

**Essa clarifies 'preferring private schools' statement**



**Turkey to get cash, closer ties with EU**



**Rosberg wins season-closing Abu Dhabi Grand Prix**



**Sharpshooter Khalil bags Asian player of the year**



## UNDER-FIRE OMAIR MOVED TO PUBLIC WORKS MINISTRY

SALEH NAMED ACTING OIL MINISTER • NOD TO ARAB ANTI-TERROR PACT



Min 12°  
Max 27°  
High Tide 01:22 & 15:44  
Low Tide 09:05 & 20:59

### CMA TO ISSUE SUKUK, BONDS FOR FIRST TIME

**KUWAIT:** Executive Director of the Capital Market Authority (CMA) Nayef Al-Hajraf revealed yesterday plans by the new CMA executive committee to issue Islamic bonds known as sukuk for the private sector. In an interview with pan-Arab television news channel Al-Arabiya, Hajraf said that work is underway on forming a specialized market to issue sukuk, the latest move in CMA's efforts to foster Islamic finance in the country.

Moreover, Hajraf lauded the new CMA executive committee, labeling it superior to its predecessors in addressing shortcomings that plagued the old system. He also noted that the new committee is better equipped at adapting to the latest breakthroughs in finance as well as being more farsighted in developing the financial market.

Hajraf also disclosed that the new committee is exerting efforts to encourage foreign investment. Hajraf also spoke of the CMA's better capabilities of liquidizing shares, which would in turn bolster investment. Hajraf also revealed that the entire financial system is being revamped with the new changes to go into effect before the end of the year.

Established according to law no. 7/2010 and subsequently passed by the parliament in 2010, the CMA works on developing the activities of capital markets in Kuwait. The CMA has bolstered efforts of incorporating principles of Islamic finance, a system in which capital is raised in accordance to sharia, or Islamic law. — KUNA

### AMIR RECEIVES GCC CHIEF



**KUWAIT:** HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah receives Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Secretary General Dr Abdullah bin Rashid Al-Zayani at Bayan Palace yesterday. Zayani briefed the Amir about the most prominent issues on the agenda of the 36th session of the GCC Supreme Council to be held in Saudi Arabia next week. — KUNA

By B Izzak

**KUWAIT:** The government finally carried out a long-awaited Cabinet reshuffle, moving Ali Al-Omair out of the oil ministry to the public works ministry after accepting the resignation of Ahmad Al-Jassar as minister of electricity and water and public works two months after submission. Finance Minister Anas Al-Saleh was appointed acting oil minister while State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah was given the electricity and water portfolio on a temporary basis.

MP Abdulhameed Dashti said the limited Cabinet rearrangement is temporary and a prelude to a wider reshuffle after three months. He gave no further details over his predictions. With the new moves, two problems have been solved, though temporarily. Tomorrow's scheduled questioning of Jassar over allegations of financial and administrative violations in awarding the KD. 1.32 billion contract for the airport expansion project will not take place because the minister has quit.

The new public works minister is not obliged by law to appear for the grilling. The grilling request was filed by MP Saadoun Hammad, who claimed that around KD 600 million in public funds have been squandered. The second problem to be resolved is the dispute in the oil sector between Omair and top executives of state-owned Kuwait Petroleum Corp (KPC) and its subsidiaries.



Ali Al-Omair

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### PM BACKS FRANCE IN FIGHT AGAINST TERROR

**PARIS:** Representative of HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, yesterday reaffirmed support to France in the fight against terrorism. "Kuwait supports the efforts of France and the international community in fighting terrorism which has become a threat to the stability and security of many world countries," Sheikh Jaber said in a statement shortly after arriving in Paris to participate in the

UN conference on climate change.

The prime minister called for collaboration of world countries to confront terrorism, which was rejected by all faiths. He expressed condolences to France and the French people following the Nov 13 attacks in Paris that killed 130 people and injured over 350 others. Sheikh Jaber praised France's "courageous" decision to host the climate summit despite the "terrorist crimes in the French capital".

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### GULF UNWILLING TO TIGHTEN OIL TAPS ALL ALONE

**KUWAIT:** Saudi-led Gulf OPEC members will reject pressure to shoulder the cost of cutting oil production alone despite warnings that prices risk sliding further, officials and analysts say. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, which pump more than half of OPEC's 32 million barrels of daily output, want a solid commitment from all other producers, especially non-OPEC member Russia, to agree to production cuts across the board. "Gulf states will not undertake a unilateral output cut. They need strong cooperation from other producers, mainly Russia, to cut," Kuwaiti oil analyst Kamel Al-Harami told AFP.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries is to hold a crucial meeting on December 4 to study prices, which have fallen around 60 percent since mid-2014. An informal meeting to be attended by some non-OPEC producers will be held the day before. "Gulf producers are not inclined to change their policy of defending market share rather than price despite heavy income losses," Saudi economist Abdulwahab Abu-Dahesh said.

"They realize they will be asked to bear the bulk of any cuts," as none of the other OPEC members are financially in a position to do so and non-OPEC Russia has so far said it will not, Abu-Dahesh told AFP. A senior Gulf oil official said nothing has changed to alter Gulf states' oil policy.

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**PARIS:** HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah is received by Kuwait's Ambassador to France Sami Al-Sulaiman on his arrival in the French capital yesterday. — KUNA (See Page 2)

### RALLIES PRESSURE UN CLIMATE SUMMIT CLASHES ERUPT AT PARIS DEMO

**PARIS:** Tens of thousands of people from Sydney to London joined one of the biggest days of climate change activism yesterday, telling world leaders gathering for a summit in Paris there is "No Planet B" in the fight against global warming. In the French capital, where demonstrations were banned by the authorities after attacks by Islamic State militants killed 130 people on Nov 13, activists laid out more than 20,000 pairs of shoes in the Place de la Republique to symbolize absent marchers.

Among the high heels and sandals were a pair of plain black shoes sent by Pope Francis, who has been a vocal advocate for action to prevent dangerous climate change, and jogging shoes from UN

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. One activist, dressed in white as an angel with large wings, held a sign saying "coal kills". About 10,000 people also joined arms to form a human chain through Paris along the 3-km route of the banned march, organizers said. "This is a moment for the whole world to join hands," said Iain Keith, campaign director for Avaaz, one of the organisers.

Elsewhere, more than 2,000 events were being held in cities including London, Sao Paulo and New York, making it perhaps the biggest day of climate action in history on the eve of the Paris summit which runs from Nov 30-Dec 11 and will be attended by about 150 heads of government. Around the world, activists marched, dressed as polar

bears or penguins at risk from melting ice, or chanted slogans such as "climate justice".

In Sydney, about 45,000 people are estimated to have marched through the central business district towards the Opera House. Protesters held placards reading: "There is no Planet B" and "Say no to burning national forests for electricity". US President Barack Obama and China's Xi Jinping will be among the leaders attending the start of the summit, which organizers hope will produce a first legally binding agreement to commit both rich and developing nations to curbing emissions of greenhouse gases, blamed for warming the planet, beyond 2020.

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**RIYADH:** Aljazi Al-Hossaini, a candidate for the municipal council in the town of Diriyah shows an electoral campaign license issued by the central municipal elections committee yesterday. — AFP

### SAUDI WOMEN LAUNCH MAIDEN ELECTION BID

#### 3 ACTIVISTS BARRED

**RIYADH:** Hundreds of Saudi women began campaigning for public office yesterday, in a first for women in the conservative Muslim kingdom's slow reform process, even as three activists were disqualified. More than 900 women are standing alongside thousands of men in the Dec 12 municipal ballot, which will also mark the first time women are allowed to vote.

"I've been eliminated as a candidate for the municipal elections," Loujain Hathloul said in a tweet. Saudi authorities detained Hathloul for more than two months after she tried to drive into the kingdom last December from the United Arab Emirates, in defiance of a Saudi ban on female motorists. She had said she wanted to run "to increase the percentage of women's participation".

Another driving activist, Tamadour Al-Yami, told AFP her name was also dropped from the final list of authorized candidates. She vowed to appeal, "but I don't think it will change anything." And Nassima Al-Sadah, a human rights activist and would-be candidate in the Gulf coast city of Qatif, said officials informed her late Saturday that her name had been removed. "I don't know why," said Sadah, who was trained in electioneering by the

National Democratic Institute, a Washington non-profit organisation.

Ruled by King Salman, oil-rich Saudi Arabia has no elected legislature and has faced intense Western scrutiny over its rights record. The country's first municipal elections were held in 2005, followed by another vote in 2011. In both cases only men were allowed to participate. From restaurants to banks, offices - and election facilities - the sexes are strictly segregated in the kingdom. "We will vote for the women even though we don't know anything about them," Um Fawaz, a teacher in her 20s, said in Hafr al-Batin city. "It's enough that they are women," she said.

The absolute monarchy, which applies a strict interpretation of Islam, has faced widespread criticism for a lack of equal rights. Saudi Arabia is the only country in the world where women are not allowed to drive. They must also cover themselves in black from head-to-toe in public and require permission from male family members to travel, work or marry. But Aljazi Al-Hossaini, a candidate in Riyadh, said she did not need any man in her family to grant permission for her candidacy. "It's by myself," the management consultant said.

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**KUWAIT:** His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah waves as he prepares to leave to Paris, France yesterday. —KUNA

## PRIME MINISTER HEADS TO FRANCE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

**KUWAIT:** The representative of Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and his accompanying delegation left Kuwait yesterday heading to Paris to attend the United Nations (UN) Conference on Climate Change hosted by France.

His Highness was bid farewell at Kuwait International Airport by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Anas Khaled Al-Saleh, besides a number of Sheikhs, ministers, and senior officials at the Diwan of His Highness the Prime Minister.

His Highness the Prime Minister was accompanied by a delegation that included First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Sulaiman Al-Jarallah, besides senior officials at the Foreign Ministry, Diwan of His Highness the Prime Minister and Environments Public Authority.

### Substantial weight

Meanwhile, Director General of the Environment Public Authority (EPA) Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad Al-Humoud Al-Sabah described His Highness the Prime Minister's chairing of the Kuwaiti delegation taking part in the Paris Climate Change Conference will add substantial weight to the Arabs' participation in the international event.

He said in a statement that His Highness the Premier's chairmanship of the delegation would "add tremendous weight to the participation of Arab and developing states" in the international event, to be hosted by the French capital between November 30 and December 11th.

His participation will positively

reflect on planned negotiations for resolving climatic problems "in a manner that will preserve regional states' rights as to realizing sustainable development," said Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad Al-Humoud in a statement to KUNA. Historic responsibility as to collective gas emissions hinges on advanced countries, he said, adding "developing countries' priority is attaining sustainable development in tandem with national development strategies and priorities."

The State of Kuwait is seeking at this conference to work out a new deal covering social and economic priorities, whereby obligations and measures will be compatible with the international framework climatic convention, with consideration to aiding the developing countries attain their development objectives. Kuwait had already called for implementing principles of the international accord as stipulated by the Kyoto Protocol, signed by Kuwait on March 11, 2005.

### Kuwait Declaration

In this context, EPA had revealed the planned "State of Kuwait Number-one Declaration" regarding the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to be forwarded to the convention secretariat. The four-volume statement tackles green-house gases, cutting impact of these gases, coping with climatic change and "the State of Kuwait national circumstances."

Keen on joining the international community in dealing with effects of the climatic change and minimizing green-house gases, Kuwait has taken a series of measures in this regard, such as signing the 1995 international framework convention and the subsidiary protocol in 2005.

According to official reports, Kuwait's gas emission "is very limited," as compared to the volume of gas

puffed into the air in major industrialized nations such as the United States, Canada, Japan and the European Union.

His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, at the 2012 Doha Climate Change Conference, affirmed Kuwait's commitment to cut carbon dioxide emissions. According to official statements, proportion of gas emissions per sector is as following: Sixty percent in the energy sector, oil and gas sector 19 percent, transports 15 percent in addition to one percent in other fields.

In implementation of governmental plans to preserve the environment and invest in environment-friendly projects, Kuwait National Petroleum Company announced closing the old Al-Shuaiba refinery permanently in April 2017, ahead of launching the environmental-friendly fuel project in middle of 2018. This venture is designed to overhaul Mina Abdullah and Al-Ahmad refineries, building 39 new units, updating seven ones, closing seven others, with aim of producing high-grade products, namely diesel and kerosene.

The venture is to be launched according to specifications adopted by the United States and Europe. Special devices are to be installed to ensure maximum cut of pollutants, minerals, sulfur and other contaminating materials or substances. Designers are planning highest level of personnel and operational safety. Authorities have also enforced stringent laws to compel industrialists put out minimum levels of pollutants and enforce strict regulations on passing or anchoring ships as to waste dumping. In power sector, Kuwait is seeking to produce safe energy at a 15 percent proportion in 2030 from clean and renewable sources. Al-Shagaya complex for renewable energy is one of the initiatives at this level. — KUNA

## CLEAN ENERGY SOURCES INSTRUMENTAL TO ADDRESS DECLINING OIL PRICES: KPC CEO

**KUWAIT:** CEO of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) Nizar Al-Adsani yesterday stressed the need to address the issue of plummeting oil prices through promoting the use of clean and renewable energy sources.

In comments during the commencement of Kuwait Sustainable Energy Conference and Exhibition, organized by KPC from November 29th to December 2nd 2015, Adsani expected a further decline in oil prices. He also underscored Kuwait's 2030 energy vision which looks to fully rely on clean and renewable energy sources. Managing Director of Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) Hashim Hashim revealed the company's plans of producing three million barrels of crude oil per day in 2015 and 3.6 million barrels by the year 2020. In a statement to journalists, Hashim announced that KPC had signed various contracts during the past two years aimed at maximizing oil production in the country with the goal of producing 3.6 million barrels per day.

Moreover, the Managing Director said that KPC aims to increase usage of clean and renewable energy sources



**KUWAIT:** CEO of Kuwait Petroleum Corporation Nizar Al-Adsani (right) and Managing Director of Kuwait Oil Company Hashim Hashim attend the Kuwait Sustainable Energy Conference and Exhibition yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

by 8 percent in 2020 and 15 percent by 2030, respectively. Kuwait's economy relies heavily on oil production but

continued decline in the price of oil has fueled concern of stalled economic growth. — KUNA

## PETROCHEMICAL INDUSTRIES UPDATES WORK METHODS

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Petrochemical Industries Company (PIC) yesterday announced graduating trainees who won green and black belts in Six Sigma category for updating work methods. Chief Executive Officer Asaad Al-Saad said, during a ceremony for projects' presentation at the last day of the training session on Six Sigma methodology, that the company was the first to apply

this mechanism in the oil sector.

The company is committed to applying the Six Sigma methodology, which is a data-driven approach, and training personnel in the KPIC and other oil companies. Six Sigma method is aimed at enhancing client's content, slashing costs, minimizing flaws and realizing optimum performance. It is one of the most accredited 'philosophies'

for enhancing quality of services and operations, he said, noting that the company with this approach saved more than \$188 million in the past eight years.

More than 550 Six Sigma projects have already been executed. Up to 120 personnel have been trained for acquiring the green belt, in addition to 28 others seeking to win the black belt. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Petrochemical Industries Company CEO Asaad Al-Saad listens to a presentation during a ceremony held to honor graduates of a training session on the Six Sigma methodology. — KUNA

## FM STRESSES NEED TO CONSOLIDATE EFFORTS TO EASE HUMANITARIAN SUFFERING WORLDWIDE

**KUWAIT:** First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah stressed yesterday the importance of strengthening international efforts to alleviate human suffering around the world.

This came in a speech by Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled during an honoring ceremony held by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for him and a number of officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in recognition of their humanitarian and effective role in the preparations for the international humanitarian conferences held in Kuwait.

### Humanitarian challenges

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled said that "the growing humanitarian challenges in today's world, in addition to the unprecedented bloody conflicts, especially in the Middle East, led to the displacement of more than 60 million refugees around the world, which doubles the size of the responsibility incumbent on all of us and on the international conscience to enhance efforts to find solutions to these conflicts and alleviate their tragic consequences." He added that the international humanitarian work that is free from any specific political, geographic, religious or ethnic approach ascended a distinct rank in the hierarchy of priorities of the foreign policy of the State of Kuwait based on the directives of His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al Sabah.

He praised the joint cooperation of the State of Kuwait with the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other international humanitarian organizations which represents a live embodiment and a practical model as well as a shining example of the spirit of human solidarity. He explained that the cooperation between the State of Kuwait and the UNHCR Office has polished the mechanism of cooperation between the two sides, which resulted in a close strategic relationship, the most prominent landmarks of

which was Kuwait's hosting of three donor conferences to support the humanitarian situation in Syria, through which the State of Kuwait had contributed \$1.3 billion.

He expressed his deep pride in his close personal relations with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres, thanking him on behalf of the State of Kuwait on taking office with all wisdom and competence.

### Prominent spot

Meanwhile, Amiri Diwan Advisor and UN Secretary General Envoy for Humanitarian Affairs Dr Abdullah Al-Maatoq stressed in a speech during the honoring that Kuwait's humanitarian endeavors worldwide has gained it a prominent spot among donor countries.

Kuwait has always strived to offer help regardless of color, race, gender or religion, Maatoq said, who is also Chairman of the

International Islamic Charitable Organization (IICO). Under the directions of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Kuwait held three donors' conferences to aid the Syrians in their crisis; a conference to help development in East of Sudan and other conferences for local and regional NGOs, he added. He pointed out that Kuwait has offered help to natural disaster-stricken countries such as Pakistan, Turkey, the Philippines, Indonesia, Mauritania, Somalia, Benin and Niger. It also aided war-torn countries such as Syria, Yemen and Iraq.

### Key issue

In the meantime, UNHCR' High Commissioner Antonio Guterres praised His Highness the Amir's support to the Syrian refugees that gained him the UN honoring of a 'Humanitarian Leader' and lauded the Foreign Ministry's commitment

to ensuring that this support sees the light and gets delivered to the right people.

Guterres said in his speech at the same ceremony that the Syrian refugees' crisis has become a key issue internationally where it posed challenges to the international community, calling for finding a solution to this problem swiftly. He lauded the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister and his staff for being the "voice" of human compassion and the embodiment of true Islamic values.

### French Foreign Minister

In other news, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled yesterday received a written message from French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius. The message handles ways of bolstering distinguished relations between both friendly countries in all fields, cooperation over the current regional and international developments and several issues of mutual interest. — KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Minister Dr Ali Al-Omair speaks to reporters on the sidelines of the conference. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

## PAYROLL STRATEGIC ALTERNATIVE TO IMPROVE, NOT TO CUT, WAGES: OMAIR

**KUWAIT:** The payroll strategic alternative project has not been set to cut wages but to improve low salaries, former oil minister Dr Ali Al-Omair said. The project is for the good of all, said Omair, who was yesterday assigned with the Ministry of Public Works' portfolio to carry along with the Ministry of State for National Assembly Affairs. He was speaking on the sidelines of the Arab Federation of Petroleum, Mines and Chemical Workers conference that kicked off here on Sunday and lasts for five days. He added that the project is now at the National Assembly's Human Resources Committee.

Omair stressed state's support to the syndicate movement in Kuwait. Meanwhile, the minister expects positive outcome of the coming meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Vienna 4 December, to reflect stability on the markets, which is for the good of exporters and importers. According to Omair, all proposals on cutting OPEC crude prices are being studied, and will be discussed in Vienna. He reiterated full commitment to any decision to be made by OPEC. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Sabah (center) with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres (right) and Amiri Diwan Advisor Dr Abdullah Al-Maatoq. — KUNA

# MINISTER CLARIFIES 'PREFERRING PRIVATE SCHOOLS' STATEMENT

## JABER STADIUM REOPENS DEC 12

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa strongly denied a statement circulating on social media attributed to him and claims that he said he would put his kids in private schools instead of public ones. The minister explained in a statement yesterday that what he actually said was incompletely quoted and needs to be explained. Essa explained that responding to a question about why people enroll their kids in private schools, he said that there are three reasons in his point of view for this. "Some people believe that public education is bad and does not meet their aspirations, others believe that teaching English in the primary stage by native speakers would be better, while a third party is only after prestige," the minister said. He added that if asked where he would prefer sending his own kids to, he would choose private schools for the second reason, particularly at this time when the education ministry needs four years to develop its curriculum and teach scientific subjects in English, which is already applied in private schools.

The minister stressed that he also remarked that such a preference did not mean Kuwait did not have any outstanding public schools nor that bad private schools did not exist. Notably, MP Mohammed Al-Hadiya had severely criticized Essa's statements about preferring to send his kids to

private schools. "Such statements by the man responsible for the educational process means public schools have malfunctions," he said, noting that millions were being spent on education and a minister who had been in office long enough makes such statements.

### Juveniles' age

MP Saleh Ashour stressed that legislating a reduction of juveniles' age from 18 to 16 would be dangerous, and it would be unjustified to reduce the age when a child could be held legally accountable just like an adult. "If this legislation is passed, juveniles will be transferred to the central prison," he warned, noting the change would also allow a juvenile to get married, form companies, drive or even travel unaccompanied. Meanwhile, the parliamentary legislative affairs committee rejected suggested parliamentary amendments to the juvenile law. In this regard, the committee chairman MP Mubarak Al-Harees said three proposals were rejected.

### Bedoons' children

MP Mohammad Al-Enezi said that he discussed allowing the children of military bedoons (stateless) and those registered in the 1965 census to enroll in the army with Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, who showed a great deal of flexibility towards the matter.

### 'Pornographic' comics

MP Abdullah Maayouf yesterday issued a very strong warning to the information minister for his responsibility of the book fair, where some comics he said contained 'pornographic material' were displayed for



Dr Bader Al-Essa

sale. "The minister has to take very strict measures against those responsible for allowing those books in, otherwise we will use our constitutional tools against him," he warned.

### Jaber Stadium

The Public Authority for Youth and Sports (PAYS) yesterday set December 12, 2015 as the date to reopen Jaber Stadium and the information ministry's assistant

undersecretary for TV affairs approved the budget allocated for a concert to be held on the occasion. A letter was sent by the assistant undersecretary declaring that the opening ceremony would be attended by HH the Amir and that a large number of Arab and GCC singers would take part in the concert.

### Price control

Minister of Commerce and Industry Yousif Al-Ali yesterday said that his ministry was capable of controlling prices and avoid increases if taxes are imposed on local and foreign companies. "Imposing those taxes does not call for increasing prices for more than one reason," he added, explaining that Kuwaiti companies already pay 4.5 percent in indirect taxes. "We are technically speaking about a maximum of 10 percent, which means taxes would be minimal and do not call for increasing prices," Yousif underlined.

### Camel competitions

The Interior Ministry's weapons inspection director Major General Farraj Al-Azobi said that weapon inspection teams would be deployed all along the roads leading to the camel and cattle competition sites where those traditional competitions are held in Jahra to search for weapons and prevent any law violation in this regard. "We will have foot and undercover patrols to immediately arrest weapons users," he added.

Legalese

## COMMON RENTAL CONCERNS

By Fajer Ahmed

**A** large part of living a stable life in a new country is finding a place to comfortably live in. Kuwait, unlike other neighboring countries has pretty easy going norms when it comes to rent-related issues. Newcomers are not asked for a year's rent in advance and there are no segregated areas for expats/Kuwaitis, yet there's a lot of things that can be changed to make the experience of living in Kuwait easier and there are still lots of common concerns, that I shall answer in this week's column.

### Rental rate increases

**Q: I have signed a one year contract, a year ago exactly when I first moved to Kuwait. The agreed rent amount was KD 200. Now a year later the landlord has provided me with a new contract to sign for KD 250. Can he raise the rent without giving me notice?**

**A:** According to Kuwaiti law no 35 promulgated in 1978, your landlord has no right to raise the amount of rent unless five years have passed since you signed the rental agreement and moved in (regardless of how long the term of your contract is) or if you have both agreed to the mark up in the price! So my advice is do not sign the proposed contract. If your landlord threatens to evict you, or declines to accept the rent, I suggest you pay your dues at court. There's a department designated for rent disputes and therefore you can deposit the amounts there accordingly.

**Q: My question to you pertains to the raising of rents by landlords. What is the criteria that landlords use to raise the rents? Is there any law stipulating the maximum percentage that a landlord can raise the rent or does the law leave it to his discretion?**

**A:** Well if the landlord is raising the rent (after five years of you occupying the space, as mentioned above), then he can only raise it if it's 50% less than the market price and can only raise it up to the average market price. How do you calculate the average market price? You see how much a place with the same standards as your building in the same location is going for. That might not be so easy to determine as places differ all the time.

### Who pays for repairs?

**Q: I have had a leak in the ceiling of a bedroom in my apartment since June which the landlord has failed to repair until this week. There is still a hole in the ceiling with the water damaging my furniture and the lights too. I have not paid the full rent of KD 650, instead I am paying KD 600 every month until it was repaired. They are refusing and have threatened to pass it on to their lawyer. Can you tell me where I stand?**

**A:** Even though the landlord is responsible for the maintenance of the unit, and is responsible for repairing issues such as water leakage, that doesn't give you the right to deduct KD 50 every month from the rent until they fix the problem. If the tenant refuses to fix any damages happening to the unit (that you are not responsible for), then let them know and wait a few weeks, if the landlord refused to repair the damage, then let him know in writing that you shall fix the damage yourself and include the cost of the damage and then deduct that from the rent. You can't just deduct KD 50 x six months because of some water leakage, you could have removed your furniture out of the way the first day and fixed it and asked for reimbursement. Things have to be balanced for both parties.

### Late rent payments

**Q: Hello, I am an expat living here in Kuwait with my family. I have fallen behind two weeks on paying rent. My question is can the harris or landlord turn my lights off? And what law states that they can or cannot?**

**A:** This is a tough one. Technically yes, the landlord can refuse to pay for your amenities if you have not paid for your rent. In fact, according to the rent law mentioned above your landlord can even evict you if you are late in paying your rent. If you are having an issue this month I suggest you talk it out with your landlord and allow him to give you a grace period or just negotiate with him according to your financial needs.

**Q: I have been living in a space for 18 months, but only had a one year contract. Does that mean that my contract automatically renewed itself for a year? And if so does that mean I can't leave till the remaining 6 months are over?**

**A:** If the term of your rent contract ends, yet you continue to occupy the space and pay the rent in a timely manner, then your contract is renewed for the period of your rent payment. For example, if you pay monthly, then your contract is renewed month by month even though you initially had a one year contract. To put it in simple terms anything beyond the initial term of your contract is renewed according to what you are paying for. I hope the answers above help with the common concerns for landlords and tenants, if you have any further questions regarding rent or any other legal issues, please feel free to email me on [ask@fajerthelawyer.com](mailto:ask@fajerthelawyer.com)

## SUBSIDIES ISSUE STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION: FINANCE MINISTRY

### FAKE EXPAT ABSCONDING REPORTS DETECTED

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** The Finance Ministry yesterday strongly stressed that a study on subsidies is still in progress, and that the concerned committee and the government had not made any related decisions except that of re-pricing petrol and diesel. A committee that includes representatives from several state departments is currently studying the feasibility of proposals to cut or reduce the subsidization of some services. The ministry also denied news reports about financial reforms, suspending subsidized items and selling two blocks in Khaitan through a public auction.

Commenting on news about suspending subsidized supplies for those who receive salaries equal to or higher than KD 1,300, the Cabinet's consideration of new financial reforms, further gas price increases and increasing electricity fees, the ministry said that the committee entrusted with studying different types of subsidies was still studying them through a specialized company hired for this reason.

The statement also denied intentions to reclaim the KD 325 million already paid to take over lands in blocks three and four in Khaitan to resell them in an auction, noting that the cabinet was still considering the issue. Finally, the finance ministry urged all media and newspapers to verify any stories related to public concerns, especially those related to subsidies, and be more accurate about them.

### Fake reports

Well-informed sources at the Manpower Public Authority announced detecting some fake absconding reports filed against expatriate workers, adding that some sponsors usually use such measures to avoid being fined for not paying overdue salaries. The sources added that some sponsors file such reports against laborers although the latter are punctual in their work, adding that in a bid to do both sides justice, all such reports would be reviewed by a special committee to determine which ones are true and which ones

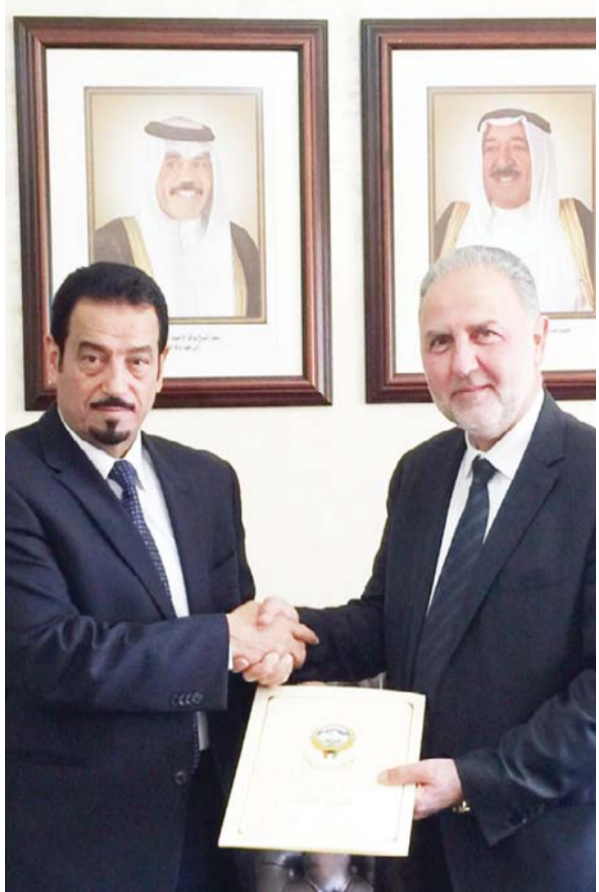
are malicious. The sources added that employers have requested extending the deadline to deposit salaries in local banks beyond the 10th of each month so that they could avoid delays that eventually end up in the form of complaints filed against them.

### Ambassador sentenced

The criminal court yesterday sentenced a Kuwaiti ambassador to seven years with labor and dismissal from office and sentenced another to five years with labor and dismissal from office. The court also sentenced them both to pay back the sum of KD 269,045 and a fine of KD 592,000 for public fund violation-related charges. The criminal court also sentenced a prominent businessman and three others to three years with labor over charges of forgery.

### Chance for rain

The meteorology department predicted the weather on Wednesday and Thursday to be cloudy with very good chances of rain in various parts of the country.



**AMMAN:** Kuwait's Ambassador to Jordan Dr Hamad Al-Duaij hands out a document to grant \$758,000 worth of aid to two charitable societies in Jordan. — KUNA

## KUWAIT DONATES \$758,000 TO AID SYRIAN REFUGEES IN JORDAN

**AMMAN:** Kuwait's Ambassador to Jordan Dr Hamad Al-Duaij has handed out a \$758,000 worth of aid to two charitable societies in Jordan to help improve the humanitarian situation of the Syrian refugees and needy in the Kingdom.

About \$450,000 of aid has been donated by Kuwait's Al-Najat Charitable Society to the Philanthropists Society in the Kingdom to support orphanages and the society's budget, Ambassador Al-Duaij stated to KUNA yesterday.

The Ghanaem Al-Khair Foundation, another Kuwaiti-based charitable society, has also donated a \$338,000 worth of aid to the Arab Medical Relief Society in Jordan to support the launch of the motherhood and childhood center in the Sheikh Sabah A-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah Village at Al-Zaatari camp, slated for 2016, in addition to the Adahi (livestock sacrifices) project, said the Kuwaiti diplomat.

