an issue, "I would have trained lots of guys, and we would have done lots of work from the US or Canada," he says, wearing a fake leather jacket to protect him from the autumnal cold as he leans over his keyboard.

There is hope Gulmit will stay in the internet age - the NGO Kado is looking for new foreign financing to provide new satellite web services, pending the arrival of landline connections, explains Abdul Waheed, the project's director. The potato farmers, for their part, are smiling again. This year, thanks to Chinese investment, construction on a tunnel bypassing the lake has been completed, re-connecting Gulmit to the rest of the country. "We were producing potatoes, then we were earning money through the Internet. This was only an alternate option... now we will go back to potatoes," said Waheed. But he hasn't lost all hope of utilizing the world wide web. He adds: "We will market the potatoes through Internet." — AFP

DUTY-FREE LOSS PILES WOES ON TROUBLED LOTTE GROUP S KOREA'S 5TH -LARGEST GROUP SUFFERS LATEST BODY-BLOW

SEOUL: Troubled South Korean retail giant Lotte, already struggling with a prolonged founder-family feud, has seen its business woes deepen with the loss of the state license for one of its biggest duty-free shops ahead of a key IPO. The country's fifth-largest business group suffered its latest body-blow at the weekend when South Korea's customs agency awarded its concession to a rival bidder—the heavy industries giant Doosan Co.

Hana Financial Securities. "As a result, the company's valuation may fall when it goes public," he said, noting that duty-free shops accounted for more than 80 percent of Hotel Lotte's overall sales. Founded in Tokyo in 1948 by Shin Kyuk-Ho, Lotte has a vast network of businesses including department stores, hotels and amusement parks in South Korea and Japan, with combined assets valued at more than \$90 billion.

ment and manipulating their frail, 92-year-old father whose mental faculties had been called into question. A temporary halt to hostilities came after Shin Dong-Bin won the overwhelming support of board members, labor union members and shareholders in August. But the battle resumed in court in October after the founder and his eldest son filed lawsuits challenging Shin Dong-Bin's position and competency.



INFINITI HEADLINES INTERNATIONAL MOTOR SHOW 2015 WITH 4 MIDDLE EAST DEBUTS

DUBAI: Infiniti, one of the fastest growing premium automotive brands in the Middle East today unveiled the regional debut of four models during an exclusive press conference at the 13th edition of the Dubai International Motor Show. "The Dubai International Motor Show is without a doubt the leading exhibition of its kind in the region. As a premium automotive brand, it is the perfect platform for us to introduce key products to the market," said Juergen Schmitz, Managing Director, Infiniti Middle East.

Infiniti QX50 LWB From an exterior design perspective the QX50 LWB has been enhanced for 2016 with a new front and rear bumper and lower front and rear fascia, new LED Daytime Running Lights, new signature Infiniti-style double-arch front grille, new side mirrors with integrated LED turn signals and updated side sill styling. Significant inroads have also been made on its size. The wheelbase increases by 81mm whilst overall length is boosted by 114mm.

From the grille, the flowing character lines rise and merge into the headlamps, drawing attention to the intelligent LED lights. The same refinement on the outside extends into the smallest detail on the inside, evoking a premium atmosphere with three-dimensional textures and meticulous craftsmanship. The Q60 will be produced globally in 2016 and will be offered with the next-generation 3.0-liter V6 engine with direct injection and twin-turbocharging.

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

Table with 6 columns: Index, Previous Close, Last Price, Change, Daily Performance %, Yearly Performance %. Includes rows for Dow Jones, NASDAQ, S&P 500, etc.

Table with 6 columns: Index, Previous Close, Last Price, Change, Daily Performance %, Yearly Performance %. Includes rows for Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Dubai, etc.

Table with 9 columns: Currency, Kuwaiti Dinar, Saudi Riyal, US Dollar, Euro, Sterling Pound, Swiss Franc, Japanese Yen, Australian Dollar. Global Currencies Exchange Rate.

Table with 9 columns: Currency, US Dollar, Kuwaiti Dollar, Saudi Riyal, Bahraini Dinar, Qatari Riyal, Omani Riyal, Emirates Dirham, Egyptian Pound. MENA Currencies Exchange Rate.

Table with 6 columns: Currency, 1-Week, 1-Month, 3-Month, 6-Month, 1-Year. Global Interest Rates.

Table with 5 columns: Country, 2-Year, 5-Year, 10-Year, 30-Year. Global Bond Yields.

Table with 6 columns: Index, Previous Close, Last Price, Change, Daily Performance %, Yearly Performance %. Includes rows for Kuwait Oil, Brent, West Texas, etc.

EXCHANGE RATES

Table with 3 columns: Country, Sell Draft, Sell Cash. UAE Exchange Centre WLL.

Table with 3 columns: Country, Sell Draft, Sell Cash. Bahrain Exchange Company.

Table with 3 columns: Country, Sell Draft, Sell Cash. Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd.

Table with 3 columns: Country, Sell Draft, Sell Cash. Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd. (continued).

Table with 3 columns: Country, Sell Draft, Sell Cash. Dollarco Exchange Co. Ltd. (continued).

MARKET RATE BETS CAN MISLEAD: BOE'S BROADBENT

LONDON: A senior Bank of England (BoE) policymaker said yesterday that pricing in financial markets for when Britain's record-low interest rates are likely to rise could be misleading and risked changing quickly.

footed since the financial crisis over when the BoE will start to raise rates, with guidance overtaken by surprise economic news such as the plunge in global oil prices. Although wages have begun to rise more strongly recently, inflation remains below zero and markets are betting that the Bank will only raise rates in early 2017.

the date at which the yield curve first reaches some particular level," he said. "But that doesn't mean the (BoE) Monetary Policy Committee's views about future policy, over the medium term, have moved so dramatically. If nothing else, this demonstrates the problem with focusing too obsessively on that particular date."

pected global slump—that did not directly feed into when the BoE was most likely to start to raise rates. A Reuters poll, published in late October, found most economists believed the BoE was likely to start raising Bank Rate in the second quarter of 2016.

was likely to happen with borrowing costs. "Our understanding of the economy evolves over time... Empirically, the behavior of the economy matters more for interest rates than prior forecasts," he said.

"Even relatively moderate changes in forward rates, prompted by unexceptional news about the economy, can result in big shifts in

the desire of investors to insure against an un-

changed into 2017.

cast was a far from perfect indicator of what

News

in brief

UAE Oil Minister defends OPEC's ceiling decision

DUBAI: United Arab Emirates' energy minister said he did not regret last year's OPEC decision not to cut the production ceiling in the face of falling prices.

Monsanto weighs another Syngenta's takeover offer

ZURICH: Monsanto is weighing whether to launch another attempt to take over Swiss agrochemicals giant Syngenta, after the Swiss company snubbed an offer from a Chinese group.

Greek farmers and police clash during tax protest

ATHENS: Police fired tear gas at dozens of Greek farmers in Athens who pelted them with oranges and tried to storm parliament during a protest against planned tax increases yesterday.

The Airgas deal deflates Air Liquide share price

PARIS: Shares in Air Liquide dropped in Paris trading yesterday after the French company said it will acquire Airgas of the United States to build the world's largest industrial gas company.

AS US PREPARES TO HIKE RATES, EUROPE COULD REAP BENEFITS

A WEAKER EURO MEANS CHEAPER TRAVEL AND SHOPPING FOR TOURISTS

FRANKFURT: In a high-stakes juncture for the global economy, the central banks of Europe and the United States are set to take opposing actions in December: the European Central Bank to cut rates, the Federal Reserve to raise them.

particular, it strengthens Germany, the largest member of the currency union. There, the economy relies on exports of autos by the likes of Daimler and BMW as well as industrial and factory equipment made by smaller companies.

The currency's decline helps the region offset the slowdown in global trade with developing economies, particularly China. It doesn't just benefit Germany: the country's industrial companies spread the wealth by buying from suppliers in other European countries.

Cheaper travel, shopping

A weaker euro also means cheaper travel and shopping for tourists, particularly Americans and Chinese, whose own currency is linked to the dollar and tend to splurge on luxury goods in Europe.

The euro's drop is important because it has become a key driver of the moderate upswing in the economy of the 19-country euro-zone. In



Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen (left) and European Central Bank President Mario Draghi speak during the Jackson Hole Economic Policy Symposium at the Jackson Lake Lodge in Grand Teton National Park near Jackson, Wyo. — AP

can boost GDP by 0.6-0.7 percent over 12 to 18 months. The trade-weighted euro has fallen 9 percent since shortly before the ECB unveiled its trillion-euro stimulus program in January.

That would be a significant bonus for the euro-zone economy, which grew by a meager 0.3 percent in the third quarter compared with the quarter before.

CALIFORNIA PETROL DEMAND SLOWED OVER THE SUMMER

LONDON: California motorists drive almost 1 billion miles every day, and in doing so consume around 40 million gallons of gasoline and 8 million gallons of diesel.

to boom. Following the end of the driving season, gasoline supplies in California and the rest of the West Coast have returned to more normal levels.

Demand outlook 2016

State data on traffic and fuel sales are therefore often used as a proxy for national trends, but California's gasoline consumption reflects a mix of local and national factors that are not always easy to separate.

The critical question is whether gasoline consumption in California, and the rest of the country, can continue growing in 2016 at the same rate as reported this year.

Growth in both traffic volumes and fuel sales has been below the national average since the end of the first quarter. Traffic on state highways rose 3.2 percent in the year to June compared with 2014, but was up just 2.0 percent in August and 1.9 percent in September.

Unless fuel prices drop again substantially, which seems unlikely, the effects of the price decline in 2014/15 on driving behavior should gradually fade.

Refinery problems

Some of the weakness during the second and third quarters was probably due to local refinery problems that began in February, leaving the state short of fuel through the summer, and sent prices soaring.

There are no separate forecasts for individual states, but if the national picture was replicated locally, California's consumption would be essentially flat next year.

Between 2005 and 2014, the state's motorists typically paid about 30 cents per gallon more for gasoline than the nationwide average.

In practice, nationwide fuel consumption has increased by 200,000 bpd more than originally forecast, thanks to traffic growth and lower prices.

Relatively high prices of gasoline in California seem to have damped consumption growth over the summer even as low prices elsewhere caused demand



NBK ISSUES KD 125M 10-YEAR SUBORDINATED TIER 2 BONDS

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait SAKP (NBK), the largest bank in Kuwait (rated Aa3 by Moody's, A+ by S&P and AA- by Fitch) successfully issued KD 125 million, 10% Subordinated Tier 2, Basel III compliant bonds.

priced at 100% and were issued in equal proportion between fixed and floating-rate tranches.



Isam Al-Sager, NBK Group Chief Executive Officer

The transaction was well received by institutional and high net worth investors, with an oversubscription rate of 2 times. The issuance proceeds will be used to boost NBK's Tier 2 capital, as it has been approved as fully eligible Tier 2 Capital by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) under its Basel III framework.

Bonds bear interest of CBK Discount Rate (at the date of issuance) + 275bps per annum for the first five years; this interest rate on the fixed rate tranche will reset after five years from the date of issuance to the prevailing CBK Discount Rate (on the fifth year anniversary of date of issuance) + 275bps per annum.

TAXI OWNERS, LENDERS SUE NEW YORK CITY OVER UBER

NEW YORK: Taxi owners and lenders on Tuesday sued New York City and its Taxi and Limousine Commission, saying the proliferation of the popular ride-sharing business Uber was destroying their businesses.

July 22 bankruptcy of 22 companies run by taxi magnate Evgeny Freidman, and the state's Sept 18 seizure of Montauk Credit Union, which specialized in medallion loans, the complaint

said. "Defendants' deliberate evisceration of medallion taxicab hail exclusivity, and their ongoing arbitrary, disparate regulatory treatment of the medallion taxicab industry, has and

continues to inflict catastrophic harm on this once iconic industry, and the tens of thousands of hardworking men and women that depend on it for their livelihood," the complaint said.



SAN FRANCISCO: A man leaves the headquarters of Uber in San Francisco. Judges for the Pennsylvania agency that regulates buses and taxis recommended on Tuesday, Nov 17, 2015, a record \$50 million fine against ride-sharing company Uber for operating in the state without approval. — AP

ASIAN SHARES SLIP, COPPER TUMBLES AS WORRY TAKES TOLL
GERMAN BOMB SCARE, PARIS GUNFIRE WEIGH ON RISK SENTIMENT

TOKYO: An index of Asian shares fell yesterday as copper prices tumbled and another bomb scare in Europe and gunfire in the French capital hurt risk appetite...

"The rally in US equity markets that followed on from European markets strong lead this week was stopped dead in its tracks last night, on reports of a multiple bomb threat in Hannover..."

German Chancellor Angel Merkel was due to attend, sparking fears of another attack coming only days after the deadly assault in Paris.

Then gunfire erupted in a north Paris suburb early yesterday as special police forces launched an operation to catch one of the suspects believed to be behind gun and bomb attacks in which 129 people were killed last week...

United States were diverted as a security precaution late on Tuesday, which also weighed on sentiment. The greenback struck a fresh seven-month high against a basket of currencies earlier in the session...

The dollar edged lower late in the Asian day, though its strength for most of the session undermined dollar-denominated commodities, making them more expensive for holders of other currencies. Copper continued to suffer, shedding 1 percent to \$4,637.50...

yield slipping from day's high of 2.313 percent. It stood at 2.262 percent in Asian trade, not far from its US close of 2.261 percent. The lower yields failed to dampen enthusiasm for the dollar as investors focused on Tuesday's US economic data...

Industrial output fell short of market expectations but the output in the manufacturing sector posted a solid increase. The dollar index was flat at 99.620, after hitting a high of 99.756, within sight of its 12-year peak of 100.39 set in March...

Gold hit a 5-1/2-year low of \$1,064.95 per ounce as the strong dollar offset its traditional safe-haven appeal. It last stood at \$1,070.15, down slightly. Oil prices rebounded a tad after data showed an unexpected stockpile draw for last week...

US Treasuries bounced back on safety bids overnight, with the 10-year

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report table containing market indices (Price index, Weighted index, KXS 15), trade volumes, and detailed security listings with columns for High, Low, Volume, Value, Trades, Last, and Change.



TOKYO: People walk past an electronic stock indicator of a securities firm in Tokyo yesterday. Asian stocks were mostly higher yesterday as the shock of the Paris terror attacks faded and an uptick in US inflation added support for a possible interest rate hike. —AP

OIL PRICES REBOUND IN ASIA; OVERSUPPLY HOBBLES GAINS

SINGAPORE: Oil prices rebounded in Asia yesterday but buying sentiment remains sluggish owing to supply glut woes and a strong dollar. Traders are waiting for the release later in the day of a US Department of Energy report on commercial stockpiles...

expectations of a December rate hike, causing the trade-weighted dollar to rise by more than 5.0 percent," Capital Economics said. "This sharp appreciation has weighed heavily on (commodity) prices over the past month."

Adding to the supply glut woes was a statement Tuesday by Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh that Tehran will not negotiate with OPEC over its planned 500,000 barrels per day (bpd) production hike once western sanctions are lifted.

A hike would likely boost the dollar and make dollar-priced oil more expensive for those holding weaker units, depressing their demand. At around 0600 GMT, US benchmark West Texas Intermediate for delivery in December was up 31 cents at \$40.98...

GOLD EKES OUT GAINS

LONDON: Gold inched up yesterday as the dollar fell and a gunfight in Paris hurt risk appetite, but the market awaited minutes of a recent Federal Reserve meeting which could reinforce bets of a rate hike next month...

Data on Tuesday showing US consumer prices increased in October fuelled further those expectations, while market odds for a December hike moved from around 30 percent to 66 percent.

"Overall, financial markets are more or less positioned that the Fed will hike this year, and the general trend for precious metals is on the downside," ABN Amro analyst Georgette Boele said. Bullion managed to regain some lost ground as the dollar eased 0.1 percent against a basket of currencies...

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

Honda Alghanim announces the exciting launch of the all-new 2016 Honda Pilot



Honda Alghanim, the exclusive distributor of Honda products in Kuwait, proudly announced the launch of the all-new 2016 Pilot at a press conference on Tuesday, November 17th, at the brand new Honda Alghanim showroom in Al Rai. Available across all Honda Alghanim showrooms in Kuwait, the third generation Honda Pilot brings a new standard of comfort and quality to SUV driving. With its comfortable seating up to eight passengers, Honda Pilot has helped set industry standards in fuel efficiency, spacious and luxurious interiors and now also boasts of highly improved off-roading performance with Intelligent Traction Management vs. existing Pilot.

Exterior Styling:

The Pilot has been completely restyled with a bold, new front grille and flowing, elegant lines of a sport coupe. The new premium features include Halogen projector headlights in EX and EXL grades whereas LED projector headlights in Touring grade, first ever panoramic glass roof on the Touring grade embodies the vision of blue skies for our future generation. The all-new Pilot has a wide, low stance contributing to improved aerodynamic performance, while large-diameter 18-inch or 20-inch Alloy wheels add a classy look. Some of the other features standard in all grades include Front Fog Lights, LED Tail Lights and LED daytime running lights as standard along with Tailgate Spoiler, Power Door Mirrors and LED Turn Light Indicators.

Interior Styling:

The interior styling of Pilot reflects luxury and convenience with a refined new cockpit design, sumptuous beige and black leather seats coordinated with exterior colors, and upscale cabin amenities. An 8-inch touchscreen Display Audio, standard in all grades, gives you instant access to audio system controls and other display features. There's also cruise control for fatigue-free long-distance driving. For the first time, the Touring grade includes second row captain's chairs, which aim at enhancing comfort and providing easy walk through between the second and third row for a 7-passenger configuration. Another notable feature in the EX-L and Touring grade is the one-touch second row seats that enable passengers to have easy access to the third row seating.

Other amenities include tri-zone automatic climate control, rear air conditioning duct in the second and third row seats, rear door sunshades which protect passengers from the harsh sun in this region, sun glass holder and conversation mirror, cargo area hidden storage for extra luggage, active noise control (ANC) for a quieter cabin, and a rear entertainment system with a 9 inch display screen available in the Touring grade.

Power Train:

The Pilot boasts of a 3.5-liter Direct Injected V6 engine with Variable Cylinder Management (VCM). It starts up at the press of a button, and with maximum output of 280 horsepower at 6000 rpm and maximum torque of 355Nm at 4700 rpm. The Pilot boasts of an



engine that combines outstanding fuel efficiency with quick, responsive acceleration and ultra-smooth power delivery. The fuel efficiency for the Pilot in GCC is 11.4Km/L for the 2WD and the 10.8 Km/L for the AWD.

The Pilot's newest feature includes Intelligent Traction Management and is now featured on all models except EX 2WD, with pushbutton mode selection and TFT mode display on the cockpit instrument panel. In addition, EX (AWD) & EXL grades offer a full 200mm of ground clearance which enables the vehicle to adapt to any terrain. The most noteworthy feature is the sand mode that enables the Pilot to be driven in the sand.

Body and Safety

The New Pilot is available with most comprehensive set of advanced safety and driver assistive technologies. EXL and Touring grades of the New Pilot feature 'Remote Engine Start' that lets you start the engine from a distance, enabling automatic climate control system to regulate cabin temperature to ensure maximum comfort before you even get in. Electric Power Steering, One Push Start System, Cruise Control on steering wheel, a Multi-Angle Rear View Camera are some of the technologies that the All New Pilot is equipped with to aid driving comfort.

In addition Honda Pilot utilizes Honda's Advanced

Compatibility Engineering™ (ACE™) body structure technology to enhance occupant protection and crash compatibility. It also boasts of Honda active-safety features such as Vehicle Stability Assist (VSA) with Traction Control Systems (TCS), Anti-Lock Brake Systems (ABS), Electronic Brake Distributor (EBD), Hill Start Assist (HSA), Agile Handle Assist (AHA) and Tire Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS). The inclusion of these safety technologies benchmarked New Pilot to receive a 2015 TOP SAFETY PICK+ rating from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) in United States of America, making it one of the safest cars amongst its segment.

Grade and Color Availability:

The All New Honda Pilot now comes in four grades for this region with the introduction of the new base grade EX in 2WD and the others namely EX, EX-L and Touring, which are in AWD. The All New Honda

Pilot will be available in the below exterior colors:

- White Diamond Pearl
- Lunar Silver Metallic
- Modern Steel Metallic
- Steel Sapphire Metallic
- Dark Cherry Pearl
- Crystal Black Pearl
- Black Forest Pearl
- Obsidian Blue

All come in beige interior colors with the option of White Diamond Pearl and Lunar Silver Metallic in black interior as well.

Honda Alghanim urges customers to experience its brand new showroom, and to test-drive the new Pilot. The new showroom boasts three distinctive floors and a service center of an awe-inspiring capacity; it's also the first in the region to incorporate a new wall fabric technology that features moving images, an element that reflects Honda's commitment to newness and innovation. Alluding to the corporation's transparency, the showroom also features glass flooring that displays the service garage at the lower level, as well as a spacious, clean and brightly lit area that is equipped with a service lounge that provides customers a chance to observe their vehicles' maintenance process. In essence, the showroom embodies Alghanim Industries' vision for Honda in Kuwait—to make dreams come true.

Customers are welcome to visit the new Al Rai showroom in Safat Alghanim from 8:30 AM until 10:00 PM, Saturday to Thursday, and from 9:30 AM until 10:00 PM on Fridays, and the Honda showroom in Shuwaikh, from 8:30 AM until 12:30 PM and 4:30 PM until 8:30PM, from Saturday to Thursday.

Alghanim Motors, the exclusive distributor of Honda automobiles, motorcycles, power products, and marine products in Kuwait, is committed to providing customers with flexible payment solutions and efficient and cost-effective services. The waiting lounge offers entertainment and comfort for customers with gaming consoles, digital satellite TV, free wireless internet and relaxing massage chairs.



ALL WORK AND NOT MUCH PAY FOR INDIA'S MANUFACTURERS

LOANS TO SMALL COMPANIES DROPS

VADODARA: In the office of the small paint factory he helps run, Pramod Patel is clear on the problem holding back India's manufacturing growth: cash, or a lack of it. Clients, he says, are taking months to pay, sometimes 150 days compared to the standard 30, choking up businesses like his Reliable Paints and hampering the creation of much-needed jobs. "We have a lot of potential in our business, but we have no confidence in the payments," says Patel, speaking over the noise of a mixer whirring behind him. Workers around him prepare paint to be decanted by hand into cream and grey colored cans.

While there is no comprehensive data for the cash cycle of India's manufacturing industry, manufacturers interviewed by Reuters in the industrial heartland of Gujarat say cash is moving at a glacial pace. All those interviewed by Reuters reported clients delaying payments, sometimes for the best part of a year, evidence of an uneven recovery and of India's credit drought as banks tackle \$100 billion of troubled loans.

Central bank data shows that loans to medium-sized industrial companies were down 10 percent by mid September, compared to the start of the financial year in April. Loans to small companies dropped more than 3 percent in the period. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who once ran Gujarat as chief minister, India has sought to improve life for manufacturers. He wants to boost a sector that accounts for under a fifth of the economy, compared to a third for

China, the world's largest manufacturer.

But the reality on the ground is tough. Even India's industrial bellwether, Larsen & Toubro, has reported deterioration. Chief Financial Officer R. Shankar Raman says payments take around 100 days after they fall due, compared to a standard 60-75 days. That is hovering around the longest payment period in over a decade, he said.

'Made in India'

India badly needs manufacturing to fuel its recovery and create jobs. After all, India will be home to a working age population of 900 million people by 2020, roughly a fifth of the world's potential workers. Modi's government has promised to make it simpler to operate in the country, with plans for a unified bankruptcy code, a unified goods and service tax, and more flexible labor laws. Last week, it lifted restrictions on foreign investment in 15 sectors, including defense.

But in this corner of Gujarat - a state that was ranked top in a World Bank-supported study on the ease of doing business in India's 29 states - manufacturers say the smallest and weakest among them could be pushed to the wall, unless reform is implemented and recovery arrives swiftly. A plethora of different taxes still wrap small firms like Reliable Paints in red tape. Others report battling outdated factory rules: some are fined for a lack of spittoons, for example, in areas where spitting on the floor is for-

bidden. There are signs of hope. L&T's Raman says he expects the numbers to have hit the bottom, provided promised government spending kicks in and banks pass on lower rates.

"The way the recovery is structured right now, it is not broad based," said economist Sonal Varma at Nomura. Government spending, however, could improve cash flows even for smaller firms within six to 12 months, she estimates. Gujarat, for one, has pushed taxes online, cutting down on the paperwork and opportunities for corruption, and manufacturers say that had made processes smoother. But until reforms come in, the bureaucracy is overhauled and real spending starts, factory managers in this baked corner of Gujarat - where paints, pumps and engineering parts dominate production - say their clients will continue to struggle.

"Our big problem is client liquidity," said the director at one European firm supplying the construction industry. "And of course we have to deal with bureaucracy and corruption." Four years after shutting an office in Mumbai, he said he was still battling to conclude the process. And with lots of workers, India needs more skilled ones. "We have a young workforce," said Vivek Sarwate, who runs plants outside the city of Vadodara for Schneider Electric, making components for the Indian power sector. "But if this young country is not a skilled country, instead of an asset, this becomes a liability." —Reuters

VIVA ANNOUNCES DAILY DRAW'S WINNERS OF PREPAID CAMPAIGN

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced the winner of the big prize \$5000, in addition to the thirteenth and fourteenth lucky winners of its final weekly draws campaign that gives prepaid customers a chance to win \$1500 daily cash prize for every 1 KD they spend on recharge, as well as \$5000 monthly. The campaign started on 28 July 2015 and was valid for six consecutive months.

VIVA's prepaid daily draws is taking place once a week with seven winners, one winner for every day of the week to get the \$1500 cash prize. The winner of the big prize is: Manal Mahmoud Mandani Nasser, and the winners of the thirteenth week are: Mariam Abdulaziz, Vera Vini Buena, Amar Siene, Dahlawer Khajori, Mohammed Atiya Awadh Shlash, Dandupalle Praveen Kumar and Refaa Ghanem Muneer Alsahali.

Both new and existing prepaid customers are eligible to enter daily and monthly draws throughout the promotion period, upon recharging their lines with KD 1 credit. Lucky winners of the daily draws will get USD 1500 cash prize while winners of the monthly draws will get USD 5000 cash prize. Moreover, the winners of the fourteenth week are: Mosalaya Sheely, Janardhana Kamatam, Khazna Thamer, Msereet Worko Fenik, Taher Mohammed, Ali Maal Allah Ali Ahmad and Abdulkareem Sharaf Aldeen.

VIVA reiterates its commitment to providing unique promotions designed to create an exceptional customer experience and reward its prepaid customers for their continued trust in VIVA. VIVA will



continue to seek new and innovative ways to facilitate the lives of its customers and share with them the latest in communication technology. To find out more about VIVA's new prepaid packages, or any of its other competitive promotions, products and packages, visit one of the 70 VIVA branches, or the VIVA website at www.viva.com.kw, or call VIVA's 24 hour call center on 102.



AL AHLI BANK STAFF GRAB 'LONG SERVICE RECOGNITION AWARDS'

KUWAIT: The Finance Division of Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently honored employees who had completed between 5 and 15 years of service with the Bank. Commenting on the long-standing commitment and value of their contribution to the development of the Bank, Shiamak Soonawalla Chief Financial Officer took the

opportunity to thank all staff receiving awards for their loyalty and dedication to ABK.

Each department in the Bank hosts regular Long Service Awards for members of staff who have been with the bank for 5 years and longer. ABK has long enjoyed a reputation of strong staff retention and an event honoring staff that

have spent 20 years and above was recently held at the Symphony Hotel where 77 staff members were recognized. For more information on Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait please visit www.eahli.com, contact an ABK representative via 'Ahli Chat' or a customer service agent via 'Ahlan Ahli' at 1899899.

ETIHAD AIRWAYS INCREASES ITS PRESENCE IN MOROCCO

KUWAIT: Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, is increasing its presence in Morocco with the launch of a new twice-weekly service between Abu Dhabi and Rabat to create a direct link between the two capitals. Scheduled to start on 15 January 2016, and providing the only scheduled air link between the UAE and Rabat, the new service will be operated on Wednesdays and Fridays using an A340-500 aircraft configured to carry a total of 240 passengers, with 12 in First Class, 28 in Business Class, and 200 in Economy Class.

The new service is Etihad Airways' second destination in Morocco and complements its existing daily service to Casablanca. This brings to nearly 4,200 the total number of seats available to passengers travelling on Etihad Airways' services between the UAE and Morocco each week. James Hogan, Etihad Airways' President and Chief Executive Officer, said: "Our service to Casablanca has performed strongly since it was launched in June 2006 and I am delighted to build on this success with the introduction of the additional service to Rabat."

"The new service provides passengers with more choice and two-way connectivity between Morocco and the UAE, and onwards over our hub in Abu Dhabi to key destinations across our global network in the GCC, the Indian Subcontinent, Southeast Asia and Australia. "We remain committed to building sustainable ties in

the North African region and deepening the strong relationship between Morocco and the United Arab Emirates."

The UAE and Morocco are united by a long history of cooperation and the growth of economic and trade relations between the two countries has developed significantly over recent years, with major UAE exports to Morocco including petrochemicals, metals, foodstuff products, transport equipment, tools and appliances. Like the UAE, the Moroccan Government has made significant investments in the development of its tourism industry. In 2010 the government launched its Vision 2020 which includes plans to make Morocco one of the top 20 tourist destinations in the world and double the number of international arrivals into Morocco to 20 million per annum by 2020.

Etihad Airways is able to extend its reach across North Africa through its code-share agreement with Royal Air Maroc, providing passengers with direct flights from Casablanca to destinations throughout Morocco, including Agadir, Marrakech, and Tangier. Etihad Airways also operates scheduled services to nine other destinations in Africa, including: Johannesburg, Khartoum, Casablanca, Cairo, Lagos, Nairobi, Entebbe, Dar es Salaam (from 1 December 2015) and MahE in the Seychelles. Daily flight schedule between Abu Dhabi and Rabat, effective 15 January 2016, subject to Government approval.

KREYF DISTRIBUTES 3.7% IN AN ACCUMULATIVE CASH DIVIDENDS

KUWAIT: KAMCO announced yesterday that its KAMCO Real Estate Yield Fund (KREYF) has successfully distributed cash dividends of 1% to investors for the third quarter of 2015, reaching a total of 3.7% since inception in April 2014. The KREYF Fund, was able to reach a weighted average occupancy rate of 96% and growth of the Fund's size by 87% since inception which

where the fund was established in April 2014 upon completion of the establishment process and obtaining the required seed capital. The fund aims to invest in income-generating real estate investments in the GCC region, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Morocco, which enables investors to deploy their excess cash to obtain higher returns than bank deposits with the opportunity to liquidate such investment through a redemption option. KREYF consists of six core investments with a total of 162 number of units with targeted markets including the Kingdom of Bahrain, United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Prudent Investment Strategy

Khaled Fouad, Chief Investment Officer at KAMCO said, "The fund, which is US Dollar dominated with a minimal subscription of 5,000 units at the subscribed month's NAV per unit, provides the investor with an option to redeem units semi-annually upon the end of a one year lock-in period." Fouad added, "To ensure that we increase the investment returns of investors, KAMCO continues to provide varied investment opportunities that are low-risk and income generating. KREYF is characterized by its prudent investment strategy, aiming to generate steady cash flows during the investment period, via the distribution of quarterly cash dividends. "KAMCO website www.kamconline.com provides more information on the prospectus and articles of association of the Fund as well as all contact details necessary for investors. KAMCO representatives can be reached at 185 26 26.



Khaled Fouad, Chief Investment Officer at KAMCO

demonstrates the market demand for such income-generating products. In addition, the Fund managed to increase its rate of return since inception to 4.03% by the end of October 2015.

KREYF, which is one of the first local funds in Kuwait to receive CMA approval for fund raising in late 2013,

X-CITE LAUNCHES THE GREATEST RETAIL ELECTRONICS CAMPAIGN

WIN MORE THAN HALF A MILLION DOLLARS IN CASH

KUWAIT: X-cite by Alghanim Electronics has proudly launched the greatest retail electronics campaign in Kuwait. Now with every KD 25 purchase, customers will get the chance to enter 5 weekly draws where 35 winners will win cash prizes worth more than 500,000 dollars. The promotion is valid from November 19th until December 26th, 2015, in which 7 winners will be announced each week for five weeks. The grand weekly prize is KD 25,000, followed by KD 5000, then KD 2,500 for the third prize, KD 1000 for the fourth and fifth prizes, and finally KD 500 for the sixth and seventh weekly winners.

The five weekly draws will take place every Sunday morning starting from November 29th at X-cite's showroom at Al Rai, and each will be supervised by a representative from the Ministry of Commerce. Coupons will remain in the central raffle box for a chance to

be drawn during all remaining draws. In other words, the best way for customers to increase their chances of winning is to purchase early on, so that their coupons will be eligible to enter all remaining weekly draws.

This one-of-a-kind promotion is X-cite's way of thanking its loyal customers who trust the value of its products and quality of service, by continuously enriching their shopping experience and turn their dreams into a reality. Indeed, the campaign is exceptionally unique in the retail sector with such valuable cash prizes coupled with amazing offers on a large variety of products. And you, #WhatsYourExcuse? Whether on cash or credit (with 0% interest on the first year), purchase now from any of X-cite's 18 showrooms, on www.xcite.comor the mobile app to get a chance to win cash! Names of the weekly winners will be announced on the website.



TRANS-PACIFIC TRADE PACT PRAISED, PANNED

MANILA: The Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal between the US and 11 other Pacific nations is drawing potential new members from Asia and criticism from those excluded, as it heads for a tough ride in the US Congress. Leaders of the trade grouping that spans the Pacific Rim met alongside a regional economic summit yesterday in the Philippines and President Barack Obama urged them to ratify the deal "as quickly as possible."

The leaders issued a statement acknowledging interest among other countries in joining the pact, which currently represents about 40 percent of global trade. "This interest affirms that through TPP we are creating a new and compelling model for trade in one of the world's

fastest growing and most dynamic regions," the statement said. Philippine President Benigno Aquino III, host of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting in Manila, met with Obama and sought his help in eventually joining the accord, which aims to reduce barriers to trade and also set labor and environmental standards.

"If the whole idea is to broaden trade, making it exclusive actually defeats the whole purpose of why you enter into all of these agreements," Aquino said earlier in the week. Indonesia and South Korea are among other countries that have expressed interest in joining the trade arrangement, which is envisioned as a foundation for an even bigger region-wide trading bloc.

The Pan-Pacific trade deal has drawn criticism, however, from China and Russia, which are not part of it.

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said Wednesday that world trade rules should be drafted within the framework of the World Trade Organization, not regional groupings. Chinese President Xi Jinping also alluded to the potential conflict between regional deals and global trade rules. "We need to encourage equal footing participation and extensive consultation and make free trade arrangements open and inclusive to the extent possible," Xi said in a speech. US officials have insisted the trade pact will be open to other countries, as long as they are willing to commit to its rules.—AP

ALPHABET REVAMPS GOOGLE+ ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORK

SAN FRANCISCO: US Internet colossus Alphabet yesterday revamped Google+ online social network focused on people's interests, and tuned for smartphones or tablets.

"We're starting to introduce a fully redesigned Google+ that puts Communities and Collections front and center," director of streams Eddie Kessler said in a blog post. "Now focused around interests, the new

Google+ is much simpler." Google's social network was rebuilt for fast, consistent performance whether accessed through computer web browsers or mobile devices powered by Apple or Android software, according to Kessler. Google+ users interested in the new version will need to opt in at the social network. Google's social network launched Communities in late 2012 as venues to people to connect online based on things or

ideas they are passionate about.

The option proved popular, and an average of 1.2 million people join Communities daily, Kessler said.

Google+ Collections launched in May of this year as a way to group posts by topics, and its use is growing fast, according to Google parent firm Alphabet.

"These are the places on Google+ where people around the world are spending their time discovering

and sharing things they love," Kessler said.

Google+ launched in mid-2011 in a challenge to Facebook, which continues to dominated the online social network world. Ambitions for Google+ were scaled back earlier this year when the California-based Internet giant stepped back from using social network log-ins as credentials across a wide array of its offerings, including YouTube. — AFP

YAHOO A NEW TARGET IN NY DAILY FANTASY SPORTS PROBE

NEW YORK: A probe by New York State's attorney general into the fast-growing, multi-billion-dollar daily fantasy sports industry has been expanded to include online media giant Yahoo Inc, a person familiar with the matter said on Tuesday.

The move coincides with a court filing by Attorney General Eric Schneiderman on Tuesday seeking a temporary injunction that would shut down DraftKings and FanDuel, leaders among online companies offering paid-for daily fantasy sports contests. Yahoo, which operates a daily fantasy sports site, was issued a subpoena by Schneiderman, the person familiar with the matter said. The company was not named in Schneiderman's Tuesday filing.

Daily fantasy sports gaming "is nothing more than a rebranding of sports betting," New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman said in legal documents filed in a Manhattan trial court amid a widening probe. "It is plainly illegal." Yahoo does not comment on legal matters, a spokesperson said. "We are monitoring industry trends and events closely and believe that we offer a lawful product for our daily fantasy sports users," the spokesperson said.

Modern fantasy sports started in 1980 and have mushroomed online. Participants typically create teams that span an entire season in professional sports, including American football, baseball, basketball and hockey.

Daily fantasy sports, a turbocharged version of the season-long game, have developed over the past decade. Players draft teams in games played in just one evening or over a weekend.