He reiterated the embassy's willingness to facilitate all humanitarian activities carried out by Kuwaiti and Jordanian charitable and relief societies, and to overcome all obstacles that face supporting the humanitarian situations of the Syrian refugees in all around the Kingdom. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) held a fire safety and risk management course for a large number of members of the American Safety Society in Kuwait. The course explained the basics of firefighting. It also included identifying various types of extinguishers and how to use them. — By Hanan Al-Saadoun

## FLU AWARENESS DRIVE IN SCHOOLS

**KUWAIT:** The Health Ministry's Undersecretary Dr Khaled Al-Sahlawi announced yesterday the launch of an awareness campaign in all schools in the country, public and private, on seasonal flu prevention and knowledge of its dangers. The campaign targets male and female students of all educational grades in the country's schools with participation of medical teams of specialists in health awareness who will provide preventive tips and guidelines to students, teachers and staff workers, Sahlawi stated to KUNA.

He also said that three awareness films on the virus, produced by the ministry, will be distributed to all schools in DVD and CD discs, in addition to printed pamphlets, stickers and bulletins. Being aware of the virus' nature, causes, symptoms and ways to prevent it has become the main base of blocking the flu's spread and infection, the senior official said, adding that this new campaign will contribute to clarifying facts and rumors regarding the virus to the public.

The health ministry also intends to intensify its anti-flu campaign through several health activities and measures such as conducting training courses for school staff in order to increase their knowledge with necessary information and updates about the virus and its symptoms. — KUNA

## KUWAIT TO HOST HASHTAG CONFERENCE

**KUWAIT:** A conference on 'Hashtag Kuwait' will be discussing positive uses of social media in the service of society, the event's media committee said yesterday. It said in a statement the December 6-7 conference, to be held under auspices of Information Minister and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah, would include 11 workshops as well as honoring distinguished social media users.

The conference aims at highlighting methods of addressing challenges arising from social media, thus establishing a platform for dialogue between society and social media users. The conference, [www.hashtagkuwait.com](http://www.hashtagkuwait.com), will host around 30 social media users from Kuwait and the Arab countries who would discuss cultural, social, economic, political and security impacts of the social media on people. —KUNA

## Crime

Report

## LIQUOR FACTORY BUSTED IN KABD

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

**KUWAIT:** Mubarak Al-Kabeer police busted a large liquor factory in Kabd. A security source said three Asian nationals were arrested for brewing and selling the alcoholic drinks. The security source said the three were caught during the act, as policemen found 50 full barrels and 11 empty ones, in addition to 580 bottles inside their place.

### Smuggling foiled

Airport customs officers arrested an Asian man who attempted to smuggle 1,000 Tramadol tablets. He was sent to concerned authorities to face charges.

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# KUWAIT URGES UNITED STATES TO FACILITATE VISAS FOR STUDENTS

**SAN DIEGO:** Kuwait Minister of Education and Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa has urged US authorities to facilitate issuing visas for Kuwaiti citizens seeking academic studies in the nation. Minister Essa made the call at the conclusion ceremony of the 32nd National Union of Kuwaiti Students (NUKS) US Branch, held late on Saturday.

This year's conference, themed 'Kuwait's dream is fulfilled with us,' was successful by all standards, the minister said, expressing gratitude to the organizers for exerting tremendous efforts despite limited resources. He also congratulated 'Al-Wihda' group that won students' elections held late on Friday, beating the 'Student Future' bloc. He urged NUKS' newly-elected board members to help the students in reporting their problems to the ministry at home and find solutions to their issues rapidly.

### Ambassadors abroad

Meanwhile, Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah, the State of Kuwait Ambassador to the US, expressed identical sentiments regarding successful outcome of the five-day convention and urged the students to bear in mind that they are practically ambassadors of their country abroad. "I urge you to abide by all

American laws because this will facilitate your presence and support your studies in the country," he told the young Kuwaitis.

He welcomed the eminent guest at the ceremony, the US Ambassador to Kuwait Douglas Silliman, expressing appreciation for services provided by the American diplomatic mission for the students seeking higher studies in the US.

The ambassador spoke to the students, urging them to be keen on serving Kuwait, rather than, merely, looking forward to what the homeland would give them. A graduate should not look after finishing studies for a job, instead he (she) should seek to create jobs, he opined.

Both the American ambassador and Minister Essa expressed condolences to family of a Kuwaiti student who had died in an accident in the US. They also wished recovery for another citizen who was injured in the accident. Moreover, they advised the students to be cautious while driving and respect the local traffic rules.

### Important aspect

In a statement to KUNA, the US Ambassador affirmed that education constitutes one of the most important aspects in

the US-Kuwaiti relationship. The United States is very proud of the relationship with Kuwait, as well as of the large number of Kuwaiti students receiving their education in several states. He added that Minister Essa had informed him that more than 11,500 Kuwaiti students were enrolled in the US universities.

"That is a very large number for Kuwait," he said. "We believe that having such a large number of Kuwaiti students in the US provides not only a good education but also gives Kuwaiti students an opportunity to see a culture and an economy that is valued, innovation is valued," he added.

Entrepreneurship, which stimulates social and economic change, has been the engine of the US economy for several hundred years.

This is very "beneficial" for Kuwait, because since the founding of the country 55 years ago, the government has tried to find ways to diversify the economy and have Kuwaitis do more than just work for the government. The US Ambassador, who flew in from New York to take part in the conference, hoped to see educational cooperation between the two countries "continue for many many years." —KUNA



Eman Al-Awadhi receives recognition on behalf of KIPCO from Ambassador of Kuwait to the US Sheikh Salem Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah.



Talah Al-Abdulaaly of Burgan Bank delivers the workshop

## KIPCO SPONSORS NUKS-USA CONFERENCE CLOSING CEREMONY

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Projects Company (KIPCO) sponsored the Closing Ceremony of the 32nd Conference of the National Union of Kuwaiti Students - USA Branch (NUKS-USA), which gathered more than 3,500 students.

Addressing the students, Eman Al Awadhi, KIPCO's Group Communications Director said: "As part of KIPCO's commitment to help create a sustainable economy through investing in a skilled national workforce, its management provides young people with the fundamental principles of personal development and the resources to help you reach your full potential and become tomorrow's achievers."

"You are the shapers of Kuwait's future, and we believe in your ability to make that future a bright one. The private sector offers diverse career opportunities that can help you develop your skills and knowledge so that you can positively contribute to your personal and your country's development," she added.

This is the fifth year that KIPCO is supporting NUKS-USA's annual conference as a Platinum Sponsor. Taking its commitment to support Kuwait's young people to the next level, KIPCO companies offered career opportunities to select graduate candi-

dates from top US universities. Burgan Bank - KIPCO's largest investment - and United Facilities Management - KIPCO's property management arm and a subsidiary of United Real Estate - interviewed students for positions in the two companies after graduation.

KIPCO also organized a workshop aimed at preparing students to enter the Kuwaiti workforce upon graduation. The workshop, 'Campus to Corporate', was tailored specifically for this purpose by the Center for Continuing Education (CCE) at the American University of Kuwait, and was facilitated by a team of professionals from Burgan Bank.

During the interactive two-hour session, the trainers helped participants explore their personalities and values and relate them to the career choices they make. They also discussed the transition of a graduate's mindset from campus to corporate culture, as displayed through preparing resumes and leveraging networking skills. The session also included tips on how to manage communication, body language and navigating through interviews. The participants were presented with certificates of completion from the CCE at the conclusion of the workshop.



Education Minister Dr Bader Al-Essa and Kuwait's Ambassador Sheikh Salem Al-Sabah visit ABK branch.

## ABK SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDES NUKS-USA CONFERENCE SPONSORSHIP

**KUWAIT:** Al-Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) announced the successful conclusion of its sponsorship of the National Union for Kuwaiti Students (NUKS) - USA Annual Conference. The conference took place in San Diego from 26 to 29 November, 2015 and was attended by Othman Tafwiqi, AGM- Retail Banking and Ali Al-Baghli, Corporate Communications Manager, on behalf of ABK.

ABK reinforced its presence by participating

in the job fair, where an ABK booth was set up to present graduating students with job opportunities within the Bank. Dr Bader Al-Essa, Minister of Education and Higher Education and Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Kuwait's Ambassador to the United States of America visited the ABK booth to better understand the services and products offered by the Bank.

The Bank also held a competition during the

job fair, where students were asked to answer a number of questions relating to ABK. The three winning students each received a \$300 reward.

ABK has supported NUKS-USA since 2008. ABK will continue to support national talent and the Kuwaitization labor law through a broad range of sponsorships and collaborative activities that support the development and employment of Kuwaiti nationals.

## AL-MANSHAR ROTANA HOSTS BOOKERS GATHERING AT AL-KOUT BALLROOMS

**KUWAIT:** Al-Manshar Rotana, the only 5-star business Rotana hotel located in Kuwait paid tribute to the business partners and associates from Kuwait by hosting a stunning bookers gathering with a travel theme in Al-Kout ballrooms.

The gathering was attended by respected decision makers, executives and comrades of various companies Al-Manshar Rotana has partnerships with, Kuwait's top Medias as well as the whole Al Manshar Rotana team.

The Al-Manshar Rotana's bookers gathering is Rotana's way to thank all the bookers for their continuous patronage and loyalty to Rotana. With the travel theme of the gathering, bookers were invited to travel and explore the entire hotel where they get to see each and every facilities of the property from different room categories, recreation and food and beverage restaurants.

Everything was made special, master chefs prepared an array and extensive culinary treats with live cooking stations. Pass around refreshments and snacks was continuous. Guests participated in the raffle draws enjoyed all the prizes that were given away such as luxurious hotel stays in sister

Rotana properties in the UAE, Lebanon, Turkey and Oman. Return ticket courtesy of Etihad Airways and some appliances were also given away.

In celebration of Al-Manshar Rotana's bookers gathering, the Sales team and the general Manager Imad Zaboura has presented the E-connect to everyone and also introduces the key people behind the scenes who always make sure that the Rotana standard, five star service and guests' satisfaction is achieved all the time.

"This event is to mark our sincerest gratitude to all our key partners all over the year and in the past years. For supporting and trusting us and for being part of all our accomplishments. We will continue to strive hard to meet each and everyone's need in the future and beyond" Imad Zaboura commented.

Akram Hamadeh, Assistant Director of Sales commented, "Our clients are definitely our partners in success and we believe celebrating that together strengthens our partnership even more. We are very grateful for all your loyalty and for always choosing Al-Manshar as your preferred hotel in Kuwait."



KUWAIT: Al-Manshar Rotana staff and guests are pictured at the gathering. —Photo by Joseph Shagra

## INFO MINISTER TO OPEN HORECA 2016 EXPO WITH PARTICIPATION OF OVER 60 COMPANIES

**KUWAIT:** Following the remarkable success achieved by Horeca 2015 which was held last January, Nabila Al-Anjeri, General Manager of Leaders Group Company for Consultancy and Development, said that Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah has agreed to patronize and open the Horeca 2016 exhibition. The event is due to be held jointly with the Hospitality Services Company at the Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa in the period of January 18-20, 2016.

Anjeri said that over 60 major companies specialized in hospitality, hotels and food services had so far announced their participation in the exhibition due to be held under direct patronage of the information ministry's tourism sector. She added that this poses real partnership between the private and public sector in supporting strategic tourism projects' plans with the ultimate goal of turning Kuwait into a touristic destination providing various types of tourism for recreation, commercial exchange,

investment and holding international conferences and sports championships.

Furthermore, Anjeri stressed that developing the touristic sector has



Nabila Al-Anjeri

become an 'urgent necessity' in order to diversify sources of national income, especially in view of the constant falloffs in international oil prices. She

added that developing the touristic sector would provide around 30,000 job opportunities within 10 years and attract what is worth over KD 700 million of national investments.

Anjeri added that tourism services 35 different sectors including transportation, real estate, construction, furniture, hotels, restaurants, health and sports. It also helps develop small and medium businesses that form over 90 percent of world economies, she said.

"In view of the constant expansion in restaurants and hospitality sector in Kuwait and the fact that country now has over 5,000 restaurants, with an average of one restaurant per 760 persons, the hospitality sector must be scientifically developed by experts who find this is possible through Horeca," Anjeri added, noting that the huge number of participating companies enriches the exhibition. Anjeri also stressed that expectations that hotel rooms in Kuwait were to reach over 10,000 within the coming three years add to the significance of Horeca Kuwait and call for more cooperation. On that regard.

## 'SOUTH AFRICA KEEN ON BOLSTERING ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH KUWAIT'

**KUWAIT:** South Africa's Ambassador to Kuwait M P Bona yesterday affirmed his country's keenness on bolstering economic and commercial relations with Kuwait. In a statement during a joint meeting between Kuwaiti and South African economic delegations, Bona said that bilateral political relations have reached satisfactory levels, underscoring the need of strengthening economic relations between the two countries.

Bona added that a South African economic delegation's visit to

Kuwait highlights his country's prioritization of relations with Kuwait. Manager of International Operations at the South African Ministry of Investment and Commerce Ricardo Andrews said that his country possesses the economic expertise needed to enter various sectors of the Kuwaiti market.

Describing South African markets as 'promising', Andrews underscored the fact that South Africa accounts for about 50 percent of Africa's purchasing power and boasts one of the

most robust stock exchanges in the continent. Andrews also announced his country's participation in Kuwait's International Commercial Exhibition to be held in February.

Member of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Tareq Al-Mutawa stressed the need for further economic cooperation between the two countries, saying that Kuwait is going through an economic boom which would facilitate South African entry into Kuwait markets. —KUNA

## DUBAI CHAMBER CHIEF LAUDS TIES WITH KUWAIT

**DUBAI:** Chairman of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry Majid Al-Ghurair has commended the deep-rooted relations and fruitful cooperation between the UAE and Kuwait, in particular trade ties.

Kuwaiti traders have played a significant role in developing Dubai's economy since a long time ago, Al-Ghurair said on Sunday during a meeting with Consul of Kuwait General Consulate in Dubai and Northern Emirates Theyab Al-Rashidi. There are some 554 Kuwaiti companies registered at the chamber, besides many others in the free zones in Dubai, Ghurair said.

Meanwhile, Rashidi told KUNA that he handed Ghurair an invitation for the Dubai Chamber to take part in the first Kuwait International Trading Fair, slated for 21-27 February 2016 under the theme 'Kuwait is the heart of world's business.' He said that Kuwait is keen on the participation of the Emirati public and private sectors in the fair, for the distinguished bilateral ties. —KUNA

## KUWAIT'S 40TH BOOK FAIR CONCLUDES WITH POETRY

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait's 40th Book Fair had a perfect ending on Saturday evening when Dr Hassan Talab of Egypt signaled the conclusion of the fair with his poems, considered as the grand finale but in words. Talab, a member in Egypt's union of writers and the poetry committee, read his famous philosophical poem "Shay" (Thing).

Then he read the Echo of the Sound poem from his "Sacrifice to God of War" collection. The conclusion was organized by the National Council for Culture, Art and Letters (NCCAL). Talab thanked the NCCAL for inviting him to participate in the Book Fair and to make his poems conclude the fair, which opened on November 19.

Mohammad Al-Asousi, NCCAL Assistant Secretary General for Culture, said there were many publishers that took part in the fair this year thus attracting many visitors. Speaking to KUNA, Asousi the cultural activities held on the sidelines of the Book Fair were diversified and thus honored all tastes. These cultural events dealt with the book, poetry and TV drama, he explained.

Asousi said the next Book Fair would coincide with celebrations that mark Kuwait as the 2016 Islamic Cultural Capital. He thanked His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah for sponsoring the Book Fair, as well as Information Minister and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Al-Sabah for his relentless support of the NCCAL. —KUNA

18 - 28 نوفمبر



**KUWAIT:** Egyptian poet Dr Hassan Talab attend an event held at the conclusion of the Kuwait Book Fair. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** 'Al-Jahra' Airbus A330-200 aircraft received at Kuwait International Airport. —KUNA

## KAC RECEIVES 'AL-JAHRA' AIRCRAFT FROM AIRBUS

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Airways Corporation (KAC) has received the 12th and last aircraft of the leasing contract with Airbus Company. A330-200 bears the name of 'Al-Jahra', KAC Chairperson and Managing Director Rasha Al-Roumi said in statements quoted by Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) reported yesterday. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a delivery ceremony at Kuwait International Airport, she said that the KAC received all the planes in the leasing contract, notably seven A-320s and five A-330s.

By receiving the last airplane from the Airbus, the first stage of modernizing the KAC's fleet has been completed, she said, adding that as the second stage would be launched by 2016. Under the second stage, the Kuwait Airways will be given a total 10 Boeing 777s, with the first aircraft to be landing in Kuwait in November 2016. On a plan to launch flights to Egypt's Sharm El-Sheikh by mid-December, Roumi said the KAC has already discussed all security measures at Sharm El-Sheikh Airport.

In February 2014, Kuwait Airways announced the lease of 12 Airbus aircraft including seven A320neos and five A330-200s in addition to the purchase of 25 aircraft including 10 A350-900 and

15 A320neo Family aircraft marking the start of a major fleet renewal plan. In November 2014, Kuwait Airways agreed to purchase 10 Boeing 777-300s which it will start receiving in Nov 2016.

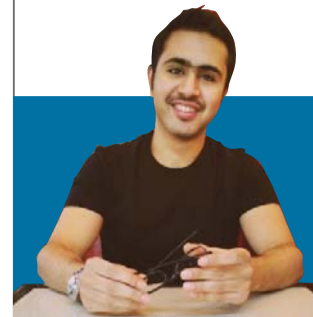
### Partner companies

In other news, the Regional Business Center of Kuwait Airways in Dubai held its annual ceremony to honor top partner companies which contributed to the success of its center. The ceremony was held Saturday night under the auspices and in the presence of Kuwait's Consulate General in Dubai and Northern States, Diab Al-Rishidi and a number of aviation officials in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates as well as officials of top world aviation companies.

Regional director of the center in Dubai, Abdullah Nashmi Al-Enezi said in his speech that the center held this annual ceremony to honor top KAC partners. He added that KAC, through its regional business center, provides a wide-range of engineering services, aircraft maintenance, consulting, training and workshops for KAC employees and customers in outstations.

kuwait digest

## INEQUALITY: WHY IT MATTERS IN KUWAIT



By Badar Al-Dehani

local@kuwaittimes.net

The notion of inequality has dazzled me for at least five months now. In fact, it was after that one day when I decided to go visit my uncle, who lectures at Kuwait University, that I dug into the entire debate. The debate, well, is quite complex; it circles around the speed of the growth of wealth. This debate could be applied to any society in the world and, hence, is not limited to the situation of, say, Kuwait or France. Yet, to use the Kuwait and France example, it is more difficult to measure how unequal the society of the former is since Kuwait is not a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as is the case with France. An economically unequal society is worth analyzing since such inequality arguably contributes to expansion of the implication of various forms of inequality like that of the political and the educational. How unequal is the Kuwaiti society?

Thomas Piketty in Capital in the Twenty-First Century argues that the wealth of certain capital-owners grows quicker than general wealth - that of the state. That is, inequality dominates the scene when the rate of return on capital (or r) gradually grows quicker than the rate of growth of the economy (or g). Thomas Piketty portrays this in a formula that may seem simple from the outside but is actually quite complex from the inside:  $r > g$ . Professor Piketty, a lecturer at the Paris School of Economics, demonstrates how inequality has historically grown: A downfall of the rate of inequality, after a continuous rise, was witnessed from the post-war period until the early 1980s when Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher took power. The rate of inequality today is as high as it has ever reached - and it will continue to increase until governments regulate their economies. Two questions should be tackled: Should governments regulate their economies and, if so, how much should governments regulate? Those two interlinked yet essential questions have, until recently, diverged the world into several ideological divisions.

Inequality in Kuwait is undoubtedly developed. This should be witnessed when travelling through different residential areas across Kuwait. Residential areas in Kuwait are arguably divided by the concentration and accumulation of wealth one household enjoys. How much wealth one household owns most likely determines where that household lives, though some other factors may also add to the complexity of the formula. Studying not only the rate of inequality in Kuwait but also how that rate came to be is of the interest of the majority of citizens. Inequality will be one of the greatest challenges Kuwait will face in the near future.

US Embassy Message

## ELIMINATION OF US PASSPORT EXTRA PAGES

**KUWAIT:** The United States Embassy in Kuwait has sent the following message for US citizens concerning the elimination the addition of supplemental visa pages for passports:

"Effective January 1, 2016, the Department of State will eliminate of the addition of supplemental visa pages for passports. To mitigate the impact of this change, applicants for new passports have started receiving 52-page

passports as of October 1, 2014. Please note that requests for extra pages on Form DS-4085 will only be accepted for current passports until Wednesday, December 30, 2015. Starting January 1, 2016, applicants who need more blank pages will need to apply to renew their passports and be issued the standard 52-page book.

As the US holiday travel season approaches, you should consider applying for extra pages while they are still avail-

able or applying to renew your passport to ensure you have enough blank pages for visa stamps from other countries. See [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov) for more information on entry, exit, and foreign visa requirements. For more information about how to apply for extra visa pages and to make an appointment with American Citizens Services, please visit <http://kuwait.usembassy.gov/passports/additional-visa-pages.html>."



A portrait of Mubarak Al-Kabeer is displayed at the event.

## HISTORY WILL NEVER FORGET MUBARAK AL-KABEER'S GREAT WORKS: MINISTER

**KUWAIT:** The memory of Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah, or 'Mubarak Al-Kabeer', will remain forever in the hearts and minds of the Kuwaiti people, honorable Arabs and the world at large, Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah said. History will never forget Mubarak Al-

government school was opened, Al-Mubarakiya in 1912, in addition to the Seif Palace, seat of government, together with drawing Kuwait's first official map.

In addition, Mubarak Al-Kabeer laid the basis for Kuwait's political and diplomatic ties with the world, when an office was opened for the British Commission in Kuwait, and the country

Mubarak Al-Kabeer was a strong leader who enjoyed wise political leadership at a time when the Europeans eyed Kuwait, amid a feverish competition then on seizing parts of the Ottoman Empire. He cited a British leading politician as saying in 1911 that Kuwait under the strong fist of Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah is the safest and best-ruled in the Gulf. At the time, Mubarak Al-Kabeer was awarded the title of 'Lion of the Peninsula.'

Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah carried the first torch for Kuwait's renaissance toward modernization, director of the National Library Kamel Suleiman Al-Abduljaleel said. Historical documents demonstrate that the late Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah was a skilled shipmaster and a wise leader who led Kuwait at a time of storm and greed by the super powers of the time, Abduljaleel said. Moreover, he laid the basis of a balanced policy that guaranteed Kuwait security, stability and revival.

### Digital system

Meanwhile, Abduljaleel said that the National Library had started a project to turn the old books of Kuwait's history into a digital system to maintain them for future generations. Kuwait under Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah flourished and achieved prosperity and stability, researcher Bassim Al-Loughani said.

Mubarak Al-Kabeer left a priceless historical legacy, he added. He also left such valuable documents and messages kept at the British, Ottoman and French archives. The forum of the centenary of Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah's death runs as far as 3 December, including a host of activities, seminars, lectures and a photo and a document gallery. —KUNA



**KUWAIT:** Information Minister Sheikh Salman Al-Humoud Al-Sabah speaks at the ceremony. —KUNA photos

Kabeer's achievements for the renaissance of Kuwait, the Minister said yesterday in his address during a ceremony on the 100th anniversary of the death of Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah, held at the National Library of Kuwait. The late Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah, may God bless his soul, was known for his effective political role, and his efforts for enhancing Kuwait's foreign relations, securing the country a prominent place on the world map, Sheikh Salman said.

During the era of Sheikh Mubarak Al-Sabah, who ruled the country from 1896 to 1915, Kuwait flourished, as the first

received the first British official representative, a consul.

Other achievements of the era include the foundation of the American Mission Hospital, opening Kuwaiti trade offices abroad, raising the first Kuwaiti flag, establishing the first customs system and the first post office and concluding a protectorate agreement with Britain.

### Strong leader

Meanwhile, Sheikh Mubarak Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah addressed the ceremony, saying that



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Al-Qabas

## 2,000 EMPLOYEES MISSING AT MPW

By Waleed Al-Ghanim

An informed source said the Ministry of Public Works discovered that there is a large number of more than 2,000 employees that did not comply with working hours for several months, following inspection of attendance records through the fingerprint system, reported Al-Anbaa. Scandals of government departments continue to grow in regards to attendance, as the MPW joins MEW and MoE, who were ahead in the employees' continued absence catastrophe, while their officials cover up for them and do not take any action against them, and this is something I wrote about during this month about those two ministries and the administrative chaos in them.

Who can believe that 2,000 employees at the MPW do not report to work for days, weeks, months and years, and the ministry is the last to know! Where did those 2,000 go? Where are the locations of their jobs? What are their jobs? Who are their superiors? In which sectors they work in? Are officials and heads of departments among them? Do they supervise state contracts and projects? Do they work at the ministry diwan or in the field? Do they get allowances in addition to their salaries, so that their embezzlement of state funds is doubled? What is going on in state ministries? Is it realistic that all these problems are taking place in ministries while officials, leaders, undersecretaries, managers and heads of departments are not taking any action? Has the government salary become a gift taken by who do not deserve it in exchange of nothing? Do we know the reason behind the deterioration of government services and failure of various projects and contracts, as thousands of employees are absent and do not carry out their duties and "leave things be as they are"!

I ask the Civil Service Commission to put an end to this chaos and declare the correct legal action with that group that does not care about the sacredness of their salaries, and does not give the country its right. It should also hold those who cover up for them or participated with them among their officials in this flagrant corruption, and this is the first cleansing steps of the government's work reputation, and restore the people's confidence in it. So who will stand up for this? — Translated by Kuwait Times

## Crime

Report

### DEAD BABY FOUND IN AHMADI

**KUWAIT:** An investigation is being conducted to identify a mother who left her newborn in Ahmadi, after a man was surprised to find the baby's dead body near his car. It was not known whether the baby, a girl, died and her body was left there, or she was alive and later died due to weather conditions. The prosecutor is considering the case as one of murder.

#### Bird hunters arrested

Jahra security men heard the repeated firing of a weapon, so they went to the source of the sound and found two adolescents using a shotgun. One of them said he came to the site with his friend to hunt birds, so he was taken to the police station first, then to the juvenile prosecution.

#### Delivery man mugged

Unidentified persons tied a delivery man to a lamp-post and robbed his mobile phone along with KD 40 before escaping. The victim and his sponsor went to the police, filed a complaint and gave police the license plate number of the thieves' vehicle, and police are looking for them.

#### Merchant robbed

Criminal detectives arrested a citizen who robbed man, then returned his stolen car, KD 1,800 and 1,345 recharge cards out of the 1,500 stolen. The car's Egyptian owner said that while he was selling the recharge cards, a man stopped him near a grocery store claiming to be a detective, but when the victim asked him for his ID, he pulled a knife and robbed him. —Al-Anbaa

### MUNICIPALITY TO CUT EXPAT STAFF

**KUWAIT:** The higher planning committee at Kuwait Municipality held an expanded meeting to discuss and set a strategy to reduce the number of contracts of using services and fixed contracts for expatriate employees, so that their numbers are reduced within one year in coordination with the Civil Service Commission.

An official source at the municipality said "the municipality is dealing with the CSC according to a certain mechanism that includes all ministries, and it will be in certain stages that go along with specialties and priorities". He said the municipality closed the services help contracts as a primary move, and will not renew fixed contracts when they expire.

The source said the move is on a trial basis, and the alternative will be according to the employment scale given to Kuwaitis and residents. He said the municipality is moving according to budget items and not the "help" principle. The source said there is an idea of reviewing the evaluation of all expat employees who are included in the services help contracts or fixed contracts according to specialties and the need of work for them, in addition to completion rate and percentage of attendance.

Meanwhile, Minister of Municipality Affairs Essa Al-Kandari approved the recommendations of the joint committee regarding the violations mentioned in the Audit Bureau's report in regards to hygiene contracts, discounts and cancellations, in addition to canceling some items that saved KD 7 million. The recommendations approved by minister Kandari included fining eight companies with amounts of nearly KD 3,357,451, that included not submitting attendance lists daily to municipality representatives, not imposing and collecting due fines and because companies did not provide a workshop to clean cars and equipment. —Al-Rai, Al-Qabas



التبليغ

Al-Anbaa

### TSARS' AND SULTANS' CONSTANT WARS

By Sami Al-Nisf

The world has witnessed a series of continuous major wars between Russian tsars and Ottoman sultans from the 16th century till the beginning of the 20th century, during which the Ottomans lost six successive wars since the 1768-1774 war till the 1877-1878 war. Consequently, the Ottomans lost the Crimean peninsula, control over the Bosphorus Strait and had to grant independence to many of the Balkans as a result of such wars.

One of the main reasons of World War I was the tsar's ambition to control the Ottoman sultan's territories. Russia was the third party in the Sykes-Picot agreement that gave Iraq to Britain, Levant to France and parts of Turkey and northern Persia to Russia, which only gave up claiming its cut when the Bolshevik Revolution erupted and civil wars started between the Whites and Reds.

Constant wars between tsars and sultans and successive revolutions in both empires weakened

both and led to their collision 100 years ago when Russia sharply shifted to leftism led by Communist leader Lenin and Turkey shifted to the extreme right under the leadership of Ataturk. The Cold War between East and West and between NATO and Warsaw pacts strongly contributed to widening the gaps between both sides and that is why the complications of shooting the Russian fighter jet by Turkey cannot be perceived without mentioning this historic background.

It is funny that Russia gets angry and accelerates things because Turkey shot down one of its very old military fighters for breaching its airspace, killing one of its pilots, while Russia (former Soviet Union) shot down a South Korean commercial flight killing all 269 passengers onboard for accidentally entering its airspace in 1983. At that time, Russia insisted that it had every right to shoot down any military or civilian plane breaching its airspace after warning it. — Translated by Kuwait Times

### PROPOSAL TO 'FREE' MINISTERS

**KUWAIT:** Parliamentary sources at the budgets committee said that it discovered during its meetings last week that some ministers and senior officials in state departments are not free for their ministerial jobs because of their connection with many other areas and their involvement in special committees over various issues, while they are paid hefty rewards. Some of these leaders do not attend the meeting of any committee.

Sources said that some boards

of directors of such establishments issue their decisions individually, but refer to joint decisions. The reason is that those commissions do not meet. They added that it is natural for them not to attend because of the ministers' preoccupations with other jobs, especially that some ministers have establishments and many entities, and the minister cannot cover them all.

The sources said a parliamentary study has been made related

to the availability of officials, and not allowing them to have more than a job, to have flexibility and ease of taking decisions and other issues, so that some establishments are not tampered with. Meanwhile, the priorities committee asked the government to send a list about activating laws issued by the parliament ever since the convening of its first term, in preparations for an integrated file to be sent to the Assembly office. —Al-Qabas



### AUB RECEIVES JP MORGAN QUALITY AWARD FOR BANKING OPERATIONS

**KUWAIT:** Ahli United Bank (AUB) is proud to announce that JPMorgan has awarded Ahli United Bank their Quality Award for Banking Operations for 2015. The award was offered to the Bank in appreciation of its high operational performance in banking transfers. This award is yet another additional recognition of the Bank's professional standard achieved in this regard.