In response to the state attorney general's push for an injunction, FanDuel stopped allowing New Yorkers to participate in paid contests as of Tuesday afternoon. "We believe that this restriction is temporary and we hope to be able to offer our paid contests to New Yorkers again very soon," FanDuel said.

GAME OF SKILL OR CHANCE?

DraftKings, however, has pledged to continue running its business as usual in the state. New York has more daily fantasy sports players than any other US state, according to

Eilers Research, so being forced to shut down there could cripple the companies. A hearing on the injunction is set for Nov. 25.

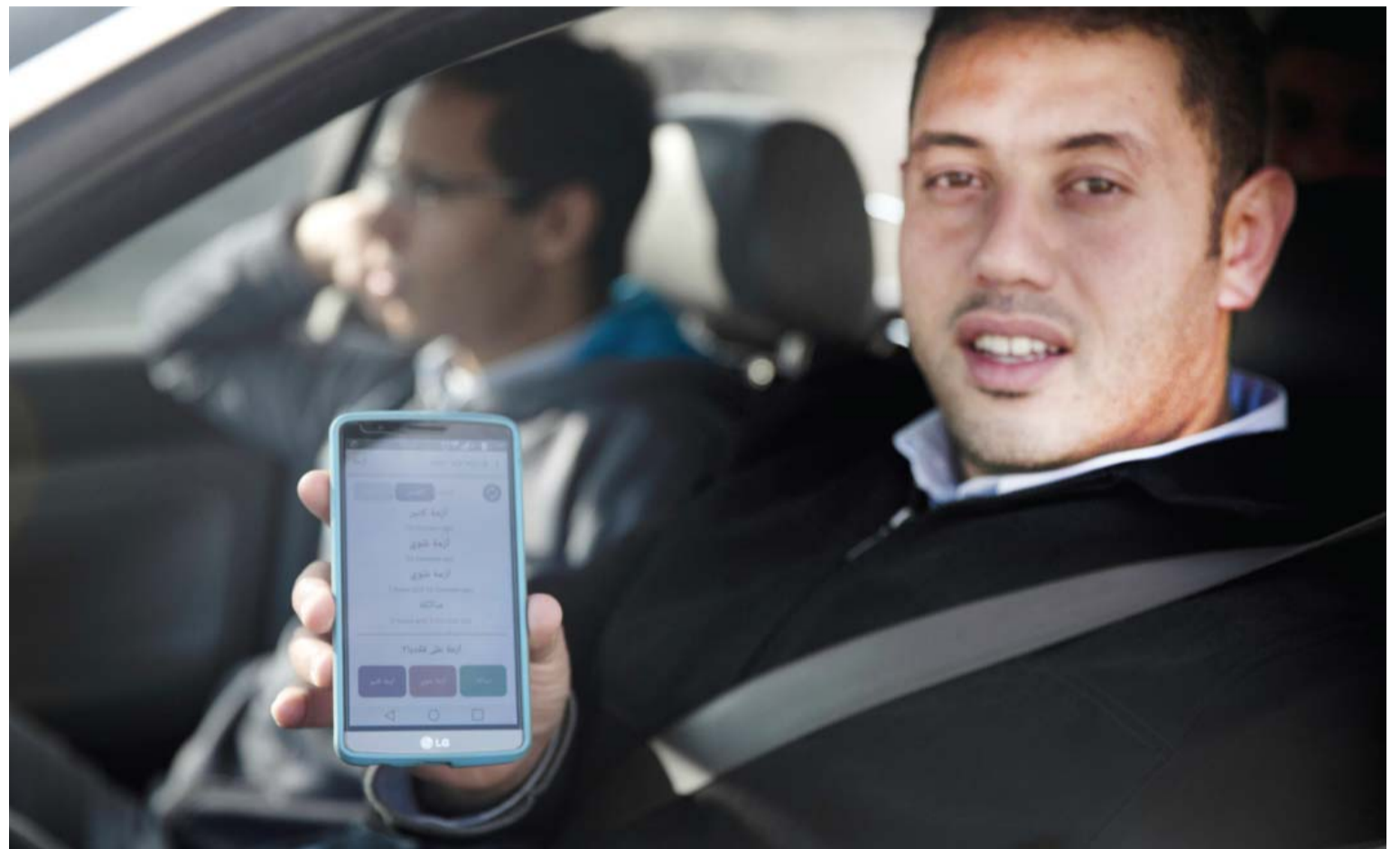
The move by Schneiderman, which was expected, followed a failed effort on Monday by the DraftKings and FanDuel to obtain a separate court order that would have headed off Schneiderman's proceeding. Schneiderman last week sent cease and desist letters to the two companies, demanding that they stop taking money from players in New York state.

While the letter established Schneiderman's view that daily fantasy sports are illegal gambling, he must obtain a court order to shut the companies down in New York state. Schneiderman, in the legal papers filed on Tuesday, argued that daily fantasy sports contests are not games of skill, which are allowed in the state, but games of chance, citing the companies' investor presentations and comments by their chief executives. For example, Schneiderman pointed to a DraftKings presentation to prospective investors that makes comparisons to poker and sports wagering.

Moreover, the attorney general said the companies had "basic compliance issues," encouraging their employees to play daily fantasy sports games on their competitors' platforms.

Schneiderman also said in the DraftKings complaint that nearly 90 percent of daily fantasy sports players lost money in 2013 and 2014, citing the company's data. The injunction requested in New York is the latest threat to the daily fantasy sports industry. The two companies have become the subject of congressional inquiries as well as a ban in Nevada after spending hundreds of millions of dollars on television advertising in 2015.

DraftKings has contacted the sales division of at least one television network asking for flexibility for their ad commitments and are asking to shift some money out of the fourth quarter into the first quarter of next year, according to sources familiar with the situation, who wished to remain anonymous because the conversations were confidential. A spokesman for DraftKings said the company has not specifically asked to move ads from the fourth to the first quarter. — Reuters



JERUSALEM: In this Tuesday, Nov. 10, 2015 photo, a Palestinian driver shows the "AzmeH" application, which means traffic jam in Arabic, on his mobile phone as he waits in traffic to enter Jerusalem at Qalandia checkpoint between Jerusalem and the West Bank city of Ramallah. A pair of new mobile apps hopes to help Palestinians navigate their way around snarled traffic at Israeli checkpoints in the West Bank, offering a high-tech response to an intractable problem: Constant, burdensome and often seemingly random restrictions on movement. — AP

NEW APPS HELP PALESTINIANS NAVIGATE ISRAELI CHECKPOINTS

FREE APPS LAUNCHED ARE STILL IN THEIR INFANCY

QALANDIYA CHECKPOINT: A pair of new mobile apps hopes to help Palestinians navigate their way around snarled traffic at Israeli checkpoints in the West Bank, offering a high-tech response to an intractable problem: constant, burdensome and often seemingly random restrictions on movement.

"AzmeH," which means traffic jam in Arabic, and "Qalandiya," the name of a major Israeli checkpoint on the outskirts of Jerusalem, join a slew of other global traffic apps, including the Israeli-developed Waze.

What sets the two Palestinian apps apart is how they go beyond daily rush hour traffic and touch at the heart of a central Palestinian criticism of Israeli occupation. They are designed to run on slow local networks - a necessity because Israel has not granted Palestinian telecommunication companies swifter 3G access.

The free apps, launched over the last month, are still in their infancy, with only a few hundred downloads each. But as they grow in popularity, their developers say the crowdsourced apps present a partial solution to the jams that checkpoints cause, and they hope will catch on with drivers. "The occupation affects the Palestinian people from all aspects, and takes from them lots of rights. One of those rights is the freedom of movement," said Basel Sader, 20, a Palestinian resident of east Jerusalem and a law student at Jerusalem's Hebrew University who developed AzmeH. "This application can't give them the freedom of movement but it can make things easier for them."

Israel operates a series of checkpoints that dot the West Bank and separate it from Israel, restricting travel for Palestinians on a number of roads. When tensions are heightened, a 120-mile (200-kilometer) jaunt from the southern tip of the West Bank to the north can become a complicated journey that could take hours. Checkpoints pose particular problems for Palestinians who want to

enter Israel for jobs, family visits, medical care or to pray. Israel says the restrictions are meant as a security measure, and officials note that the number of military checkpoints has been greatly reduced as violence has subsided over the last decade. But Palestinians see the limits on movement as a form of collective punishment that disturbs their routine and can often include intrusive and humiliating searches by guards.

In contrast, Israeli settlers can travel freely in and out of Israel and pass quickly through military checkpoints set up to protect their communities. Palestinians need permits to enter Israel, as well as Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem, and must pass through Israeli-controlled border crossings to enter neighboring Jordan.

HIGH SPEED ROADS

This dual treatment also affects Palestinian travel inside the West Bank. Well-maintained, high-speed roads serve settlements and connect them to each other and Israel.

Palestinians are not expressly barred from using these roads, but the highways usually bypass Palestinian communities. Many of the roads connecting Palestinian areas are decrepit and in poor condition. In times of conflict, Israel also puts up additional military checkpoints that can slow or halt movement between Palestinian towns. The apps could relieve a bit of that burden. For now, they are used mainly for checkpoints separating Israel and the West Bank, where drivers are often stuck for hours in a tangle of traffic. The apps are relatively basic.

With AzmeH, users can post updates about the status of the hold-up at a checkpoint, using green to mark no traffic, orange for moderate and red for heavy, allowing other users to choose to divert to other, less clogged checkpoints. For now, the app tracks traffic at half a dozen checkpoints. Qalandiya also has users mark the level of traffic at the checkpoint, using green, red or yel-

low car icons. Users can also inform others if the checkpoint has been closed.

CONGESTED ROUTE

Unlike Waze, the apps do not time the wait at a checkpoint or suggest a different route. Users must decide that on their own. Milena Ansari, a 21-year-old from east Jerusalem who studies at Birzeit University in the West Bank, drives through the Qalandiya checkpoint every day and uses the AzmeH app. "I check it every morning when I wake up and decide which road to take," she said. If Qalandiya is backed up, she said she takes a longer but less congested route through a smaller checkpoint. She said she sends reports in whenever she crosses. The apps themselves are hobbled by Israeli restrictions. According to interim peace agreements, Israeli authorities control cellular networks in the West Bank and they have not granted Palestinian telecommunication companies 3G access, meaning many data-heavy apps cannot be used on the road. Palestinians who choose to subscribe to an Israeli cellular provider can access 3G. Drivers using the apps connect through 2G, a previous generation of wireless technology that is sluggish. "The limitations of the Internet connectivity cause us problems," said Ahmed Zaytoun, the developer of Qalandiya. "When I worked on the application, I made sure that it wouldn't need a high speed (connection)." Palestinians have been using social media like Whatsapp and Facebook groups to share traffic updates but Zaytoun said users were posting unrelated content that made navigating the groups cumbersome.

Mashhour Abu Daka, a former Palestinian minister of telecommunications and information technology who now works as a consultant, welcomed the apps but said they could only go so far in assisting Palestinian motorists in the face of Israeli restrictions. "It will be helpful. But it would be even more helpful if we didn't have checkpoints," he said. — AP



MOUNTAIN VIEW: In this Nov. 12, 2015 photo, Google director of People Analytics Abeer Dubej, left, and director of People Operations Danielle Hair, on screen, are interviewed in Mountain View, Calif. Teams in the workplace are most productive when they can count on each other for quality work, feel safe to take risks and believe in their mission. That's according to new research at Google, a company that studies its own successes and failures as closely as it studies algorithms, refining interactions and teamwork among some of its employees with anthropological researchers and business scholars. — AP

GOOGLE SEARCHES ITSELF TO BUILD MORE PRODUCTIVE TEAMS

MOUNTAIN VIEW: Google coddles its employees with free food, massages and other lavish perks, yet some of its best engineers still grouse about their jobs and bosses as they struggle to get assignments done.

The Internet company tackled the puzzling problem with a study that concluded how teams work together is more important than who is on a team. That's not exactly rocket science, but it's an example of how companies are spending more time trying to understand how to build the most productive and cohesive teams. It's a high priority because the best products and ideas increasingly are springing from people working together.

"It's becoming difficult to think of companies that aren't depending on teams," says Amy Randel, a professor of management at San Diego State University. "And usually nothing is more important than having a goal that inspires and organizes people's efforts."

Google's study, based on data analysis, found that teams work best when their members feel like they can take risks, can count on each other, have clear goals and believe their work matters. Some of those findings were reinforced by a recent study published in the Academy of Management Journal by Jasmine Hu, an assistant professor of management at Notre Dame University and Robert Liden, a management professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago. That analysis of 67 different teams working at six different companies found employees excel when they feel their work will help the colleagues, customers and community.

"The social aspect of teams is very important because many times people are just not motivated to work for money alone," Hu says. "They want to have the opportunity to achieve

a positive impact on the lives of others." All of Google's 60,000 employees work on at least one team, and some are on two or more. Google itself was born from one of technology's most famous partnerships between former Stanford University graduate students, Larry Page and Sergey Brin. They followed in the footsteps of other legendary duos such as Microsoft co-founders Bill Gates and Paul Allen and Apple co-founders Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak. Today, Google's teams range in size from three to 70 people and are usually project oriented. For two years the company has studied more than 200 teams, identifying what motivates the most effective groups while looking for the ideal mix of traits and skills.

Although most industries are embracing teamwork, Silicon Valley is at the forefront of the trend. Technology firms are typically more collaborative, in part because people writing different parts of software code or building machines need to do one part of a larger project. Google's first workplace study, which it released in 2014, showed effective managers are good coaches who empower rather than micromanage.

That research, called Project Oxygen, is now taught in MBA programs and has been adopted by companies hoping to emulate the innovative culture of Silicon Valley. The research released Tuesday has already reshaped Google's workforce through training, reviews and new standards. The transformation is helping to enrich Google, already one of the world's most profitable companies. The revenue produced by sales teams, who market advertising, apps and partnerships, varied by nearly 50 percent based on their own reported feelings of psychological safety, according to Abeer Dubej, a Google director. — AP

COUNTDOWN TO INTERNET OF THINGS WORLD FORUM 2015 IN DUBAI BEGINS

DUBAI: The countdown to the third edition of the Cisco sponsored Internet of Things World Forum (IoTWF) 2015 has started. There is less than a month to go until more than 1500 government officials, heads of business, academia and researchers, from all over the world, descend on Dubai to discuss and share best practice on the dramatic transformations now gaining momentum across every global sector and creating a new world of opportunities made possible by the Internet of Things (IoT).

The Dubai IoTWF announced in January 2015, will be held at the Dubai World Trade Centre from December 6-8, 2015. Driven by a steering committee comprising industry visionaries, technologists, executives, and educators who are committed to accelerating the awareness and adoption of Internet of Things (IoT) technologies, the IoTWF 2015 aims to convene top thought leaders, implementers and creators across public sector, private business and education from throughout the Middle East as well as globally in one place at one time to collaborate, network, partner, and build the industry's ecosystem together.

Boasting a packed agenda of keynote sessions and technical break-outs over the three days, delegates will gain valuable insights into the value and momentum of global IoT strategies and deployments as well as discuss and share of best practices on every front - flexibility,



Rabih Dabboussi - GM - Cisco UAE Cisco

scalability, security, availability, and connectivity - as individuals, companies, and governments accelerate and optimize their IoT deployments, driving dramatic gains in efficiency, economic value, and quality of life. Hosted by Cisco in partnership with industry

steering committee members, the event is now well respected a premier leadership forum for key stakeholders and innovators who are driving IoT adoption worldwide.

During the forum, attendees will have the opportunity to experience multiple proofs of concepts (PoCs) in Dubai, nearly all demonstrating horizontal integration deployments into the city digital platform including a dynamic mix of smart city and cross-vertical solutions. Smart city solutions such as parking, lighting, and waste management, will be highlighted in addition to cross vertical solutions in transportation, environmental and energy monitoring, safety and security, banking, aviation, and education. Tours of the Command and Control Center will demonstrate the horizontal integration of nearly all the PoCs into the City Digital Platform to enable aggregation of data from various sensors, solutions, and partners, advanced data analytics, a wide spectrum of urban services, and partner applications. Furthermore, attendees will also be able to experience the path of the 'city of the future transformation' through a walking or self-guided tour around Dubai World Trade Center or bus tour to Dubai Design District (d3).

Keynote speakers will comprise a strong lineup of globally respected IoT subject matter experts including John Chambers, Executive Chairman, Cisco.

COURTING BUSINESS, OBAMA PRESSES FOR CLIMATE ACTION

MANILA: Aggressive action to fight climate change will be a boon for businesses in Asia and beyond, President Barack Obama has asserted as he reaches for a global climate change agreement he hopes will burnish his environmental legacy. World leaders are just weeks away from a deadline for an unprecedented carbon-cutting deal that environmentalists say offers the last, best hope to avert the worst effects of climate change.

At a meeting of chief executives in Manila yesterday, Obama sought to build momentum toward that still unfinished agreement, as he prepares to travel to Paris in late November for the deal's long-awaited conclusion. In the Southeast Asian capital, Obama urged business leaders to reduce emissions in their operations and use their sway to pressure governments to sign on to the international pact. "Your businesses can do right

by your bottom lines and by our planet and future generations," the president said. "The old rules that said we can't grow our economy and protect our environment the same time - those are outdated."

Joining Obama on stage were Jack Ma, chairman of the Chinese e-commerce company Alibaba, and Aisa Mijeno, whose startup called Salt sells low-cost lamps run on salt water. Although Obama said no nation is immune to climate change's consequences, he added that the Asia-Pacific region is particularly affected because of its low-lying islands. He said without action to curb emissions, businesses will make less money amid economic disruptions and dampened agricultural production.

"We have to come together around an ambitious framework," Obama said of the

emerging climate pact. The CEOs gathered on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, an annual forum for 21 member nations typically used to hash out the region's overlapping economic interests. This year security issues seeped onto the agenda. In the wake of the deadly attacks in Paris, talk of a response and containing the spread of Islamic radicalism filled both the formal meetings and hallway chatter during Obama's week of summits that began Sunday in Turkey.

But while Obama privately discussed ways of ramping up pressure on the Islamic State group, he came ready to use his public spotlight to zero in on the landmark climate deal. The president has made the issue a top priority as his term in office winds down. With no hope for passing legislation through Congress, Obama has shifted to international lob-

bing. The White House points to some success. On his last trip through Asia, Obama and Chinese President Xi Jinping issued a joint declaration that set a 2030 deadline for carbon emissions to stop rising in China. The deal seemed to mark a shift in China's approach to carbon reduction, and a diplomatic win for the president.

Some critics say that in an effort to clinch a deal, Obama and US negotiators have already acquiesced to an agreement that will be too weak to prevent the worst effects of climate change. The White House says it's searching for "significant commitments" that will ratchet up over time. The US has pushed for each nation's contribution to be revisited every five years. "It's going to require countries making good on promises to cut carbon pollution, and to doing so in a transparent, verifiable manner," White House

spokesman Josh Earnest said, as Obama left for a string of summits in Turkey and Asia. "That is our goal."

In Washington, the Senate approved two GOP-sponsored resolutions disapproving of Obama's plan to force steep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions from U.S. power plants and rendering the rules inoperative. Both measures were narrowly approved under a little-used law that allows Congress to block executive actions it considers onerous with simple majority votes. The maneuver is subject to a presidential veto and has rarely been successful in overturning executive branch rules. In Asia, Obama also plans to ramp up his global lobbying campaign on another front during the trip. The president met with leaders from the 11 other countries backing the Trans-Pacific Partnership free-trade deal and urged them to ratify it "as quickly as possible." — AP

COURT FINES JAPANESE FIRM OVER WHALE KILLS

SYDNEY: A Sydney court fined a Japanese firm Aus\$1 million (US\$709,300) yesterday for repeatedly killing Antarctic minke whales in an Australian Southern Ocean sanctuary. The Federal Court found that Kyodo Senpaku Kaisha harpooned the animals in contravention of parts of Australia's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act over four seasons between 2008 and 2013. Justice Jayne Jagot ordered Kyodo to pay fines of Aus\$250,000 for each of the seasons, after finding it guilty of wilful contempt of a 2008 injunction against hunting the animals in the area.

"Under Australian law, whales in the Australian Whale Sanctuary in Australian Antarctic waters are fully protected," said Michael Kennedy, national director of Humane Society International (HSI), which initiated the case. Kennedy said that Jagot had found Kyodo's conduct in breaching the 2008 injunction to be "deliberate, systematic and sustained" and that she was satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that tens, if not hundreds, of whales had been killed during the whaling campaigns. Despite international disapproval, Japan has hunted whales in the Southern Ocean for years under an exemption in the global whaling moratorium that allows for lethal research.

It cancelled its 2014-2015 Antarctic hunt

after the United Nations' highest court, the International Court of Justice, ruled in 2014 that Japan was abusing a scientific exemption set out in the 1986 moratorium on whaling. Japan said in June that it intends to resume hunts in the Antarctic this year, despite a call by global regulators for more evidence that the expeditions have a scientific purpose. It makes no secret of the fact that meat from the mammals-killed ostensibly for research-is processed into food, and says the whale population in any case is big enough to allow sustainable whaling.

HSI urged the Australian government to use the ruling to redouble diplomatic efforts to ensure Japan is aware the international community would condemn any resumption of whaling in the Southern Ocean. "We would also expect the Australian government to assess what further legal options are open to it under international law," Kennedy said. Sea Shepherd Australia, which for years has hounded the Japanese fleet in the perilous waters off Antarctica trying to obstruct their hunt, described the ruling as "an incredible win for the whales." "The onus for stopping Japan from returning to Antarctica to slaughter whales this year now lies directly with the Australian government," Sea Shepherd managing director Jeff Hansen said in a statement. — AFP

UK PROPOSES CLOSING ALL ITS COAL-FIRED PLANTS BY 2025

GOVERNMENT TO UNVEIL NEW DIRECTION FOR ENERGY POLICY

LONDON: Britain wants to close all of its coal-fired power plants by 2025 and lower their output from 2023, the government said yesterday, making it the first major economy to put a date on shutting down polluting coal plants to curb carbon emissions. Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, Amber Rudd, will set out further details in a speech later that will seek to encourage the building of new gas and nuclear power plants instead. Coal-fired power plants provided around a third of Britain's electricity last year but many of the ageing plants have been due to close over the next decade due to tightening European Union environmental standards.

Now a consultation starting in the spring next year will set out proposals to close by 2025 all coal-fired power stations which are "unabated" - plants not equipped to capture and store their carbon emissions - and restrict their usage from 2023. "It cannot be satisfactory for an advanced economy like the UK to be relying on polluting, carbon inten-

sive 50-year-old coal-fired power stations," Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change Amber Rudd will say, according to excerpts of the speech she will deliver at the Institution of Civil Engineers.

Drax Group, operator of one of Europe's largest coal and biomass-fired power plants, could see the remaining coal units close two years earlier if the government sticks to the 2025 closure date, analysts at Jefferies said. "By putting a specific date by which coal will be phased out, the government will naturally focus attention on security of supply," the analysts said in a research note. Shares in Drax were down 0.8 percent at 224.8 pence by 1023 GMT, having already fallen from over 600 pence in the past year.

Britain hopes to fill the supply gap with new lower-carbon gas and nuclear power plants, which will also help it to meet a legally binding target to cut its carbon dioxide emissions by 2050 to 80 percent below 1990 levels. "One of the greatest and most cost-effective contributions we can make to emis-

sion reductions in electricity is by replacing coal-fired power stations with gas," Rudd will say. Gas plants emit almost half the amount of carbon dioxide per megawatt of power generated as coal plants. The move away from coal was welcomed by climate change campaigners seeking a reduction in carbon emissions blamed for global warming.

Later this month, world leaders will gather in Paris for UN negotiations to seek an accord to curb greenhouse gas emissions. "The UK is demonstrating the type of leadership that nations around the world must take in order to craft a successful agreement in Paris and solve the climate crisis," said former US Vice President and climate change campaigner Al Gore. However, some campaigners protested about the new emphasis on burning gas instead. "Phasing out coal is essential for the climate. But switching from coal to gas is like an alcoholic switching from two bottles of whisky a day to two bottles of port," said Simon Bullock of the environmental group Friends of the Earth. — Reuters

BRAZIL DECLARES EMERGENCY AFTER DEADLY WASTE SPILL

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazilian authorities declared a state of emergency Tuesday in more than 200 towns affected by a deadly mining waste spill. The government of Minas Gerais state said the measure covered the Rio Doce river basin and all towns impacted by the avalanche of mud and waste unleashed when two dams collapsed at the Samarco iron ore mine in Mariana 12 days ago. The torrent of yellowish muck caused an environmental catastrophe, contaminated drinking water supplies and mostly destroyed the nearby village of Bento Rodrigues, with a toll of 10 dead and 15 missing.

Samarco is a joint venture of Australia's BHP Billiton, the world's largest mining firm, and Brazil's Vale, the biggest iron ore miner. The spill contaminated some 500 kilometers (310 miles) of river in southeastern Minas Gerais and the neighboring state of Espirito Santo, destroying

crops and killing fish, turtles and other animals. The state of emergency, which will be in effect for 180 days, gives victims access to disaster relief funds, speeds the deployment of emergency workers and cuts through local governments' red tape for infrastructure projects and purchases of medicine.

"Through this measure, municipalities will have access to state and federal resources, both financial and humanitarian," said state emergency chief Ronilson Edelman de Sales Caldeira. Samarco pledged yesterday to pay \$260 million in damages as a "preliminary commitment" toward clean-up and compensation. The courts have blocked an additional \$78 million and the government has slapped the firm with a total of \$67 million in fines, warning there will be more. The final clean-up cost could top \$1 billion, according to Deutsche Bank. — AFP

INDONESIA SORRY OVER HIV 'SWIMMING, SNEEZING LINK'

JAKARTA: Indonesia's health ministry has apologized after a printing error led to posters being put up claiming that HIV can be transmitted through mosquito bites, swimming and sneezing, an official said yesterday. Social media was flooded with angry comments after the ministry's attempt to launch a campaign to debunk myths about HIV backfired badly in a country where people with the virus are much stigmatized.

The controversy came as the virus was hitting the headlines globally after US actor Charlie Sheen revealed he was HIV-positive and had paid millions of dollars in hush money to people who knew about his infection to keep them quiet. The Indonesian plan involved putting up posters on commuter trains in the capital Jakarta stating that HIV cannot be transmitted through mosquito bites, swimming and sneezing, as well as human saliva and sweat. But the printing company managed to miss out the word "not" from the posters and then failed to get final approval from officials, meaning the banners reinforced the very beliefs they were meant to challenge.

Hundreds of posters were plastered on trains at the weekend, but have now been removed following an outcry. "The ministry has to carry out a massive and systematic awareness campaign to undo this blunder," said Aditya Wardhana, an activist from Indonesia AIDS Coalition. Prominent HIV activist Fajar Jasmin tweeted that the botched campaign was a "stupid, fatal mistake." Senior health ministry official Muhammad Subuh admitted the mistake was due to a "printing error." "We have made a public apology and now the banners are being removed and will be replaced with the correct ones," he said. "They omitted the word 'not', it was an honest mistake."

'Blessing in disguise'

Subuh said the printing company failed to

show the ministry the final version of the posters before issuing them as they were supposed to. The company has also apologized for the error. However Subuh insisted the controversy was a "blessing in disguise" as many people recognized immediately it was a mistake, showing progress had made in spreading awareness about the true causes of transmission. Activists dismissed his claim, with Wardhana saying that HIV campaigners would now have to be sent to train stations to inform people of the error. The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), which can lead to AIDS, is mainly transmitted via sexual intercourse or needle sharing. Awareness about HIV in Indonesia remains poor despite the fact that more than 660,000 people are estimated to be living with the virus, according to the United Nations.

Ignorance about the virus has come from the highest echelons of government in February, then trade minister Rachmat Gobel sparked outrage by claiming that second-hand clothes could spread HIV as he campaigned to stop the import of used garments. He has since been removed from his job. US actor Sheen's dramatic revelation on NBC on Tuesday that he was HIV-positive came after years of controversy over his drug and alcohol use as well as a penchant for hiring prostitutes. "It's a hard three letters to absorb, you know?," said the 50-year-old.

"It's a turning point in one's life." Sheen's stint as a middle-aged, womanizing bachelor on the sitcom "Two and a Half Men" made him America's highest paid TV actor. South Africa has the world's greatest number of HIV-positive citizens and its leaders have in the past come under fire for failing to tackle the problem. Former president Thabo Mbeki's government even questioned the link between HIV and AIDS and promoted garlic and beetroot instead of medication. Since 1981, about 78 million people have been infected by HIV worldwide, according to UN figures. — AFP



NEW YORK: Students chat as they leave Martin Luther King Jr High School on Tuesday. Martin Luther King is one of 88 New York City schools requiring students to pass through metal detectors before entering. — AP photos

ALLS MOUNT TO REMOVE METAL DETECTORS FROM NYC SCHOOLS

NEW YORK: A student has not been shot in a New York City school over the past 13 years, an era when school shootings across the United States have become sadly commonplace. But there is a growing cry to rid the city's schools of metal detectors, the very tool some observers credit with keeping them safe. Some parent groups and advocates say the scanners installed at the city's most troubled institutions more than two decades ago are now unnecessary because of low crime rates, and they condemn them as discriminatory, since by and large they sit in schools serving minority neighborhoods.

"Making students have to go through metal detectors to go to school sends a terrible message to students about where they are headed and how they are viewed," said Donna Lieberman, executive director of the New York City Civil Liberties Union. But other parents, and the union for school safety agents in the nation's largest district, which educates 1.1 million students, warn removing the machines would leave children unsafe. The union that represents the 4,915 school safety officers - who are overseen by the police department but are not armed - stress that scanners placed by the New York Police Department in high-crime schools are necessary.

"It's very simple: If the scanners are taken away, then every day will be less safe for the students, faculty and school safety agents inside these schools," said Gregory Floyd, president of Teamsters Local 237. More than 300 weapons, including knives and BB guns, have been recovered by school safety agents since July, Floyd said. Nearly 90,000 high school students are scanned every day. Some parent groups and education activists have appealed to Mayor Bill de Blasio to eliminate or reduce the use of metal detectors, noting almost half of black students are scanned daily, while only 14 percent of white students are.

As crime has plunged citywide over the past two decades, the number of violent crimes and robberies in schools has also fallen. Assaults dropped 34 percent from 2010-11 to 2014-15, according to police. Critics of detectors say that drop makes them unnecessary. A panel convened by City Hall comprising criminal justice and education experts recommended this year that

some detectors be removed. A Manhattan education council urged their elimination, and several online petitions supported the cause.

Safety

But education officials say there are no plans for substantive changes. "While we have taken important steps in the right direction, keeping our schools safe remains our top priority, particularly for our black and Hispanic students and our students with special needs," said Lois Herrera, head of the district's student safety program. "We are working tirelessly toward that end." Other major cities, such as Los Angeles and Philadelphia, also use scanners in at least some schools. Despite some pushback from civil liberties groups, some cities have doubled down. In Detroit, the first US city to use them, their installation is required for every new and renovated school.

There have been 160 school shootings since 20 chil-

dren and six adults were killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Dec 2012, according to statistics kept by Everytown for Gun Safety, a gun control advocacy group. But the last time a student was fatally shot in a New York City school was a double killing in Brooklyn in 1992, police said. After that, metal detectors, previously used just for special events, were put into wider use. And the last shooting overall in the system was on Jan 12, 2002, according to the NYPD.

That day, 17-year-old Vincent Rodriguez pulled a .380-caliber handgun from his waistband and opened fire in a hallway at Martin Luther King Jr High School on Manhattan's Upper West Side. He shot two teenagers in the back after they had teased his girlfriend and pulled a bandanna off her head, police said. Both survived.

These days, it's one of 88 New York City school buildings - many of which house more than one school - that have metal detectors and safety agents at the watch each morning. — AP



Students from Fiorello H LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts cross the street on Tuesday after getting out of school for the day. LaGuardia, with a predominantly white or Asian student population, is one of many New York City schools that do not have metal detectors.

KEEPING BEES HELPS GARDENERS UNDERSTAND PLANTS BETTER

NEW YORK: Want to become a better gardener? Then learn something about beekeeping. Become a matchmaker who ensures that flowering plants and honeybees enjoy a beneficial relationship. Keeping bees increases one's interest in botany, says Jim Tunnell, a master beekeeper and owner of Beez Neez Apiary Supply in Snohomish, Washington. "I can't help

but look at the world more from the bees' perspective," he said. "Whenever I see them show an interest in a particular plant, I have to know what it is and whether it is a nectar source or a pollen source or both." Bees gather pollen, nectar and water to make honey, reproduce and survive. Pollen is used primarily to feed new generations of brood. Water cools the hives

and dilutes the honey on which the bees feed. The sugary nectar is stockpiled for overwintering when flowering plants are dormant. Pollen and nectar-rich plants, meanwhile, need the kind of cross-pollination provided by bees and other insects. "Bees tend to confine their attention to one flower species during a single foraging trip, but they move from plant to plant, favoring cross-pollination," a Missouri Botanical Garden fact sheet says. "Cross-pollination results in greater genetic variation, which can mean stronger, more vigorous plants."

Honeybees seem partial to white, blue, yellow and violet flowers. Flowers with saucer-shaped blooms, like dahlias, cosmos, coneflowers and sunflowers are more open than tube-shaped types, making pollen and syrup easier to collect. Provide flowering plants and the pollinators will come. But it takes more than several suburban yards to support a honeybee colony. "A hive's foraging area extends several miles in every direction," Tunnell said. "If you define 'surrounded by pollinator-friendly perennials' as a yard filled with such plants, that is woefully inadequate for a single beehive."

Rather than emphasizing planting in quantity then, plant for availability. Practice succession planting with species that bloom from early spring through late autumn. Food supplies for pollinators are particularly scarce early and late in the year. "This is critically important," said



WASHINGTON: This Sept. 11, 2015 photo shows a honeybee covered with pollen, after foraging on a collection of Dahlias at a home near Langley, Wash.

Mace Vaughan, a spokesman for The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation in Portland, Oregon. "We know that honeybee hives that bring in a diversity of pollens are healthier and better able to cope with diseases, pests and even pesticide exposure. "Also, bees are active year-round," he said. "There are times when the natural supply of nectar or pollen is low during the year. By working to have blooms available consistently throughout the growing season, honeybee hives are better able to thrive." In many cases, native plants are

best because they produce an abundance of pollen and nectar and are easier to maintain, Vaughan said. But that doesn't mean there isn't a role for non-native plants. "Lawns full of clover or crop fields full of buckwheat or phacelia can be very valuable and inexpensive to establish," he said. Not every gardener is cut out to be a beekeeper, but all have a vested interest in the long-term health of bees and other pollinators, Tunnell said. "I think it's always a good thing to keep the pollinators in mind when we plant our gardens," he said. — AP



WASHINGTON: This July 5, 2015 photo shows a bumblebee gathering pollen from a clump of eryngo, late-summer-blooming wildflowers, that are members of the carrot family, in a yard in Langley, Washington. — AP photos

SIZE MATTERS WHEN IT COMES TO SPERM DOMINANCE

PARIS: A tiny fruit fly has the bizarre distinction of possessing the longest sperm of any animal - 20 times the length of its own body and 1,000 times that of human sperm. Not longer in proportion to its body size, just longer. Period. It is a freakish extreme, but as a general rule, scientists have long known that the smallest animals have the biggest sperm, and vice versa. In a study published yesterday, researchers said not only sperm length, but also numbers, are determined by an animal's size. A mouse ejaculation contains about 9.5 million sperm—each about 124 micrometres long—and that of an elephant (56 micrometres) over 200 billion sperm, they said.

For species where females mate with multiple males, sperm are in sharper competition with one another to fertilise the egg. In small animals, larger sperm seem to have an evolutionary advantage, while in big animals it is smaller sperm in higher numbers which prevail. The findings were published yesterday in the journal Proceedings of the Royal Society B.

Sperm comes in all sorts of shapes and sizes. Generally, they range in length from about 30 micrometres (0.03 millimetres), as in some whales, to about 350 micrometres for the honey possum, a 10-gramme (0.35-ounce) marsupial the size of your thumb.

The tightly-coiled sperm of the fruit fly *Drosophila bifurca* is an incredible 5.8 centimeters (2.3 inches) long. The team speculated that the trade-off between sperm size and numbers might have something to do with the size of female plumbing. "Since elephants are bigger than mice, it seems that their sperm have a higher risk of being diluted or lost in the bigger female reproductive tract," study co-author Stefan Lupold of the University of Zurich said. "In other words, sperm number becomes far more important than sperm size," he said by email. "By contrast, sperm dilution is less of an issue in small species, which creates conditions where the benefit of longer—and faster-swimming—sperm may come into play. — AFP

GETTING THAT SINKING FEELING IN TORTUOUS UN CLIMATE TALKS

MALDIVES WARNS OF SEA LEVEL RISE

BONN: Abdullahi Majeed was a young delegate for the Maldives when low-lying island states warned for the first time in 1989 that climate change and rising seas could "threaten the very survival" of some nations. Now a 60-year-old veteran, Majeed is still repeating that message, one of a handful of delegates to this month's Paris climate summit who have been attending tortuous UN negotiations to combat global warming from the start. "It's frustrating," he said. "The sense of urgency is simply not there."