On this occasion, Jehad Al-Humaidhi, Ahli United Bank's General Manager of Operations and IT, announced in a press release that "We are delighted with this high-level international recognition from a renowned institution such as

JPMorgan as a result of our continued efforts to maintain the high level of performance and precision for the second consecutive year. This reflects our philosophy and our dedication to a culture of service excellence and the achievement of the highest international standards quality."

Al-Humaidhi added: "This award will be added to the numerous other awards which the Bank has obtained all of which commended the quality and proficiency of transactions excellence. We shall continue this trend relying on the experience and dedication of our teams, the solid IT infrastructure, and the multi service channels of Ahli United Bank."

JPMorgan indicated that only 1% of its clients qualified for the Award in 2015, with Ahli United Bank being one of this limited elite selection of banks.

This Quality Appreciation Award in Banking Operations has been offered by JPMorgan since 1997 to the banks which achieve the highest competence rates in accomplishing international transfer transactions and treasury processes. This was achieved after the Bank accomplished a high level of precision for MT103 SWIFT messages, which pertain to "Banking Transfers Service to clients" and MT202 messages in US dollar which relate to "implementing the inter-banking transfers."

التبليغ

Al-Anbaa

### KUWAITI STUDENTS AND THE WEST

By Nermin Al-Houti

Away from violations and mistakes that remain in the education ministry, we will focus on one of them - scholarship students. We will not talk about the way our children's schooling is going, and our lines will not be sharp arrows towards bogus universities, and our words will not include old issues that did not find solutions and are forgotten, bearing in mind that they are lingering and continue until now, but our cause today with education is about the treatment of our students by the West.

The political situation between Islam and European countries worsened this month following the Paris attacks. We are not political analysts here for what happened and may happen in the future, but what was and will be is now threatening our students in Western countries, as following the attacks, the West started to look at Islam as a form of terrorism that is destroying their countries and people, ignoring what Arab and particularly Gulf countries have given in the form of many assistances during their catastrophes and good times.

The story began on Monday morning following the Paris attacks in most Western countries, when some of their citizens ambushed our students in their universities, as some of them shouted unsuitable words about Islam and their countries, while others resorted to beatings. The stranger thing is that some professors in various universities in European countries ridiculed Arabs and Islam during their lectures, ignoring that those they are insulting and accusing them of others' mistakes are the children of countries that built hospitals and schools for them. Here we say - where is the role of the cultural offices accredited to our embassies?

The issue does not need official letters between countries, and does not require written complaints by scholarship students - rather the issue is searching for political, cultural and media savvy, but with regret, most of those who are placed in those offices only carry the letter "W".

We are not giving solutions for education, rather we place the issue in the society's hands to pressure officials to find solutions for our students abroad, and demand the government to commit Western countries to respect our students and have them comply with human rights and respect religions. Those lines came out of the sounds and complaints of our scholarship students, and our solutions and demands came out of the slogans of Westerners, you the educated people!

A last word: "All people are equal in human dignity, and in public rights and duties before the law, without distinction as to race, origin, language or religion". (Article 29 of the constitution). This is what we learned, and I taught to our students, you the education ministry! — Translated by Kuwait Times

### EXPATS DEPORTED FOR NOT CHANGING PROFESSION IN LICENSE

**KUWAIT:** Interior Ministry's Assistant Undersecretary for Traffic Affairs Major General Abdullah Al-Muhanna said Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Sabah's decision to deport expats driving without licenses would also apply to those who change their profession to those not allowed to have a driving license, without handing over the ones they have.



Major General Abdullah Al-Muhanna

Muhanna explained that all traffic police have been instructed to consider expats who had changed professions to ones not listed as allowed to issue a driving license as if they hold none at all, and thus they would be considered driving without a driving license and deported even if the licenses they have are still valid.

Responding to a question about some expats' complaints that they had been deported though they were caught for not carrying driving licenses while driving as they had forgotten them at home, Muhanna stressed that there was a great difference and that they should only be fined for not carrying the licenses with them. Muhanna warned both citizens and expats not to drive using a learner's license before they have their licenses issued. "Citizens will be severely punished and expats will be deported," he underlined. Commenting on using international driving licenses in Kuwait, Muhanna stressed that this was only allowed for non-residents provided they are valid and endorsed. — Al-Anbaa

### SECURITY REPORTS FILED EVERY 6 HOURS

**KUWAIT:** A security source said all land and sea locations are monitored round the clock, adding that cases of suspicion about belonging to or sympathizing with terrorist organizations are being referred daily to state security and detectives, at an average of five to 10 cases a day. The source said the interior ministry, in cooperation with many government departments such as the defense ministry, customs, aviation and ports authority, seeks to find any security loophole on the Kuwaiti borders, while any security shortcoming is dealt with instantly and the persons responsible are held to account.

The source said undercover teams have been formed by the interior ministry to spot loopholes and prepare confidential reports about them. He said that camps, animal pens, farms and even areas many people frequent such as auctions are monitored by the interior ministry. The source said the interior ministry monitors any attempt to recruit youth to terrorist organizations, or communications between terrorist groups and their sleeper cells here in Kuwait. He said security reports are filed every six hours to monitor any suspect who threatens state security. —Al-Qabas



**Assad says enemies increasing support for insurgents**

**ICC STAVES OFF REBELLION, SETS SIGHTS ON NEW HQ**



**BRUSSELS:** Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu (center front) stands with EU heads of state and government during a group photo at an EU-Turkey summit at the EU Council building in Brussels yesterday. — AP

**TURKEY TO GET CASH, CLOSER EU TIES**  
**BRUSSELS COMMITTED TO EASING VISA RULES FOR TURKS**

**BRUSSELS:** European Union leaders were set to sign a deal with Turkey's prime minister at a summit yesterday giving Ankara cash and a boost for its membership bid in exchange for its cooperation with the migrant crisis. Desperate to stop the flow of humanity from Turkey where some 2.2 million refugees from the Syrian conflict are living, the EU offered Turkey three billion euros (\$3.2 billion) to take action, according to draft summit conclusions obtained by AFP.

Turkish premier Ahmet Davutoglu, standing in for President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, will also be offered the opening in December of a new chapter in Turkey's stalled accession talks for the 28-nation bloc, the draft said. But concerns over human rights and Turkey's role in the Syrian conflict, including the shooting down of a Russian warplane in the last week,

have made EU nations wary of offering Turkey too many concessions without safeguards.

EU president Donald Tusk said in his opening speech that while the bloc was ready to help, "in return, we expect to see an immediate and substantial reduction in irregular migrants arriving in Europe, and expect Turkey under the new government to assist us." He added that Turkey should "uphold human rights and media freedoms." Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel insisted that the EU would not give Turkey a "blank cheque" and that the aid package would be conditional on Turkey living up to its commitments to curb the flow of migrants.

**Turkey Hails 'New Beginning'**

For Davutoglu, however, the focus was on deepening Turkey's ties to the EU. "It's a his-

toric day in our accession process to the EU... I am thankful to all European leaders for this new beginning," Davutoglu said. "This meeting is not just to discuss the issue of migration which is very important for all of us, but also how to re-energize this great ideal of uniting the EU with Turkish potential."

Fuelled by the Syrian war, some 850,000 people have entered the EU this year and more than 3,500 have died or gone missing in what has become Europe's worst refugee crisis since World War II. Turkey is the main gateway for migrants and refugees to reach Europe, and Germany has pushed for the summit as it is the main destination for most of the people arriving in the bloc. Under the agreement expected at the summit, Turkey will take steps including cracking down on people smugglers and cooperating with the EU on the return of

people who do not qualify as refugees. But the three billion euros in aid it gets in return will be "reviewed in the light of the developing situation", the draft statement said, and it did not provide any timescale for when exactly it would be paid out.

**Cyprus Sceptical**

Turkey is meanwhile set to get its wish for the acceleration of its bid for membership of the EU, which began in 2005 but has seen only one of 35 so-called "chapters" completed. The statement said the EU agreed to open Chapter 17 of Turkey's accession process - covering economic and monetary policy - by mid-December. It also agreed to have two summits with Turkey each year. Brussels also committed to easing the rules for visas to visit the EU's Schengen passport-free area by Oct 2016.

But Cyprus in particular opposes any mention in the final summit statement of plans to open further chapters, European officials said, due to decades of tensions with Turkey on the divided Mediterranean island. The case for cooperation with Turkey comes against a backdrop of growing security concerns over the migrant crisis, especially after the Nov 13 attacks in Paris, claimed by the Islamic State group (IS), which left 130 people dead.

Relations between Europe and Turkey remain tense over Erdogan's increasingly autocratic rule, rights abuses and Turkey's alleged backing for Islamist rebels in Syria. Two Turkish journalists charged with "spying" over their reports about Ankara's alleged arms supplies to Syrian rebels urged the EU on Saturday not to compromise on human rights and press freedom at the summit. — AFP

**POPE VISITS DIVIDED CAR**

**BANGUI:** Pope Francis brought a message of peace to divided Central African Republic yesterday, visiting people displaced by months of bloody sectarian violence and calling for unity. "I come to the Central African Republic as a pilgrim of peace and as an apostle of hope," the 78-year-old pontiff said on arriving in one of Africa's poorest and most unstable countries for a 24-hour visit fraught with safety concerns. Crowds burst into cheers and singing as his plane touched down in Bangui from Uganda on the final leg of his three-country tour of Africa, which he hailed as "the continent of hope." He began his visit Wednesday in Kenya.

For the short ride to the presidential palace in Bangui, the pontiff travelled in his open-topped popemobile, with huge crowds, many of them children and young people, cheering wildly as he passed, some waving branches in a sign of peace. At the palace he met with acting president Catherine Samba-Panza, who begged his forgiveness for the wave of "evil"

sectarian violence that has devastated the country. "Central Africans have inflicted unspeakable suffering on other Central Africans," she said. "On behalf of the ruling class of this country but also in the name of everyone who has played any part in this descent into hell, I confess all the evil that has been done here throughout the course of history and ask for forgiveness from the bottom of my heart."

In his own address, Francis called for unity, urging the people to avoid "the temptation of fear of others, of the unfamiliar, of what is not part of our ethnic group, our political views or our religious denomination". He also said he hoped the upcoming elections would allow the country to peacefully begin a "new chapter". "It is my fervent wish that the various national consultations to be held in coming weeks will enable the country to embark serenely on a new chapter of its history," he said ahead of a first round of presidential and legislative elections which on Dec 27.

The country descended into bloodshed more than two years ago after longtime Christian leader Francois Bozize was ousted by rebels from the mainly Muslim Seleka force, triggering the worst crisis since independence in 1960. Since then, the former French colony has been gripped by violence between ex-Seleka members and Christian "anti-balaka" militias.

**A Sea of Hands**

The leader of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics then went on to visit the Saint-Sauveur camp for displaced people in central Bangui. The camp is home to about 3,000 people. UN figures show close to 450,000 people remain internally displaced by the conflict. As he entered the camp, a sea of hands reached out to him as he wandered past a crowd packed with children and parents holding their toddlers out towards him.

Beaming in delight, the pontiff reached out and laid his hands on the children's heads in a gesture of blessing. "We are very pleased to see the pope," said Fidele Ndjindorom. "He knows that things have happened in our country and maybe he has come to ask God to save us." Later yesterday, Francis attended a prayer vigil outside Bangui's Notre Dame Cathedral and a day later will celebrate a huge mass at the city's 20,000-seat Barthelemy Boganda Stadium.

Ahead of the mass he will meet members of the Muslim community and visit a mosque in Bangui's flashpoint PK5 district, a maze of red dirt roads and flimsy shacks at the heart of the latest violence in the coup-prone country's history. The area saw an unprecedented wave of attacks pitting majority Christians against minority Muslims in late 2013 and early last year. Concerns about the pope's safety have been paramount, with the pope's chief bodyguard locked in days of consultations with local security forces. — AFP



**BANGUI:** Pope Francis waves from the popemobile as he arrives at St Saviour parish to visit an internally displaced people camp yesterday. — AFP

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## US COLLEGES TRY TO DEAL WITH RACIAL INCIDENTS

**WASHINGTON:** Officials were slow to handle racial incidents at the University of Missouri, and that contributed to protests, a student hunger strike, a threatened boycott by the football team and ultimately, the resignations of two administrators. At the University of Oklahoma, damage over a racist chant that was caught on video was kept to a minimum when the school president acted quickly to expel the students and condemn the episode.

Swift action is high among the best practices that school leaders can use to help defuse campus tension, experts say. "There's no such thing as having a perfect plan, but you have to continually be in the motion of creating a better campus climate," said Jabar Shumate, Oklahoma's vice president for the university community. Benjamin Reese, president of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education, said administrators should not wait for students to demand a meeting. Instead, he said, they can invite students to strategic meetings and join students in protests if it's over an issue they agree with. Administrators should know what they are going to do before something happens and be willing to speak out immediately, Reese said.

For example, Harvard University President Drew Faust immediately condemned the taping over of portraits of black professors on a wall. "Such acts of hatred are inimical to our most fundamental values and represent an assault on the mutual respect essential to our purposes as a community of learning and inquiry," Faust said a day after that happened. "We all absolutely need to prepare and there's

a lot of things that we can do," said Nancy Cantor, chancellor of Rutgers University-Newark, who joined students at her university at a recent protest. College leaders cannot create perfect environments, Reese said, "but I better try as hard as I can to work toward that environment." He plans a national meeting to help colleges come up with strategies.

### Protests

Campus protests are occurring almost daily. At Missouri, the perceived slow response to a series of episodes marked by racial slurs and graffiti sparked protests and the resignations. Students are protesting at places such as Yale, where a college administrator upset many students by pushing back against a school committee that asked students to avoid culturally stereotypical Halloween costumes like Native American headpieces.

The Education Department's civil rights office fielded 53 racial harassment complaints from postsecondary schools in the 2007-2008 budget year, a number similar to previous years going back to 2004. The next year, the number soared to 91 and it has continued to rise almost annually, to a high of 177 before dipping to 146 in the budget year that ended Oct. 1. To help schools deal with these issues, the department convened students and administrative leaders in Chicago for a private meeting in November, as various schools have taken steps on their own.

Education Secretary Arne Duncan said the fast response to racial incidents, a campus-wide statement of



**COLUMBIA, Missouri:** Jonathan Butler (front left) addresses a crowd following the announcement that University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe would resign, on Nov 9, 2015. — AP

values to help set a tone for students, and support for student-led initiatives can help episodes from overwhelming campuses. "There is no constitutional right to perpetuate

hostile environments or to engage in threatening speech," Duncan said. "We can do better in our responses to these incidents and creating more welcoming climates." — AP



**ARIHA, Syria:** A Syrian man weeps near the body of a victim who was killed by airstrikes carried out by Russian warplanes in the center of this town in the northwestern province of Idlib yesterday. — AP

## 18 CIVILIANS KILLED IN SYRIA AIR STRIKES

ASSAD SAYS ENEMIES BOOST SUPPORT FOR REBELS

**BEIRUT:** At least 18 civilians were killed and 40 wounded in "probably Russian" air strikes on a rebel-held town in northwestern Syria yesterday, a monitoring group said. The strikes hit the Idlib province town of Ariha, which is controlled by the Army of Conquest, a rebel alliance of mainly Islamist groups, including Al-Qaeda affiliate Al-Nusra Front, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. Several areas of the town were hit and rescue operations are under way with several critically wounded, the Britain-based group said. The Army of Conquest alliance seized Ariha in May after heavy fighting with regime forces.

A longtime ally of Damascus, Moscow escalated its support to President Bashar Al-Assad on September 30 with an air campaign aimed at bolstering regime positions and backing ground operations by Syrian government troops. Moscow says it targets the Islamic State group and other "terrorists", but critics accuse it of targeting moderate and Islamist rebel fighters more than IS. Syria's neighbors have charged that Russian planes have strayed into their airspace on multiple occasions during the campaign.

Russia carried out heavy raids in northern Syria this

week after Turkey downed one of its jets in the area. Turkey claims the warplane strayed into its airspace and ignored repeated warnings to change course, but Russia has insisted it did not cross the border. The incident has led to a sharp deterioration of relations between Ankara and its largest energy supplier. The pilot of the Russian plane was shot dead by rebels as he parachuted down after ejecting, but his navigator was rescued by Russian and Syrian special forces.

The pilot's body is to be handed over to a Russian representative after being retrieved from Syria, Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said on Sunday. A Russian warplane recently entered Israeli-controlled airspace from Syria but the intrusion was resolved without incident, Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Yaalon said yesterday. In early November, apparent Russian air strikes killed at least 11 civilians in two towns in Idlib province, the Observatory said. More than 250,000 people have been killed since the Syrian conflict erupted in 2011. Meanwhile, Assad told a senior Iranian official yesterday that his adversaries had increased weapon supplies and financial support to insurgents since the start of a major offensive aided by his allies to regain

lost territory. Assad was quoted by state media as telling Ali Akbar Velayati, a top adviser to Iran's supreme leader, that the military support his country was getting from Iran and Russia had pushed the enemy states he did not name to "further escalate and increase financing and equipping of terrorists".

The Syrian army said on Saturday that Turkey had increased supplies of weapons, ammunition and equipment to what it described as terrorists in Syria. The senior Iranian official was quoted as saying that his country would continue to support Syria as the war "against terror was a decisive one for the region and the world". Assad said the defeat of rebel groups fighting to topple his rule was a prerequisite for the "success of any political solution decided by Syrians".

A Syrian military source told Reuters last week rebels were making heavy use of US-made anti-tank missiles paid for by Saudi Arabia and supplied via Turkey and the weapons were having an impact on the battlefield. The so-called TOW missile is the most potent weapon in the arsenal of rebel groups and has been seen in action more frequently since Russia intervened with air strikes on Syria on Sept. 30. — Agencies

## PALESTINIAN SHOT DEAD, RADIO STATION CLOSED

**JERUSALEM:** A stabbing at an entrance to Jerusalem's Old City and another near a bus stop Sunday left two people wounded and an attacker killed, while Israel closed a third Palestinian radio station it accused of inciting violence. The attacks and closure of the station came with Israeli security forces struggling to halt two months of knife, gun and car-ramming assaults. Several weeks ago, an Israeli security crackdown in Jerusalem, including roadblocks in Palestinian neighborhoods, was followed by a lull in attacks in the city, but violence has recently returned.

Early yesterday, a 38-year-old Palestinian stabbed and lightly wounded an Israeli border police officer at Damascus Gate, a main entrance point for Palestinians to east Jerusalem's Old City and the site of several previous attacks. The attacker was identified as Bassem Salah from the northern West Bank city of Nablus. Later in the morning, a foreign woman of around 30 was lightly wounded in a stabbing near a bus station in west Jerusalem and the attacker fled. Police said a Palestinian suspect was later arrested near the scene. Further details on the victim were not immediately provided.

Violence since October 1 has left 100 dead on the Palestinian side, including an Arab Israeli, as well as 17 Israelis, an American and an Eritrean. Many of the Palestinians killed have been alleged attackers, while others have been shot dead by Israeli security forces during clashes. A visit last week by US Secretary of State John Kerry failed to produce any breakthrough, and debate has intensified within Israel on whether to take conciliatory steps to ease tensions or to respond more forcefully. Palestinian leaders blame Israel for the wave of violence, saying its continued occupation and settlement building along with a lack of progress in peace efforts have led to hopelessness among

young people. Many of the attackers have been young Palestinians, including teenagers, who appear to have acted on their own.

### Radio Incitement?

In the flashpoint southern West Bank city of Hebron, the army shut down the Dream radio station, the third private broadcaster it has closed there, accusing it of stoking the violence. An Israeli minister raised the threat last week of shutting down Palestinian public broadcasters as well, charging that they were guilty of fanning the flames. Hebron, considered a West Bank stronghold of Islamist movement Hamas, has been the focus of much of the recent violence.

Talab Jaabari, owner of the station closed yesterday, said soldiers arrived and seized "all the material and caused significant damage to the station". He said he received a written order to close for six months, which accused his station of "broadcasting programs with the aim of promoting and encouraging terrorism against civilians and Israeli security forces". The Al-Khalil and Al-Hurriya radio stations in Hebron were also closed earlier this month on similar grounds. Two other Palestinian radio stations - one in Hebron and one in Jenin - said they have received letters threatening closure. Such closures have been among a raft of security measures taken by Israel in bid to halt the attacks. Last week, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced tighter controls on Palestinian vehicles and an increase in the number of so-called "bypass roads" which create separate routes for Palestinians and Jewish settlers. He said work permits would be withdrawn from the families of alleged attackers and there would be "no limits" on the powers of Israeli soldiers in the West Bank, where some 400,000 Jewish settlers live among 2.8 million Palestinians. — AFP



**AL-BIREH:** Palestinians rush to help a demonstrator, wounded in the eye, during clashes with Israeli security forces following a demonstration against Israeli occupation in this Palestinian town on the outskirts of Ramallah in the West Bank yesterday. — AFP



**COLORADO SPRINGS:** Mourners attend a vigil held on the University of Colorado - Colorado Springs' campus for those killed in Friday's deadly shooting at a Planned Parenthood clinic on Saturday. — AP

## US SHOOTER SPOKE OF 'NO MORE BABY PARTS'

**WASHINGTON:** A suspected shooter reportedly spoke of "no more baby parts" after his arrest following a five-hour siege of a family planning clinic in Colorado Springs that left three people dead, including a police officer. Details began to emerge Saturday about what may have driven the suspect, Robert Lewis Dear, 57, to enter the Planned Parenthood clinic with a high-powered rifle on Friday and fire on police and civilians outside the building. The clinic performs abortions - a highly emotive and divisive issue in America.

NBC News, citing two law enforcement officials, said that when questioned after his arrest Dear mentioned "no more baby parts" in reference to Planned Parenthood. The agency came under intense scrutiny earlier this year over videos purportedly showing that it was involved in trafficking fetal organs and tissue - allegations that it has vehemently denied.

Dear also mentioned President Barack Obama, so the sources told NBC

that it was unclear whether he targeted the clinic because of abortions. However for Vicki Cowart, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Rocky Mountains, the connection was clear. "Eyewitnesses confirm" that Dear "was motivated by opposition to safe and legal abortion," Cowart said. "This is an appalling act of violence targeting access to healthcare and terrorizing skilled and dedicated health care professionals."

Reacting to the shooting, Obama made an impassioned call for tighter controls on military-style weapons. "This is not normal. We can't let it become normal," a frustrated Obama said. "If we truly care about this ... then we have to do something about the easy accessibility of weapons of war on our streets to people who have no business wielding them. "Enough is enough."

Planned Parenthood - a major provider of women's health services that receives funding from the govern-

ment - offers preventive checkups, contraceptives and abortions. It has 700 clinics around the United States and has been violently targeted before. "We've seen an alarming increase in hateful rhetoric and smear campaigns against abortion providers and patients over the last few months. That environment breeds acts of violence," Cowart said. "We should not have to live in a world where accessing healthcare includes safe rooms and bullet-proof glass."

### Community in Mourning

Police and officials said little about Dear, who appeared in police booking photos with a bushy gray beard. But US media described him as a seemingly troubled loner who had had several previous but minor brushes with the law. The Colorado Springs Gazette said he had arrest records in South and North Carolina on misdemeanor charges, and said he also faced peeping Tom charges in 2002 in South Carolina

that were dismissed.

Mayor John Suthers, who along with police and other officials watched the drama unfold on the clinic's security cameras, paid tribute to police for hauling in the gunman without further bloodshed. The wounded included five police, but none suffered serious injury. Dear entered the Planned Parenthood building before noon Friday and started shooting from a window. Several people managed to flee the building, running out into the snowy street, while others hid in the sanctuary of a clinic safe room. Police said 24 people who at one point were held hostage were evacuated unharmed. "We are in mourning today," Suthers told a news conference, saying that police, particularly SWAT teams, were "responsible for saving many, many lives." The dead policeman was identified as Garrett Swasey, 44, a campus officer at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. Officials were expected to name the two other dead today. — AFP



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## BURKINA VOTES FOR NEW PRESIDENT AFTER YEAR OF UPEHAVAL

**OUAGADOUGOU:** Voters in Burkina Faso began casting ballots yesterday for a new president and parliament, hoping to turn the page on a year of turmoil during which the west African nation's people ousted a veteran ruler and repelled a military coup.

Security was tight as some five million voters in the nation of 20 million went to the polls to choose a new leader for the first time in almost three decades. The authorities are deploying between 20,000 and 25,000 troops to ward off the threat of a jihadist attack, following two recent assaults against police barracks on the country's long western border with troubled Mali.

"For the first time in 50 years there is an electoral uncertainty... we don't know the winner in advance," said Abdoulaye Soma, the head of the Burkinabe society of constitutional law. "This is a positive point and a fundamental change from the other elections that we had seen earlier." Former president Blaise Compaore was forced to flee the country following mass street protests in October 2014 against his bid to change the constitution to extend his 27-year rule.

A transitional government was put in place until fresh elections could be held. But the country was plunged into fresh uncertainty in

September this year, weeks before a planned October 11 presidential vote, when elite army leaders close to Compaore tried to seize power. Once again angry citizens took to the streets, foiling the military coup. Its leaders were thrown behind bars and the presidential and general elections were re-scheduled for November 29.

There were problems as some stations opened late or were short of voting papers and ballot boxes, but many people said they were glad just to have the chance to choose their leader. "I'm happy to have been able to vote. I want the candidate I voted for to take care of us," said 39-year-old Omar Tiemore.

Voter Ousmane Francois Ouedraogo said that with Compaore now exiled in neighboring Ivory Coast-gone, the country was "more free and more democratic". Former army officer Compaore, 64, took power in 1987 when revolutionary former comrade-in-arms Thomas Sankara—a charismatic leader who came to be known as "Che Sankara"—was gunned down in a coup Compaore is now widely believed to have orchestrated.

Transitional president Michel Kafando hailed the vote as a victory for the country and its young people who "expressed themselves and expressed their desire for change, for

democracy and freedom" by ousting Compaore.

### 'First-round knock-out'

To bolster the legitimacy of the next head of state, members of the interim government have been banned from standing as have all those who backed Compaore's bid for a third term, as well as members of his Congress for Democracy and Progress party (CDP). The pro-Compaore CDP is still fielding candidates in the parliamentary elections and is expected to do well in parts of the country traditionally behind "Beau Blaise". In the race for the presidency, seven of the 14 contenders were once close to Compaore, including the two favorites for the job-Roch Marc Christian Kabore and Zephirin Diabre.

"I quit state affairs in 1997. I've been through the decontamination chamber!" says Diabre.

Diabre, an economist, opted for an international career but also served at home as minister of economy and finance. He at one point joined the United Nations Development Programme with support from Compaore. Kabore worked side-by-side with Compaore for 26 years—serving as premier, parliament speaker and CDP party chief—before falling out



**OUAGADOUGOU:** Burkina Faso's Prime Minister Issac Zida casts his vote for the presidential election at a polling station in Ouagadougou yesterday. — AFP

of favour and quitting the ruling party months before the collapse of the regime. Kabore was already crowing victory. "It's going to be a first-round knock-out," he predicted. "The priority is

good governance along with justice." Polls are due to close at 1800 GMT. The electoral commission says provisional results should be known by today evening. — AFP



**A migrant carries his child after crossing the Greek-Macedonian border, near Gevgelija, yesterday. A group of migrants trying to enter Macedonia pelted the police with stones injuring several officers as the small Balkan country became the latest to build a border fence aimed at checking the flow of newcomers. — AFP**

## GERMANY OUTLINES PLAN TO SUPPORT FIGHT AGAINST IS

### MASS BRAWLS ERUPT IN CROWDED MIGRANT SHELTERS IN GERMANY

**FRANKFURT:** Germany could send 1,200 soldiers to the Middle East by the end of the year to support a coalition battling Islamic State, Germany's top defense official told a newspaper yesterday as his minister backed an international alliance against the group. Chancellor Angela Merkel promised to support the offensive against Islamic State during talks with French President Francois Hollande, who called for more countries to help fight the militants after the Nov. 13 attacks in Paris.

Germany's defence minister Ursula von der Leyen called for the alliance for a limited time to combat the militants in a commentary in an advance copy of the Bild newspaper due out on Monday.

She said the aim of what she called a "special purpose" alliance was to "weaken ISIS, to limit its freedom for manoeuvre, to destroy its training camps, to win back city by city, destroy its oil revenue and break the aura of invincibility". Germany's troops plan, which still needs approval from parliament and was outlined by Germany's Chief of Defence Volker Wiewer in Bild am Sonntag, does not include direct involvement in the coalition's air offensive.

In Germany, the public still dislikes sending forces overseas except for in peace missions, in part due to memories of Nazi militarism. Under the plan, a

German frigate would accompany France's Charles de Gaulle aircraft carrier, Wiewer said in the interview. German planes would refuel the jets of the coalition as well as take photographs in the region.

"From a military point of view for the servicing of the planes and ships, about 1,200 soldiers would be necessary," Wiewer told the newspaper.

He said he hoped to obtain the necessary mandate by the end of the year. Wiewer also said Germany was in talks with Jordan and Turkey about stationing Tornado aircraft for reconnaissance in the region. German officials said Merkel saw a bigger German role as the price to pay for Hollande's support in tackling the refugee crisis in Europe.

### Mass brawls

Meanwhile, clashes broke out yesterday between hundreds of asylum seekers at a shelter in Berlin, in the second mass brawl to erupt over the weekend in Germany's crowded migrant accommodations.

Several people were arrested at the fight that started in the food distribution queues at the former airport of Tempelhof, which has been turned into a temporary accommodation for 1,200 refugees, an AFP photographer witnessed. The brawl came just hours after another mass fight at a refugee shelter in the

Berlin suburb of Spandau, where migrants went at each other with fire extinguishers, a police spokesman said.

Windows were smashed, sofas were thrown, and fire extinguishers emptied, said police, adding that several residents of the shelter were wounded. Some 500 people evacuated the building "in fear and panic" over the dispute. Separately, two other fights broke out in other shelters. At a refugee home in Berlin's Kreuzberg area, a 18-year-old struck a 17-year-old on the head with a belt, police said.

Meanwhile, five people were injured in a fight between Syrians in the showers of an accommodation in the eastern state of Saxony-Anhalt. Such disturbances have occurred before in other shelters in Germany, with tensions escalating quickly between often traumatized people from different cultures sharing packed spaces.

At the same time, they have been relatively rare given the sheer numbers of new arrivals—Germany expects to take in a million asylum seekers this year alone, and has put up hundreds of thousands in flats, army barracks, sports halls and tent cities.

Germany's police union had called for refugees to be separated by religion and by country of origin to minimize the potential for conflict. — AFP

## ICC STAVES OFF AFRICA-LED REBELLION, EYES NEW HQ

**THE HAGUE:** The International Criminal Court staved off a veiled African-led threat to quit the world's only permanent war crimes court, but experts say that has come at the expense of justice for the victims of mass atrocities. Tensions flared last week at the nine-day Assembly of States Parties (ASP) over Kenya, which is embroiled in a bitter tussle with the ICC over efforts to prosecute its two top leaders, President Uhuru Kenyatta and Deputy President William Oduro.

As delegates pack their bags, the court is now turning its attention to moving into its new permanent premises on the other side of The Hague, only steps away from the detention cells where defendants are held. "This meeting... has left a lot of people disappointed," said Janet Anderson, writing on the Justice Hub website.

"Much of the debate and discussion was about efforts by the Kenyan delegation to get the ASP to discuss and agree on a rule concerning using witness testimony," she said. "Shouldn't the meeting be about more than that, about the victims who need justice and about getting the court to run well?" she asked. The Kenyatta case collapsed late last year, and Kenya this week renewed calls to drop charges against Ruto stemming from 2007-08 post-election violence, which left some 1,200 people dead.