In countless conference halls from Bangkok to Buenos Aires, Majeed has seen more setbacks than breakthroughs, not least the failed Copenhagen conference in 2009. He is now pinning cautious hopes on the Paris summit, from Nov 30-Dec 11, when almost 200 nations will once more seek an accord to curb manmade greenhouse gas emissions, blamed by almost all leading climate scientists for rising global temperatures and sea levels. "There is more hope," he said. "We can't have another Copenhagen." In November 1989, Majeed was head of his country's meteorological service when 14 island nations met in the capital of the Indian Ocean archipelago to sign the Male Declaration about the risks of climate change. It went almost unnoticed outside the signatories, which included Grenada, Fiji and Malta. At the time, few scientists blamed mankind for global warming, and the fall of the Berlin Wall a week earlier was dominating the world's headlines. "We knew it wouldn't be plain sailing but we thought 'We have to begin somewhere,'" Majeed said.

Now, the risks are far more widely known. Sea levels have risen by about 20 cm since 1900 and the U.N. panel of climate scientists says they could swell again by between 26 and 82 cm by the late 21st century, driven by a thaw of ice from Greenland to Antarctica. That would be a creeping threat to coasts from Bangladesh to Florida, to coastal cities from London to Shanghai and to many low-lying coral atolls. The Maldives, with a population of 345,000, is among the most vulnerable since its highest natural point is just 2.4 meters above sea level.

'Steady rock'

Robert Van Lierop of Vanuatu, the first chair of

the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) from 1991-94, said Majeed had helped to set the tone for island negotiators by blending concern with humility. "Through the ups and downs of the negotiations, he has been a steady rock," Van Lierop said. Majeed, now Minister of State for Environment and Energy, said he had first become interested in the weather as a child when his father had been unable to answer the question "How do you measure rainfall?"

Delegates often jokingly liken the negotiations to herding cats. Just like AOSIS, now grown to 44 members, the United States, China, African nations, OPEC oil producers or left-wing Latin American states all have often-competing national interests. OPEC nations, for instance, immediately realized that any shift to wind and solar power was a threat to oil exports. At climate talks in the early 1990s, "half of the OPEC delegates were lawyers," Majeed said. It was not until 1992 that a UN climate convention in Rio de Janeiro finally set a goal of limiting greenhouse emissions to 1990 levels by 2000, albeit only for developed economies. But the goal was non-binding, and was not met.

After a grind of unproductive annual UN meetings, the next accord was the UN's 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which initially obliged about 40 rich nations to cut greenhouse gas emissions by about 5 percent below 1990 levels in the period 2008-12. Those cuts have been met overall, but Kyoto had fatal flaws, and the number of participants in an extended period to 2020 has shrunk to a small core around the European Union. US President George W Bush concluded that Kyoto was giving big emerging economies such as China and India a free ride, and would cost US jobs. Having signed the deal, Washington never ratified it.

"It was a very minor step in the right direction," Majeed said, remembering that his delegation had to leave before the agreement was reached, in overtime, to avoid missing their expensive flight home. One of the lowest points was a two-week meeting in Buenos Aires in 2004, which ended with an agreement merely to hold a seminar about climate change the following year. To some, given the U.S. opposition to Kyoto, even that was a

victory. "At the time, I was very happy to get this workshop," said Yvo de Boer, the UN climate chief from 2006-10 who was a senior member of the Dutch delegation in Buenos Aires.

World economy

He says the core problem is that climate change ultimately means transforming the world economy. Crops will have to be replaced or planted elsewhere, for instance, industry will have to find new ways of working without fossil fuels, and low-lying countries may one day have to move whole cities. "If it was just about cutting emissions, it would be much easier," said de Boer, who now heads the Global Green Growth Institute in South Korea. Majeed said the pace picked up in Bali in 2007, when nations agreed to work out a global accord to succeed Kyoto within two years. Washington dropped its opposition at a stormy final session during which US delegates were booted.

But the 2009 Copenhagen summit failed, with only a partial accord for emissions cuts until 2020 and a promise to mobilize \$100 billion a year in climate finance for developing nations by 2020. By last year, about \$62 billion had been amassed. Majeed says Copenhagen was the worst meeting: "People started with such optimism, and it ended with such doom." Prospects for a global accord are now brighter, partly because the United States and China are working together. But ambitions are also lower: a Paris accord will compile voluntary national pledges for action beyond 2020, forsaking the binding model of Kyoto.

In Male, Majeed lives in a house that is about 2 meters above sea level and 50 meters from the waterfront. He grumbles that there are few beaches, because of the sea defenses that occupy much of the capital's coast. After the Paris talks, set to take place under heightened security after the attacks that killed 129 people last week, he reckons he may stay with climate negotiations for another five years. "Nobody likes travelling to so many places," he said. "We all have families too." Majeed has four daughters. Asked why he has stayed on so long when many others have given up, he shrugs: "I've got climate in my veins." — Reuters



KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia: A Malaysian Zoo official displays the four-month old giant panda cub born to parents Liang Liang and Xing Xing on loan from China, inside the panda enclosure at the National Zoo in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak had announced on August 18, that giant panda leant by China to Malaysia had given birth to a cub in captivity following a diplomatically tough year between the two countries. — AFP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

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SARACENS RUGBY PLAYERS START SEASON IN ABU DHABI

The Kuwait Saracens travelled to Abu Dhabi to Zayed sports city to compete in the first tournament of the season, Abu Dhabi Harlequins RFC. The under 8's and under 10's teams travelled to this fantastic event along with coaches and parents. The atmosphere at the ground was amazing with lots of teams entering the tournament from all over the gulf.

To reach the semifinal the under 8's scored a fantastic last minute try and the under 10's took a one try victory over their opponents.

Both teams played exceptionally well and were narrowly beaten by their opposition in the semifinals.

Committed to supporting major sports activities in Kuwait, Gulf Bank reaffirms its commitment to broadening horizons and encouraging youth to lead a healthy fit lifestyle as interest and involvement in the game continues to spread rapidly throughout the region. We would also like to thank Agility Logistics for believing in the Sport and being part as a co-sponsor.



ICAI FAMILY DAY TOMORROW

The Kuwait Chapter of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) welcomes all its members and their families to celebrate the annual family cum sports day event on tomorrow from 10 am onwards at Corner Stadium Aqua Park, beside Kuwait Towers. The family day activities include team building games, magic show for kids, magic balloons for kids, face painting, DJ and music, raffle draw and prize distribution.

WHAT'S ON - SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All photos submitted for What's On should be minimum 200dpi. Articles must be in plain text and should include name and phone numbers. Articles and photos that fail to meet these requirements will not be published.

Please send them to news@kuwaittimes.net

THE PALESTINIAN CULTURE EXHIBITION AT BAYT LOTHAN, NOVEMBER 23-26, 2015 OPEN INVITATION: FOR JERUSALEM

The Palestinian Culture Center holds the second of its two annual exhibitions for 2015 at Bayt Lothan. The show includes a large collection of textile-based traditional handmade cross-stitch as well as pottery from Hebron, posters and books about Palestine in English and Arabic. It aspires to reaffirm the Palestinian national identity by its handicrafts and support education and families.

The Palestinian Culture Center is a non-profit organization that was established in Jordan in 1993. It aims to (1) preserve the rich heritage and culture of Palestine, (2) help empower women and their families in the refugee camps become economically independent, and (3) sustain needy Palestinians in their homeland and in the Diaspora.

This year was an active year for the Center due to the effects of the global financial crisis which placed a further strain on the poor. Furthermore, the violent and aggressive Israeli military onslaught on Gaza, Jerusalem and the rest of occupied Palestine, have made the situation in Palestine dire, and the need for aid more urgent. As a result, the Center has worked to increase the salaries of the 550 or so women who

do the embroidery work as well as pay for their transportation (from the camps). We motivate the ladies by granting bonuses for excellent quality work. We also provide support to Palestinians in the homeland by providing financial aid to needy families, health care, and university scholarships.

Some of the Center's accomplishments included support of some of the vital institutes such as Almaqasid hospital in Jerusalem which was established in 1968 with substantial financial support from The State of Kuwait. The Center is also working on providing the necessary financing of the Water Desalination Project in Gaza for producing potable water and assisting Gaza area hospitals that were bombarded by Israel, such as Alshefa Hospital, to produce and store oxygen for medical purposes.

Exhibition Highlights

Traditional cross-stitch embroidery of dresses, linens, shawls, cushions, table runners, cards, frames, coasters, belts, purses, bookmarks and more:
* Handmade ceramics from Hebron.
* Books, posters, key chains, kafiya's

and DVDs as well as posters from Palestine.

* Food sale of traditional Palestinian food such as thyme, sumaq, baked goods and other traditional plates.

* Palestinian folklore "Dabkah" will be performed on and Thursday at 6:30 pm.

Palestinian embroidery using needle and silk thread is a manifestation of the Palestinian identity as it has evolved over the ages. An age old art, all Palestinian ladies, young and old, would spend hours embroidering their trousseau, dresses, shawls and cushions. Using geometric shapes at first, and then evolving to depicting images from nature surrounding them, the dresses are famous for their flowery designs and bold natural colors of indigo and red. Symbols of the ubiquitous cypress trees surrounding the orange groves, roses, jasmine and the famous olive tree are typical motifs in these dresses.

The exhibition will be held at Bayt Lothan, Salmia, It will be held for 4 days starting Monday the November 23rd through Thursday 26th. It is open to the public from 10:00 am to 1:30 pm and 4:30 to 8:30 pm.

Greetings



Sara Ahmad Eisa celebrated her fourth birthday last Monday with family and friends.



Sallakanchu Ramakrishna Yadav and Sallakanchu Parwatamma celebrated their marriage anniversary recently, and received best wishes from family and friends.



GRAND CHILDREN'S DAY FIESTA AT IISM

Children are synonymous to fun filled innocence. The feeling of innocence and fun combined was transpired at India International School Mangaf campus on 14 November, 2015 during their Children's Day Fiesta which was carefully planned focusing on children and their enjoyment. Classes IV to XII had a gala time with an assortment of stalls arranged class-wise under the supervision of Stall Managers and Stall Supervisors. There were nearly 50 stalls with mouthwatering food items, curios, dance and games floor etc under various names like 'Delight Cotton

Candies, 'Dance Palace', 'Arcade', Mayoer', 'Ustad Hotel', 'Play and Pluck', 'Rose Wood', 'Cinema World', 'Crunchy Corn', 'Yummy Ice Cream', 'Fashion Zone' and so on. The huge slide arranged by the school management was another attraction where children flocked to. It was a satiating sight to see children moving from stall to stall where the student vendors were busy canvassing the customers. Students also put up a wonderful entertainment program including dance, music, skit, instrumental music etc. The whole event was under the supervision of the Vice Principals Saleem and Indulekha

and the CCA in charges Firoza and Kochurani.

Primary Section teaching faculty organized a special assembly in this regard on 11 November. Besides a spine-tinkling cinematic dance performance by the teachers, melodious songs and Fashion Show made the day more remarkable. Master Rohit Shyam of class II, the budding star of IISM and the Runner-up of 'D'light Music Band Competition' was given a token of appreciation by the school Director Malayil Moosa Koya. Vaibhavi and Abhirami of class II also were given a token of encouragement for

showcasing their talent in dancing.

Classes I and II had 'Sharing and Caring' as a part of the Children's Day Celebrations. The children enjoyed the Movie Show and Games arranged exclusively for them. Ice Cream and chocolates were also distributed among them to make the day sweet and memorable. The activities were organized under the supervision of the Vice Principal Sapna and the CCA in charge Sridevi.

Kindergarten Section of the school celebrated the day on 12 November with different cultural programs by the teachers under the supervision of the KG Head Nilifer.

Children also participated in the entertainment activities with great excitement and involvement. The enjoyment was at its height when the children saw their teachers in the guise of small kids. Sweets and chocolates were distributed to the tiny-tots who seemed to be mesmerized by the overwhelming performance of their teachers.

All the events were graced by the presence of the school Director Malayil Moosakoya, Principal F M Basheer Ahmed, Vice Principal Narinder Kaur and the Vice Principals Saleem, Sophy, Sapna and Indulekha.



BURGAN BANK CONCLUDES SPONSORSHIP OF 'THE HUMAN MARATHON 2015'

Burgan Bank is proud to have been a sponsor of 'The Human Marathon 2015', which was held on Saturday November 14th, 2015 at the 360 mall. The event was organized by young entrepreneurs, and was targeting participants from all segments of the community, starting from the age of 10 and up.

The importance of this Marathon is to integrate those with special

needs into the community and restore their sense of belonging. We at Burgan Bank believe it is our role to support such events and encourage a healthier lifestyle to those with special needs as well as the local community in general. For this reason, this sponsorship has helped Burgan Bank to demonstrate its ongoing commitment towards the country."

Such community interactions further reinforces Burgan Bank's leadership and social dedication to the wellbeing of the society. As part of its overall social responsibility framework, the bank has pledged to support initiatives that work on familiarizing the public with the benefits of maintaining a healthier lifestyle as well as engaging all segments of the society in an interactive manner.

BSK HONORS TRAFFIC POLICE TEAM

The British School of Kuwait hosted a presentation ceremony for Colonel Hamad Jaber Al-Mari and his team of officers in appreciation of the advice and guidance they have shown to parents, staff and students with parking procedures at the beginning and end of the school day. Since the beginning of the academic year 2015/2016 Colonel Hamad and his colleagues have been on hand to meet the Senior Management Team, advise on policy and procedures while at the same time taking charge of key crossings and parking locations across the campus of The British School of Kuwait (BSK) and The Sunshine Kindergarten (TSK). The feedback from parents and staff has been highly positive and as a mark of appreciation a short ceremony was held to honor the members of the team.

BSK Director of Media, Kefah Al Mutawa, acted as MC and welcomed the guests who included BSK Chairman, Sadiq Al-Mutawa; BSK Director, Madame Vera Al-Mutawa MBE; BSK Deputy Director Of Finance, Kamella Al-Mutawa; BSK Principal, Paul Shropshire; TSK Principal, Joanne Wild as well as colleagues from the management team of both schools.

The ceremony included an address by Sadiq when he thanked the police for their co-operation, help and support to the school community and a response from Colonel Hamad who spoke of his happiness at attending such an event and how his team are always at the ready to support the various strands of society with their health and safety procedures. This was followed by poetry reading from BSK students Abdullah Al-Ghaeis and Amnah Al-Awadh. Each member of the police team was invited on stage to receive their plaques and certificates of appreciation and following the cutting of the cake guests enjoyed a lavish breakfast and the opportunity to mingle and reflect on the partnership between BSK and the Police force. Further exchanges are planned during the forthcoming student Assemblies when road safety and safe parking will be a feature of the PSHE education program.



Kuwait Autism Center's Director Dr Samira Al-Saad recently attended a meeting for the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, which discussed placing diagnoses and intervention protocols.



EQUATE SPONSORS 10TH ANNUAL GPCA FORUM

EQUATE Petrochemical Company, Kuwait's first international joint venture in this industry, sponsored the 10th Annual Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association (GPCA) Annual Forum, which is considered one of the most celebrated industrial events through gathering top executives from around the world.

EQUATE President and CEO Mohammad Husain said, "Our participation in the 10th edition of GPCA Annual Forum is an embodiment of our commitment to this organization that plays a critical role in supporting the petrochemical and chemical industries throughout the world, not only the Gulf. EQUATE is honored to have been one of the active 'Partners in Success' in all GPCA events throughout the years, including the first ever GPCA Forum."

Husain, who is also a GPCA Board Member, noted "Although the revenues of the global petrochemical and chemi-

cal industries have exceeded \$4.2 trillion during 2014, the Gulf's share from these revenues were only 2 percent. During that year, the Gulf had a 6 percent share of the global production which reached over 21.5 billion tons."

Husain added "Moreover, in 2014, the Gulf's total petrochemical exports exceeded 67 million tons valued at \$62 billion, with Kuwait having only a 7 percent share of total production with 8.6 million tons." Husain emphasized, "This is a long-term strategic industry and it has a cyclic nature. For that, companies have to build their resilience and reliability to be prepared for any future down-dips in the cycle. In terms of overall international market conditions, difficulties have been witnessed throughout different regions."

Husain noted, "Challenges facing our industries remain the same in terms of fluctuating prices due to supply and demand, feedstock availability, adequate infrastructure and, most important, spe-

cialized human capital. At the same, the Gulf's petrochemical and chemical producers have been successful at maintaining their global presence through innovative solutions, high-quality products and top in-class services."

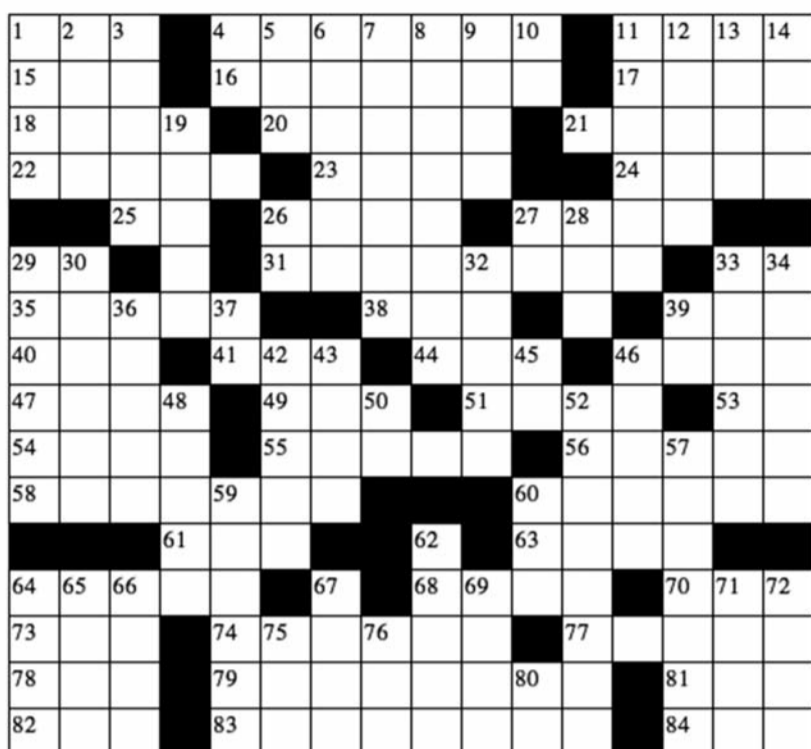
During the exhibition on the sidelines of the Forum, EQUATE hosted the UAE Energy Minister His Excellency Suhail Mohamed Faraj Al Mazrouei, the Chairman of the Chairman of the Royal Commission for Jubail and Yanbu in Saudi Arabia His Highness Prince Saud bin Abdullah bin Thunayan, the Governor of the Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA) Abdulatif Al-Othman and other prominent figures.

The 10th Annual GPCA Forum 2015, is held in Dubai, UAE, during November 17-19. The forum gathers top executives from petrochemical and chemical companies, as well as government bodies and other entities to discuss various topics.



The Kuwait Police Museum hosted visits for trainees at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's department of professional rehabilitation for people with special needs.

CROSSWORD 1084



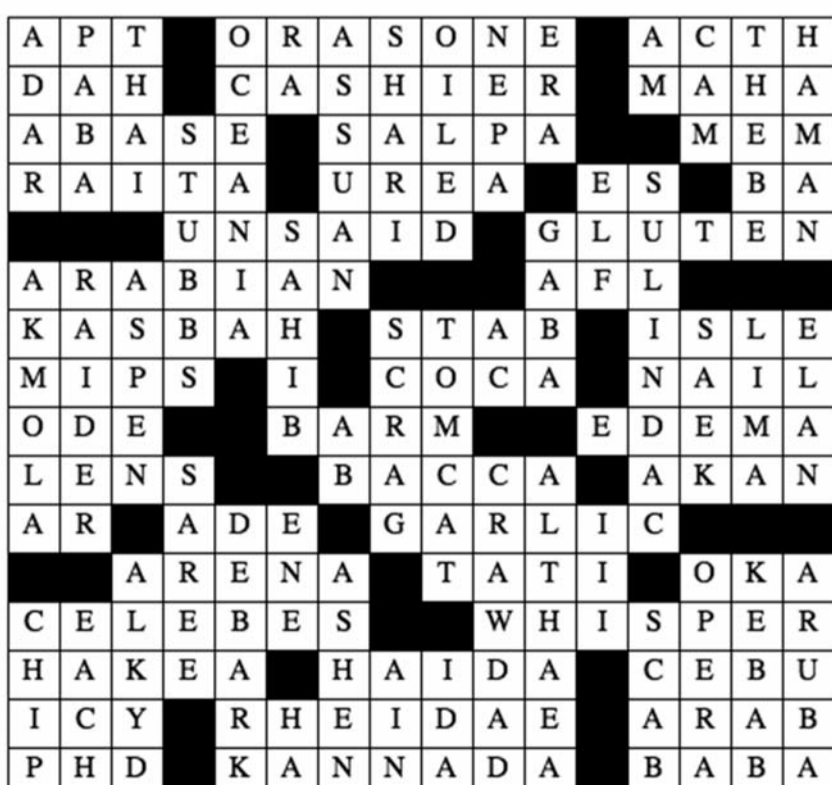
ACROSS

1. Aircraft landing in bad weather in which the pilot is talked down by ground control using precision approach radar.
4. Brazilian tree with spicy red fruit.
11. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
15. (Judaism) Sacred chest where the ancient Hebrews kept the two tablets containing the Ten Commandments.
16. Of or relating to Aram or to its inhabitants or their culture or their language.
17. United States composer noted for his innovative use of polytonality (1874-1954).
18. Having little physical or spiritual strength.
20. A dance involving a rhythmical stamping step.
21. Grind together, of teeth.
22. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
23. A tall perennial woody plant having a main trunk and branches forming a distinct elevated crown.
24. A dry cold north wind in SE France.
25. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
29. A heavy ductile magnetic metallic element.
31. Used especially of mail.
35. Jordan's port.
38. A beverage made by steeping tea leaves in water.
40. A passage with access only at one end.
41. An awkward and inexperienced youth.
44. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
47. The villain in William Shakespeare's tragedy who tricked Othello into murdering his wife.
49. An inflammatory disease of connective tissue with variable features including fever and weakness and fatigability and joint pains and skin lesions on the face or neck or arms.
51. Fallow deer.
53. A state in the Rocky Mountains.
54. Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
55. An indehiscent fruit derived from a single ovary having one or many seeds within a fleshy wall or pericarp.
56. A unit of apothecary weight equal to 480 grains or one twelfth of a pound.
58. Chinese fruit having a thin brittle shell enclosing a sweet jellylike pulp and a single seed.
61. An angular shape characterized by sharp turns in alternating directions.
63. The basic unit of money in Thailand.
64. A resin used in adhesives and paints.
68. Type genus of the Anatidae.
70. The fatty flesh of an eel.
73. The cry made by sheep.
74. Tropical African herbs.
77. A shade of brown with a tinge of red.
78. Electronic warfare undertaken to prevent or reduce an enemy's effective use of the electromagnetic spectrum.
79. One that is absent or not in residence.
81. A human limb.
82. A unit of length of thread or yarn.
83. Consisting of or resembling mother-of-pearl.
84. A light touch or stroke.

DOWN

1. An awkward stupid person.
2. A member of an Algonquian people living in central Canada.
3. Jordan's port.
4. An informal term for a father.
5. The bureau of the Treasury Department responsible for tax collections.
6. A drumbeat of bugle call that signals the military to return to their quarters.
7. One dedicated to love and lovemaking especially one who writes about love.
8. Proboscis worms.
9. An expression of open-mouthed astonishment.
10. An associate degree in nursing.
11. In the Arabian Nights a hero who tells of the fantastic adventures he had in his voyages.
12. A means of serving.
13. A strip of land projecting into a body of water.
14. United States tennis player who was the first Black to win United States and English singles championships (1943-1993).
19. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
26. A long-playing phonograph record.
27. A hard gray lustrous metallic element that is highly corrosion-resistant.
28. Aromatic bulb used as seasoning.
30. Consider or describe as similar, equal, or analogous.
32. A genus of Poceidae.
33. Aristocratic Italian family of powerful merchants and bankers who ruled Florence in the 15th century.
34. Necessary for relief or supply.
36. Primitive chlorophyll-containing mainly aquatic eukaryotic organisms lacking true stems and roots and leaves.
37. A radioactive element of the actinide series.
39. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
42. A member of a Turkic people of Uzbekistan and neighboring areas.
43. (Scottish) Bluish-black or gray-blue.
45. An official prosecutor for a judicial district.
46. The sound of laughing.
48. British writer (born in Hungary) (1865-1947).
50. An international organization of European countries formed after World War II to reduce trade barriers and increase cooperation among its members.
52. Thick dark syrup produced by boiling down juice from sugar cane.
57. A pad of paper for keeping notes.
59. Of or relating to or characteristic of Hades or Tartarus.
60. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
62. A state in New England.
65. A cord that is drawn through eyelets or around hooks in order to draw together two edges (as of a shoe or garment).
66. God of love and erotic desire.
67. Sound recording consisting of a disc with continuous grooves.
69. An international organization created in 1949 by the North Atlantic Treaty for purposes of collective security.
71. A genus of Mustelidae.
72. Young sheep.
75. A master's degree in business.
76. (Irish) The sea personified.
80. A bivalent and trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You assumed you were right on track, but now you could realize how much you must change just to keep up with the shifting landscape. If you aren't comfortable with your place in the outer world now, look to your long-term goals for clues as to what you should be doing today. Increasing your awareness is necessary prior to making any meaningful alterations to your direction. The answers to your questions can be found within.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

It seems as if time is running out when it comes to stabilizing your relationship world. Interpersonal dynamics are in flux and the speed at which they change can be a bit dizzying. Don't try to intellectualize this emotional journey today; there will be plenty of time for understanding the reasons later on. Right now, just stay in the present moment by listening to your heart and remaining open to the feelings of others. Love doesn't always play by the rules.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Although you may not be certain about someone's intentions today, you still may pretend that doubt doesn't even appear on your radar. Nevertheless, you must also be careful about projecting over-inflated optimism for the next couple of days, which could make matters worse instead of better. Noticing your own insecurities as they arise can prevent petty arguments that might increase your loneliness in the long run. Lead by example; acknowledging your vulnerability allows others to do the same.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Life is all about making choices and it is healthier today to decide sooner than later. Of course, you can do what comes naturally and hide safely within your own inner world. Unfortunately, this self-protective strategy keeps others from realizing how much you have to offer. Or, you could take a different route and face the cause of your fears. This seemingly dangerous path could initiate a major healing process and deepen the intimacy of your relationships. No risk, no reward.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You are worried about being misunderstood today, but success ultimately depends less on how others see you than on how you see yourself. You may not want to fit into the expected norms of society, but you still wish to belong to a larger community. Finding that sweet spot of emotional bonding while maintaining individuality is a challenge. Reestablish relationship dynamics by including those you love in your vision of the future. You could be pleasantly surprised with the support you receive if you remain true to yourself.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

People are making unreasonable demands on your time, but behind the front lines of engagement you need to create some semblance of peace and quiet. Unfortunately, the current chaos in your life may not quiet down for a few more days as the Moon's visit to your 7th House of Others will likely call you into action. You might not be sure of your path yet, but you can buy yourself some time by choosing the right people to be around. Your heightened sensitivity means it's more important than ever to surround yourself with those who support your dreams.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your current annoyance on the job can't be directed at anyone in particular today, making it nearly impossible to express your true feelings. Put your emotional angst to good use by tackling a significant project. However, trying to finish it right away will only reactivate your frustration now. Pace yourself to prevent burning out before your work is done.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

The power of romantic inspiration wakes you up when the evocative Moon struggles with imaginative Neptune in your 5th House of Love. But nothing is simple now; your spiritual goals are not easily integrated with your emotional life. Nevertheless, it's productive to talk about what is important to you as long as you don't expect a quick fix to your current dilemma. Patience is the key which unlocks the solution to your quest for happiness.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

There's an edge to your emotional instability today that encourages you to roll with the unexpected waves coming your way. Don't bother constructing a barrier to keep the changes at bay, for this tired strategy just won't work. Instead, utilize clever Mercury's presence in your 12th House of Soul Consciousness to create a strong spiritual foundation that can't be shaken by external events. No matter how busy you are now, find time to recharge your soul.



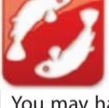
Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Processing all the fantastic images that float into your awareness now can be rather overwhelming. Whatever your intentions are for the day, don't avoid the immediate tasks at hand. Luckily, you might be able to accomplish something important with what you learn today. You won't likely feel comfortable if you focus only on production when your imagination is so fertile. Ironically, you can find the stability you seek by relinquishing the pursuit of your ambitions and wandering around in your dreams.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You might be considering which of your values aren't reflected in your current career path, yet this self-examination is not cause for despair. Quite likely there are lessons waiting for you now, but you must accept your vulnerability before you can appreciate the knowledge. Don't take the easy way out by withdrawing into silence today. Express yourself, even if it could wound your pride. The walls you build for protection also keep out the joy.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may have meticulously planned your day down to the last minute, but you face a good chance of seeing reality subtly slip off its hinges, anyway. If unfulfilled relationship desires are creating a cloud of sadness now, don't push the feelings away. Or, if your job is a source of headaches today, just bite the bullet and meet your responsibilities. Regardless of what issues you face, stick to your initial agenda the best you can. Your dogged persistence will bring rewards if you stop asking questions and get to work.

WORD SEARCH

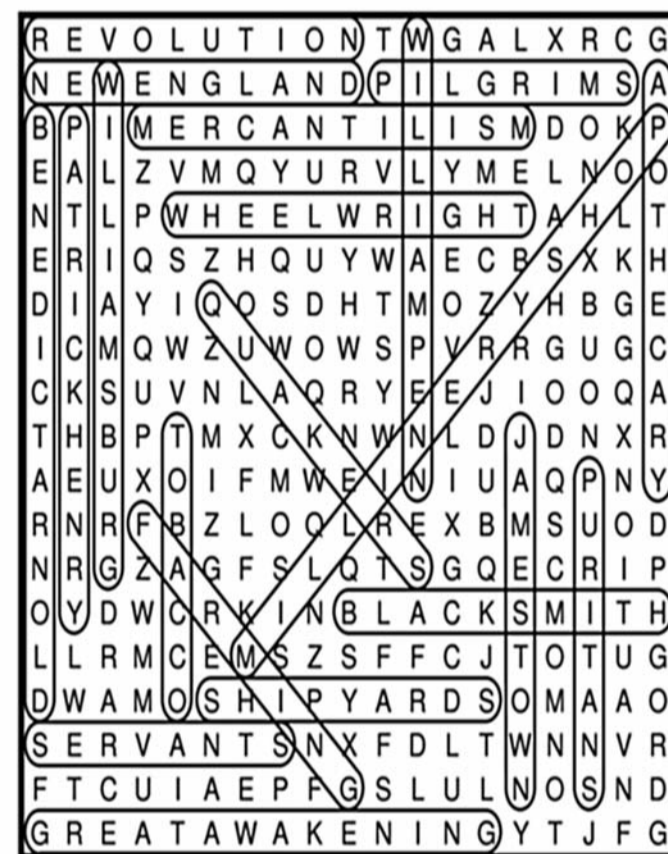
ON THE DANUBE WORD SEARCH PUZZLE



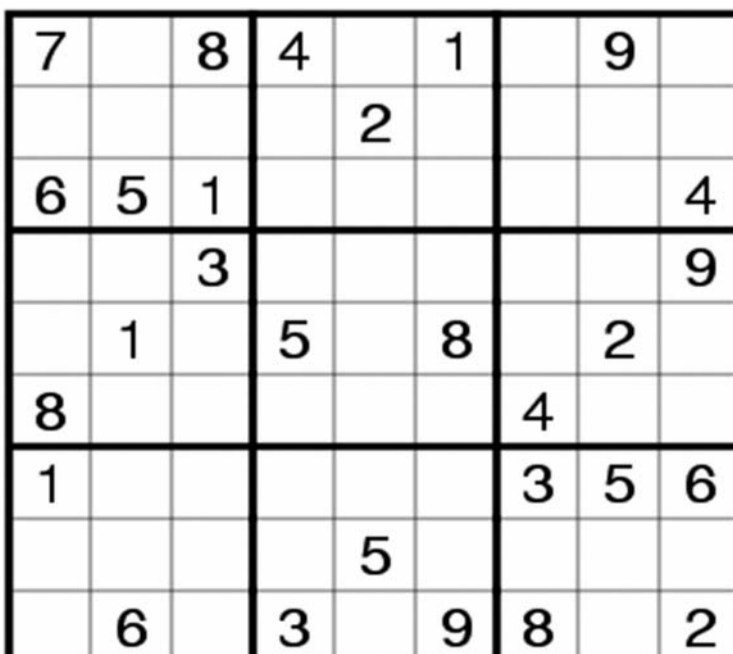
- AUSTRIA
- BELGRADE
- BLACK FOREST
- BLACK SEA
- BRIDGES
- BUDAPEST
- DANUBE DELTA
- DONAU AUEN
- EUROPE
- FREIGHT SHIPS
- FRUSKA GORA
- GERMANY
- HUNGARY
- IRON GATE
- ISLANDS
- REGENSBURG
- RIVER BOATS
- ROMANIA
- SLOVAKIA
- VIENNA

Yesterday Solution

SOLUTION TO COLONIAL AMERICA PUZZLE



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



Rick Ross on new album, Meek Mill and 50 Cent beef

For Rick Ross, it's been a juggling act for the self-proclaimed "bawse." The Grammy-nominated rapper is set to release his eighth album, "Black Market," on Dec 4, but his life is busy with more than just music. In a wide-ranging interview with The Associated Press, 38-year-old Ross touches on several topics, from releasing music to his ongoing beef with 50 Cent to the issues between his signees, Meek Mill and Wale.

AP: You've released so much music in the last two years. What has motivated you?

Ross: I'm just reminding the culture, reminding the streets exactly the boss' position, and why I'm the biggest and will remain the biggest.

AP: What do you want listeners to take away from 'Black Market'?

Ross: 'Black Market' is the purest representation of me at my most comfortable form. The music is soulful and layered. It's sophisticated, but it's street.

AP: It seems like you've found your groove musically.

Ross: I'm in the most comfortable place in the music that I make. Depending on the moment, it determines the type of music that I make. This album was much more precise.

AP: You've lost nearly 100 pounds. Are you still being healthy?

Ross: Yes. I'm at my lowest weight right now as we speak.

AP: How much do you weigh?

Ross: I'm right around 275.

AP: You and 50 Cent had an exchange on social media recently. Why do you think he continues to attack you?

Ross: You ever ask yourself that?

AP: I thought the beef was a done deal, but it keeps coming up... Ross: Is it beef?

AP: Yes. People still look at it as beef.

Ross: Are you aware of his current financial status?

AP: 50 Cent filed for bankruptcy this year.

Ross: And when companies and corporations usually file for bankruptcy then, what?

AP: You tell me.

Ross: You do that when it's over. It's called 'when it's over.' So rest in peace. R.I.P. Other than that, we are running around New York City (50 Cent's hometown) as we speak. The excitement in these streets for the new album, I'm dropping new remixes, I've been in the game since '06 and nobody has ever stepped on one of my sneakers. Not one, ya dig. That speaks for itself. There's a lot of talking and tweeting in this industry, but who really getting money? Don't ever get it twisted. You see Jay Z, you see Puff Daddy, and right around there somewhere, you see (Rick Ross) is in the starting lineup. We put new chlorine in the pool weekly. It's a lot of distractions that's meant to distract you from staying focused. In the majority of the time, the distractions aren't even worth it, especially when you have single-handedly torn something down that you've once respected and admired to the point where they are nothing. I think that's the testament to the MMG (Maybach Music Group) brand, as we continue to grow, sign new artists, create new ventures, our net worth has only tripled in the last three years. I think for young entrepreneurs, that is what's important. Not no flossing (stuff), but on some keeping your lights on long-term type-of-(stuff). Let's remain creative with no boundaries. It doesn't matter which state you are from, what gang you're in or country you are from. Let's put some big thinkers together and make something that'll last a lineage. That's what I'm about. My homies are giving promotions, we're empowering people. We are not firing and tearing down. We're not chasing behind



actresses. We don't get our booties licked. We live by principles. It's a certain code of ethics. As men in our position, there will be problems, there will be disagreements, but as ... kings, it's certain things we don't do.

AP: There was some friction between your label mates Meek Mill and Wale. How is their relationship now?

Ross: It came and went. When things have potential to (become) something that's a problem, then I may get involved. ...I know in 10 years, they will be the same executives, if they are no longer artists, giving the next

generation the right input. ...My job is to make sure they don't take it (too far) ... which will never happen. I put my life on that.

AP: There have been talks of your broken engagement with Lira Galore. Can you clear that up?

Ross: This is what I'm going to clear up: I'm happy and I'm living. That's what it is. Rozay is so happy. That's what life is about, being happy. — AP

In this file photo, rapper Rick Ross performs at Power 105 Powerhouse 2015 at Barclays Center in Brooklyn, New York. —AP photos



In this Oct 7, 2015 file photo, Bebe Neuwirth attends a special screening of 'Truth' at The Museum of Modern Art in New York. — AP

Neuwirth to join faculty of Manhattan School of Music

Bebe Neuwirth is going back to school - the Emmy and Tony winner will be artistic adviser at the Manhattan School of Music's new bachelor's degree program in musical theater. The program is only the second musical theater degree program in the US to be offered at an independent conservatory. It launches in fall 2016.