In a tense week at the ICC annual conference, the African Union also accused the ICC of unfairly targeting the continent, warning that Africa's "common resolve should not be tested." Delegates eventually introduced an 11th-hour agreement on Thursday reaffirming the rule, but experts said Kenya's efforts dominated the conversation to the detriment of other issues, particularly victims of mass atrocity crimes.

The Coalition for the ICC said the days of brinkmanship had "set a dangerous precedent for the court's independence." Using unfounded

accusations of an anti-Africa bias at the ICC and threats to withdraw from the Rome Statute, the Kenyan government has sought to gain concessions from this assembly to put pressure on the decision-making of independent ICC judges," said the coalition's William Pace.

### 'Obscure the real victims'

Ruto is accused of crimes against humanity for his role in the post-election violence, the worst unrest since independence in 1963. Nairobi lobbied intensely for the assembly to publicly restate a rule that recanted testimonies cannot be used in cases which are already before the courts.

The ICC prosecutor Fatou Bensouda has been allowed by judges to use such testimonies in the case against Ruto—a ruling which his lawyers are currently appealing. "We should not be surprised by the efforts we've seen, particularly by the government of Kenya, to discredit the court's work and to obscure the real victims—thousands of Kenyans who have yet to see any justice," Human Rights Watch senior legal expert Elizabeth Evenson said. "The saddest part of this ordeal... #Kenya convincing the world problem was (with the) #ICC while justice for #PEV (post-election violence) became irrelevant," international law expert Mark Kersten added in a tweet.

Officials from the court, which began work in 2002, are now trying to put the tensions behind them. On November 12 court officials formally received their new premises overlooking the dunes and the North Sea in a seaside suburb of the Hague. "We can now concentrate on getting settled in," an ICC official said. The first cases will be heard in January—with the much-anticipated trial of former Ivory Coast president Laurent Gbagbo, due to open on January 28. — AFP



**DONETSK:** Women look at their ballots at a polling station in Mariupol, in the Donetsk region yesterday. Voters in the east Ukrainian government-held port of Mariupol yesterday cast their ballots in a delayed local elections after an earlier poll was scrapped in the strategic frontline city. — AFP

## SPANISH DIVIDED ON JOINING ANTI-IS STRIKES: POLLS

**MADRID:** Spaniards are divided on whether Spain should take part in the international military campaign in Syria against the Islamic State, with just over half, 54, percent, opposed, a poll published yesterday showed. About a third, 35 percent, are in favour of joining the military campaign in Syria and the rest were undecided, according to the poll published in El Mundo newspaper.

The poll—carried out after the November 13 suicide bomb and shootings in Paris—also found that 83 percent of Spaniards believed a Paris-style attack could happen in Spain, suggesting that national security could emerge as a theme for a December 20 general election.

Another poll published Saturday in the conservative daily La Razón showed 69 percent of Spaniards wanting Spain to help France "in its fight against Islamist terrorism". By contrast with the poll in El Mundo the survey showed more people supporting Spain "bombing the terrorists in Syria" than not, with 49.3 percent in favour compared with 43.6 percent against.

Several thousand people marched Saturday in Madrid against Spanish involvement in the Syrian conflict as conservative Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy stressed he

would not rush into a decision. "No to war," chanted the demonstrators who gathered rallied outside the Reina Sofia museum in the Spanish capital. The organisers estimated their number at around 6,000.

With elections looming, Rajoy's government has been holding off on any decision on whether Spain will join France, the United States and others in airstrikes against Islamic State strongholds in Syria. "Decisions have to be well thought through, as in any aspect of life," said Rajoy, who added Madrid was in touch with its allies on a clear plan of action.

Leftist opposition parties have voiced opposition to Spanish military involvement in the Middle East. The leader of the far-left grouping Podemos, Pablo Iglesias, backs putting the issue to a referendum. Rajoy is mindful of how events unfolded in March 2004 under his Popular Party predecessor, former conservative prime minister Jose Maria Aznar.

Aznar, who had backed the US intervention in Iraq a year earlier, was voted out of office days after Islamic extremists killed 191 people in bombings on Madrid trains. Aznar's stance on Iraq was in stark contrast to that of the public in a traditionally pacifist country. — AFP

## BELGIAN SCHEME TRIES TO NIP RADICALIZATION IN THE BUD

**MOLENBEEK, Belgium:** In the troubled Brussels district of Molenbeek, politician Sarah Turine is on the frontline of her own war to stop the sons of Belgian families going off to Syria to join Islamic State fighters.

The first step is often to send a sociologist and psychologist to try to re-establish the link between the troubled young man and his family. The next is to flag up the dire consequences of the choice they seem to be about to make.

"We must try to defuse this anger among the young," Turine, who oversees a radicalization prevention program in Molenbeek, told AFP over tea at an upscale Arab cafe. "We have to assure them they have a place here, that they are not second-class citizens, and to undermine the recruiters' arguments," said Turine, a member of the leftist Ecolo party. Belgium has come under fire for failing to crack down on the radicalization of its youth since the Paris attacks this month saw 130 people killed by jihadists, many of whom lived in or had links to the impoverished immigrant district of Molenbeek.

For families it can be hard to know where to turn in the tiny northern European country, already the region's top recruiting ground for jihadi "foreign fighters" in Syria and Iraq compared to the number of people. Community leaders say Molenbeek presents a toxic mix of reasons its youth are becoming radicalised: high

unemployment, lack of career prospects, drug abuse, petty crime and isolation from Belgium's non-Muslim majority. Compounding that is poor political engagement and lax security oversight. Bilal, a 21-year-old Muslim resident of the district, says recruiters from the Islamic State group that claimed the Paris attacks convinced around a dozen of his male and female friends to join their cause in Syria.

He said recruiters played on his friends' guilt over their "craze for nightlife," their relations with the opposite sex and "brushes with the law"—a wayward lifestyle in a conservative and poor immigrant community.

They also whipped up a sense of injustice over the perceived Western meddling in Middle East events, said Bilal, who himself resisted repeated recruitment bids.

"Recruiters target the weak," he told AFP.

### 'Fertile ground'

Jamal Habbachich, who chairs a council of 22 mosques in Molenbeek, said extremist recruiters have started distributing leaflets in the streets and the markets. And he said Molenbeek-cut off from the rest of Belgium like a "ghetto" offers recruiters "fertile ground" to lure in young people with the false promise of a more righteous life. "The Islamic State conducted a diabolical, satanic strategy," he told AFP in his office at Attadamoun Mosque. "It won people

slowly with its pitch: 'Help the poor and end injustice'. And once they get over there, they pass to the war phase."

The mosques work with people like Sarah Turine to try to stop the young from becoming radicalized, but they need far more people and resources, Habbachich said. "There is also prevention work that we do with the imams," he said. "The imams warn the young... 'If you take this path, you are going to destroy your life.' Olivier Vanderhaeghen, an administrator for Turine's prevention program, said he and his colleagues, working with schools, social workers and others, try to restore the community and family ties that young people break when they are lured by radicals. "First, the young person will break with his or her network, he will break with his friends, he will break with his school, his sporting club," he said. "Second, he will no longer frequent the same public places. 'In the third and last phase, he will break with his family,' he added.

Turine said she is certain the program has helped "dozens and dozens and dozens" of young Muslims and has prevented some going to Syria. But Habbachich said much more work needs to be done to professionally train and help the young find work, including outside Brussels, as well as give them an outlet to express themselves. "Nobody listens to them, nobody speaks to them," he added. — AFP

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## SAUDI WOMEN LAUNCH MAIDEN ELECTION BID

Continued from Page 1

The late King Abdullah said women would participate in this year's vote. In 2013, he also named women to the appointed Shura Council, which advises the cabinet. Abdullah died in January and was succeeded by Salman, who stuck to the election timetable. In other Gulf states, women have had some voting rights for several years. About 7,000 people are vying for seats on 284 municipal councils, according to the Saudi electoral commission.

Only around 131,000 women have signed up to vote, compared with more than 1.35 million men, out of a native Saudi population of almost 21 million. Although the voting age has been lowered to 18 from 21 and the proportion of elected councilors has increased to two-thirds, winning a seat remains a challenge for women. Hossaini said

she had hoped to set up a campaign tent in Riyadh's Diriyah area. "When I asked the man to give permission for his land... he refused," she said. Like other contenders, she plans to focus online, and has her own website.

In the Red Sea city of Jeddah, Sameera Abdullah Al-Shamat was also relying on Twitter, Instagram and other Internet forums widely used in the kingdom. "My daughter and two sons are running my campaign," said Shamat, a charity worker. Electoral democracy is still a novel concept in a country where tribal loyalties remain strong and the influence of "wasta" - knowing the right people - is powerful. Saud Al-Shammry, 43 of Riyadh, said it was time for a new approach. "We strive for development and real change, free from tribal or family biases," he said, adding "there's a big possibility" he could vote for a woman, if her platform is right. — AFP

## UNDER-FIRE OMAIR MOVED TO PUBLIC WORKS...

Continued from Page 1

Since his appointment in Jan 2014, Omais has been locked into several disputes with oil executives over the interpretation of his powers over KPC and oil companies.

A decision by him early in November to swap the CEOs of two oil companies triggered a row with the oil sector after KPC chief executive officer Nizar Al-Adasani and the two concerned CEOs openly rejected the decision and challenged his authority. This prompted the Cabinet to take Omais away from the sensitive oil sector amid a reported compromise to also change the oil executives shortly.

Immediately after the move, Omais was targeted as the new public works minister. Two MPs, Mansour Al-Dhafiri and Hammad, warned Omais against allowing the airport expansion contract to be signed without an investigation. Hammad said that Omais should examine the awarding process and other alleged violations, otherwise he will resubmit the grilling against the new minister. Dhafiri urged Omais not to allow the contract to go ahead.

MPs Khalil Al-Saleh and Ahmad Al-Qudhaibi, who

had threatened to file to grill Omais as oil minister over a variety of violations, criticized Omais's management of the oil ministry and called on the new minister to correct the mistakes. Saleh said the reported violations have now moved under the authority of the new minister, who should take necessary legal actions.

Qudhaibi said moving Omais out of the oil ministry has defused tensions with oil sector executives and stopped the minister's unacceptable interference in the sector. He said he will continue to follow up on the issues he raised when Omais was oil minister, especially the violations around the oil pipeline contract.

Meanwhile, rapporteur of the foreign relations committee MP Mohammad Tana said the committee approved the Arab anti-terror agreement but decided to delay the Gulf anti-terror pact until the foreign ministry sends details on it. The committee also approved the Gulf anti-dumping agreement that will be debated by the Assembly tomorrow. Also, the financial and economic affairs committee approved the amendment of 22 articles of the commercial agencies law. Rapporteur of the committee MP Mohammad Al-Jabri said the amendments will help boost competition and provide commodities to consumers in a better way.



LONDON: Climate change demonstrators march to demand curbs to carbon pollution yesterday on the eve of the climate summit in Paris. — AFP

## RALLIES PRESSURE UN CLIMATE SUMMIT

Continued from Page 1

Hopes are high that the Paris summit will not fail like the previous such meeting six years ago in Copenhagen. But all sides say pledges made in Paris will be insufficient to limit a rise in global temperatures to 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, widely viewed as a threshold for dangerous changes in the planet's climate system.

Almost all the demonstrations were peaceful but, after the human chain protest in Paris, riot police fired tear gas and clashed with about 200 protesters, some wearing masks, in the Place de la Republique. Demonstrators carried banners calling for the defence of the climate and democracy. The square has been a gathering place for Parisians since the Nov 13 attacks.

Riot police took action after a group of protesters pelted officers with bottles and candles from one of the tributes to the victims of the attacks. Around 100 people were arrested. Using the state of emergency rules, police put 24 green activists under house arrest ahead of the summit, saying they were suspected of planning violent protests.

In Berlin, about 5,000 people marched with some dressed as penguins. One carried a huge "There is no planet B for penguins," banner. In London, hundreds of marchers were joined by fashion designer Vivienne Westwood and actress Emma Thompson. "This is our planet and we are in deep, grave danger," Thompson told Sky television. In the biggest single march on climate change ever staged, last year organizers estimated 310,000 people took part in New York. — Agencies



A fisherman prepares to go out to sea in Manila Bay, one of the Philippines' many typhoon-vulnerable coasts yesterday. The Philippines is among countries pushing for a binding pact to cut greenhouse gas emissions at the United Nations summit in Paris this week. — AFP

## GULF UNWILLING TO TIGHTEN OIL TAPS ALL ALONE

Continued from Page 1

"No indicators or changes have happened to convince Gulf states to change their policy and cut output," the official told AFP, requesting anonymity.

But another Gulf official hinted at some flexibility in case of cooperation. "It's too early to say if OPEC would maintain its production policy," said the official, who also wished to remain anonymous. OPEC heavyweight Saudi Arabia said last week it was ready to cooperate with other producers to stabilize the oil market and support prices. The OPEC meeting comes at a time of a massive production glut, with oversupply continuing and inventories at almost record levels of more than 3.0 billion barrels, triple the normal rate.

OPEC member Venezuela and some international economic reports have warned that the oil price could slide to the range of \$20-\$30 a barrel from around \$42 now if output is not trimmed. Abu-Daheesh said Gulf states are betting on developments indicating a balanced oil market next year after OPEC's strategy knocked out some high-cost production, such as some US shale oil. OPEC secretary general Abdullah el-Badri said in October he was confident the oil market will pick up in 2016 due to a growth in demand and a drop in non-OPEC output. He said the glut was caused by a six

million bpd increase from non-OPEC members over the past five years and that this has started to contract.

Saudi Oil Minister Ali Al-Naimi told an energy conference in Bahrain on Nov 19 that, despite oversupply, the world still needs 5.0 million bpd of new output, four million of that due to natural decline. Bassam Fattouh, director of the Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, told the same conference the market rebalancing process has started but the effect on prices will be slow.

The International Energy Agency said this month that growth in demand for crude is set to slow next year as the allure of cheap oil fades. The IEA expects demand to grow by 1.2 million bpd in 2016, down from 1.8 million bpd this year. Harami believes oil prices will remain low for at least the next two years until the global economy picks up. By then, falls in high-cost oil production will make way for OPEC crude, Harami said. Massive cuts in oil investments will also help slow production, he said.

Saudi Arabia said this month that more than \$200 billion worth of energy projects worldwide had been cancelled this year and more cancellations were expected in 2016. Despite economic woes and major revenue losses due to low oil prices, the Gulf states have a huge fiscal cushion to rely on. "Gulf states can bear the downturn for another three years enough for their oil policy to achieve targets," Abu-Daheesh said. — AFP

## PM BACKS FRANCE IN FIGHT AGAINST TERROR

Continued from Page 1

He said Kuwait was keen on participating in the climate summit, which was very significant due to the rapid climate changes over the past two decades. Kuwait, he said, has been an active partner in previous summits which were aimed at addressing global warming, and was amongst the leading countries that approved the UN

framework agreement on climate change. He hoped the Paris climate summit would mark a "serious start" that would prevent "disastrous" consequences on the environment and economy. Sheikh Jaber called for narrowing gaps between industrial and developing countries, as well as increasing funding to tackle climate change. Kuwait has exerted huge efforts to eliminate pollution and preserve the environment, he said. — KUNA

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## Issues

## WHY WE SHOULDN'T CONFUSE REFUGEES WITH TERRORISTS

By Ovais Sarmad

There is an incorrect notion that migration and refugee flows are somehow linked to terrorism or that terrorist activities are motivated, directly or indirectly, by these populations. It is important to decouple and separate the migration and refugee flows around the world from acts of terrorism in any shape or form, no matter where they occur.

The vast majority of people become displaced because they are fleeing from terrorists and their acts of brutal violence. The cruel irony, therefore, is that migrants and refugees are unfortunately being linked to the same terrorists they are fleeing from.

A careful distinction must be made between addressing migrant and refugee flows and responding to terrorism. The ones who are fleeing terrorism at home are doing so in desperation and are in need of international protection and assistance. The ones who are terrorizing the innocent and creating circumstances for large population displacements within and outside national boundaries, must be addressed with appropriate measures. There is no place for violence and brutality in any religion or society.

When it comes to heinous acts of violence, a response of shock and horror is entirely justified and understandable, but anger must not be directed towards the innocent. The vast majority of refugees and migrants around the world contribute positively to the culture, economy and nation-building of the countries they live in. Many migrants return to their countries of origin when economic and political situations have improved.

The international community, therefore, needs to create opportunities for migrants and refugees to usefully contribute to their host societies. This could be achieved through provision of humanitarian facilities for short-term, temporary relocation assistance, and selective employment opportunities.

### Not in Islam's name

Unfortunately, the recent waves of violence and terrorist attacks in many parts of the world have been carried out in the name of Islam. The international community must recognize and declare that this is not the correct and true spirit of Islam, which is a religion of peace. Muslim countries, both leaders and citizens, have a greater moral responsibility to come forward and condemn these acts of terrorism.

The entire international community has the obligation to condemn terrorist activities carried out in the name of religion and to share the responsibility of assisting those who are fleeing from countries in which acts of terrorism are rampant. Terrorist groups do not uphold the true values of any religion or human-rights principles. Every nation, religion and society must join forces to voice their condemnation.

### We are the majority

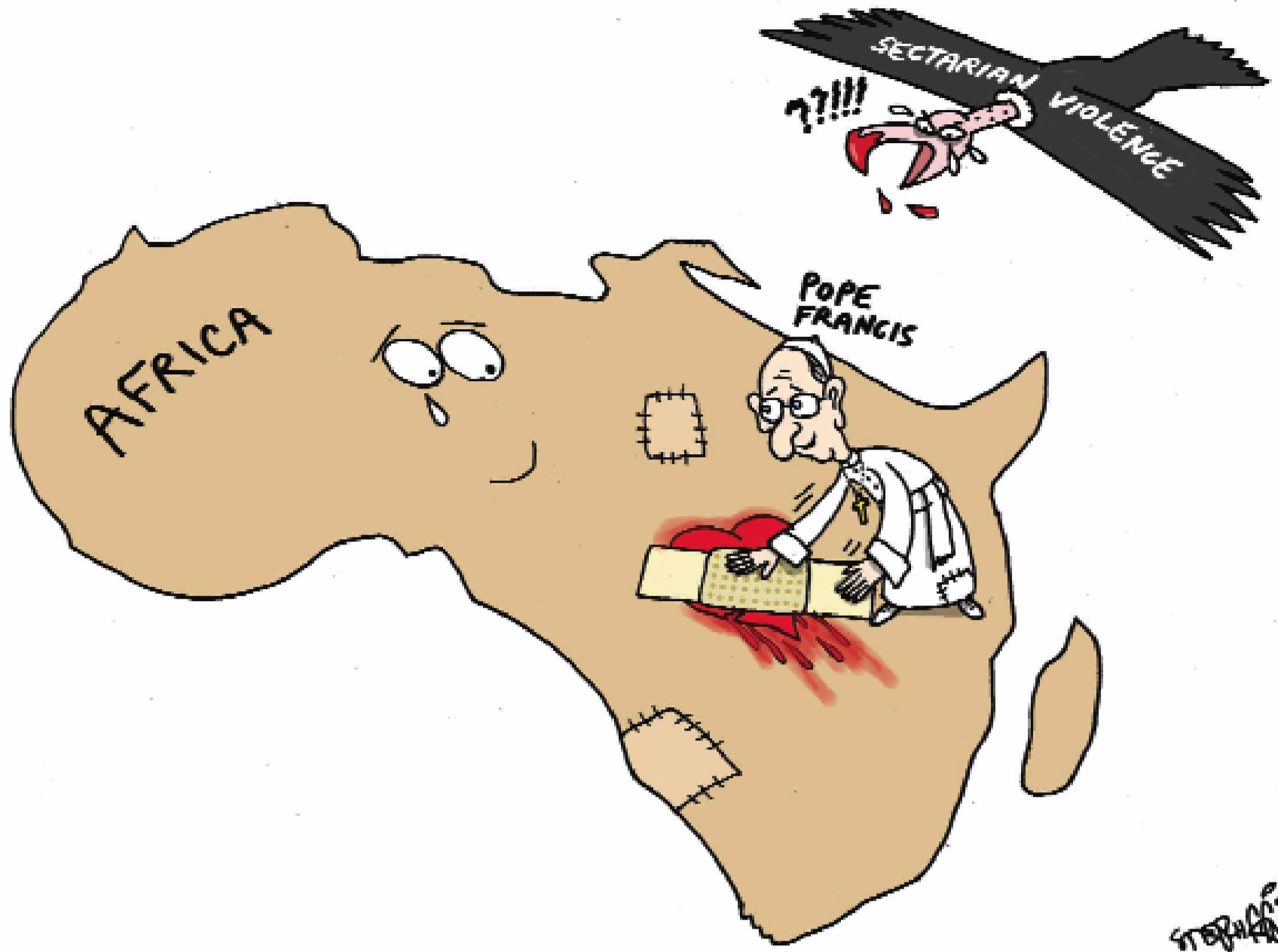
The international community - including the media, international and civil-society organizations and general public - cannot let the terrorists distract us from doing the right thing for the right reasons. We need to protect the human rights of those who are fleeing from violence and terrorism and are in need of protection and attention, both in the short and longer term.

Let us also do all we can to address the root causes of why so many people are being displaced and forced to live in less-than-humane conditions in refugee camps around the world. The terrorists are but small fractions of large, peaceful and peace-loving societies that exist and thrive in many parts of the world. They should not be allowed to destroy the positive image of any religion or society. We should not let the greater goodness of human nature be affected by a terror-perpetrating minority.

The International Organization for Immigration believes, practices and implements its mandate through its activities to ensure migration and human mobility is managed in a dignified, orderly, safe and humane manner.

NOTE: Ovais Sarmad is Chief of Staff of the International Organization for Migration (IOM)

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## LABOUR BATTLES FOR SOUL AND IDENTITY

By Elizabeth Piper

In the 1970s, a trio of socialists joined a battle to steer Britain's Labour Party to the left. Within a few years, two of them had seized control of the council that governed London, running the capital for half a decade. Almost 40 years on, the same three men, led by new party chief Jeremy Corbyn, are closer than ever to their goal of pushing the opposition party to the hard left. But in doing so, they have set off an internal war which could end its chances of winning an election for years.

Two months after 66-year-old Corbyn was elected leader on a wave of enthusiasm for change, some Labour lawmakers closer to the centre are rebelling openly over his stand on vexed questions such as how to tackle terrorism and whether Britain should bomb Syria. With slurs and accusations flying on both sides, the battle for the soul of the Labour Party is turning nasty.

Alongside Corbyn stand two old friends and colleagues who form the rest of the trio: Labour's finance spokesman in parliament, John McDonnell, and Ken Livingstone, who led the now-defunct Greater London Council (GLC) and later served as the capital's mayor. Livingstone says he has seen it all before, not least when he became GLC leader in 1981. "I am watching what is happening to Jeremy and it reminds me of what I went through in '81. I was depicted as a pro-terrorist, an agent of the Soviet Union," said the 70-year-old, nicknamed "Red Ken" at the time.

"But like me, Jeremy's not giving in to this and he's not changing his policies because of these lies," he told Reuters at his terraced house in north-west London. "It is very nasty, but he's got four-and-a-half years before the next election to turn this around and I think he will." Corbyn may not get that long - rumors of plots to oust him are rife - but Livingstone and McDonnell are battling to protect him.

The three have worked together since the ear-

ly 1970s, "usually on the same side on virtually every issue", said Livingstone. In the mid '70s, he said, they set up campaigns to get more socialists onto local councils. While Livingstone led the GLC, McDonnell was the council's finance chief, although their rule ended in 1986 when the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher abolished the body. Corbyn, meanwhile, headed to parliament, campaigning from the left while voters consigned Labour to opposition for almost two decades.

In 1997, Tony Blair finally won a landslide election victory for "New Labour", but only after steering the party away from its trade union roots. There was now little room for the three leftists. Blair even expelled Livingstone from the party for running for mayor of London as an independent in 2000, an election he won. Blair deemed him too leftwing to represent Labour, although he was eventually let back into the party.

Now the pendulum has swung again; Corbyn and his supporters have moved quickly to break what they call the top-down tyranny of New Labour to return "democracy" to the party. While no longer a lawmaker, Livingstone has been appointed by Corbyn as the joint head of a committee reviewing party policy on renewing the submarines which carry Britain's nuclear weapons.

### 'Old School'

The trio are "old-school" campaigners; Livingstone describes finding a leaflet while "shuffling through papers" from 1980 when he and Corbyn were the speakers at a rally intended to help make the GLC socialist. Livingstone admires what he calls Corbyn's honesty, one of the reasons cited by many of the mainly young new Labour members and supporters who backed his leadership campaign. Many also saw him as the only alternative to the party's "establishment".

But others, including many of Corbyn's own lawmakers, see his refusal to compromise on his socialist principles as a problem and do not trust

his closest allies. Corbyn was elected on Sept 12 after former leader Ed Miliband's attempt to fuse centrism with a more left-wing doctrine failed to convince voters in last May's election. Many did not trust Labour to run the economy well, while the legacy of the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, backed by Blair's government, also weighed heavily. The party was already split when some lawmakers reluctantly nominated Corbyn for the leadership after facing what one senior Labour member described as an awful selection of candidates. Starting as a rank outsider, Corbyn not only won the votes of the leftist old guard but captured the mood of younger members with his opposition to the Conservative government's austerity measures to eliminate a large budget deficit.

Some senior party members refused to work with Corbyn but others decided to give him a chance when he brought moderates as well as more natural allies into his shadow cabinet, whose members hold portfolios mirroring those of the government. But Corbyn then moved to tighten his control over the party by bringing in new advisers, endorsing a campaign to get leftists onto local councils and sticking closely to his principles, including an anti-war stance. Some more mainstream Labour lawmakers, wary of public opinion, became increasingly critical.

### 'Kindly Go'

Social media has become the forum for often vicious spats, and the Labour Party seems at war with itself. Following the Paris bloodbath on Nov 13 claimed by Islamic State, Corbyn questioned the "shoot-to-kill" policy of British police in tackling such attacks. One lawmaker who criticised his comments was told to "get behind the leader or kindly go". It is not an isolated case. Several lawmakers said they have had to distance themselves from his stance on the "shoot-to-kill" policy, his opposition to joining air strikes against Islamic State in Syria and his statement that if prime minister he would never use nuclear weapons. This,

they said, was to persuade voters that Labour would keep the country safe. Some were branded Tories, or Conservatives. Others feared they would be hounded out of their jobs.

McDonnell, 64, has also ruffled feathers among centrists, notably when he brandished a copy of Chairman Mao Zedong's Little Red Book - a collection of the Chinese communist leader's thoughts - in parliament. Livingstone himself prompted outrage when he responded to a lawmaker's criticism of his appointment to the defence review by suggesting he needed "psychiatric help". The lawmaker had a history of depression and Livingstone was forced to apologize.

Richard Angell, director of Progress, a group of Labour "modernizers" which has been touring the country to gauge public feeling, says Corbyn has alienated centrist members by surrounding himself with leftists. "His controversial appointments are of individuals more enthusiastic about his leadership than even he might be," Angell told Reuters.

### Time Has Come

Livingstone points out that Corbyn has strong support among party members who now number more than 380,000, up from about 270,000 in August and close to the more than 400,000 figure when Blair was elected in 1997. He condemns the attacks on Corbyn as disloyal and blames a hostile media owned by "corrupt, tax-dodging billionaires" for demonizing the Labour leader.

With control over much of the party's apparatus, the leftists are also trying to boost their wider appeal through a group called Momentum. Some Labour lawmakers say Momentum is "a party within the party" and portray it as little more than a lynch mob to get rid of moderate parliamentarians. Momentum denies this. Its aim is "to open up the Labour Party to make it more like a social movement" developing what one organizer, 28-year-old James Schneider, calls "a more democratic and equal society". — Reuters

## CLIMATE CHANGE AND CONFLICT, A PERFECT STORM

By Mariette Le Roux

Violence has cast a long shadow over a climate summit opening in Paris today, two weeks after 130 people were killed in a coordinated jihadist onslaught on the French capital. As more than 150 world leaders prepared to meet under heightened security, analysts warned of an increasingly war-torn future facing humanity if they fail to limit global warming. The Paris attacks on November 13 were claimed by the Islamic State group that has a brutal war in Syria - a conflict rooted in part, experts say, on an historic drought from 2006 to 2010.

It drove some 1.5 million farmers and herders off their land and into cities and towns like Homs, Palmyra and Damascus. "It's not a coincidence that, immediately prior to the civil war in Syria, the country experienced the worst drought on record," US Secretary of State John Kerry said in Milan last month. According to Francesco Femia of The Center for Climate and Security in Washington DC, research has shown the Syrian drought "was made two-to-three times more likely because of climate change". Many a report has suggested that water scarcity, exacerbated by global warming, has fuelled deadly conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, thus contributing to the flood of refugees seeking a better life in Europe and elsewhere. Experts warn the situation is likely to worsen as climate conditions become more hostile to human survival - and people become more desperate.

### 'Threat Multiplier'

While climate change is not, on its own, a direct cause of conflict, competition for dwindling water and land resources can certainly fan flames in an already volatile situation, say analysts. "Climate change is a threat multiplier," Femia told AFP. "If, in a certain place, you introduce climate stress to the kinds of natural resource deficiencies that can contribute to state failure or conflict, you increase the likelihood of a conflict occurring."

In July, an international team of scientists, policy analysts, financial and military risk experts, cautioned that food and water shortages would boost future conflicts over resources, mass migration and state failure. Even sophisticated governments may be unable to deal with the combination of pressures, said the report entitled "Climate Change, a Risk Assessment". "The expansion of ungoverned territories would in turn increase the risks of terrorism," with large numbers of marginalised and disenfranchised people to recruit from, said the report compiled for policymakers.

Negotiators from 195 nations will gather in Paris until December 11 to craft a pact to stave off worst-case-scenario climate change by limiting emissions of climate-altering greenhouse gases. The goal is to limit warming to two degrees Celsius above mid-19th century levels, when industrial-scale emissions began. Even a 2 C increase will mean a land-gobbling sea level rise, longer and more frequent droughts, and increasingly acute water shortages, scientists say.



Syrian civil defense workers evacuate a wounded man from the scene of an air strike in the rebel-held city of Douma in Eastern Ghouta on the outskirts of the capital Damascus yesterday. Eastern Ghouta is the largest rebel stronghold in Damascus province, and is regularly targeted by government air strikes. — AFP

But the projected impacts worsen significantly beyond the two degree threshold. A recent report by the Washington-based World Resources Institute warned that "high water stress" in Syria and its neighbors "will likely deteriorate in the coming decades". "A well-documented path can connect water scarcity to food insecurity, social instability and potentially violent conflict," it said, adding that "climate change amplifies scarcity worries."

Earlier this month, Toby Lanzer, the UN's humanitarian coordinator for the Sahel, warned that Europe's migrant crisis will become worse if the Paris climate summit fails countries in the drought-stricken Lake Chad basin. Some 2.5 million people in the region have been displaced by a toxic mix of drought, poverty and conflict. An estimated 850,000 migrants have entered the European Union so far this year, mainly from the Middle East and North Africa.