Neuwirth won the Tony in 1997 for her portrayal of jazz-age killer Velma Kelly in "Chicago." She returned 10 years later as merry murderess Roxie Hart. She also played Matron "Mama" Morton, making history as the first actress to play all three female principal parts. Her other Broadway credits include "The Addams Family," "Fosse," "A Chorus Line," "Sweet Charity" and "Damn Yankees." She also played Dr Lilith Sternin in "Cheers" and "Frasier." — AP

Florence and the Machine to headline US summer fests

English rock act Florence and the Machine will headline two US summer music festivals, which announced lineups months before expected amid growing competition. Florence and the Machine, led by the theatrical yet introspective singer Florence Welch, will play the May 20-22 Hangout festival on Alabama's Gulf coast and the June 16-19 Firefly Music Festival in Delaware. Firefly, which was created in 2012 to give a major festival to the densely populated US East Coast, announced a comprehensive lineup Wednesday that also included English folk rockers Mumford and Sons, the hard-edged Kings of Leon and leading house music DJ Deadmau5.

The Hangout festival, announcing its lineup on Tuesday, will also feature R&B sensation The Weeknd, star DJ Calvin Harris and veteran rocker Lenny Kravitz. The festivals announced lineups months before previous years amid a proliferation in the

United States of music festivals, which have become the key money-makers for the music industry but have put pressure on promoters to book prominent acts. Coachella, arguably the most prominent festival which takes place in April in the California desert, generally starts the announcement season in January.

Next year is expected to see even more festivals. In New York City alone, promoters are seeking to create two more major music events in addition to Governors Ball which launched in 2011. Florence and the Machine earlier this year won wide praise for a headlining set at England's celebrated Glastonbury festival, where the band stepped in for Foo Fighters whose frontman Dave Grohl broke his leg. Besides Florence and the Machine, another leading British singer, Ellie Goulding, will play both the Hangout and Firefly festivals. — AFP



In this June 5, 2015 file photo, Florence and the Machine perform during the Governors Ball Music Festival on Randall's Island Park in New York. — AFP

Mountains may depart, says Tibetan filmmaker

Snow-capped mountains, endless grasslands, smiling monks: Tibetan filmmaker Pema Tseden's latest vision of his homeland, shot in stark black and white, relegates these to the background. Stereotypes of the Himalayan region are deeply ingrained in China, whose six million Tibetans—less than half of one percent of the total population—are often presented to the Han majority as exotic and rugged features of the wild west, framed more as a tourist attraction than people.

But Tseden's films, featuring all-Tibetan casts and almost entirely in Tibetan, mostly deal with the collision between modern life and traditional culture, and its impact on the individual. "Some people think Tibetans are very mysterious and mystical, that they live in the sky, but through my works I want to show Tibetans are ordinary people and change some people's thinking," Tseden told AFP. It is a daunting task, with Tseden fighting against a narrative often reinforced by China's vast state media and propaganda machine as it seeks to promote "ethnic unity" and snuff out any sign of what Beijing sees as separatism.

His latest work "Tharlo" opens with the title character, a shepherd, reciting from memory "To Serve the People" in Mandarin Chinese, a passage from revolutionary leader Mao Zedong's Little Red Book, and hoping he will live up to its Communist ideals. It follows him as he travels from the pastures to the city to get a photo for his government identity card. Tharlo finds his austere existence called into question after meeting a hairdresser who promises she will run away with him, if only they had the money from selling Tharlo's flock—not all of which he owns.

"He is confused about his own identity, he's not really sure about it, so he needs to go looking," Tseden said. "In Tibetan areas, this kind of case is still very common." The character's dilemma reflects Tseden's personal transformation as a son of nomads who now shows films at international festivals. A soft-spoken man who rarely shows emotion, he is clearly uncomfortable in the spotlight himself. "Tharlo" cost little more than \$300,000 and took only two months to film and edit. But it is currently facing off against works by titans Jia Zhangke and Hou Hsiao-hsien—who won the best director award at Cannes this year—at the world's premiere festival of Chinese cinema, Taiwan's Golden Horse.

It is among the five nominees in both the best feature and best director categories, with the winners to be announced on Saturday (Nov 21). The monochrome footage mutes the towering mountains that are the centerpiece of many films about Tibet, and highlights the contrasts of China's efforts to modernize underdeveloped areas. One exterior shot of Tharlo's mud brick home shows towering pylons standing alongside, while the hovel itself lacks electricity. A review on the website of trade publication Screen International said it was "a beautifully judged picture from a director to note".

Minority report

Born in 1969 in a Tibetan area of Qinghai province, Tseden said he knows many Tibetans like Tharlo, who may not be able to read a single Chinese character but have memorized propaganda that was forced on everyone of a certain age in China. Even so he grew

up loving the slapstick comedy of Charlie Chaplin. After graduating from university he spent a year as a government official before going back to school, first studying translation and then cinema at the prestigious Beijing Film Academy. His 2005 movie "The Silent Holy Stones" was the first full-length film to be shot entirely in Tibetan.



This photo taken on November 12, 2015 shows Tibetan filmmaker Pema Tseden in the Beijing Film Academy theater in Beijing before a screening of his new film 'Tharlo'. — AFP

As a whole, the Chinese film industry is booming, with ticket sales for domestically made films raking in 16.2 billion yuan (\$2.5 billion) last year, up 27 percent, according to the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television, which regulates the media and censors its output. But despite international acclaim, minority films have a precarious future in China, not least because of a dearth of cinemas in Tibetan regions, with most films watched on pirated DVDs. "Compared to mainstream Chinese-language films and commercial movies, the space for development for ethnic minority films is small," Tseden said.

"It's hard for a film that's made on the fringe to integrate into the wider market... and one reason is censorship." Authorities have stopped some of his scripts being filmed, although Tseden said he now understands the system better and "Usually there won't be a big problem". Officials only requested minor changes for Tharlo, he said—declining to give details—even though the movie centers on modernization corrupting the shepherd. "Urbanisation has definitely impacted traditional lifestyles and that impact has been huge," Tseden said. "Their lives change, they enter the city, a new environment, and they can't adapt, they can't survive." — AFP

Adele releases new single, but will her album '25' hit Spotify?

British singer Adele released a new single Tuesday from her forthcoming album "25" on YouTube—which quickly topped 1 million views—but it remains unclear if the Nov 20 album will be coming to Spotify. The single, a live version of "When We Were Young," generated nearly 1.7 million views in the first 14 hours on Adele's Vevo channel on YouTube. "25," her first album since 2011's "21," is currently available to pre-order from Apple's iTunes, Google Play and Amazon.com (on digital, and vinyl), slated to be released Friday.

But "25" may not be making its way to Spotify, according to a report by the Verge. The hangup was allegedly that Adele's camp wanted the album to be available only to Spotify's paying subscribers, not on the free, ad-supported service, but the company responded that it was "categorically untrue" that there was a request to keep Adele's new album exclusively on the premium tier. It's worth noting that Spotify currently offers "Hello," the first single released from "25." Adele wouldn't be the first music star to play hardball with Spotify. Last year Taylor Swift's record label pulled her entire catalog from the service in a public spat, with the singer complaining Spotify didn't compensate artists fairly. Meanwhile, Adele's "25" is expected to be available on Apple Music and Google Play Music, given that those services are subscription-only (with no ad-supported versions) — although that might happen a few weeks after the retail launch. — Reuters



Adele



Martin Sheen

Martin Sheen praises son Charlie's courage

"The West Wing" actor Martin Sheen says he wishes he had the courage of his son Charlie Sheen, who has revealed he's HIV-positive. Sheen spoke Tuesday during an event at The Ritz-Carlton resort in Naples, Florida, hours after his son's appearance on NBC's "Today." According to the Naples Daily News, Sheen said his 50-year-old son had been working up to the announcement for months with his family's encouragement.

Sheen said that as he watched his son reveal "his deepest, darkest secret, I couldn't believe the level of courage I was witnessing, and that it was my son." Sheen encouraged support for people struggling with drug and alcohol addictions. He said he hoped the announcement was "the first day of the rest of Charlie's life as a free man." — AP

The essential factors for success

Relationships in life are what keep you going, whether it is was friends, partner or lover, each and every relationship you're a part of is completely different than the other, depending on the person you are dealing with.

People who encourage and cheer you on are the type of people you want to keep around you. They

enjoy watching you grow and bloom, however, others might enjoy watching you be destroyed. What's scary about this is that the people who enjoy watching you break down sometimes seem nicer to you than the people who want to see you succeed.

Nowadays, it's extremely difficult to completely trust someone with your life or be one hundred percent yourself with someone. You hear all these horrible and sad betrayal stories and all about the ideal couple going through an ugly divorce. I feel like a person can make a mature and accurate decision once they've fully matured and experienced life. Sometimes, you need to be broken in order to grow and become a better person, and this is not only for your personal life, but also for your work life and career. Once you've loved and educated yourself, you can make better decisions.

Experiencing life and meeting new people from different backgrounds can give you an incredible outlook in life. If you're around the same people or the same type of people all of your life then it's time for a change. Appreciating

and accepting "different" people is always a humbling and eye-opening experience. Travel, meet new people, listen to their life stories and their struggles, it makes you appreciate what you already have and also encourages you to get what you feel is missing in your life.

Successful people

Education plays a vital role in building your personality and character, and it's not only done by reading books. Experiencing different jobs and positioning is also education as you learn more about your field and the problems you might encounter along the way. The most successful people in their fields are the people who've started from the bottom and worked their way up to the top. Successful never comes without hard work and consistency, but first, you must find yourself and your genuine passion. Ask yourself, what do I love? Who do I want to be? What do I want to be remembered for? Keep in mind the answers to your questions don't necessarily have to be the president of a country nor a good will

ambassador! It can be as simple as being a volunteer at a shelter, a nutritionist, an artist, anything your heart truly loves.

If you're surrounded by people who don't have much going on in their lives, and tend to bring you down for dreaming big then for you to actually accomplish your dreams you need to let go of these negative people. Many people have so much potential but are dragged down because of who they decide to be around, that could be your husband/wife, partner, friend, colleague, whoever it is that you have in your life should want to see you do better and succeed. These people need to love you for your first and foremost then for any other reason.

Never accept anything less for yourself than what you give for others. You set the tone of your life and the only factor standing between yourself and success is you. Your brain is much more powerful than you know. Use it wisely.



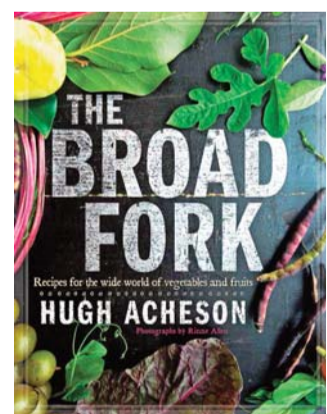
For all your gift giving needs: The best food books of 2015

By J M HIRSCH

Have you ordered your copy of the latest five-ingredient-paleo-gluten-free-Nordic-kale smoothie cookbook yet? Me neither. You know why? Because nobody outside hipster man bun-loving enclaves in Brooklyn and Los Angeles actually eats that way. Just don't tell the publishing industry, which forever seems to trip over itself to get into ink whatever outrageous culinary fad crosses the editors' Facebook feeds. Surely there's a better way... Until then, we're left to sift through the thousands of food books spewed forth each year. And we do it with particular fervor during this season of gifting as we search for books to satiate the foodies on our lists. So to save you a bit of trouble, I've assembled my list of the most useful, most inspiring and most interesting food books of 2015. In no particular order:

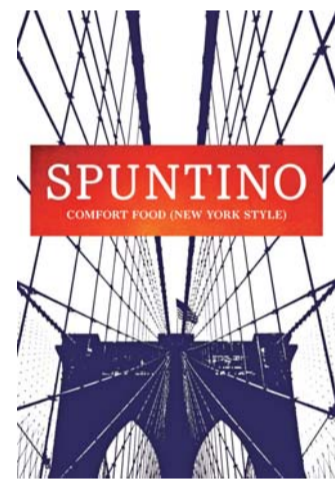


1. **"Kitchen Hacks: How Clever Cooks Get Things Done" by Cook's Illustrated magazine (America's Test Kitchen, \$19.95)**
The folks at Cook's Illustrated magazine have long collected kitchen tips and hacks from readers - the original culinary crowdsourcing. Now they've gathered their top 1,000 tips into one book (perfectly sized for stuffing in stockings). Nicely organized by circumstance (such as cleaning, food storage and how to transport things), the book is an amusing collection of ways to help you get the job done. Ideas include how to tame the tears when chopping onions (burn a candle), what to do when avocado pits get stuck on your knife (tap it on the counter) and how to pit olives using an upside down funnel (you'll just have to see that one for yourself). There are also some easy recipe hacks, including my favorite - how to use dry sherry, vanilla and liquid smoke to improve the flavor of cheap bourbon.

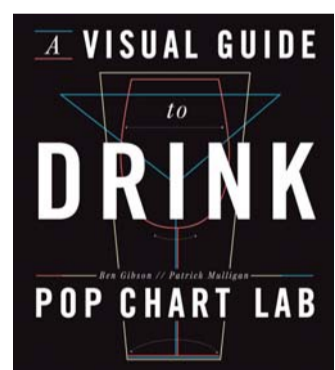


2. **"The Broad Fork" by Hugh Acheson (Clarkson Potter, \$35)**
This is Southern-by-way-of-Canada Hugh Acheson's gorgeous ode to produce, and it is seriously inspiring. As in, the man makes a bowl of kohlrabi puree look (and taste) decadent, and that's no easy task. Blissfully, the book isn't vegetarian, but it does show you how to truly enjoy your veggies. Organized by season, then by vegetable, the book guides the reader through simple - yet sensual - ways to eat more plants. I mean, fried Brussels sprouts with lime vinaigrette? Poached eggs over sunchoke hash? Sautéed parsnips with country ham, parsley and basil? One of each, please. This is a

prime contender for best cookbook of year.



3. **"Spuntino: Comfort Food (New York Style) by Russell Norman (Bloomsbury, \$45)**
A London restaurateur idealizing New York City food and drink? Sounds like doomed carpet bagging. But Russell Norman captures if not a Big Apple vibe, at least a taste of comfort you will crave. The book, named for Norman's London eatery, is a gorgeous romp through visceral recipes you will crave. Things like mackerel sliders, eggplant chips with fennel yogurt, and a salad of ribbon steak, chicory and anchovy. Make no mistake: This is Brit gastro pub grub, but it's tinged with a New York flavor. And the section on Prohibition-era cocktails certainly ups the appeal.

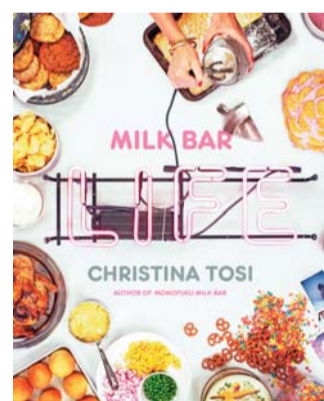


4. **"A Visual Guide to Drink" by Ben Gibson, Patrick Mulligan and Pop Chart Lab (Avery, \$30)**
This is a book I was prepared to hate. When you first open it, it seems like just page after page of charts and graphs that leave you feeling a bit like you've stumbled into a nightmare PowerPoint presentation. Then you start reading and you get sucked in by the minimalist presentation of gobs upon gobs of cool facts, figures and lesser known tidbits about everything drinks.

5. **"What Katie Ate on the Weekend" by Katie Quinn Davies (Viking Studio, \$40)**
Speaking of books I wanted to hate... There is a growing genre of cookbooks that seem to exist mostly to let you know that the authors' lives are more beautiful, more delicious and way more fun than your own. Australian food photographer and blogger Katie



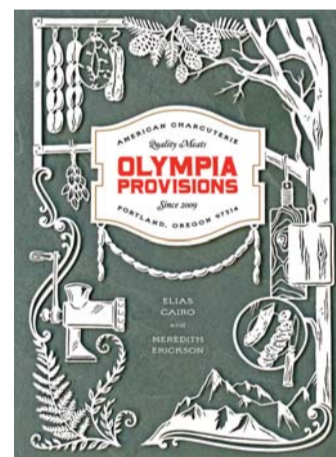
here. Except I was drawn to her book anyway. And I became convinced her life really is more beautiful, more delicious and way more fun than my own. In fact, her book - a follow to her first, "What Katie Ate" (also the name of her blog) - is beautifully photographed (no shock since that's her day gig) and the recipes are truly appealing. I want her spiced squash and apple soup with bacon, and her crab, lemon and chili spaghetti (even if I have to wade through dozens of pages of lifestyle photos to get to them). Get this book for the person who wants to get lost in - and inspired by - a cookbook.



6. **"Milk Bar Life" by Christina Tosi (Clarkson Potter, \$35)**
If "What Katie Ate on the Weekend" is all about aspirational eating, Christina Tosi's book is dedicated to embracing your grubby inner child. Deliciously so. As the pastry chef and owner of Momofuku Milk Bar, she made a name for herself with crazy good creations like compost cookies, crack pie and cereal milk ice cream. Her latest book pulls her more into savory territory, but with the same sense of whimsy. Many of the recipes are riffs on the banal eats she (and many of us) had growing up. And so she gives us slow cooker cocktail meatballs (complete with a bottle of Heinz Chili Sauce), desperation nachos (which allow for Cheez Whiz) and Spaghettios sammy (which is exactly what you think it is). Tosi has a sense of humor. The recipient of this book should, too.

7. **"Olympia Provisions" by Elias Cairo (Ten Speed Press, \$40)**
Elias Cairo is a bit of an icon in the food world, particularly on the Portland, Oregon, scene, where his Olympia Provisions has

become a revered institution. What started as a salumeria has morphed into a mail order business, two restaurants and now a book. This is a book to inspire carnivorous cravings. Are you likely to tackle its three-page recipe for homemade chorizo? Probably not. But you will LOVE the centerfold spread of 19 creative ways to dress hot dogs. Get this book for the meat geek in your life (because it also has ample recipes for using charcuterie, even if you're not ambitious enough to make it from scratch).



8. **"The New Sugar and Spice" by Samantha Seneviratne (Ten Speed Press, \$27.50)**
And I'll wrap with something to satisfy the holiday sugar rush. Samantha Seneviratne has a fresh approach to what can feel like a tired niche - the baking book. She organizes her beautifully photographed cookbook by spice, so chapters are sorted by cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla and so on. It's a different way to peruse - and be inspired by - a baking book. And tucked inside those chapters are approachable and creative takes on classic treats. So you get brownies laced with cinnamon, a frosted chocolate cake spiked with an impressive tablespoon of nutmeg, and an orange pull-apart bread flavored with cloves. Great for the home baker eager for fresh ideas.—AP



This photo provided by Horne shows Tse Tse porcelain and gold-glazed cups that are one of the unique products available at Dering Hall.