### 'Increasing Evidence'

"There is increasing evidence... that there may be a statistically-significant correlation between climate change and conflict," Femia said. This was borne out, he said, "in places like Kenya, where a changing climate has been linked to conflicts between pastoralists and farmers, and in Syria, where a mass internal displacement of people may be connected to political turmoil." — AFP

## NIANG'S DOUBLE WORTH THE WAIT FOR MILAN

**MILAN:** AC Milan forward M'Baye Niang said that he'd been waiting a long time to make an impact in Serie A after finally scoring his first league goals for the Rossoneri on Saturday, three years after signing for the club. The 20-year-old, who has suffered a number of injuries and gone away on loan twice since signing from Caen, struck twice in a 4-1 win over Sampdoria on Saturday. Niang had made 35 Serie A appearances for Milan without finding the net before Saturday, and his only previous goal for the club came in the Italian Cup almost three years ago. He began to make up for lost time in eye-catching fashion against Sampdoria, first setting up Giacomo Bonaventura for Milan's opener in the 16th minute and then scoring from the penalty spot in the 38th after being brought down by Lorenzo De Silvestri. The attacker added a third four minutes after the break, before being substituted to a standing ovation in the 74th minute. "I am very happy, as I'd been waiting a long time for a night like this," Niang said to Mediaset Premium after the match. "All the hard work paid off and I hope to continue like this. I like to play as a centre-forward."

## F1 TIGHTENS RULES ON TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION

**ABU DHABI:** Formula One stewards moved yesterday to tighten up the rules on technical co-operation between teams with immediate effect in a decision that calmed talk of a looming 'arms race' in the sport. In a statement issued at the season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, in response to questions posed by champions Mercedes, they also made clear that Ferrari would face no consequences for their work this year with the new US-based Haas team. "No retrospectivity shall apply," they said in a detailed document. The stewards said they would recommend to the governing FIA that any future 'potential competitor' be bound by the rules once their application to enter the championship had been accepted rather than at the moment of official entry. The championship entry list, for the season that starts next March, will be published in December but Haas's application was accepted long ago. Haas, who will use Ferrari power units and whatever parts and components the regulations allow, are due to make their debut next season. Ferrari, who failed to win a race in 2014, have made significant progress this season and have emerged as the closest rivals to Mercedes.

## SHONAN PANDORA IN SHOCK JAPAN CUP WIN

**TOKYO:** Long-shot Shonan Pandora stunned favourite Lovely Day to win the Japan Cup by a nose yesterday, keeping the trophy out of the hands of foreigners for a 10th successive year. The four-year-old 9/1 bet produced an electrifying finish in the home straight to beat Last Impact and Lovely Day and become the seventh filly to win Japan's richest race, run over 2,400 metres on turf in Tokyo. Shonan Pandora and Last Impact are both offspring of the beloved Japanese horse Deep Impact, a triple crown winner and winner of the Japan Cup in 2006. Not since Frankie Dettori rode the British-trained Alkaased to victory in 2005 has a foreign horse won the cup, which has a total purse of around \$5.2 million. "The horse was in fantastic shape so I just tried to give it everything in the saddle," victorious jockey Kenichi Ikezoe told reporters after completing victory in two minutes, 24.7 seconds. —AFP



## KENNY BELAEY'S BIKE TOUR OF KUWAIT CONCLUDES

**KUWAIT:** Red Bull's Trial Biker Kenny Belaey from Belgium concluded his tour in Kuwait by performing several shows starting at Kuwait University Shuwaikh followed by a show at the American University of Kuwait and concluded at Marina Crescent with four shows in two days.

"Kuwait is a nice country and people here are really friendly. There was a great atmosphere and energy at all the shows and people were really enjoying it. I am here to

show people what you can do with a bike and how you can enjoy your ride. Said World Champion Kenny Belaey"

Since his first junior outing in 1992, at the age of nine, the Red Bull athlete has produced an awesome list of achievement including two Cadet World Championships, two Junior World Championships, a Junior European Championship, four Elite World Championships, an incredible six Elite World Cups, and three Elite European

Championship titles. After seeing the tricks audiences are left wondering how he manages to move on a bicycle in the way that he does. From road to the street to walls, buildings and rails, the city holds no limits for a trial rider.

Beside training hard every day, he's also a true ambassador for trials by traveling the world with his show, seating the UCI commission, producing his own TV show called Kenny Belaey's BIGtime aired on the Extreme sports chan-

nel, is starring in global commercials and likes making YouTube videos, showcasing his all-round style combining competition and freestyle moves in one.

Since June 2014, Kenny has also become an ambassador for the prestigious Laureus foundation, a charity based platform spreading the message 'Sport for Good', which once a year organizes the Oscars of the Sport, The Laureus awards.

## NO REGRETS ON EXPOSING DOPING: WHISTLEBLOWERS

**LONDON:** The husband and wife who blew the whistle on doping in Russian athletics say they have no regrets about speaking up and exposing cheats despite being accused of betraying their own country. Yulia Stepanova, an international runner who was herself suspended for doping offences, and her husband Vitaly, a former Russian anti-doping agency official, secretly recorded Russian coaches and athletes over almost two years describing how they used performance-enhancing drugs.

Their evidence formed a major part of an investigation that led to Russian athletes being suspended from international competition this month, but came at a high personal cost. Both have been heavily criticised in their homeland and have spent the past year living abroad but say the sacrifice was worth it. "In the sense that I believed in something that I thought was right, and I tried," Vitaly told the Sunday Times newspaper in Britain. "You can have fake values, animal instincts or

you can be more human.

"Because if this year has proved anything, it is that sports are run by the wrong people." The Stepanovas first took on the role of whistleblowers last year when they featured as witnesses in a television documentary that alleged widespread corruption and drug-taking in Russian athletics.

### Complicated world

The pair had been in hiding since but agreed to be interviewed by the Sunday Times. In the interview, the pair said their actions had been vindicated by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Independent Commission's (IC) report into allegations of widespread doping in Russian athletics. "I knew that I was right, I didn't need the report to tell me that," Vitaly told the Sunday Times. "It did make me feel that a naive person can make a difference in this complicated world. I was a spy without a cover, and everyone was looking at me as an idiot, but I could still

manage to get this thing going.

"I felt very alone but right now it seems the whole athletics world is discussing what I have been talking about for the past five years. I keep thinking about this. This happened to me. This happened to Yuliya. This is our life. This is our story. A true story. I've told it as it is. People should know the true story," Vitaly said he believed Russia should be banned from competing at next year's Rio Olympics because of its doping record but doubted that would ever happen. "Sports officials and politicians in Russia did a lot worse than what athletes were doing, so I think fair punishment for Russian Athletics would be four years. Learn from your mistake, change and come back in four years. See you in Tokyo," he said. "(But) I estimate there is a one per cent chance of Russia not being at the Olympics. For this to happen, the International Olympic Committee would have to change and that's not going to happen in the next six months." — Reuters



Yulia Stepanova







# SKIPPERS PRAISE DAY-NIGHT TEST AS SUCCESS

**ADELAIDE:** The world's first day-night Test match was a great success, rival skippers Steve Smith and Brendon McCullum agreed yesterday, after the match at the Adelaide Oval lived up to its much-hyped billing.

Thirty-seven wickets tumbled in three days as the pink ball dominated the bat, and the first Test to be played under lights in the 138-year history of the five-day game drew a total of 123,736 fans through the gates.

The tension lasted into the third day as the determined Kiwis battled right to the end. The Australians won the historic match by just three wickets as bowler Peter Siddle cracked the winning runs with a hobbling Mitchell Starc as his partner. It was the first

time since 1993 that an Adelaide Test match had not produced a single individual century. It was the first three-day Test match at the famous ground in 64 years—since the West Indies beat Australia by six wickets.

"The whole Test match was a great innovation, it was a great spectacle, and to get 120,000 people through the gates in three days is absolutely amazing," said Australia's Smith. "It was just a game that was dominated by the bowlers. I thought New Zealand's bowlers bowled just as well as ours."

Kiwi counterpart McCullum was equally excited by the concept, which has attracted high interest around the cricket world. "It's a great concept. As pink-ball cricket evolves, which I'm sure it will in the global game, I

think we'll see that pitches won't have quite as much grass on it," he said.

"Overall, it's a roaring success — 120,000 people turning up over three days. People are voting with their feet. I think it's here to stay, which is great." "It definitely brought a different element, even on day one. It certainly asked some different questions."

"I think, tactically, there's a lot to learn for captains as we head into the pink-ball era." International Cricket Council chief executive David Richardson said the day-night Test was part of a package designed to lift the five-day format. Cricket Australia already has plans in place for more day-night Tests during next season's tours by South Africa and Pakistan. — AFP



**JALANDHAR:** An Indian cricket ball maker packs pink cricket balls at the Chhaju Ram manufacturing workshop in Jalandhar on Saturday. In an historic day-night Test, Australia will chase 187 runs to win after dismissing New Zealand for 208 on the third day at Adelaide Oval yesterday. — AFP

## AUSTRALIA WIN DAY-NIGHT TEST IN TENSE FINISH

**ADELAIDE:** Australia beat New Zealand inside three days to win cricket's first ever day-night test match, wrapping up a three-wicket win yesterday evening. Paceman Peter Siddle struck the winning runs under the Adelaide Oval floodlights to seal the series-clinching victory after Australia all but collapsed late on day three of the third and final test. With the hosts reduced to 185-7 in pursuit of a modest victory target of 187, Siddle pushed two runs past point and his injured batting partner Mitchell Starc hobbled up and down the pitch with a broken foot to complete a nervous three-wicket win.

"It was certainly a very tense finish. Thankfully we were on the right side," Australia captain Steven Smith told reporters, praising the inaugural day-night test as a "great innovation". "It was a great spectacle. To get 123,000 people through the gates in three days is absolutely amazing."

Australia took the series 2-0, ending New Zealand's run of seven consecutive series without loss, dating back to 2013. Australian batsman Shaun Marsh fell just short of a half-century with victory in sight but his 49 anchored important stands with Adam Voges and his younger brother Mitchell.

Fired by a five-wicket haul by seamer Trent Boult, who swung the specially developed pink ball with venom, New Zealand mowed through the top order and captured late wickets to turn what should have been a procession into a cliff-hanger.

### Man-of-the-match

The 187 runs ultimately proved too few to defend and Siddle's inelegant shot to seal the win sparked a thunderous roar from the crowd of 33,923. Paceman and man-of-the-match Josh Hazlewood was vital for the hosts, capturing a career-best 6-70 in the absence of injured spearhead Mitchell Starc to limit New Zealand to 208 in the third innings. Boult dismissed Voges for 28 straight after the dinner-break but all-rounder Mitchell Marsh joined his older sibling at the crease and compiled a brisk 28 to push Australia within 26 runs of their target.

Mitchell Marsh bashed a six over the head of spin-bowling all-rounder Mitch Santner but was out swiping at the next delivery, the skied top-edge well-caught by a scrambling Kane Williamson. Shaun Marsh grew jumpy as victory and his 50 approached and he holed out with a needless push at a Boult delivery which ended in the slips and left Australia 11 runs short of their target. Wicketkeeper Peter Nevill also fell to Boult, caught behind for 10, before Siddle finally pushed Australia over the line.

The match was won earlier in the day, however, when Hazlewood took three wickets as New Zealand could only add 92 runs to their overnight total of 116-5. The 24-year-old struck with the ninth ball of the day to remove wicket-keeper BJ Watling for seven and had Mark Craig nick behind for 15. He later wrapped up New Zealand's innings by bowling Boult for five, with Mitchell Marsh capturing 3-59. "It's pretty hard to separate the two teams over the last two test matches," New Zealand captain Brendon McCullum told reporters. "We've got a bit of a mantra within our team, that if you are going to get beaten, then make it bloody tough for the opposition to do so." — Reuters

### SCOREBOARD

**ADELAIDE, Australia:** Scores on the third day of the day-night third Test between Australia and New Zealand at the Adelaide Oval yesterday.

**New Zealand 1st innings** 202 (T. Latham 50; M. Starc 3-24, J. Hazlewood 3-66)

**Australia 1st innings** 224 (P. Nevill 66, S. Smith 53; D. Bracewell 3-18)

**New Zealand 2nd innings** (overnight 116 for 5):

T. Latham c Nevill b Hazlewood 10  
M. Guptill c M. Marsh b Hazlewood 17  
K. Williamson c Nevill b M. Marsh 9  
R. Taylor lbw b Hazlewood 32  
B. McCullum lbw b M. Marsh 20  
M. Santner st Nevill b Lyon 45  
B.J. Watling c Smith b Hazlewood 7  
M. Craig c Nevill b Hazlewood 15  
D. Bracewell not out 27  
T. Southee c Lyon b M. Marsh 13  
T. Boult b Hazlewood 5  
Extras (b6, lb2) 8  
Total (all out; 62.5 overs) 208  
Fall of wickets: 1-29 (Guptill), 2-32 (Latham), 3-52 (Williamson), 4-84 (McCullum), 5-98 (Taylor), 6-116 (Watling), 7-140 (Craig), 8-175 (Santner), 9-192 (Southee), 10-208 (Boult)  
Bowling: Hazlewood 24.5-5-70-6, Siddle 14-6-35-0, M.Marsh 14-2-59-3, Lyon 10-1-36-1.

**Australia 2nd innings**  
D. Warner c Southee b Bracewell 35  
J. Butts lbw b Boult 11  
S. Smith lbw b Boult 14  
A. Voges c Southee b Boult 28  
S. Marsh c Taylor b Boult 49  
M. Marsh c Williamson b Santner 28  
P. Nevill c Watling b Boult 10  
P. Siddle not out 9  
M. Starc not out 0  
Extras (lb2, w1) 3  
Total (7 wickets; 51 overs) 187  
Fall of wickets: 1-34 (Burns), 2-62 (Warner), 3-66 (Smith), 4-115 (Voges), 5-161 (M. Marsh), 6-176 (S. Marsh), 7-185 (Nevill)  
Bowling: Southee 16-1-58-0, Boult 16-3-60-5 (1w), Bracewell 11-2-37-1, Craig 6-0-22-0, Santner 2-0-8-1.

**Result:** Australia won by 3 wickets  
Australia won series 2-0  
Man of the match: Josh Hazlewood (AUS)  
Man of the series: David Warner (AUS)



**ADELAIDE:** Australia's team members pose with the winning trophy after defeating New Zealand in the first day-night cricket Test match at the Adelaide Oval yesterday. — AFP

# CURRY SCORES 19 AS WARRIORS BEAT KINGS TO IMPROVE TO 18-0

**OAKLAND:** Stephen Curry scored 17 of his 19 points in the first quarter, Draymond Green had his second straight triple-double and Golden State Warriors extended their NBA record to 18 straight wins at the start of a season Saturday night with a 120-101 victory over the Sacramento Kings. Leading by 10 points at halftime, the defending champion Warriors opened the third quarter with a 27-8 run that included four 3-pointers by Brandon Rush to build the lead to 29 points. The Kings never got close the rest of the game. Green had 13 points, 11 rebounds and 12 assists, becoming the first Warriors player with back-to-back triple-doubles since Wilt Chamberlain in 1964. A night earlier, he had 14 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists in a 135-116 win at Phoenix. Rush had 16 points and Klay Thompson added 15 for the Warriors. Rudy Gay scored 20 points for Sacramento.

### CAVALIERS 90, NETS 88

LeBron James made a running hook shot with a second left and scored 26 points, giving Cleveland a victory over Brooklyn. After Joe Johnson's three foul shots tied it with 15.2 seconds left, the Cavaliers called timeout and took the ball at midcourt. James took the inbound pass, dribbled to the top of the key before cutting to the right of the lane and hitting a hook shot over Brook Lopez, the Nets' 7-foot center. James scored 10 points and added a key steal late in the game to help Cleveland remain unbeaten at home in nine games. Kevin Love also scored 26 points for Cleveland, which played a sluggish first half and didn't take its first lead until midway through the third quarter. Lopez led Brooklyn with 22 points.

### RAPTORS 84, WIZARDS 82

Cory Joseph made a 3-pointer at the buzzer to lift Toronto past Washington. Joseph took DeMar DeRozan's pass in the corner and nailed the winning shot. He finished with 12 points as Toronto won its fourth straight despite tying a season high with 22 turnovers. Kyle Lowry scored 27 points for the Raptors. Bradley Beal scored 20 points for Washington.

### SPURS 108, HAWKS 88

Kawhi Leonard scored 22 points and San Antonio won its fifth straight, holding the Atlanta to several season lows offensively. San Antonio matched a season high with nine 3-pointers in winning its 18th consecutive home game against Atlanta and 10th straight overall against the Hawks. Atlanta had season lows for points in any quarter (12 in the second), first-half points (37) and matched a season low for total points. The Hawks' starters finished with 38 points.

**TRAIL BLAZERS 108, LAKERS 96**  
Damian Lillard scored 29 points and

Portland handed Los Angeles its fifth straight loss. CJ McCollum added 28 points for the Blazers. They have won three of their last four games after a six-game losing streak. Kobe Bryant scored 21 points in the Lakers' seventh straight road loss.

### MAVERICKS 92, NUGGETS 81

Deron Williams scored 22 points, Zaza Pachulia added 16 points and 12 rebounds, and Dallas beat Denver to end a three-game losing streak. Dallas has won five straight at home after losing its first two games of the season at American Airlines Center. Darrell Arthur, who attended Dallas' South Oak Cliff High, scored 16 points for Denver. The Nuggets began a five-game road trip with their sixth straight loss.

### JAZZ 101, PELICANS 87

Alec Burks scored 21 points and Utah beat New Orleans. Gordon Hayward added 17 points, Rodney Hood had 16, and Trevor Booker finished with 13 points and 15 rebounds. Pelicans center Anthony Davis scored 14 of the Pelicans' 16 first-quarter points and finished with 36. Davis also had 11 rebounds and blocked three shots. — AP

### NBA Results/Standings

Toronto 84, Washington 82; Cleveland 90, Brooklyn 88; Dallas 92, Denver 81; San Antonio 108, Atlanta 88; Utah 101, New Orleans 87; Portland 108, LA Lakers 96; Golden State 120, Sacramento 101.

Eastern Conference				Western Conference				
Atlantic Division				Northwest Division				
W	L	PCT	GB	W	L	PCT	GB	
Toronto	11	6	.647	-	Oklahoma City	11	6	.647
Boston	9	7	.563	1.5	Utah	8	7	.533
NY Knicks	8	9	.471	3	Minnesota	8	8	.500
Brooklyn	3	13	.188	7.5	Portland	7	10	.412
Philadelphia	0	17	0	11	Denver	6	11	.353
Central Division				Pacific Division				
Cleveland	13	4	.765	-	Golden State	18	0	1.000
Indiana	10	5	.667	2	LA Clippers	8	8	.500
Chicago	9	5	.643	2.5	Phoenix	7	9	.438
Detroit	8	8	.500	4.5	Sacramento	6	12	.333
Milwaukee	6	10	.375	6.5	LA Lakers	2	13	.133
Southeast Division				Southwest Division				
Miami	10	5	.667	-	San Antonio	14	3	.824
Atlanta	11	8	.579	1	Dallas	10	7	.588
Charlotte	9	7	.563	1.5	Memphis	9	8	.529
Orlando	8	8	.500	2.5	Houston	6	10	.375
Washington	6	8	.429	3.5				



**OAKLAND:** Sacramento Kings guard Seth Curry (30) drives past Golden State Warriors guard Brandon Rush, right, during the second half of an NBA basketball game Saturday, in Oakland, Calif. The Warriors won 120-101. — AP



# Sports

Long wait over as Murray wins Davis Cup for Britain



Real's Bale and Ronaldo score in defeat of Eibar



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FURY BEATS KLITSCHKO TO BECOME NEW WORLD HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION Page 16



LIVERPOOL: Liverpool's English midfielder James Milner (C) has an unsuccessful shot during the English Premier League football match between Liverpool and Swansea City at the Anfield stadium in Liverpool, north-west England yesterday. — AFP

## MILNER GIVES KLOPP FIRST LEAGUE WIN



**LIVERPOOL:** Liverpool gained their first Premier League home win under manager Jurgen Klopp as James Milner's penalty secured a 1-0 home win over struggling Swansea City yesterday.

Milner lifted his spot-kick into the top of the net with just under half an hour remaining after Neil Taylor handled Jordon Ibe's cross. Striker Daniel Sturridge and captain Jordan Henderson made returns from injury

as Klopp's side laboured to a victory that sent them up to sixth place in the table.

Sturridge, waylaid by a knee problem, made his first appearance since Klopp took charge last month, while midfielder Henderson, who has been absent with a broken foot, played for the first time since August.

Defeat leaves Swansea, who have won just one of their last 10 league matches, hovering just above the relegation zone. Garry Monk's side were fourth at the end of August, but have faltered badly since.

They looked nervy at first and almost conceded a comical own goal inside the first six minutes as they were undone by a swift Liverpool attack. Ibe raced in from the right onto Adam Lallana's through-ball after Milner had won possession.

Centre-back Kyle Bartley slid in as the

winger lost control, diverting the ball against his own post as goalkeeper Lukasz Fabianski stood helpless.

The visitors occasionally broke, with Kyle Naughton eager to get forward, and it was from the right-back's cross that Portugal forward Eder headed wide at the near post under pressure from Martin Skrtel.

By and large, though, it was Liverpool who were creating the early problems with their crisp passing. One superb diagonal Lallana ball looked to have given a clear run at goal to Christian Benteke, whose first touch was loose and allowed Naughton to nip in and tidy up.

**Sigh of relief**

Swansea invited pressure as they dropped deeper to try to keep Liverpool at bay, and lived on their nerves, with captain

Ashley Williams surviving a penalty appeal as he tangled with Benteke.

Ibe then lost his footing when he was in a good position to control and finish Alberto Moreno's cross from the left, before Williams made a superb block to deny Lallana as Klopp's side continued to press.

The visitors came through that tricky spell, breaking to engineer a couple of promising attacks of their own, as Gylfi Sigurdsson began to have more of an influence, but Liverpool's defence remained solid. And still chances were hard to come by, despite Ibe cutting in from the left early in the second half to fire in a low shot that Fabianski pushed around his near post.

But Liverpool got the break they needed on the hour mark when Swansea left-back Taylor was judged to have handled

Ibe's cross. Taylor was turning away from the ball with his arm out as he blocked the cross and referee Anthony Taylor only awarded a penalty on the advice of his linesman.

Milner stayed calm to lift the spot-kick beyond Fabianski, allowing the Kop to breathe a big sigh of relief. Klopp then brought on Henderson and Sturridge to cheers as they made their returns.

And his team almost added a second, with Milner drilling a shot just wide at the end of a fine passing move. Ecuador winger Jefferson Montero caused Liverpool concerns when he came on for the final 18 minutes, while fellow Swansea substitute Bafetimbi Gomis saw a late shot deflected wide. But Liverpool edged home to move into the top six and close to within four points of a Champions League spot. — AFP

## SANCHEZ, KOSCIELNY HURT IN ARSENAL STALEMATE



**NORWICH:** Arsenal saw star man Alexis Sanchez and centre-back Laurent Koscielny forced off by injury during yesterday's 1-1 draw at Norwich City in the Premier League.

The Gunners had hoped to move level on points with leaders Manchester City, but instead find themselves in fourth place, two points off the pace and also below Leicester City and Manchester United.

And their chances of closing that gap will diminish should either player be ruled out long-term, with Chile forward Sanchez in particular an early contender for the league's Player of the Season awards.

The pair appear set to join an absentee list that already includes Mikel Arteta, Francis Coquelin, Theo Walcott, Danny Welbeck, Jack Wilshere and Tomas Rosicky. It has all added up to a disappointing November domestically for Arsene Wenger's side.

They may have kept their hopes of Champions League progress alive on Tuesday with victory over Dinamo Zagreb, but they accumulated just two Premier League points over the month.

An early Sanchez effort fizzed just wide at Carrow Road, but Arsenal's troubles began straight afterwards when centre-back Koscielny was hurt as Lewis Grabban challenged him.

On came Gabriel in the 11th minute as Koscielny trudged slowly round the perimeter of the pitch clutching his right hip. Norwich goal-

keeper John Ruddy did well to beat away a Sanchez drive, but when Gary O'Neil failed to control the goalkeeper's scuffed clearance, it allowed Sanchez to slip in Ozil on the left of the box.

The German dinked the ball over Ruddy sublimely to give Arsenal the lead on the half-hour mark. Arsenal may have been fortunate that referee Jon Moss saw nothing amiss in Mathieu Flamini's barging over of Wes Hoolahan just inside their penalty area as the two contested a throw-in.

Wenger must have been concerned when Ozil tumbled into a pit for press photographers behind one goal and Sanchez into a similar structure where a television camera and its operator were stationed.

**Grabban strikes**

Both players were able to clamber out and continue, but Sanchez would not remain on the pitch for much longer. Visiting goalkeeper Petr Cech was forced into his first save four minutes before the break as Robbie Brady let fly, but Norwich's second attempt on target, a minute later, saw him beaten.

Grabban, who had refused to play in a League Cup tie in September after a move to Bournemouth collapsed, turned Gabriel to convert Brady's piercing pass from six yards.

Hoolahan should have put Norwich ahead in first-half stoppage time when Andre Wisdom's cross found him at the back post, but he fired over with the goal at his mercy.

The second period began with another Arsenal man hurt, Santi Cazorla this time, and in the process of fouling O'Neil. He was able to continue after treatment.

Ruddy's woes continued as he misjudged a bouncing ball under pressure from Olivier Giroud. That let in Ozil again, but his shot was deflected over at the last moment. Cazorla became the



**NORWICH:** Arsenal's Spanish defender Hector Bellerin (L) vies with Norwich City's Swedish defender Martin Olsson during the English Premier League football match between Norwich City and Arsenal at Carrow Road in Norwich, eastern England yesterday. — AFP

## COSTA STEWS AS CHELSEA MAKE POINT AT SPURS



**LONDON:** Jose Mourinho's relationship with Diego Costa came under renewed scrutiny after the Chelsea manager dropped the striker for yesterday's 0-0 draw at Tottenham Hotspur in the Premier League.

The point left the reigning champions languishing in the bottom half of the table, while Tottenham-now unbeaten in 13 league games were left frustrated after failing to take a chance to put pressure on the top four. But it was Mourinho's decision to leave Costa on the bench, having clashed with the Spain international at half-time of the mid-week Champions League win away to Maccabi Tel Aviv, that drew most attention.

It clearly angered the striker, who tossed his bib towards Mourinho as the game neared its conclusion, but Mourinho said: "If he wants to hurt me, it's not with a bib. I have a good relationship with him, no problems. "I think Diego is very privileged because he was the last one to be (put) on the bench."

"Everybody was on the bench. I kept him in the team for all these matches and today we thought the best strategy to play was this one. We are happy with the decision."

Mourinho described the visitors' display as "the best Chelsea performance of the season", but opposite number Mauricio Pochettino was frustrated that Spurs had not emerged victorious. "Chelsea had only one shot on target and it

was a good save from Hugo Lloris," said the Argentine. "They did not do much to win the game. We deserved more. We tried to win it. I think Chelsea will be happy with the point. It is more important to them than us."

Chelsea captain John Terry was also absent for the visitors after failing to recover from the ankle injury he picked up during the 4-0 victory in Israel. That meant Kurt Zouma and Gary Cahill were paired at the heart of the visitors' defence, while Eden Hazard was pushed forward to fill the hole left by the brooding Costa.

Tottenham also came into the game on the back of a long trip, having travelled to Azerbaijan to face Qarabag in the Europa League on Thursday. Pochettino had complained about the possible effects on his players of making such a demanding journey just 72 hours beforehand, but still opted to retain eight of his mid-week starting XI in his line-up. It initially appeared as though the home side were still working the journey out of their system as Chelsea started with an energy that has been too often missing from their play this season.

Hazard's movement up front, together with Pedro Rodriguez's penetrating runs down the left flank, clearly unsettled Pochettino's team. Chelsea, though, were unable to find the finish that might have given them the breakthrough, with Mourinho's side failing to muster a single effort on target during the first half.

Hazard was guilty of wasting their best opportunity, the Belgian heading over from Pedro's cross when unmarked in front of goal. A high-tempo game lacked quality and Tottenham's efforts in front of goal mirrored those of their opponents, although it took an excellent save by Asmir Begovic to repel Son Heung-Min's header from Harry Kane's cross. — AFP

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## INFINITI UNVEILS 4 NEW CARS AT DUBAI MOTOR SHOW



SCHLITZ: Timber-framed buildings are illuminated in front of a tower setup as a giant candle in Schlitz, Germany on Saturday. The 36 meter (118 ft) high tower is the main attraction of the Christmas market in the town of Schlitz in the German state of Hesse. —AP

## IMF POISED TO PUT YUAN IN ELITE CURRENCY BASKET

**WASHINGTON:** The International Monetary Fund is expected to approve inclusion of China's yuan in its SDR basket of elite currencies today, rewarding Beijing's strong pursuit of the global status.

The IMF executive board is scheduled to meet today to decide on the recommendation by staff experts earlier in November to include the yuan, also known as the renminbi, alongside the US dollar, euro, Japanese yen and British pound in the grouping. While not a freely traded currency, the SDR (special drawing right) is important as an international reserve asset, and because the IMF issues its crisis loans-crucial to struggling economies like Greece-valued in SDRs.

China, now the world's second-largest economy, asked last year for the yuan to be added to the grouping of world reserve currencies, but until recently it was considered too tightly controlled to qualify. It is extremely rare that the executive board, which represents the IMF's 188 member nations, opposes the recommendation of its own experts. IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde said in mid-November that she supported the experts' finding that the yuan had met the requirements to be a 'freely usable' currency—a key hurdle for SDR status.

If accepted, the decision would not take effect before September 30, 2016, to allow users more time to prepare. The last time the SDR basket was modified was in 2000, when the euro replaced the German

deutschemark and the French franc. The remaining question is the yuan's weight in the basket. It could be 10 percent to 16 percent, but the lower estimate is more likely due to the Chinese currency's limited convertibility.

The basket composition is reviewed every five years. At the last rebalancing in 2010, the dollar accounted for 41.9 percent, the euro 37.4 percent, the pound 11.3 percent and the yen 9.4 percent.

That weighting revision was based on the value of the exports of goods and services by country or currency zone, and the amount of reserves denominated in the respective currencies held by other IMF members.

### Diplomatic success

The entry of the yuan is, above all, a major diplomatic success for Beijing, which will see its money graduate to the inner circle of the world's most important currencies. The vote of the United States, the largest IMF stakeholder, will be closely watched, as will US political reactions. US officials have long accused China of keeping the yuan artificially low to gain a trade advantage, making its exports relatively cheaper.

The US Treasury Department, in an October 19 report, said that the yuan "remains below its appropriate medium-term valuation." Paradoxically, China's unexpected devaluation of the yuan last August received good marks from the IMF because



it reinforced the currency's movements with market forces and opened the door to future revaluation.

Beijing on Wednesday announced an initial group of foreign central banks has been allowed to enter the Chinese currency market, which likely will promote further internationalization of the yuan in global trading. Credit rating firm Fitch says it does not expect the yuan's inclusion in the IMF basket "to lead to a material shift in demand for renminbi assets globally in the short term." However, it said, over time the

emergence of the yuan as a global reserve currency could support China's credit rating.

An IMF decision to include the yuan among its elite currencies risks angering some lawmakers in the US Congress amid fierce maneuvering for the 2016 presidential election. Congress, for example, has repeatedly refused to ratify a 2010 IMF reform that would give greater weight to the emerging-market powers, the so-called BRICS - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. —AFP

## EGYPT RISES AS NEW CB CHIEF ARRIVES; GULF SLOW

### MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

**DUBAI:** Egypt's stock market rose yesterday as a new central bank governor took office, increasing hopes that the country's foreign exchange crisis can be resolved, while bourses in the Gulf were mostly sluggish. Tarek Amer, a well-regarded former commercial banker, was to head the first meeting of the Egyptian central bank's new board yesterday.

Many people expect him to work with the government to try to end a foreign currency shortage by regulating imports and supporting exports, which could benefit many listed firms. He is expected to be more generous in allowing the private sector to obtain foreign exchange. Bolstering investor sentiment, the central bank kept the Egyptian pound steady at its foreign currency auction on Sunday and the pound rose slightly in the black market.

But with Egypt's tourism revenues hit by last month's apparent bombing of a Russian passenger plane over the Sinai, Amer faces a very difficult challenge, and many economists think a devaluation of the Egyptian pound is inevitable at some stage.

The Egyptian stock index climbed 0.8 percent with United Arab Stevedoring, which could benefit from any increase in trade through Egypt's ports as a result of changes to foreign exchange policy, gaining 2.6 percent in unusually heavy trade. Canal Shipping Agencies rose 4.2 percent.

But Ezz Steel fell 1.4 percent to 8.28 Egyptian pounds. Blom Egypt Securities downgraded it to a "sell" rating with a target of 7.45 pounds, citing its continued losses and saying it had weak prospects.

### GULF

The Saudi stock index edged up 0.2 percent. The cement sector index climbed 1.5 percent and Saudi Basic Industries, which has a major steel producing affiliate, rose 0.3 percent. Saudi Arabia is considering lifting partial export bans on cement and steel to relieve oversupply in the local market, economic news website Al-Eqtisadiyah quoted a customs department official as saying. That could help to ease producers' problems as the local construction industry struggles because of state spending cuts due to low oil prices.

Most of the stock market moved little, however. Data released late on Thursday showed growth in Saudi Arabian money supply and bank lending in October slowing to its lowest levels since late 2010.

In Abu Dhabi, Dana Gas soared its 15 percent daily limit after saying a tribunal of the London Court of International Arbitration, ruling in a six-year dispute, had directed the Kurdish regional government in Iraq to pay \$1.98 billion to a consortium including Dana within 28 days. — Reuters

## REFUGEES, SHOPPERS REV UP GERMAN GROWTH MOTOR

**BERLIN:** A massive influx of refugees, and accompanying billions in public spending, have provided Germany with a long-awaited answer to partners' calls for it to do more to jumpstart the eurozone economy. Data released this week showed solid growth for Europe's top economy in the third quarter, lifted by strong consumer spending and state expenditure for asylum seekers.

Analysts hailed the news as a welcome shift for a country that has often preached fiscal rectitude at the expense of stimulating the 19-country eurozone. "The German economy has finally become what many international critics had been demanding for a long while: a domestically-driven economy," ING economist Carsten Brzeski said, "at least in the third quarter". The figures for July to September showed that gross domestic product had expanded 0.3 percent, as household consumption rose 0.6 percent from the previous three months and state spending shot up 1.3 percent.

US rating agency Standard and Poor's said

Wednesday that European consumers were finally loosening their purse strings, most pointedly in powerhouse Germany, and allowing a nascent eurozone recovery to gather steam.

### 'Biggest growth program in years'

It was not the first time that the German economy, traditionally reliant on exports, looked more to its own shoppers to buoy growth. Last year saw a similar trend, propelled by a robust labor market. However the effect has been bolstered this year by the government outlays to process, feed and house more than 800,000 people fleeing war and poverty.

The expenditure will amount to around 10 billion euros (\$10.6 billion) for 2015 and 2016, Economy Minister Sigmar Gabriel said Thursday. Economist Stefan Kipar at Bayern LB bank noted that "this extra spending is like a small and unexpected stimulus program".

And Armin Laschet, a leading member of the ruling conservative Christian Democrats,

called it "the biggest pro-growth program in years". This is just what the International Monetary Fund, the European Commission and eurozone partners had long been clamoring for: Germany pouring its large trade and budgetary surpluses into investments that would benefit the wider euro area. Despite the presence of the Social Democrats in the left-right "grand coalition" government, who managed to push through 15 billion euros in new spending on infrastructure to 2018, Chancellor Angela Merkel's determination to balance the federal budget has blocked any broader coordinated stimulus drive. Recent developments have not softened calls in Brussels for action. The European Commission took Germany to task in early 2014 for a huge current account surplus that it said was a source of economic imbalance in Europe. On Thursday, it reiterated in a report that Germany's "very large and increasing external surplus and strong reliance on external demand expose growth risks and underline the need for continued rebalancing

towards domestic sources".

### Not off the hook

Nevertheless, said Philippe Waechter of Natixis investment bank, it is certainly clear that "Germany is starting to play this role (of a driver of growth) to help all the others in Europe". However he noted that the public spending for refugees "were largely short-term outlays—they are not the investments, particularly in infrastructure, that everyone has been expecting". "That, however, could come later," Waechter said. Brzeski said Germany's policymakers were certainly not off the hook. "To cope with the ongoing and new challenges, the economy will need a more sustainable investment boost," he said. "Just banking on the current strength of domestic consumption could be a dangerous strategy." The warnings, however, could continue to fall on deaf ears in Berlin. A third consecutive balanced budget, as foreseen for 2016, "is not something we should sacrifice," Merkel told parliament Wednesday. —AFP











Infiniti Q80 Inspiration - Paris Motor Show 2014



Infiniti Q30

# INFINITI WRAPS UP SUCCESSFUL FIRST DAY OF DUBAI MOTOR SHOW 2015 WITH 4 MIDDLE EAST DEBUTS

INFINITI WELCOMES NEW INFINITI QX50 LWB, INFINITI Q30 AND UNVEILS INFINITI Q60 CONCEPT, INFINITI Q80 INSPIRATION

**DUBAI:** Infiniti, one of the fastest growing premium automotive brands in the Middle East wrapped up a successful first day of Dubai International Motor Show following the regional debut of four new models.

Infiniti's focus during the Motor Show was firmly on design and innovation. Infiniti unveiled the Q60 concept - Infiniti's vision for a future

sports coupe and Infiniti Q80 Inspiration, the halo model for Infiniti's design language. The first day of the event also saw the premium marque showcase the all-new Infiniti Q30, the brand's first premium compact and welcome the Infiniti QX50 LWB to the line-up.

"Our success in the region is due to our diverse portfolio which

appeals to sophisticated and discerning audiences. We are constantly raising the bar and looking at new ways to innovate and inspire. The models we have on display during the show are testament to Infiniti's pioneering design influence and vision.

"The Dubai International Motor Show is the key exhibition of its kind in the region, which matches our status as a leading premium automotive brand. The show is the ideal platform for us to make the regional debut of these four new models. The first day has been hugely successful for us, having welcomed our industry partners to the show and received fantastic feedback on the new models," said Juergen Schmitz, Managing Director, Infiniti Middle East.

Schmitz added: "The first ten months of 2015 have been excellent for Infiniti and we continue to build on our exceptional performance to date. We are focused on building on the momentum we have experienced so far this year, into and beyond 2016, we are confident that these new models will play an important role in supporting our plans in the region."



Infiniti Q60 Concept



Infiniti Q60 Concept

## ECB EXPECTED TO EASE FURTHER

### NBK MONEY MARKETS REPORT

**KUWAIT:** The US dollar rose last week to its highest level since April amid expectations that the Federal Reserve will increase short-term interest rates next month. Indeed, the US dollar remained at a six-month peak against the other major currencies, as trading volumes remained thin during the long Thanksgiving weekend.

Last week, a set of upbeat US economic data continued to reinforce the case for a Federal Reserve rate hike next month. The US Department of Labor said jobless claims declined by 12,000 last week to 260,000. Analysts expected claims to fall by 2,000 last week. In parallel, the US Commerce Department said durable goods orders jumped 3.0 percent in October, surpassing expectations for a 1.5 percent increase.

In Europe, markets continue to expect the European Central Bank to increase their monetary stimulus next week. After continuously and clearly signaling their intentions over the past few weeks, backing off from further easing has become extremely difficult without causing a market shock. Since the ECB President Draghi indicated in October that the governing council would act if needed to drive up inflation to its 2 percent target, speculation of further extreme measures continue to weigh on the currency. Economists also revised their forecast for the ECB's December meeting and now expect a 20 basis point deposit rate cut from previously 10 basis point cut. Additionally, investors expect the ECB to increase the amount of bonds it buys each month to 75 billion Euros from the current 60 billion Euros, or extend its quantitative easing program beyond September 2016 potentially until September 2017.

On the foreign exchange side, the euro fell to its lowest level in more than 7-months on speculations that the ECB will act decisively during its December policy meeting. Markets expect the European Central Bank to either increase the scope of its bond-buying program and/or potentially impose a two-tiered penalty for banks that leave deposits at its facility. At the same time, markets continue to expect the US Federal Reserve to start its monetary tightening cycle. Policy divergence between both continues to create a highly negative environment for the Euro. The currency opened the week at 1.0645, reached a high of 1.0689, however, closed the week at the lowest level since April marking a low of 1.0565.

Similarly the sterling pound opened the week at 1.5186 and rose slightly to 1.5195 where it found major resistance. The currency then dropped sharply, reaching a fresh seven months low of 1.5023, after the Bank of England governor Mark Carney said that UK interest rates are likely to remain low "for some time". The Pound closed the week near the lows at 1.5040.

The Japanese Yen traded in a tight trading range between a high of 123.25 and a low of 122.23 after minutes from the Bank of Japan meeting indicated that the underly-

ing trend in inflation has been improving steadily and that the quantitative and qualitative monetary easing which the Bank introduced in April 2013 has been exerting its intended effects toward overcoming a deflationary environment.

#### US Q3 GDP growth revised higher

The US economy grew at a better rate in the third quarter than originally expected, suggesting resilience that could help give the Federal Reserve confidence to raise interest rates next month. GDP grew at a 2.1 percent annually, higher than the 1.5 percent rate reported last month. The growth estimate was also boosted by upward revisions to business spending on equipment and investment in home building. Household consumption, which accounts for almost 70 percent of the economy, grew

#### US home prices rise

US single-family home prices rose in September at a faster pace than in August and above market expectations. The housing composite index of 20 metropolitan areas gained 5.5 percent in September on a year-over-year basis compared with 5.1 percent in the year to August. The general economy appeared to slow slightly earlier in the fall, but is now showing renewed strength. With unemployment at 5 percent and hints of higher inflation in the CPI, most

decreased from 26.8 percent to 24.4 percent. However, those claiming business conditions are "bad" also decreased from 18.3 percent to 16.9 percent. Heading into 2016, consumers are cautious about the labor market and expect little change in business conditions.

with the pace of expansion accelerating slightly since October. This was highlighted by the seasonally adjusted Markit Flash Germany Composite Output Index posting 54.9, up from 54.2. Stronger growth was mainly driven by a sharp upturn in activity at service providers, where the rate of increase was the most marked in 14 months.

On a different note, German business confidence unexpectedly rose, in a sign that Europe's largest economy is strong enough to weather risks including a global slowdown. The Ifo institute's business climate index climbed to 109 in November from 108.2 in October. The median estimate was for the measure to stay unchanged. It is widely expected that the German data would continue to improve rather than deteriorate, supported by a stabilization of global growth, lower euro and improving financing conditions on the back of a further easing of the ECB's monetary-policy stance in December.

#### Weak UK Q2 GDP

UK's economy slowed in the three months to September, as trade stood the biggest drag on quarterly growth on record against the backdrop of a slowing global economy. The British economy grew 0.5 percent in the third quarter, the Office for National Statistics said, confirming a preliminary reading, and slowing from 0.7 percent growth between April and June. Foreign trade put the biggest drag on record on British economic growth last quarter, as a weakening global economy and surging demand for imports slowed Britain's recovery.

#### Tokyo core yearly CPI improves

There has been a slight improvement in Japan's inflation numbers, especially in the national CPI for November that reassurance market participants of the slim chances of Bank of Japan Governor Kuroda announcing further QE in the near future. Japan's CPI ex-fresh food and energy came in at 0.7 percent, which is the only disappointment, while the consumer price index year on year stood at 0.3 percent improving from last year's 0 percent.

#### Australia's investment spending drops

Australian firms scaled back investment spending by 9.2 percent in the third quarter from the second quarter, a much steeper drop than the 2.9 percent fall economists had been expecting. In the year through September, total new capital expenditure dropped by 20.0 percent. The report also showed that companies expect to invest AUD 120.4 billion in the current fiscal year, which is 20.9 percent lower than the corresponding estimate for the previous fiscal year.

#### German PMI and IFO

November data signaled a continuation of private sector output growth in Germany,

Kuwait  
Kuwaiti dinar at 0.30440  
The USDKWD opened at 0.30440 yesterday morning.



at a 3 percent annualized rate, less than the previously estimated 3.2 percent.

Personal income also picked up, with salaries rose by 102.7 billion dollars in the third quarter following a 109.4 billion gain in the April through June period. After-tax total personal income adjusted for inflation climbed 3.8 percent in the third quarter from the same time in 2014, the largest year on year gain since the end of 2012. Saving rate was also up to 5.2 percent from 5 percent in the second quarter.

#### US consumer confidence weak

After dropping in October, consumer confidence index declined further in November. The Index now stands at 90.4, down from 99.1 in October. The decline was mainly due to a less favorable view of the job market. Consumers' appraisal of current business conditions, on the other hand, was mixed. Consumers' assessment of current conditions was less positive in November. Those saying business conditions are "good"

analysts expect the Federal Reserve to raise its fed funds target range, the first increase since 2006.

#### French manufacturing PMI drops

The latest flash France PMI data indicated an easing of private sector output growth during November. The Markit Flash France Composite Output Index came at 51.3, down from 51.9 in October. Both manufacturers and service providers signaled weaker increases in activity during November. In each case, growth was modest and the slowest in three months. Some service providers reported that the terrorist attacks in Paris had negatively impacted on activity. New business in the French private sector rose for a third consecutive month in November, with the rate of expansion accelerating to the sharpest in since June.

## RATE CUT, MORE STIMULUS IN STORE AT ECB MEET

**BERLIN:** The ECB will roll out its big guns at its monetary policy meeting this week, ramping up its trillion-euro asset purchases and cutting key rates to hike weak inflation, analysts said.

Fed up with an inflation rate that is stubbornly far below the target of close to 2.0 percent, European Central Bank chief Mario Draghi has in recent weeks multiplied pledges to "do what we must" to lift consumer prices in the 19-member eurozone.

In what was viewed as an attempt to lay out his case for more stimulus, Draghi also presented a morose state of the economy at a banking conference earlier this month.

"We cannot yet say with confidence that the process of economic repair in the euro area is complete," he said, noting that global growth is expected to be the weakest since 2009, while the rebound in the eurozone is the lowest since 1998. For Jonathan Loynes, an analyst at Capital Economics: "The question is not whether the ECB's governing council will loosen monetary policy at its meeting on December 3rd, but rather whether it will do so decisively enough to meet the very strong expectations stoked up by its own dovish signals."

"Anything less than a marked acceleration in the pace of its monthly asset purchases and a significant cut in its deposit rate would now come as a severe disappointment," he said. The ECB launched in March a 1.1-trillion-euro (\$1.2 trillion) scheme to help lift consumer prices.

The quantitative easing program to buy sovereign bonds at a rate of 60 billion euros a month runs until at least September 2016, but inflation came in at zero in October. At the ECB board's last meeting on October 22, the question of whether to cut interest rates again surfaced as a potential tool to boost consumer prices.

The ECB had cut the rate on its deposit facility—that is, for funds placed by banks at the central bank, to negative 0.2 percent in June 2014. That means banks have to actually pay the central bank to hold their cash, thus encouraging them to lend. The rate has remained at that level since.

#### Dissenters shrugged off

Draghi's expansionist stance is not without detractors, with Bundesbank president Jens Weidmann warning against hastily boosting stimulus rather than letting the current package do its work.

But the dissenters "appear to have had little influence on their colleagues," said Loynes. Berenberg analyst Holger Schmieding also said that "experience tells us that the ECB council usually follows Draghi's lead in such contentious discussions." "With no inflation risks whatsoever, a further stimulus would certainly do no damage even if the benefits may not be very pronounced either," he said.

The current bout of weak inflation is underpinned by persistently low petrol prices. Central bankers of the 19-member eurozone are keen to fight falling prices because they can be poisonous for the economy, creating a vicious circle of falling demand and fewer jobs.

While falling prices might appear to be good for consumers, deflation can become entrenched if consumers delay purchases in the hope of lower prices later, which in turn prompts companies to hold off investment. For Commerzbank's chief economist Joerg Kraemer, the ECB may simply "make a decision in principle... and defer the clarification of further details to a later meeting."

"The ECB's main objective is probably to achieve the strongest possible effect on the markets. To do so, the markets must be convinced that the ECB is doing all it can to achieve its inflation objective," said Kraemer.

The bank is therefore likely to meet market expectations of more stimulus, as well as "announce further steps in the case that its objectives run the risk of not being achieved". — AFP

## ETIHAD AIRWAYS WINS ULTRATRAVEL AWARD FOR BEST FIRST CLASS

**ABU DHABI:** Etihad Airways has received the coveted award for Best First Class at the annual Ultratravel Middle East Awards (ULTRAs) ceremony, which was held last night at the iconic Burj Al Arab Jumeirah hotel in Dubai.

The award is another major accolade for the UAE national airline's First Class experience, which has repeatedly been voted best in the world.

The ULTRAs are voted for by the readers of Ultratravel Middle East, the regional edition of the United Kingdom's exclusive Ultratravel magazine, a high-end luxury travel publication which was launched in the UK in 2004 in partnership with the Daily Telegraph. Ultratravel Middle East is distributed in English and Arabic within The National and Al Ittihad newspapers.

Peter Baumgartner, Etihad Airways' Chief Commercial Officer, said: "This award further validates and recognises the tremendous efforts which have gone in to creating the most innovative, stylish and luxurious First Class service in the air. We are incredibly proud to receive it."

"This year has been a momentous one for Etihad Airways. The revolutionary cabin concepts we launched in 2014 are now a reality, already flying on our new fleet of

can be for its guests."

The A380 First Class cabin boasts nine First Apartments, unique living spaces which at 39 square feet in area, are 74 per cent larger than the airline's current award-winning First Class suites, and feature a Poltrona Frau leather armchair and a separate ottoman which converts into a full-length 80.5 inch long bed. A dedicated shower room is available for exclusive use by First Class guests.

The B787s are equipped with eight private First Suites in a unique curved aisle setting, an airline industry first, with a 10 per cent increase in personal space. The forward and aft facing suites feature a large Poltrona Frau leather armchair which converts into an 80.5 inch fully-flat bed. The suites feature 24 inch TV monitors, large dining tables for dual dining, personal wardrobes and privacy doors.

Etihad Airways' remaining three-class configured longhaul fleet of Boeing 777s and Airbus A330/A340 family aircraft is configured with a private First Class suite product.

### The world's best First Class experience

Inspired by the best hotels and restaurants in the world, Etihad Airways' First Class service includes a personalised welcome letter from the Cabin Manager and an elegant reception with a drink of choice and Arabic coffee service, fragrant hot towel, and traditional Arabian dates, served on a silver platter.

First Class dining features a contemporary menu with an enhanced selection of canapés, a palate cleanser served between appetiser and entrée, a pre-dessert course served by the Chef, coffee and tea from the 'Café Gourmand' brand accompanied by mini biscuits, cakes and pastries.

Guests can choose from an extensive haute cuisine a la Carte menu, or can select fine steaks and sides from The Grill menu, complemented by a choice of side dishes and sauces, and can also choose delicious meals and snacks throughout the flight from the All Day Dine menu. The onboard Chefs, many of who hail from fine dining establishments around the world, including some Michelin Star restaurants, are provided with an onboard pantry of fresh ingredients including proteins and vegetables. These talented crew members can discuss made to order requests with the guest and can prepare a bespoke dining experience tailored to their palette. A Chef is available in First Class on every Etihad Airways flight.

Meals are served on sophisticated new crockery from the famous Japanese manufacturer Nikko, and new 'Royal Oak' cutlery has been designed by the quintessentially British brand, Studio William. Fine wines from the Etihad Airways onboard cellar are now served in crystal glasses for both red and white wines separately, created for Etihad Airways by Lucaris. A special XO Cognac service is provided featuring signature glasses designed by Norman of Copenhagen.

First Class bedding includes a luxurious all-natural mattress pad, duvet and pillow set, produced exclusively for Etihad Airways by COCO-MAT, widely regarded as the providers of the world's best bedding. The First Class turndown service is accompanied by a 'sweet dreams' card, pillow mist, and aromatic pulse-point oil for the wrists. Elegant loungewear is provided for comfort and relaxation and guests are offered limited edition Sougha amenity kits, inspired by the culture and colours of Abu Dhabi, and containing a selection of exclusive products by luxury New York-based brand, Le Labo.



**Hareb Al Muhairy, Etihad Airways Senior Vice President Corporate and International Affairs, receives the Ultra award for Best First Class from JP Fitzgerald.**

Airbus A380 and Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft. The Etihad Airways brand has been catapulted into the global consciousness as the world-leading provider of remarkable travel experiences in all classes of service."

Etihad Airways introduced groundbreaking First Class cabins with the introduction of its fleet of A380s and B787-9 aircraft, with five of each type delivered to date.

Nick Perry, Chairman of Ultratravel, said: "With the introduction of revolutionary inflight innovations such as The Residence, with its three rooms, and the airline's new First Apartments and First Suites, Etihad Airways is redefining what world-class hospitality and First Class trav-



**A380 First Apartment landscape.**

## BURGAN BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF YAWMI ACCOUNT

**KUWAIT:** Burgan Bank announced yesterday the names of the lucky winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a prize of KD 5,000.

The lucky winners for the daily draws took home a cash-prize of KD 5,000 each, and they are:

1. YOUSEF HUMOUD SULAIMAN AL-MUD-HAYAN
2. SAMI DHIYAB BADER AL TAMIMI
3. MOHAMMAD IBRAHIM MOHAMMAD AL-KHABBAZ
4. SAFWAT MORKOS NAGEEB BOLISS
5. ALI ABDULLAH HAMAD AL HAMAD

To further add to the anticipation of Yawmi account customers, Burgan Bank now offers a Quarterly Draw with more chances to win higher rewards, entitling one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account now offers Daily and quarterly Draws, the Quarterly Draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for 2 months prior to draw

date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account, will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.

Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances of becoming a winner. The more customers deposit, the higher the chances they receive of winning.

For more information on opening a Yawmi account or about the new quarterly draw, customers are urged to visit their nearest Burgan Bank branch and receive all the details, or simply call the bank's Call Center at 1804080 where customer service representatives will be delighted to assist with any questions on the Yawmi account or any of the bank's products and services. Customers can also log on to Burgan Bank's [www.burgan.com](http://www.burgan.com) for further information.



**Margot Robbie in an Abu Dhabi Liwa Desert photoshoot to celebrate the new British Airways 787-9 Dreamliner route.**

## BRITISH AIRWAYS CELEBRATES NEW 787-9 DREAMLINER WITH HOLLYWOOD EVENT AND PHOTOSHOOT IN DESERT

**ABU DHABI:** Abu Dhabi becomes British Airways' second 787-9 Dreamliner destination after the airline debuted the futuristic new aircraft on its Delhi route in October.

To mark the launch of British Airways' Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner on its daily London-Abu Dhabi-Muscat service on 6 November 2015, Hollywood star and Australian Margot Robbie attended an exclusive VIP party on Zaya Nurai Island just off the coast Abu Dhabi along with British chart star Jessie J and fellow Hollywood star Orlando Bloom and VIP guests.

Margot Robbie also displayed vintage glamour in an exclusive photoshoot. Robbie glows in a beautiful gown from Burberry's Prorsum collection amid the drifting, orange-hued dunes of the enchanting Liwa desert in Rub Al Khali (the Empty Quarter). British Airways pilots - many of whom operated the inaugural 787-9 Dreamliner flight from London Heathrow to Abu Dhabi International Airport and Muscat International Airport - accompanied Margot at the event.

British Airways will add the 787-9 Dreamliner - which is poised to become the mainstay of the airline's fleet - on several more destinations including Kuala Lumpur, Austin and the airline's upcoming new route San Jose, California, next year.

The 787-9 features four cabins: World Traveller (economy), World Traveller Plus (premium economy), Club World (business class), and the new First cabin - which was created specifically for the aircraft. The new First suites were designed based on feedback from First customers to ensure comfort was at the heart of the experience.



**Margot Robbie in an Abu Dhabi Liwa Desert photoshoot to celebrate the new British Airways 787-9 Dreamliner route.**



**Margot Robbie during the Abu Dhabi Liwa Desert photoshoot.**



## 10 NISSAN SALES EXECUTIVES CERTIFIED N-SPEC

**KUWAIT:** Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co (AABC), the exclusive agent of Nissan in Kuwait is proud to announce that 10 of its Nissan sales executives were awarded with the N-SPEC (Nissan Sales Program for Executives Certification) certification and are now officially part of Nissan's elite certified global sales team.

Leading the ceremony were Al-Babtain Group Chief Operating Officer - Mohammed Shalaby, Al-Babtain Group HR General Manager - Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain, Sales General Manager (Nissan, Renault & Citroen) -

Issam Salameh; who welcomed the Nissan Gulf FZCO Dubai (NGF) delegates to the event.

Director of Sales & Marketing Cameron Gowing, awarded the Nissan Al-Babtain Sales Executives with their NISSAN customized pins, trophies and certificates.

With their hard work and dedication, the certified Sales Executives have successfully completed their certification program courses and passed the assessment conducted by Nissan Middle East Sales Training Manager - Tamer Yasin.

The Nissan N-SPEC certification is a globally recognized certification course for Sales Executives, based on the Nissan global Sales Training templates to upgrade the knowledge & skills of the Sales executives and thereby increasing customer satisfaction. Al-Babtain Group recognizes the importance of staff training and development and invests heavily in this area. With its recently developed staff L&D center, the company is introducing more and more training and coaching sessions to develop its Sales team's skills.

## AL-TIJARI ANNOUNCES NAJMA ACCOUNT WINNERS

**KUWAIT:** Commercial Bank of Kuwait held the Al-Najma Account draw on 29th November, 2015.

The draw was held under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce & Industry represented by Mr. Saquer Al-Manaie.

**The winners of the Al-Najma daily draw are:**  
Emad Helaihel Abdullah Al Sulalili — KD 7000, Kortattu Parambil Abdulrazak — KD 7000, Bisma Khalaf Ibrahim Al-Saadoun — KD 7000, Mona Abdullah Thunayan Alghaini — KD 7000, Catarina Zebellay Silvieira

Rodrigues — KD 7000.

The Commercial Bank of Kuwait announces the biggest daily draw in Kuwait with the launch of the new Najma account. Customers of the bank can now enjoy a KD 7,000 daily prize which is the highest in the country and another 4 mega prizes during the year worth KD 100,000 each on different occasions: The National Day, Eid Al-Fitr, Eid Al-Adha and on the 19th of June which is the date of the bank's establishment.

With a minimum balance of KD 500, cus-

tomers will be eligible for the daily draw provided that the money is in the account one week prior to the daily draw or 2 months prior to the mega draw. In addition, for each KD 25 a customer can get one chance for winning instead of KD 50.

Commercial Bank of Kuwait takes this opportunity to congratulate all lucky winners and also extends appreciation to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for their effective supervision of the draws which were conducted in an orderly and organized manner.

## QUALITYNET WINS TELECOM PROJECT, CONNECTING WORLD'S SECOND LARGEST OILFIELD IN IRAQ



Mohammed N. Al-Nusif -  
Qualitynet CEO

**KUWAIT:** Qualitynet, Kuwait's No. 1 Internet, Information and Data Communications Technology Services provider yesterday announced its successful accomplishment of a Telecom Project initiated by one of the world's largest Oil & Gas Operators, to connect its sites in Rumaila - Southern Iraq with multiple cities worldwide.

Mohammed Al-Nusif, CEO stated that the company is quite excited about winning the project, especially the large scale implications it would have for the company and its staff. "The project

is quite challenging and is among the largest we've undertaken so far. The bidding process took months of stringent interviews, documentation and presentations, with participation from the biggest International brands in the Telecom Segment. Our team's proposal emerged victorious at the end, and we are now gearing towards executing the solution within Southern Iraq and onwards to locations across the globe, in collaboration with our International partners".

Rumaila is a supergiant oilfield located in Southern Iraq,

and is operated by the Rumaila Operating Organization (ROO) - a joint venture between the biggest names in the O&G sector. ROO invited the Telecom industry's finest to propose a solution that would connect its sites in Rumaila with its offices located across the globe in Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

"Implementing this project brought up many challenges, especially given an underdeveloped sector like Iraq" said Mohammed. "Finding the right technology partners with the know-how to implement solu-

tions for the available infrastructure and terrain in Iraq, roll-out schedules that clashed with unexpected weather conditions in Iraq and Europe, and the strict HSE standards were among the many challenges faced and conquered". He added that Qualitynet's teams are working onsite in Iraq and Europe at present, testing and implementing the solution as per the agreed roll-out schedules.

Mohammed underlined how this project showcases Qualitynet's capabilities on a global scale. "A complex commu-

nications project of this size brings to the forefront our technical prowess and capability to execute even the most challenging of requirements in any given situation. We work with the best, employ proficient resources and deliver projects on-time in accordance with the highest of quality standards", said Mohammed. He concluded by saying that this project has strengthened Qualitynet's project portfolio both in Iraq and within the O&G Sector globally, and that the company is currently working on similar projects within the sector.

## IMPLANTING CIOs INTO CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

By Jyoti Lalchandani

After many years of competing on price, selection, quality, and service, businesses find themselves on the newest battleground - customer experience (CX). Beyond great products and services, customers increasingly expect organizations to provide engaging, high-quality experiences tailored to their individual wants and needs and available across a wide variety of touch points and devices.



For CIOs and their IT departments, CX similarly represents an important battleground; for many, their very future is at stake. That's because technology is an essential ingredient of CX - meeting customer expectations requires a growing complex of technology solutions, and businesses can't deliver great CX without IT support.

It might sound overly dramatic, but there is a huge amount at stake here. Indeed, those CIOs that can rise to the "CX occasion" will find themselves feted as essential strategic allies to their business partners. On the other hand, those that fails in helping to shape and drive superior CX run the risk of jeopardizing not only their companies' success but their careers as well.

The road to CX success for IT teams is a challenging one, riddled with technological complexity, siloed organizations and politics, disruptive competition, and rapidly evolving market expectations and competition. Under such circumstances it can be tempting for CIOs to stick to the bread and butter of building, acquiring, and managing conventional IT systems and infrastructure. But the reality is that they must play an integral role in CX, and doing that well can help secure a more prominent role within their organizations. While 'customer experience' may be the hot topic of the day in boardrooms around the world, it's certainly not a new concept. Indeed, it can be traced back to the very origins of commerce when merchants had to fix problems associated with a sale or risk losing a customer's business. But it has certainly come to the fore once again as markets have become increasingly crowded with competing players and product offerings, making differentiation difficult for many businesses. CX has had to evolve over the years to meet changing needs. From the earlier focus on service and problem resolution, CX evolved to encompass customer engagement, marketing, and sales. Fast forward, and organizations are now realizing that customers want and expect quality CX to extend across the entire customer journey, from awareness to purchase, service and support, and even beyond into co-innovation of prod-

ucts and brand advocacy.