Setting up a new home is just a click away

In a connected world, nesting's a lot easier than it used to be. There are apps and websites that streamline many aspects of setting up and dismantling a home. Whether you're trying to get rid of old stuff, buy new stuff, move stuff or find ways to use your stuff, chances are there's an app (or at least a website) for that.

Move it

There was a time when moving out of an old place and into a new one was a daunting logistical challenge, especially for the unorganized or inexperienced. How do you find a reliable moving company? What do you need to know to prepare and execute a successful move?

Unpakt.com lets you compare over 600 pre-screened, licensed, local or interstate moving firms, read credentials and reviews, and book online. Plug in the size of your home, the date you want to move, locations, and any additional needs like storage or extra drop-off stops. You can live-chat with an adviser. There's info and an app for setting up your moving timeline and making an inventory.

Move Advisor also helps with an inventory, and calculates how many boxes and furniture blankets you're likely to need, as well as estimating the requisite moving capacity of any truck you're thinking of renting for a DIY move. If you decide to go with pros, you can email your inventory directly to them. An online timeline tracks your to-do list.

Lose it

New York-based AptDeco.com was founded by Kalam Dennis and Reham Fagiri as an alternative to Craigslist after they learned that 10.8 million tons of furniture goes to landfills each year. They hoped to make it easier to unload unwanted furnishings or find something new. Want to sell that old dresser you got from your uncle? AptDeco provides pricing advice, promotion, picks up the item, and handles the financial transaction.

MoveLoot.com is another online consignment marketplace, whose tagline is "Used is the new New." Launched in San Francisco, they're also in Raleigh/Durham; Charleston, South Carolina; Atlanta; New York City and Los Angeles. The company has its own warehouses and teams that will pick up, deliver and set up the objects you're looking to buy or sell. Recent items posted included a Restoration Hardware king-size bed frame for \$878, a Hekman shagreen chair for \$410 and a red Ikea tub chair for a cool \$25. The app keeps you apprised of bids.

Decorate it

You could ask your style-savvy best friend for decorating advice, but wouldn't it be nice if a pro was available? Well, for a relatively small fee you can tap into an online brain trust of hundreds of design professionals.

West Elm offers free help with things like designing and measuring a floor plan, decorating, and choosing paint and fabrics. For a fee, they've got pros who can come help with everything from wall-mounting a TV to painting a room to hanging shelves, art and curtains.

Laurel & Wolf, a Los Angeles online interior design marketplace, connects people with interior designers. Upload some photos and answer questions about your space, budget, lifestyle and



This photo provided by The Swatch Box shows a batik indigo pillow that is a popular item on Swatch Box's site.

taste, and you'll receive "First Looks" from several interior designers. You review the ideas and select one designer with whom to work. They send you back a style board, furniture plan, instructions and shopping list.

Kimberly Valente, one of Laurel & Wolf's design partners, recently helped a Santa Monica couple who were moving in together and didn't like each other's stuff. They agreed they wanted a beachy, casual vibe. Valente suggested some kitchen backsplash and counter upgrades as well as new lighting, and a soothing palette of ocean blue and sand.



This photo provided by The Swatch Box shows home decor items curated by a stylist for those who join Swatch Box.

— AP photos

The Fountain app connects you to interior decorators, handymen, gardening experts and tech folks. You can talk over your project by video-chat, and the experts can sketch out ideas on your posted images.

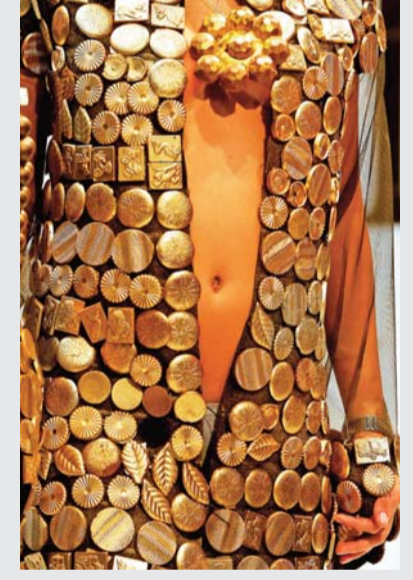
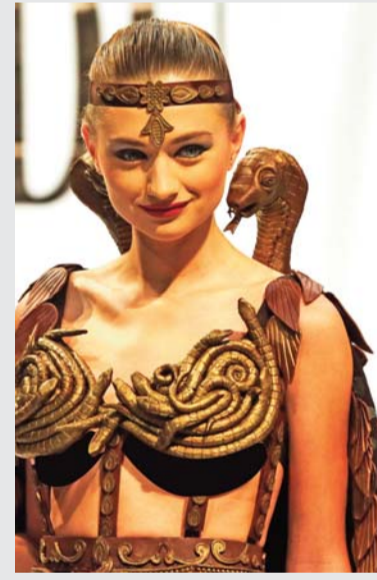
If you're a member at The Swatchbox.com, you complete a style-preference survey and get matched with a stylist, who curates a quarterly collection of items for your space and sends them to you - throws, pillows, bedding and entertaining items, for instance. You keep what you want and send back the rest.

Finally, if you like higher-end dEcor or have a favorite designer, check out www.deringhall.com. There's a "shop the look" section where you can surf professionally designed spaces and buy similar furnishings. It's an interesting mix of aspirational and inspirational decor. — AP

Beirut Cooking Festival



A model spreads chocolate and gold dust as she stands by the creators of her dress, international fashion designer Abed Mahfouz (right) and the Chocolate artist (left) who executed the idea, during a fashion show with chocolate dresses on the occasion of Beirut Cooking Festival. — AFP photos



Models display dresses made out of chocolate during a fashion show with chocolate dresses on the occasion of Beirut Cooking Festival in the Lebanese capital. — AFP photos

BOMBERG launch event held by Bomberg and Behbehani Group

BOMBERG, the new Swiss Watchmaking brand that's causing a stir, and Behbehani Group launched the brand in TikTok, Soku - The Avenues on Monday November 9th. Ali Morad Behbehani, President of Morad Yousuf Behbehani Group, Rick De La Croix, Chairman of BOMBERG and Jacques Tedeschi, Sales Director of BOMBERG Middle East, commenced the event with an introduction of the brand before allowing the media and customers to view the BOMBERG collection.

"It is a great honour to collaborate with such an amazing company as Morad Yousuf Behbehani Group for BOMBERG. Being represented by the most prominent partner here in this

wonderful country, Kuwait, is a fantastic opportunity for us" said Rick De La Croix.

BOMBERG is based in Neuchatel, the cradle of the Swiss watchmaking. Swiss Made and high-quality brand, BOMBERG is making noise all over the world with its unconventional design, audacious communication and provocative identity which can be seen on Instagram @bombergmea and website www.bomberg.ch. This is foreseen by the concept which completely overturns classic Watchmaking rules to create unusual timepieces.

Launched at the Basel Fair 2014, the BOLT-68 shortly became the major collection of BOMBERG with its patented

bayonet system that turns your exclusive timepiece into a masculine pocket watch. Together with the 1968 collection, with its unique asymmetric shape takes the wristwatch to a new level opening up new horizons for its trend-setting wearer.

BOMBERG is housed under the luxury retail conglomerate, Behbehani group, with over 75 years of experience. Behbehani Group owns and manages a series of showrooms and stores exclusively for international watch brands as well as jewellery. These showrooms are located in prestigious malls around Kuwait such as Salhiya, 360 MALL, Marina Mall, Souq Sharq, Al-Kout, Laila Gallery, Al-Hamra Luxury Center, The Gate Mall, Behbehani Complex and Tiktok (Soku, The Avenues).

The event, as unconventional as the brand, engaged the media and customers to participate in a selfie competition by selecting from various BOMBERG watches via the selfie box installed in the TikTok showroom. Selfies were uploaded onto Tik Tok Facebook page so contestants would share their pictures. Two selfie's with the most likes won a BOMBERG watch each - The winners were announced on November 15, 2015.



Fashion



Dresses worn by French style and fashion icon Jacqueline de Ribes are displayed at the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on Tuesday in New York. — AP photos

New Met exhibit celebrates style of Jacqueline de Ribes

When the latest exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute opens this week, celebrating the style of French fashion figure Jacqueline de Ribes, an important guest will be missing: The 86-year-old de Ribes herself. In the wake of the horrific Paris terror attacks, "she felt it would be unseemly to celebrate," said the exhibit's curator, Harold Koda. Despite canceling her trip, however, de Ribes noted in a statement that she hopes the show "will represent the joy associated with the freedom of creation."

De Ribes, born to aristocratic parents in 1929, was a unique figure in fashion for much of the 20th century, beginning in her '20s when she was already landing on best-dressed lists. She was famously photographed by Richard Avedon and termed a "swan" by Truman Capote. Not content to simply wear the designs of others, she often had dressmakers make her own designs for her, and in the 1980s she came to New York and launched her own design business, despite the perception that aristocrats like her (she's a countess) didn't get involved in commerce.

Haute couture client

In a walk through the exhibit earlier this week, Koda explained that it was hard to find early dresses that de Ribes wore, because she gave clothes to charity through the 1960s. Luckily for the museum, she kept many of her clothes from 1975 onward - both her haute couture gowns, and her own designs. Still, Koda said, "It was hard to convince her to do the show, because there's a side of her that wanted to keep things private." Koda convinced her, though, by proposing that the show focus on her creative arc, from a little

girl who made costumes, to the haute couture client who always had changes made to garments she bought, to the eventual designer she became.

"She was always making things," Koda said. "Jacqueline De Ribes: The Art of Style" is composed of items from her personal collection, half designed by others - like Yves Saint Laurent, Emanuel Ungaro and Valentino - and half of her own design. After passing by a giant black-and-white Avedon portrait of de Ribes, in profile with a long black braid, visitors will spot a photo of de Ribes and her sister, as little girls, dressed in fringed hula skirts that Jacqueline made from shredded potato sacks.

A daywear section shows de Ribes was an early devotee of the current concept of "mixing high and low," combining elegant pieces with sporty streetwear, and also mixing designers - some 20 years before it became the norm. She was an aficionado of down winter coats, and there's a Norma Kamali "sleeping bag coat" on display, in a pinkish red, worn over de Ribes' self-designed light pink sweater dress and brown sable hat. Nearby, in the cocktail section, there's a sparkly summer evening dress by Saint Laurent from 1969 - short, with fringes, beads, pearls and sequins. It's one of the few items that de Ribes did not change at all - however, she pairs it here with a dramatic "motoring veil," meant to keep dust out of one's face. "She remembered that she had it somewhere," Koda said. "She remembers everything."

Universal appeal

A set of ruffled, Grecian-style gowns in three different colors - orange and two shades of blue - shows she was

nothing if not practical. "Saint Laurent was closing the couture atelier, and so she got a call asking if she wanted anything. She finds her favorite dress from 1983 and has it done in two other colors," Koda said. De Ribes' own designs - except for her elaborate costumes for balls, and the like - are simple. "She likes ornament," Koda said, "but the best description was in Women's Wear Daily: 'Spare ribs.' A kind of simplicity."

She loves drama, but in the end she's very disciplined." The show also features a set of casual photos, several showing de Ribes engaging in sports. A photo of her waterskiing on one ski caught the curator's eye. "Jacqueline," Koda recalls telling her, "I'm surprised that you're wearing a turban in that photo!" "Harold," she told him. "I had no intention of falling in!" Koda also said de Ribes feared the show might not have universal appeal. "Will young girls be interested?" he said she asked him. "Does anyone want to be elegant, rather than sexy?" She might as well have looked back at one of her own quotes, one that's written on a wall at the exhibit: "I totally disagree with Christian Dior, who once said that one could never look sexy and be elegant at the same time," the quote reads. "It is just more difficult, that's all!" —AP

This Nov 20, 1959 file photo shows Viscountess Jacqueline de Ribes, right, with actress Miiko Taka from the film, "Sayonara," at the Embassy Ball at the Waldorf Astoria in New York. — AP photos



Kendall Jenner (left) and Kylie Jenner arrive at Chadstone Shopping Centre in Melbourne yesterday. — AFP photos



Kendall Jenner (right) receives a hug from a fan.

KENDALL AND KYLIE JENNER TOUR: FAN FAINTS AT THROBBLING MELBOURNE APPEARANCE

Chanting, screaming, fainting - Kendall and Kylie Jenner's appearance at a Melbourne shopping Centre had it all. The heirs to the Kardashian crown (or is that crown?) can certainly draw a crowd, with fans lining up as early as 9am to get a glimpse of the famous sisters in the flesh. Chadstone became a heaving, sweating moshpit on Wednesday afternoon as tens of thousands of screaming teens mobbed the barricades both inside and outside the fashion capital. But the girls had little to say for themselves. Arriving 15 minutes late, they briefly waved at the crowd before sitting down to a very well-oiled autograph session.

"I love you guys and I can't wait to come back and thank you so much for having us," Victoria's Secret model Kendall told the crowd. Burly security guards were there to pull away fans who'd been lingering in front of the Jenners for too long, while fan photos were only allowed via a professional photographer. As time wore on and the shops started to close, exhausted fans started to go home, many of them without even getting a glimpse of Kendall, 20, or Kylie, 18. Still, the deafening screams that greeted the Jenners when they walked on stage showed just how loved and adored they were.

Boys in the crowd bought bouquets of roses in vain, while chants of "Kendall! Kylie!" filled Chadstone before the superstars had even arrived. With a combined social media reach of 127 million, it's no wonder they create hysteria wherever they go. One boy in the audience named Montell described the Kardashians as like his own family. "I love Kendall and Kylie," he gushed. "They're just very confident and beautiful and I love how they explore their personalities through their style."

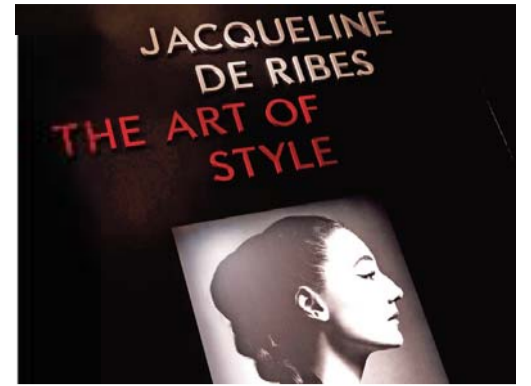
For others, it was the sisterly bond between the pair. "I have an older sister so I feel like I can relate to their connection. I

find them so entertaining," said Millie, 16, from Canterbury. Love them or hate them, the screaming fans who chased the Jenners' SUV all the way out of Chadstone in scenes reminiscent of Princess Diana or The Beatles shows this famous family is going to be around for a while.

— www.smh.com

Kendall Jenner and Kylie Jenner fans wait for them to arrive at Chadstone Shopping Centre.





A painting of the iconic Swiss Alpine mountain Matterhorn is projected onto the Swiss House of Parliament during a light show entitled 'Rendez-vous Bundesplatz' on November 16, 2015 at the Swiss capital Bern. The show runs twice every evening until November 29.— AFP

Honoring a loved one during a day of celebration

In the days leading up to her wedding, Lauren Chertok was heartbroken. Her beloved Aunt Rosie, who taught her to make meatballs and often came over for Sunday dinners, died just two weeks before her big day, leaving her large family enveloped in sadness. "It was hard to celebrate and be so happy when everybody was mourning my aunt and grieving her," Chertok, 24, said of her mother's eldest sister, Rosie Van Acker, the aunt and godmother who was like Chertok's second mom.

Chertok felt that her aunt, who died on June 20 at age 76, would have wanted her to carry

of them from Chertok's Sweet 16 party at the reception, and lit a candle in her honor. The 250 guests who gathered at the Larkfield in East Northport, New York, raised a glass to Aunt Rosie, and a favorite Italian song played as well.

Fitting tribute

In ways big and small, many brides and grooms honor lost loved ones on their wedding day. The tributes, silent or overt or somewhere in between, are a good idea for those who are missing somebody important that day, said San Francisco wedding planner

is important to honor that person who is close to you, but maintain the positivity and look ahead to the life change and union of two people," said Jamie Miles, managing editor of TheKnot.com. To come up with a fitting tribute, consider your relationship with the person. What did he enjoy? What are your memories of her? "It's all about making it a personalized remembrance and what feels right to you," Miles said. Kalabokes said many couples are worried about bringing their guests down on what is supposed to be a happy day. She recommends talking with each other and with family members to see what everyone is comfortable with, so nobody is caught off guard.

Subtle tribute

There are many ways to remember a loved one, from traditional to creative and personal. For a traditional approach, list the person's name in the program, or dedicate a poem or reading. Light a candle in his or her honor, or have a moment of silence during the ceremony. Couples sometimes leave an empty chair, often in the front row with a flower on top, as a tribute. A popular reception tribute is the display of photos of departed relatives. A loved one's special cooking creation, say chocolate chip cookies, can be served with dessert or handed out as a favor. Or, couples can make a charitable donation in the person's honor instead of a favor.

For a more subtle tribute, a bride may stitch a memento under her gown, such as a piece of her mother's wedding gown, or wear a loved one's garter. Wearing keepsake jewelry or cuff links from departed relatives keeps them close. Or include a beloved flower, even a favorite color, in the bridal bouquet. One bride who lost her mom about 18 months before her wedding released butterflies after the ceremony, and used a butterfly motif on printed items and the cake, said Kalabokes, owner of Dream a Little Dream Events.

"Everyone knew the mother loved butterflies," she said. "It was her thing." Weddings are already emotional days, and thinking about someone who died may not be right for everyone. For Chertok, the tributes were a comfort. "She did so much for me growing up and for my family," Chertok said, "that doing something to honor her meant a lot to me." — AP

Kathryn Kalabokes. "A wedding is the one time that everyone would be there, and when you've lost someone, especially during the planning process, it can be very devastating," she said. "The best thing to do is to honor them because you know that person would have been there and been a significant part of the wedding."

A tribute, though, should feel right for a celebratory day, nothing too somber or serious. "It



Photo provided by Kathryn Kalabokes shows family wedding photos that the bridal couple displayed as a tribute to their lost loved ones at their wedding reception at Bimbo's 365 Club, in San Francisco. — AP photos



This July 2015 photo provided by Lauren Chertok shows a framed photograph of Chertok and her aunt, Rosie Van Acker, who died two weeks before her wedding.



This July 5, 2015 photo provided by Lauren Chertok shows Chertok holding her bouquet on her wedding day.



This Dec 30, 2011 photo provided by Kathryn Kalabokes shows a bride wearing her grandmother's vintage diamond pinky ring as a tribute to her on her wedding day at Aquatic Park, in San Francisco.

on. She did, marrying Josh Gutes as planned on July 5, a very happy day despite the raw pain. Still, the bride, a kindergarten teacher who lives in Nesconset, New York, felt she had to do something to represent and honor Rosie at the happy celebration of her marriage so "we didn't forget what our family just went through."

Chertok pinned a small photo of Aunt Rosie to her bouquet, displayed a photo of the two