## Digital services

Savvy organizations have long since figured out that their brand and image don't originate in the marketing department; they come from the last interaction that a customer has had with any part of the business. Visions of glistening planes soaring through the heavens with grandiose music evaporate extremely quickly in the face of flight delays, cryptic ticketing applications, and stony-faced flight attendants. That means that every interaction, whether physical or digital, either contributes to or detracts from the quality of the customer experience.

Ultimately, CX is all about bringing together technology, processes, information, and empowered employees to make and keep customers satisfied. And it is here where the CIO and his/her team must strive to make a difference. At IDC we predict that by 2020, 60% of CIOs in global organizations will have been supplanted by chief digital officers for the delivery of IT-enabled products and digital services. So the threat to the CIO's influence - and even very existence - within the CX circle is an extremely real one.

In order to play a meaningful role and head off the threat of a CDO taking away key responsibilities, the IT department must develop some critical new skills that until now may have not even been on their radar. Central to this is the need to develop deep levels of customer knowledge and empathy, while CIOs must also become adept at simultaneously leading, following, influencing, and persuading line-of-business executives who may or may not welcome IT's involvement in CX initiatives.

## CX journey

This last point is crucial to avoiding conflict, because there will undoubtedly be certain lines of business that believe they 'own' the customer experience. Contrary to such beliefs, IDC is firmly of the opinion that CX is an enterprise-wide, mission-critical initiative and that CIOs and their teams are essential elements as they bring some critically needed competencies. For example, chief marketing officers will only be successful if a productive relationship with the IT organization is created and developed, and that holds true in service, support, and other facets of customer relationships as well, as all are underpinned by technology along with people, processes, and information.

Failure to play an active and transformational role in the CX journey will most likely result in the IT department being branded as a caretaker and infrastructure management organization, with customer-facing technology initiatives handed off to a CDO (or equivalent). It is for this reason that CIOs and their teams must step up to the plate. IT has much to bring to the CX table, including a deep-seated knowledge of enterprise systems and processes and invaluable skills in privacy and security protection, enterprise architectures, and application integration, to name a few. It is now up to them to prove their worth.

The author is the Group Vice President and Regional Managing Director at IDC, Middle East, Turkey and Africa.



WAYNE: Bree Stopper, middle, talks on the phone after finishing work at a clothing store in the Willowbrook Mall, Friday. —APP

## BEWARE OF ONLINE FRAUD DURING HOLIDAY SEASON

OPEN WI-FI IS PROBABLY THE LEAST SECURE PLACE

**NEW YORK:** Online fraud spikes during the holiday shopping season, as people searching for the perfect gifts take to cyberspace and head to traditional stores armed with their smartphones.

"The Pandora's box of cyberattacks is about to open," says Pete Tyrrell, chief operating officer for Digital Guardian, a Waltham, Massachusetts-based data protection firm. "The cybercriminals are getting more and more creative - and at the end of the day, it's your personal information at risk." Here are some tips for protecting yourself and your information from online Grinch.

## BEWARE OF GIFTS OF FREE WI-FI

It's awful tempting to sign on to a store's free Wi-Fi while you're out shopping, especially since store walls are notorious for blocking or weakening smartphone data connections. But fraudsters also may be lurking on the networks, ready to use that connection to steal credit card or other personal information.

"People may want to log on to their Best Buy or Amazon accounts to check prices, but open Wi-Fi is probably the least secure place to do that," says Michael Kaiser, executive director of the National Cyber Security Alliance.

And never use open Wi-Fi connections to check bank account information. The last thing you want a hacker to have is a direct connection to your bank account.

If you're tech-savvy enough to use VPN software - short for "virtual private network," a technique for shutting would-be eavesdroppers out of your connection - on your phone, then free Wi-Fi is safe so long as you have the VPN on. For

most people, though, it's simply best to stick to your cellular connection.

Shoppers also need to be on the lookout for less high-tech thieves when shopping online in crowded public places like coffee shops, says Nitin Bhandari, senior vice president for products at Opera Software Solutions. That means keeping your screens out of the views of others - even smartphones, which are bigger and easier to read from a distance than they used to be.

## SWIM AWAY FROM POTENTIAL PHISH

Phishing spikes during the holiday season. Emails that offer great deals on holiday gifts or donation pitches from charities could actually be attempts to steal your credit card or login information. Another popular trick: fake emails supposedly sent by online retailers or shippers such as FedEx or UPS, saying that a payment for an order didn't go through, or that an order didn't ship. Don't click on links in these emails. It could contain malware or take you to a fake website that looks very much like that of a legitimate company. Instead of getting help, you'll most likely have your personal information stolen. Panic over the possibility of not getting a gift in time can make people click before they think, Kaiser says. So, it's best to slow down. If you think an email is genuine, just go directly to the company in question's main website.

## CHECK YOUR ACCOUNTS FOR 'NAUGHTY' ACTIVITY

Both during and after the holidays, shoppers need to keep a close eye on their accounts. The

easiest way to do this is to use the same credit card for all of your holiday shopping. Never use your debit card; if hackers get hold of your number, they could clean out your bank account.

A dedicated email account can also help keep things organized.

It's also a good idea to use different user names and different passwords for your various shopping accounts. That way if one is compromised, it's less likely that the others will fall to hackers as well, says Tim Francis, the head of "cyber insurance" policies at Travelers.

## IF IT LOOKS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE ...

Websites and emails that advertise hot deals on popular or hard-to-find gifts, along with free or deeply discounted gift cards, are probably scams. "I still haven't been able to buy an iPad for \$7," Tyrrell joked.

It's best to stick with e-commerce sites you know are real and go directly to those websites. Don't click on Web ads.

Shopping on the websites of companies you've previously done business with can also save you time and hassle, says Steve Platt, a vice president at credit monitoring company Experian.

Online retailers will be on the lookout for fraudsters too. That means they might be more likely to flag a transaction - and slow down your shopping - if they haven't dealt with you before.

"The more information they know about you and your purchases, the more likely you'll have a seamless experience," Platt says. — AP

## FOR US ALLIES, PARADIGM SHIFT IN INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION

**PARIS:** Fearful of an expanding extremist threat, countries that for years have relied heavily on US intelligence are quickly building up their own capabilities with new technology, new laws and - in at least one case - a searing debate on how much the American government should be allowed to spy on their own citizens.

Responding to a jihadi movement that is successfully recruiting people from around the world, France and Canada are both passing laws that would dramatically ramp up their surveillance apparatus. In France, lawmakers are on the verge of approving a bill that would let the government install "black boxes" to collect metadata from every major phone and Internet company. Canada's measures were rushed through after a two separate attacks in October 2014 on Canadian soldiers - including one that ended when the gunman stormed Parliament and was shot to death by guards and police. France's law went into high gear after the January terror attacks on the satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo and a kosher supermarket that left 20 dead, including the gunmen. Analysts

say it's not so much a question of diminishing cooperation with the US - the revelations of Edward Snowden have ultimately done little to harm relationships between allies - as a push to increase domestic capacities ill-equipped to face the rising threat of Islamic State and other jihadi groups. "These are not people coming from the outside, these are not people who are taking plane trips, they are not people who attracted notice outside our countries. These are people who come from the heart of our society," said Alain Chouet, a former French intelligence official who recently returned from an extended trip to Canada where he debated the measures in both countries. "International cooperation in this area isn't hugely useful."

## Collection of metadata

Technologically, France goes the furthest with the planned creation of a 'Made in France' mass collection of metadata that has the potential to go beyond a National Security Agency program. Where the NSA collected headline metadata for nearly every US citizen but never really got into

scooping up cell data, France is pushing to essentially vacuum up and analyze everything - landline, mobile and Internet metadata.

The law authorizing that NSA program is set to expire June 1, but the U.S. House of Representatives last week passed legislation ending the collection by the government and only allowing the NSA to ask telephone companies for the metadata on a case-by-case basis. That bill may still face changes in the US Senate. The Canadian proposals are more measured, but would still dramatically expand domestic intelligence capabilities, legalize some collection of metadata, and allow spy services to take over recruiters' social networking accounts to "counter-message" as well as delete online material from anywhere in the world that promotes terrorism against Canadians. Unlike the French proposals, the Canadian measures began coming under strong public opposition as time went on, including an open letter from 60 executives and a Twitter campaign that included a dire warning this month from author Margaret Atwood: "See you in the slammer, kids." — AP



NANTERRE: In this Jan 19, 2015 photo, a French police officer works at the headquarters of the Pharos reporting platform against cyber criminality outside Paris. — AP

## BRAZIL CONFIRMS ZICA VIRUS LINK TO FETAL BRAIN-DAMAGE OUTBREAK

**RIO DE JANEIRO:** A link between a form of fetal brain damage and the mosquito-borne zica virus has been confirmed by Brazilian health authorities on Saturday. The link between zica, first medically identified as a new disease half a century ago, and birth defects has never been made. The virus, endemic in parts Africa, South America, Southeast Asia and some Pacific Islands, has until now been blamed for

symptoms such as fever, mild headache, skin rashes, joint pain and conjunctivitis, or "red eye." Initial analysis shows that the virus can be passed to a fetus and that the fetus is at greatest risk from the virus during the first three months of pregnancy, the statements said.

More tests and studies are needed to clarify the exact method of transmission and infection, the statement added. A

surge in recent months of babies born with microcephaly, or an unnaturally small brain, in Brazil's northeast, led authorities to suspect the virus may have more sinister effects than previously recorded, the ministry said. Microcephalic children can suffer developmental and intellectual difficulties that limit intelligence and muscle coordination for life.

The ministry's conclusion was made

after tests on the tissue of a deceased child with microcephalic symptoms by the Ivandro Chagas Institute in Belém, Brazil, one of South America's leading health institutes. There is also evidence that zica has contributed to the deaths of adults weakened by other diseases. Zica is transmitted by the Aedes aegypti mosquito also known to carry the yellow fever, dengue, chikungunya viruses.

The ministry said that the new information means that zica has become a serious risk to public health and that Brazil must embark on an emergency program to control the Aedes aegypti mosquito to prevent the virus' spread. Brazil has invited the Atlanta, Georgia-based US Center for Disease Control to visit the country and observe research and control efforts, the health ministry said. —Reuters

## NORWAY MULLS USING HEROIN TO PREVENT DEADLY OVERDOSES

'I AM IN HEAVEN THAT HE IS ALIVE'

**BERGEN, Norway:** The pale, zombie-like addicts staggering through concrete underpasses make an unlikely scene in wealthy Norway's picturesque second city. As a gateway to the fjords which zigzag the oil-rich nation's long coastline, Bergen is the last stop on a global drug route that gives it one of the worst heroin problems in Europe. Now with a change in local government here and in the capital, Oslo, there is an appetite to use radical policies to curb the alarming number of Norwegians who die from heroin overdoses each year. Alongside traditional replacement therapies, such as methadone, the new left-wing local leaders want to use a medical form of injectable heroin to treat the most at-risk users.

The official goal is to wean them off the drug entirely, but even the most ardent supporters admit the most achievable target is to bring them within a safer environment, while helping to tackle the crime associated with heavy drug use.

"We can't go on criminalizing our drug users. We need the trust between us and the health professionals," said Kim Arnetvedt, an addict and member of the Association for a Humane Drug Policy, a campaign group. Norway has the worst heroin mortality rate in Western Europe with 70 drug deaths per million inhabitants in 2013, according to the EU's drugs watchdog, the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction. In the continent as a whole, Norway trails only Estonia, with 127 deaths per million. The average is 16.

Like most of Bergen's estimated 1,100 regular users, Arnetvedt spends much of his time near the city-run Straxhuset needle exchange center between the housing projects and the industrialized western edge of the city where addicts can get clean needles, medical help and a hot meal. He reluctantly dips in and out of medical rehabilitation programs run out of centers like this,



**BERGEN, Norway:** Norwegian heroin addict, Kim Arnetvedt, a member of the campaign group Association for a Humane Drug Policy, stands on a corner in Bergen. —AP photos

but is highly suspicious of a health system that he says is too close to the police and makes "every day of addiction miserable." He is treated with methadone and anti-depressants, but says he can't imagine ever shaking his addiction to heroin.

### CASE OF OVERDOSE

Outside the needle exchange there is a more-or-less open drug market. Dozens of users and dealers cut deals unmolested by police. Last year a crack-down on heroin users in the notorious Nygaards Park in the center of town drove them into the tourist-heavy city-center. Straxhuset leader Hugo Torjussen says the unofficial policy is to allow them to congregate here instead. The proximity of health professionals makes it safer in case of overdose, and the new local government has cut through political deadlock to sanction a safe injecting room for users to shoot up their own gear inside. Even so, a small number of addicts are either too suspicious or immune to the methadone to start treatment at all.

Ola Joesendal, deputy director of Bergen's Haukeland Hospital, said more than 90 percent of the city's heroin addicts receive methadone treatment. "But for a very small amount of addicted people it is not possible to establish contact through the (methadone) maintenance program," he said. "If we have the opportunity to reach them through heroin, then they can be reached." Otherwise, their isolation from health professionals means they are the users most likely to die, he says.

Some are skeptical. Anti-drug campaigner Mina Gerhardsen says free heroin therapy would put too much strain on many of the vulnerable users it is intended to reach. "They won't be able to use this because you need to show up at the same place and time several times a day," she said. "Many of these people are not capable of that." Gerhardsen also said the publicly-funded medical heroin programs would be too expensive. The cost of the treatment can reach some \$22,000 per year, compared with an upper level of \$3,800 per year

for methadone, according to the EU drugs watchdog.

First synthesized from opium poppies in 1898, and marketed as "Heroin" by the German pharmaceuticals giant Bayer, diamorphine was initially prescribed as pain relief. Later evidence showed its addictive qualities and it was banned in most countries, but continued to be manufactured and made available in Britain, primarily for end of life care. It also survived as a street drug where it is mixed with other toxins and its purity varies dangerously. In 1991, Switzerland established a small scale trial, using diamorphine to treat heroin addicts unresponsive to other treatments such as methadone. Later trials in Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany all showed that supervised injectable heroin can be effective for targeting this marginal group, according to the EU watchdog.

### Major reductions

It said the therapy creates "major reductions" in their continued use of illicit street heroin, "major disengagement from criminal activities" and "marked improvements in social functioning." Joesendal says this type of harm reduction is at the heart of the proposed policy. The drug is still available in these countries in small-scale quantities and strictly controlled conditions. However, wary of encouraging use rather than rehabilitation, in 2013 Norway's Conservative-led national government rejected Joesendal's application for a medical heroin trial.

Cecilie Brein-Karlsen, deputy health minister for the junior ruling coalition partner, the Progress Party, says the change in local government to Labor in September will not force the Department of Health to change its mind. "It is not an option from the government's point of view," she said. "We think we should prioritize other measures." The government's overdose prevention strategy advocates persuading users to switch to smoking, which is far safer than injecting. Yet it will not allow addicts to use Oslo and Bergen's injecting rooms to smoke the drug. — AP



**BERGEN, Norway:** Addict Birgitte Langoy, who rescued her boyfriend from a heroin overdose, holds part of a Naloxone kit in Bergen.

## GETTING TREATMENT: TIMING IS KEY AFTER A HEROIN OVERDOSE

**NEW YORK:** Using naloxone, often known by the brand name Narcan, to stop an overdose on heroin or related painkillers called opioids is the first step in a complex process that can include hospitalization, treatment and relapse. Here's a step-by-step look at recovery, based on the accounts of first responders, harm reduction experts and health care providers:

### Overdose

An overdose shortens breath and weakens the pulse. It turns lips and fingertips blue and shrinks pupils to the size of a pinhead. It can cause drowsiness, disorientation, choking, vomiting, a gurgling sound known as the "death rattle," and, eventually, a loss of consciousness. Death occurs when the brain stops sending the signals that make breathing automatic. Symptoms can kick in within minutes or hours, depending on the

strength of the opioid and the user's tolerance. Highly potent batches of heroin, some mixed with the powerful anesthetic fentanyl, can accelerate the timeline.

### Antidote

Without intervention, an overdose can be lethal. Brain damage can occur three to five minutes after a person stops breathing. A widely used antidote, naloxone, works by blocking an opioid's effect on brain receptors for 30 to 90 minutes. First responders in many places carry the drug, and it's also available for home use at pharmacies and harm-reduction clinics. It's administered via a shot or nasal spray and works most of the time to revive a victim.

### Revival

Once revived, a person usually wakes up within two

to five minutes. Withdrawal symptoms and cravings start almost immediately. Some people react angrily and lash out, saying police and paramedics have ruined their high. Experts say the person should be carefully monitored because naloxone's inhibiting effects could wear off before the opioid does and trigger another overdose.

### Hospitalization

A person revived with naloxone should be taken to an emergency room for evaluation and treatment, but authorities cannot force them to go, and many refuse. A hospital stay usually lasts a few hours - enough time to ensure another overdose doesn't occur. When people don't go to a hospital, doctors say, they should not be left alone for about three hours for the same reason.

### Relapse

After a revival, a user's life often goes one of two ways: Relapse spurred by the hard tug and easy availability of street drugs, or long-term treatment. Police and paramedics report reviving the same relapsed users multiple times. For instance, a 19-year-old man near Syracuse, New York, saved with naloxone in April died of a suspected overdose two weeks later, the day he was to leave for rehabilitation in Florida.

### Treatment

Short of a court order, nothing can force a user into treatment. Immunity laws designed to encourage people to call 911 in an overdose emergency have made those harder to come by, but police and prosecutors can have input when a user commits another crime, like robbery, to further the habit. Someone deciding to get help could face hurdles including high insurance deductibles, long waiting lists, and a month or more away from family and friends. Health care providers recommend detoxification and methadone or other treatment to wean users. They also recommend outpatient or residential therapies to modify behavior and improve the ability to live without drugs. — AP



**CAMDEN, New Jersey:** A jug of used needles to exchange for new is seen near Jim "Woods" Ellis in an industrial area of Camden, as Ellis describes using the drug, naloxone, often known by the brand name Narcan, to reverse an addict's heroin overdose. —AP

## PRESCHOOLERS IN DAYCARE NEED MORE OUTDOOR TIME

**NEW YORK:** Many preschoolers in daycare may need more outdoor time to help increase their odds of getting enough physical activity, a small US study suggests. Pediatricians recommend that young children get at least an hour a day of physical activity to help build motor skills, coordination and strong muscles and bones, as well as to reduce the potential for obesity later in life. Playground time is also key for developing social skills like taking turns and conflict resolution. But fewer than three in 10 children in full-time daycare got an hour outside for recess each day, the study found.

"It is ideal if parents can make some time for their child to play outside every day," lead study author Dr. Kristen Copeland of Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center said by email. "But when children are in child care for eight to 10 hours, all of the daylight hours may be in child care settings, so this is not always possible." Researchers studied 380 children ranging in age from three to six years old at 30 childcare centers from 2009 through 2011. In each center, they randomly selected two classrooms to observe for one school day.

On the observation day, researchers fitted children with activity trackers for a 24-hour period to record their movements in preschool as well as at home. All but one of the daycare facilities had a playground outside and 23 had an indoor gym or activity space. Just 14 of the centers had policies scheduling more than 60 minutes of daily outdoor time, however. Only five centers had no television or computer use on either observation days.

While 90 percent of the daycare centers reported scheduling two or more outdoor sessions daily, only 40 percent of children participated. The children who did get at least 60 minutes of outdoor or active time in school were also more active throughout

the day, including time at home, than their peers who didn't get as much exercise in daycare. One drawback of the study is that it only included a single day of observation, the authors acknowledge in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine. It's also possible that even though researchers controlled for many factors that can influence activity levels in kids - including children's weight and parents' education levels - other variables may still have influenced the outcomes.

Even so, the findings suggest that parents should ask about physical activity policies when selecting a daycare center for their child, said Leigh Vanderloo, a pediatric activity researcher at the University of Western Ontario in Canada who wasn't involved in the study. Ideally, the daycare should have access to quality indoor and outdoor activity spaces, limit screen time, and have policies in place to ensure that children get exercise even if the weather doesn't cooperate, Vanderloo said by email.

Expanding access to physical activity, however, isn't one size fits all, noted Laura Lessard, a researcher in behavioral health and nutrition at the University of Delaware who wasn't involved in the study. In cities, it may not be feasible for daycare centers to have their own outdoor space, and nearby playgrounds might not be safe or appropriate for younger children, Lessard said by email. In suburban or rural areas, space may be abundant but kids might still lack access to enough play equipment or supervised physical activities. "Internationally the childcare environment is predominantly a sedentary and obeseogenic one," Vanderloo said. "It's important that we explore mechanisms to enhance the supportiveness and conduciveness of the childcare environment as it relates to physical activity, in addition to limiting the opportunities available to the children to engage in sedentary pursuits." — Reuters



**NEW DELHI, India:** Participants run past the India Gate monument shrouded by the haze during the Delhi Half Marathon in New Delhi yesterday. — AP

## TENS OF THOUSANDS OVERCOME DELHI POLLUTION IN HALF MARATHON

**NEW DELHI:** The tens of thousands of people who participated in yesterday's half marathon in India's capital had more than just running 21 kilometers (13 miles) through New Delhi's streets on a misty, chilly morning to deal with. They also had to overcome the city's unparalleled air pollution. Last year, the World Health Organization named New Delhi the world's most polluted city. Twelve other Indian cities ranked among the world's most polluted 20. Yesterday, most of New Delhi's government-run air monitors were showing "very poor" readings, providing an extra challenge for those taking part in the annual half marathon.

More than 30,000 people participated in the race, according to the Press Trust of India, or PTI. Two runners were seen being taken to ambulances, but it was not known why they needed medical attention. Still, the event proceeded in a carnival atmosphere, with Ethiopia's Birhanu Legese and Kenya's Cynthia Limo winning the men's and women's elite categories. "It is my first time in Delhi, and I have come up with a personal best," PTI quoted Legese, who finished in 59 minutes, 20 seconds, as saying. "It is even more satisfying considering the top six were so close." PM2.5 - the very fine particles that get lodged deep in the lungs and cause the most damage crossed 300 at some places in New Delhi, but very few runners wore pollution masks during the race.

"I've never tried to run with a mask. The idea of wearing one for the race seems uncomfortable," said one of the

runners, Shruti Saxena, a 41-year-old businesswoman who has been distance running in New Delhi for eight years. "We're breathing the same air even if we stop running, and I'd rather run than not." The Delhi half marathon, in its 10th year, has become an important part of the city's calendar. The race, and the international runners it attracts, has encouraged a culture of running in a country where for decades the odd cricket game on the weekend was the most exercise most people got. Running groups are now gaining in popularity across the country.

The US Embassy's air quality monitor, located in one of the greenest parts of the city, showed a reading of 283 this weekend, deemed so hazardous that the embassy advised that everyone avoid outdoor activities. The readings were nearly five times higher than what India deems acceptable and 11 times what's recommended by the World Health Organization. The race is typically scheduled for late October or November, when the air is cooler and the scorching north Indian summer has ended. But the cold weather also leads to spikes in smog levels.

"It's a public health catastrophe," said Akshay Jaitley, a lawyer and long-time distance runner who has competed in races all over the world and ran in yesterday's half marathon. "You can feel the difference," he said of training and running races in cities like Boston and London. But he said he would continue to run in India's capital. "The benefits of running are more than not running," he said. — AP

## 80% OF MEN IN MIDDLE EAST MORE SAVVY ABOUT FASHION THAN HEALTH

With the spotlight on men's health issues this month, Centrepoint reflected upon the health consciousness or lack thereof of its male consumers within the GCC region. As the region's largest family fashion retailer, Centrepoint feels a responsibility towards its customers and puts each member of the family at the centre of its offerings. This November, Centrepoint has launched a campaign to increase consumer's knowledge of health related topics.

In support of the Movember initiative activated globally, Centrepoint chose to delve deeper on its regional consumers' understanding of good health. The regionally present retailer conducted a recent survey to gauge consumers' consciousness of their personal and general health in comparison to their savviness when it came to fashion. As a family fashion retailer, Centrepoint is well-aligned with its trend-setting and highly engaged consumer base in the Middle East. The survey that was disseminated through Centrepoint's social media platforms garnered response from over a thousand respondents from the GCC, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon. The results portrayed a distinct disparity in



respondents' behaviour and knowledge when it came to fashion vs. health. Of the men surveyed, 80% answered each of the fashion related questions correctly, while a mere 20 per cent were able to answer questions on basic health measures.

Following the survey results, Centrepoint has launched a region-wide campaign to raise awareness for effective health habits and measures. "Responses to survey questions such as 'How often do you shop?' and 'How often do you see your

physician for a medical check-up?' were extremely insightful in getting an understanding of our customers' priorities when it came to personal health," commented Shyam Sunder, Marketing Head of Centrepoint. Over 90 per cent of survey respondents claim to visit the mall and shop once a month or more, with close to 25 per cent shopping on a weekly basis. In terms of health, while 70 per cent of the men surveyed visited the gym once a week or more. In contrast, over 50% of survey

respondents visited the doctor only in case of a medical emergency. This speaks clearly about the way in which consumers here prioritize health issues.

Sleep, which is a vital indicator of overall health and well-being, also appeared to be compromised as per survey results. 40 per cent of survey respondents get only between 5-7 hours of sleep per night. According to the National Sleep Foundation those of us experiencing under the mandatory 8 hours or so of sleep on a regular basis experience elongated sleep debt and forget the feeling of being well and truly rested. To further the problem, stimulants like coffee and energy drinks, alarm clocks, cell phones and other external lights and sounds interfere with our natural sleep cycle causing added distress.

Another aspect of health consciousness highlighted by the survey was that of water consumption. A third of the respondents surveyed consume between four to six glasses of water a day, which is quite low in comparison to the eight glasses recommended for adults. Lack of water can lead to dehydration, which can be particularly severe in the hot desert conditions we face in the Middle East.



## EARTH A WILDER, WARMER PLACE SINCE LAST CLIMATE DEAL MADE

PARIS: This time, it's a hotter, waterier, wilder Earth that world leaders are trying to save. The last time that the nations of the world struck a binding agreement to fight global warming was 1997, in Kyoto, Japan. As leaders gather for a conference in Paris today to try to do more, it's clear things have changed dramatically over the past 18 years.

Some differences can be measured: degrees on a thermometer, trillions of tons of melting ice, a rise in sea level of a couple of inches. Epic weather disasters, including punishing droughts, killer heat waves and monster storms, have plagued Earth. As a result, climate change is seen as a more urgent and concrete problem than it was last time.

"At the time of Kyoto, if someone talked about climate change, they were talking about something that was abstract in the future," said Marcia McNutt, the former US Geological Survey director who was picked to run the National Academies of Sciences. "Now, we're talking about changing climate, something that's happening now. You can point to event after event that is happening in the here and now that is a direct result of changing climate."

Other, nonphysical changes since 1997 make many experts more optimistic than in previous climate negotiations. For one, improved technology is pointing to the possibility of a world weaned from fossil fuels, which emit heat-trapping gases. Businesses and countries are more serious about doing something, in the face of evidence that some of science's worst-case scenarios are coming to pass.

"I am quite stunned by how much the Earth has changed since 1997," Princeton University's Bill Anderegg said in an email. "In many cases (e.g. Arctic sea ice loss, forest die-off due to drought), the speed of climate change is proceeding even faster than we thought it would two decades ago."

**Some of the cold numbers on global warming since 1997:**

- The West Antarctic and Greenland ice sheets have lost 5.5 trillion tons of ice, or 5 trillion metric tons, according to Andrew Shepherd at the University of Leeds, who used NASA and European satellite data.
- The five-year average surface global temperature for January to October has risen by nearly two-thirds of a degree Fahrenheit, or 0.36 degrees Celsius, between 1993-97 and 2011-15, according to the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. In 1997, Earth set a record for the hottest year, but it didn't last. Records were set in 1998, 2005, 2010 and 2014, and it is sure to happen again in 2015 when the results are in from the year, according to NOAA.
- The average glacier has lost about 39 feet, or 12



In this July 19, 2011 file photo, pools of melted ice form atop Jakobshavn Glacier, near the edge of the vast Greenland ice sheet. — AP

meters, of ice thickness since 1997, according to Samuel Nussbaumer at the World Glacier Monitoring Service in Switzerland.

- With 1.2 billion more people in the world, carbon dioxide emissions from the burning of fossil fuels climbed nearly 50 percent between 1997 and 2013, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. The world is spewing more than 100 million tons of carbon dioxide a day now.
- The seas have risen nearly 2 1/2 inches, or 6.2 centimeters, on average since 1997, according to calculations by the University of Colorado.
- At its low point during the summer, the Arctic sea ice is on average 820,000 square miles smaller than it was 18 years ago, according to the National Snow and Ice Data Center. That's a loss equal in area to Texas, California, Montana, New Mexico and Arizona combined.
- The five deadliest heat waves of the past century - in Europe in 2003, Russia in 2010, India and Pakistan this year, Western Europe in 2006 and southern Asia in 1998 - have come in the past 18 years, according to

the International Disaster Database run by the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disaster in Belgium.

- The number of weather and climate disasters worldwide has increased 42 percent, though deaths are down 58 percent. From 1993 to 1997, the world averaged 221 weather disasters that killed 3,248 people a year. From 2010 to 2014, the yearly average of weather disasters was up to 313, while deaths dropped to 1,364, according to the disaster database.

Eighteen years ago, the discussion was far more about average temperatures, not the freakish extremes. Now, scientists and others realize it is in the more frequent extremes that people are truly experiencing climate change. Witness the "large downpours, floods, mudslides, the deeper and longer droughts, rising sea levels from the melting ice, forest fires," former Vice President Al Gore, who helped negotiate the 1997 agreement, told The Associated Press. "There's a long list of events that people can see and feel viscerally right now. Every night on the television news is like a nature hike through the Book of Revelation." — AP

## FEDERAL REGULATORS: PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL HARMING PATIENTS

SEATTLE: Federal regulators plan to cut millions in Medicare and Medicaid funding for Washington state's largest psychiatric hospital after a recent inspection found "multi-system wide failures" have caused serious harm to patients and placed the health and safety of all patients at risk. In addition, federal officials said Western State Hospital's governing body "failed to provide oversight and supervision necessary to ensure patients are protected from abuse and neglect and received safe and appropriate psychiatric, medical and nursing services," according to a letter sent this week to hospital CEO Ron Alder and acquired by The Associated Press on Friday.

The US Department of Health and Human Services said it will end its provider agreement with the 842-bed facility on Nov. 28, the letter said. The Lakewood, Washington facility receives \$4.7 million from Medicaid and \$11.2 million from Medicare annually, according to state officials. State officials said they plan to fix the problems before the two-week deadline.

"We have been under the threat of losing federal funding since the inspection in September," Kathy Spears, spokeswoman for the state Department of Social and Health Services, said in an email Friday. The agency is working with the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to correct the problems, she

said. "Patient and staff safety remain priorities and to that end we are working to recruit more staff, which is key to improving safety and providing quality services to the patients at all of our state psychiatric hospitals," she said. "We have not lost federal funding."

### 'Immediate jeopardy'

Stephanie Magill, a Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services spokeswoman in Seattle, said Friday that although terminations sometimes happen, "more often than not, facilities come back into compliance." The letter marks the fourth time in 2015 that the hospital has been under threat of losing federal funds. The federal agency sent 90-day termination notices to the hospital in January, March and September after finding that patients were at risk. This is the first letter that threatens funding cuts within weeks of the announcement. The decision followed an inspection that ended on Nov. 5 in which investigators identified several "immediate jeopardy" findings. "Immediate jeopardy" is defined by law as a situation in which the hospital's failure to comply with program requirements "has caused, or is likely to cause, serious injury, harm, impairment, or death to a resident." The infractions related to patient rights, quality assessment, medical staff, nursing services and infection control, the letter said. — AP



WASHINGTON: Dr Joseph Wainer, left, a psychiatrist at Western State Hospital, and Paul Vilja, right, a nursing supervisor, pose for a photo near the facility in Lakewood. — AP

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## ALGHANIM INDUSTRIES EMPLOYEES TAKE PART IN RUNQ8 CHARITY EVENT

**A**lghanim Industries, one of the largest private companies in the region, announced the participation of 235 of its employees in the RUNQ8 Charity Event that started at Marina Crescent on Saturday morning. The company contributed the largest number of participants at the race, which totaled 2200 runners and walkers.

Employees from several businesses owned by Alghanim Industries participate in the RUNQ8 event on a yearly basis. The company covers registration fees for all employees who participate as part of its effort to promote a healthy lifestyle amongst its employees, and to support the charitable cause behind the event. All proceeds from the race are donated to the Children's Evaluation and

Rehabilitation Center (CERC) which serves children with disabilities who need special support and do not have access to appropriate healthcare.

Speaking about the company's participation in the event, George Lambros, Chief Human Resources Officer at Alghanim Industries, said: "We're happy that Alghanim Industries once again is sponsoring the largest contingent of employees participating in the RunQ8 event. Our company is concerned with the overall well-being of our employees, and we conduct a wide array of events and seminars throughout the year that focuses on healthy lifestyles. Additionally, we're very pleased to be supporting such a worthy cause as the Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center."

Kawther Albader, an employee at Costa Coffee Kuwait, one of Alghanim Industries businesses, said, "I really enjoyed being a part of the RUNQ8 race with fellow colleagues from different functions of the company, and running for a noble cause like the rehabilitation of children. This was the first race I participated in, but it won't be my last."

It is worth mentioning the various health initiatives that Alghanim Industries is keen on supporting to promote a balanced and healthy lifestyle for its employees. The company organizes an annual medical campaign to support and raise awareness about breast cancer, as well as regular blood donation campaigns in association with the Kuwait Central Blood Bank.



## ASAR HAILS RUNQ8 MARATHON SUCCESSFUL SPONSORSHIP



**A**SAR - Al Ruyayeh and Partners (ASAR), Kuwait's leading and most prominent corporate law firm, and one of the region's top tier firms, successfully sponsored the RunQ8 Marathon for the second consecutive year. Organized by the Fawzia Sultan Rehabilitation Institute (FSRI), the 10km charity race was held on Saturday 28 November 2015 on the Gulf Road, and came under the theme of "Run for a Cause."

This year, the event gathered more than 2200 runners, where all the proceeds from the race were dedicated to the Non-Profit Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center (CERC). Families often struggle with financial resources when a child with disabilities and injuries needs

constant therapy at CERC. This is when FSRI extends its support in collaboration with local partners, to provide families without resources the assistance to care for their disabled children.

Commenting on ASAR's participation, Sam Habbas, Senior Partner at ASAR said: "ASAR's support and sponsorship of RUNQ8 is primarily aimed at raising public awareness of the challenges faced by children with physical or cognitive disabilities, as well as enabling and promoting healthy living conditions for these children. At ASAR, we take our corporate social responsibility very seriously, and we strongly believe that our well-being and that of the communities we operate within are inter-connected. ASAR's sup-

port of this effort is aligned with this corporate social responsibility commitment. ASAR is proud to have sponsored RUNQ8 for the second consecutive year and we will continue to assert our leadership in being a socially responsible firm. We aim at maintaining our support and sponsorship of community centric events in the future, and in particular those aimed at raising health, and healthy living, awareness in Kuwait."

It is worth mentioning that RUNQ8 is the largest children's charity event in Kuwait. The Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center provides comprehensive programs that include physical therapy, speech therapy, psychology and occupational therapy.

## YALWAH EXPO KICKS OFF

**Y**alwah Expo 2 for wedding and Events Kicked off on Saturday at Arraya Ballroom in Marriott Courtyard Hotel during the period from 28 to 30 November, 2015, to reveal the secrets of a successful wedding preparations.

The Expo is the first of its kind in Kuwait and it's for the second year in a row. Yalwah opened its doors to the marriage couples to give them a variety of services and gives visitors the opportunity to save time of hard work in order to set up a wedding and other occasions celebrations, and all this under one roof.

The 3 days Expo, has several sections, where the exhibition provides multiple and varied options include booking the wedding halls, as well as the wedding preparation in booking the flowers, photography and video, and food equipment options. Also it takes care of women starting from taking care of their beauty, hair, make-up, smile and

fitness, through jewelry and bride dresses, down to the preparations for lighting and sound, and the halls of celebrations and supplies rental, and even the organizers of the wedding.

The idea of the exhibition 'Yalwah' is the result of a passion shared by three young women ambitions collection in preparation for the celebrations and organizing weddings and other events all kinds, concerts, to be able to become acquainted with the details of the establishment of concerts in general and especially the wedding to pass then their experience and their relationship in this area to the services to submit them to assist those interested in setting up a special ceremony is unparalleled.

The Creators of Yalwah are Nour Al-Baghli, Aroob Al-Abdali, and Basma Al-Baghli, three young aspiring entrepreneurs who are passionate about weddings, celebrations, and all kinds of events. The Yalwah

girls aim to aspire generations of brides to endless limits.

Yalwah.com is Kuwait's first online wedding directory/blog of its kind related to the world of weddings, events, celebrations, and all the preparations related to it. The website is subdivided into two parts on the same page that is user friendly.

First of all, the directory consists of 16 categories of the best service providers in the wedding and event industry. Through these categories, users can view and select the services that suit their needs and tastes. Then the blog which is not only an entertaining but educational tool for sharing all kinds of topics regarding the world of weddings and celebrations. Two more services were added which completed Yalwah's holistic vision. It includes "Event Management" which covers the whole spectrum of different types of events providing clients with top notch logistics and organizational services to ensure quality and excellence. The second service "Bridal Consultations and VIP concierge services", which is one of its kind in Kuwait, completes our brides exclusive experience with Yalwah. This service takes brides in a fruitful journey in the completion of their bridal preparations for their big day. The icing on the cake is our fine VIP concierge services that cover the finest details, and fulfills all of brides unique requests. For her part, Aroob Al-Abdali said that the Yalwah Expo aims to provide distinctive model and services value to enhance the capacity for a comprehensive and integrated wedding with the participation of actors and corporate sponsors at the highest level of professionalism in the provision of various services ceremony, promising visitors to run the show that they meet offers and exclusive discounts.

Basma al-Baghli said that the journey of the unique experience that we have tried in Yalwah Blog will witness the success during the next three days, especially since the idea is great and unique.

On the other hand, Nour al-Baghli explained "We had to add two services to "Yalwah" for inclusiveness and achieve our desire, vision and our ambitions to offer the best services to our customers. The first service is about the organization and management of events and covering the organization of all kinds of events by providing some of the logistical and services to ensure quality." She added "The second service is providing a VIP consulting for the bride, which is the first of its kind in Kuwait, in order to meet all the bride's personal every detail requests, and thus will make the bride able to deal with Yalwah team directly to enjoy the full experience and comprehensive through special consultation which are specifically designed as special equipment for her special day."



Nour Al-Baghli, Basma Al-Baghli and Aroob Al-Abdali. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



## BURGAN BANK SPONSORS RUNQ8

**A**s part of its commitment and strategy towards Corporate Social Responsibility, Burgan Bank sponsored RunQ8, the 10 km charity race organized by the Fawzia Sultan Rehabilitation Institute (FSRI). RunQ8 took place on Saturday November 28th, 2015 on the Gulf Road, under the theme of "Run for a Cause."

The event, which drew large crowds and around 1,800 runners, was organized by FSRI to support its non-profit Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center (CERC), with all proceeds from RUNQ8 going towards helping children and families in need. Caring for a child with a physical and/or cognitive disability has significant emotional, physical and financial effects on a family; many families will even postpone seeking treatment for the child due to finan-

cial reasons. FSRI's goal is to provide much needed specialized treatment and support to affected children, regardless of their family's financial constraints.

Commenting on the bank's sponsorship, Bashir Jaber, Burgan Bank's Group Head & Investor Relations & Corporate Communications - General Manager said: "Our sponsorship of RUNQ8 comes as part of our corporate social responsibility strategy and in line with Burgan Bank's vision of supporting noble initiatives that help raise public awareness on children with a physical or cognitive disability, while encouraging healthy living to these children. Our aim is to work towards increasing health awareness between the communities in Kuwait as well as reinforcing the public to adopt healthy lifestyles."

Dr Elham Al-Hamdan, President and Medical Director at FSRI, emphasized the importance of community initiatives such as RunQ8 in order to raise awareness and help mobilize financial and moral support for important social causes. She added that only with the support of community and corporate sponsors, like Burgan Bank, is FSRI able to properly carry out its mission as a non-profit healthcare institution.

Burgan Bank's sponsorship falls under its corporate social responsibility umbrella, to support a cause that raises public awareness on children with a physical or cognitive disability, while encouraging healthy living for these children. The bank will continue sponsoring many more community events in the future, to help grow health awareness among the communities in Kuwait.



## AOU CONDUCTS WORKSHOP ON ITS WORKING ENVIRONMENT

**T**he Arab Open University (AOU) organized a workshop on "Analysis of AOU Working Environment", which was headed by Professor Moudi Al-Humoud, Rector of AOU, and in presence of Vice Rectors, Deans, Directors of AOU Branches and Directors of HQ Departments in addition to Professor Mahmood El-Gamal, Professor of Business Studies at Kuwait University and a member of the Performance Evaluation Committee of the AOU Strategic Plan. Al-Humoud started the workshop by a statement confirming the commitment of AOU towards the participation of all AOU leadership and top management in this workshop in order to set the fourth AOU strategic plan (2017-2022), which are jointly being worked on. AOU leadership and top management staff participated in this workshop to benefit from their experience and from the achieved proj-

ects and programs in the third strategic plan 2012 - 2016.

The AOU top management is looking forward to achieving the workshop objectives, primarily SWOT analysis of AOU and its internal and external environment at all its branches. One of the main workshop objectives is the evaluation of achievement of objectives of the current and fourth strategic plans, Al-Humoud said, adding AOU aims to translate its noble mission and objectives into reality and to be pioneering in building science and knowledge society as well as to keep up with the fast-evolving developments in the fields of science, research and services. During the workshop, all participants represented their department working environment at AOU. The workshop was concluded with a set of recommendations and suggestions in the light of discussion held on this issue.



## ASWAT 3 PERFORMANCE AT ABDUL HUSSAIN ABDUL RIDA THEATER

By Athoob Al-Shuaibi

LOYAC Academy of Performing Arts (LAPA) in collaboration with the French Institute of Kuwait set up their annual hybrid music and dance performance 'Aswat 3' in two consecutive days at Abdul Hussain Abdul Rida Theater in Salmiya. The show was divided into two scenes. The first was about man's conflict with nature and how he adapted to it and created a social environment. The second scene took the audience to the challenges and achievements of Kuwait today as a multi-cultural nation. The performance was attended by a large crowd that lively interacted with all the theatrical roles of the musical dance which merged the spirit of East and West. LOYAC Academy of Performing Arts (LAPA) is an academy that empowers the talented youth of Kuwait to develop their skills and nurture their passion through programs in the fields of theater, dance and music.



## GUST PARTICIPATES IN P2P: CHALLENGING EXTREMISM INITIATIVE

Gulf University for Science and Technology (GUST) is one of 45 schools worldwide participating in the Peer to Peer (P2P): Challenging Extremism initiative. The program, sponsored by the US Department of State, and facilitated by EdVenture, an organization dedicated to developing innovative industry-education partnership programs, tasks student teams to create digital media content that empowers networks of youth to counter the social media presence and effectiveness of violent extremists' online messaging.

This program is a pathway for young people, social networks, and engaged communi-

ties to help counter violent extremist messaging and recruitment. By enlisting tech-savvy, digitally aware students from throughout the world to create and implement culturally relevant and credible digital campaigns that engage civic minded university students and hopefully create progress with social impact.

As part of the initiative, undergraduate students at GUST have formed a student-run agency to develop and implement a campaign aiming to build among Kuwait's university students the willingness to speak openly against extremist violence on social media channels. The communication strategy devised by GUST students is dubbed "Raise Your Words", and is

designed to empower the silent majority, while emphasizing notions including solidarity with victims, humanitarian values, and raising awareness of the threats from violent extremism.

Dr Fahad Al-Sumait, Head of the Mass Communications and Media Department at GUST, said, "Mobilizing against hate and empowering the silent majority to come together to voice their disapproval of what is going on in the world, in an organized and measured way, is a movement we hope will grow and be the catalyst of change we desperately need right now".

Results of a survey conducted to support

GUST's Team in the global P2P campaign shows that 62% of Kuwaitis college students believe that violent extremism can affect their life; 30.5% are high or very concerned about this issue, while only 22% feel totally free to discuss the topic with their friends. Furthermore, 61% agree that open public discussion on social media is important in countering violent extremism.

The campaign mounted by the students was multifaceted. Two Skype conferences with leading experts on the Middle East were organized. One with Dr F Gregory Gause III from Texas A&M University, and one with Hugh Naylor, the Middle East Editor for the

Washington Post. The students also organized a fun afternoon whereby well-known graffiti artist, "Monstariam", was invited to create a mural on the subject, and GUST's very own DJ TRQ spun tracks from a set list specifically put together for the occasion.

The top three participating schools will be invited to Washington, D.C. in January 2016 to present their research, plan, and results to senior government officials and industry leaders at the US Department of State, to determine the P2P: Challenging Extremism winner. The top team will receive a scholarship prize of \$5,000, followed by \$3,000 for second place, and \$1,000 for third.



## AZZAD CELEBRATES 14 YEARS AS CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF DISTRIBUTOR

Azzad Trading Group Company is one of the leading food stuff companies, specialized in the distribution of food in the local market and owns several reputable international brands and, the company is supplying food and it is characterized by the diversity of its customers between Kuwait-Five Stars hotels, and the majority of Luxury upscale

restaurants since more than twenty years.

Azzad Trading Group is the authorized distributor for The Certified Angus Beef (CAB) since fourteen years and during the previous years, the brand has grown to become the most important and largest meat of oxen, a global program to provide the best and most delicious varieties of beef quality.

Official reports issued by the American company (CAB) that Azzad Trading Group company is the largest distributor in the Middle East and the Gulf countries, as they achieved the highest sales over the past years.

On this occasion, Azzad Trading group company set up in cooperation with the American company training course at the Terrace Grill

Steak House at J W Marriott Hotel on Tuesday, November 17, 2015 included a presentation by the Executive chef of American meat company explaining to the presence of a selected group of head chefs in First Class hotels where comprised the presentation of the latest ways and methods of cooking meat and various advantages of American meat cutters.

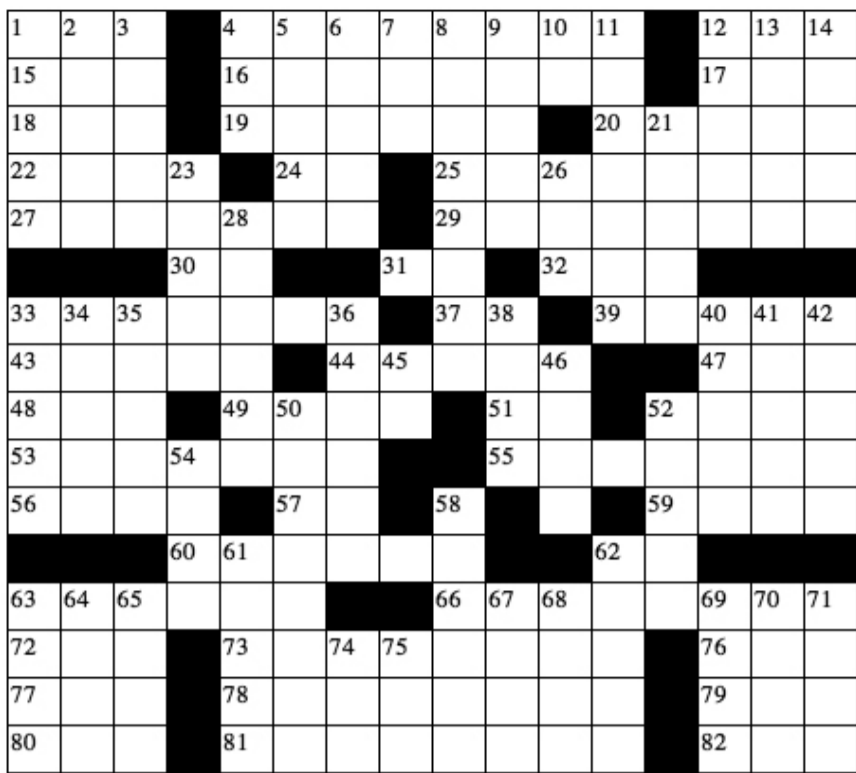
As well as set up a training course at Salhiya Hall at Marriott Hotel for the Sales Team of Azzad Group specialists from the US company to introduce the most important advantages of meat compared to other meats available in the market, as the training course included a focus on the development of sales skills and marketing with respect to the American meat (CAB).







CROSSWORD 1095



ACROSS

1. (usually followed by 'of') Released from something onerous (especially an obligation or duty).
4. A clap of the hands to indicate approval.
12. The airforce of Great Britain.
15. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
16. The stage of meiosis or mitosis when chromosomes move toward opposite ends of the nuclear spindle.
17. An extension at the end and at right angles to the main building.
18. A vessel (usually cylindrical) with a wide mouth and without handles.
19. An unpredictable outcome that is unfortunate.
20. The capital and largest city of Bangladesh.
22. A Kwa language spoken in Ghana and the Ivory Coast.
24. Informal terms for a mother.
25. Undifferentiated tissue from which new cells are formed, as at the tip of a stem or root.
27. (optics) Having two foci.
29. (of plants) Having tufts of soft woolly hairs.
30. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
31. A hard brittle blue-white multivalent metallic element.
32. The Tibeto-Burman language spoken in the Dali region of Yunnan.
33. One of a series of rounded teeth formed by curves along an edge (as the edge of a leaf or piece of cloth etc.).
37. A mouth or mouthlike opening.
39. A discrete unit of living matter.
43. The univalent unsaturated organic radical C3H5.
44. 100 sente equal 1 loti.
47. Perennial herb of East India to Polynesia and Australia cultivated for its large edible root yielding Otaheite arrowroot starch.
48. Japanese ornamental tree with fragrant white or pink blossoms and small yellow fruits.
49. Someone who copies the words or behavior of another.
51. Half the width of an em.
53. Tall feather palm of northern Brazil with hard-shelled nuts yielding valuable oil and a kind of vegetable ivory.
55. An artificial language.
56. Lacking sufficient water or rainfall.
57. A doctor's degree in optometry.
59. (Babylonian) God of wisdom and agriculture and patron of scribes and schools.
60. A unit of weight used in some Spanish speaking countries.
63. Ground snakes.
66. Uneaten and saved for eating later.
72. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
73. Of or relating to or characteristic of Alsace or its inhabitants.
76. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
77. A spacecraft that carries astronauts from the command module to the surface of the moon and back.
78. Italian painter and sculptor and engineer and scientist and architect.
79. System of measurement based on centimeters and grams and seconds.
80. A federal agency established to regulate

the release of new foods and health-related products.  
81. A great raja.  
82. Anterior pituitary hormone that stimulates the function of the thyroid gland.

DOWN

1. The seventh month of the Moslem calendar.
2. Of or relating to Iraq or its people or culture.
3. A unit of elastance equal to the reciprocal of a farad.
4. Thigh of a hog (usually smoked).
5. (Jungian psychology) The inner self (not the external persona) that is in touch with the unconscious.
6. Of or in or relating to the nose.
7. A doctor's degree in preventive medicine.
8. Medieval plate armor to protect a horse's head.
9. Lap at the front of a coat.
10. A very poisonous metallic element that has three allotropic forms.
11. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
12. Right-hand page.
13. Elk or moose.
14. The process of combustion of inflammable materials producing heat and light and (often) smoke.
21. (computer science) American Standard Code for Information Interchange.
23. In a noble manner.
26. Take something away by force or without the consent of the owner.
28. Greek coloratura soprano (born in the United States) known for her dramatic intensity in operatic roles (1923-1977).
34. Clear to the mind.
35. (law) A defense by an accused person purporting to show that he or she could not have committed the crime in question.
36. (often used in combination) Not genuine but having the appearance of.
38. (linguistics) The form of a word after all affixes are removed.
40. A drama set to music.
41. (Sumerian and Babylonian) A solar deity.
42. About three feet long exclusive of tail.
45. A trivalent metallic element of the rare earth group.
46. An organic compound that contains a hydroxyl group bonded to a carbon atom which in turn is doubly bonded to another carbon atom.
50. Widely distributed genus of herbs or shrubs with glandular compound leaves and spicate or racemose purple or white flowers.
52. The capital and largest city of Yemen.
54. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
58. A salt used especially in baking powder.
61. A domain in which something is dominant.
62. A seaport in northwestern Italy.
64. In bed.
65. A Tibetan or Mongolian priest of Lamaism.
67. A genus of Mustelidae.
68. A pilgrimage to Mecca.
69. Consideration in dealing with others and avoiding giving offence.
70. Oval reproductive body of a fowl (especially a hen) used as food.
71. Distinctive and stylish elegance.
74. The syllable naming the fifth (dominant) note of any musical scale in solmization.
75. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You're like a little kid today, mischievously searching for your next round of fun and games. You yearn to display affection to someone you love while the Moon brightens your 5th House of Play. Nevertheless, you may think that everything will remain perfect if you continue to avoid the truth. Your current state of grace won't last forever, so face the facts while your creative powers are operating at their optimum. Maturity is knowing when childish behavior is acceptable and when it's not.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Your visionary approach to your work can gain you bonus points from your superiors today. Although your boss might hold you in high regard now, it's challenging to grasp the real intentions behind your lofty ideas. Don't add noise to the existing confusion by letting too many words take the punch out of your message. The more you talk, the greater the possibility of contradicting yourself. Let your brilliant actions make the best impression.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Although your schedule seems hectic today while the lively Leo Moon flies through your 3rd House of Distractions, you still can float through the day without feeling much stress. Your ability to manifest your dreams is so strong now that just like Cinderella, you can turn a pumpkin into a beautiful carriage in your mind. In fact, very little will slow you down, but your overall perspective may be a bit warped. Don't be afraid of your fantasies; they have the power to propel you into your perfect future.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may believe you have established an easy equilibrium in your family life, but the emotional complexity can catch you off guard today. Unfortunately, your immediate reaction to an unexpected turn of events could be more shocking than whatever triggered your outburst. Count to ten and take plenty of deep breathes to regain your center. Think twice before letting a rush of adrenaline hijack your future. No drama, no regret.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

You might feel as if your life is on the launch pad today. Thankfully, your stamina is strong as karmic Saturn and the radiant Sun trine the Moon in your 1st House of Self this morning. The power is yours, but your current burst of self-confidence might come and go without leaving a trace unless you put your positive attitude to work. Just watch out for your blind spot; ignoring the facts could cause a delay in liftoff. Fortunately, you can reach the stars if you take the time to do your due diligence first.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Sometimes you do your best work behind the curtains, and the Moon's presence in your 12th House of Secrets pushes you even deeper into your inner world now. Your reaction to someone's non-committal behavior can be so visceral today that you can't put it into words. Unfortunately, bottled-up feelings have negative consequences, so fight against your tendency to withdraw emotionally. Tell others what you're experiencing as kindly as possible, and then let the chips fall where they may.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your need to strengthen your social network takes precedence these days. In fact, you could be so enthusiastic to connect with others now that you book personal activities when you should be working. Nevertheless, you might just be able to get away with an extended coffee break or an extra long lunch. Thankfully, kicking back with your friends may be very inspirational today, setting the stage for an efficient workday tomorrow when you can cheerfully make up for lost time.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You're operating as if you possess superpowers today, enabling you to accomplish more than you thought possible while the proud Leo Moon is strutting her stuff in your 10th House of Career. You're at the top of your professional game now, but you still need to convince yourself that it's acceptable to work for your own success rather than just doing as you're told. Instead of acquiescing to the expectations of others, fight to make your dreams come true.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Socializing with a group of coworkers or relaxing with a few friends might be the most healing thing you can do for yourself today. You may have big career plans in mind but driving toward your goals is frustrating if you're not making as much progress as you desire. However, it's inadvisable to just let go of your aspirations, even if they take additional time to materialize. Ironically, applying less gas now could be the catalyst that reignites your forward movement.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You could be quite unrealistic about your long-term goals because three planets congregating in your 12th House of Spirituality take your mind off your work. Although you can see far off into the distance, it's still challenging to separate your fantasies from what's real today. Give yourself sufficient time to deliver on your current promises. However, you won't be happy if you just fritter away the day while daydreaming about your future. No matter how it appears in the present moment, taking direct action now is your key to satisfaction.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

You may be involved in a relationship that pulls you into new territory while planets harmonize with the playful Leo Moon in your 7th House of Companions. Unfortunately, it's difficult to know how pushy you need to be in order to get the conversational ball rolling today. On the other hand, you might choose to withdraw if someone else's aggressive behavior makes you uncomfortable now. Ultimately, following your intuition is your smartest strategy when it comes to the game of love.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

Holding your cards close to your chest sounds like a great plan today, but getting caught up in office politics or sucked into someone else's melodrama is all too likely. Your hypersensitivity is on high alert now, making you more susceptible to the emotional ploys of others than you realize. Thankfully, it's possible to be sympathetic without losing your objectivity. One way to reestablish balance is to throw yourself into your work today so there's not much time left over for wandering into dangerous territory.

Wordsearch Puzzle

LAS VEGAS WORD SEARCH PUZZLE



- |                |               |              |                 |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| BELLAGIO       | GOLDEN NUGGET | SIN CITY     | TREASURE ISLAND |
| BLACKJACK      | HOOVER DAM    | SLOT MACHINE | TROPICANA       |
| CAESARS PALACE | MANDALAY BAY  | STRATOSPHERE | VEGAS VIC       |
| EXCALIBUR      | MGM GRAND     | THE MIRAGE   | VENETIAN        |
| FREMONT STREET | ROULETTE      | THE STRIP    | WEDDING CHAPEL  |

Yesterday's Solution

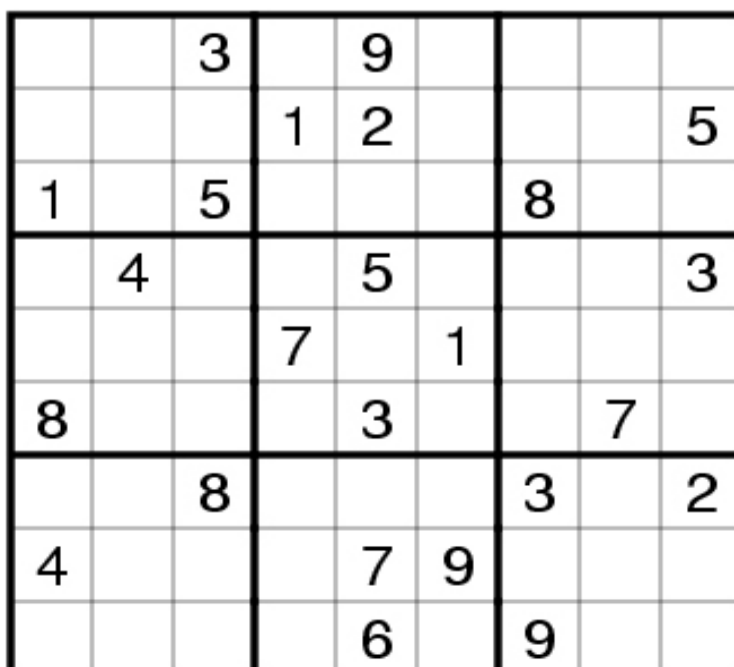
SOLUTION TO STEPHEN KING BOOKS PUZZLE



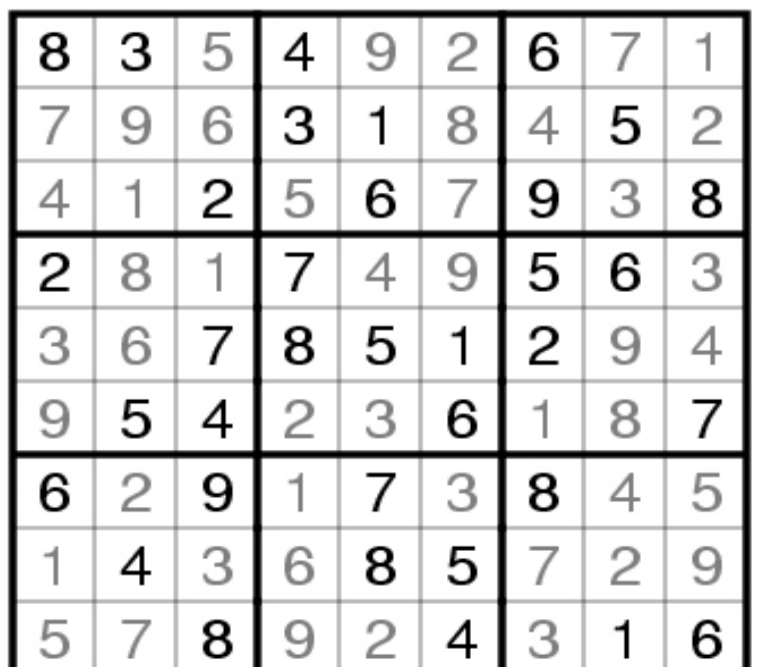
Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution







This photo provided by courtesy of California Closets shows the Chef Pantry.—AP photos



In this photo provided by Crown Point Cabinetry, ample counter space and open shelving with decorative brackets create a functional corner pantry with a place for everything.

# 'Super Pantries' frequent many kitchen wish lists

Teresa Keller used to joke that she was pantry-challenged. She often relied on a flashlight to search the deep, dark cupboard that held her canned goods and other food items. When she and her husband, Dave, decided to build a home in Sunbury, Ohio, a proper pantry was a priority. "I brought it up to the builder," said Teresa Keller, who moved into the new house in October. "I told them I've got to have this."

The Kellers' new "super pantry" is a walk-in, with plenty of quality shelving to store drinks, trash bags and other household goods bought in bulk. One shelf is dedicated to snacks for the grandchildren. A small door connects it to the garage, so groceries can be unloaded easily. "At a certain price point, it's what people are expecting - more storage," said Ed Snodgrass, vice president of P&D Builders in Delaware, Ohio, which built the Kellers' house.

Many new homeowners are asking for larger pantries, said Kermit Baker, chief economist for the American Institute of Architects in Washington, DC. In a recent survey by the group, 43 percent of residential architects reported that customers placed an increased emphasis on pantry

space. Besides storing food, some of the newer, bigger pantries offer storage for china and serving pieces that are used just a few times a year. Some include spaces for toasting bread, brewing coffee and chilling wine. Others have spots for laptops, or sinks for prepping food and washing pets.

Open floor plans, building costs and big-box stores, where people buy cases of water and months' worth of paper towels, are driving the trend, industry experts said. "The 'super' pantry is a backlash to the open floor plan," said Amy Beth Cupp Drago, an interior designer who works in New York City and Litchfield County, Connecticut. "People have been living in the open concept house long enough now to know that if the kitchen is messy, the whole place feels messy." Pantries allow them to stow kitchen items out of sight. Homeowners no longer feel the need to leave their high-end mixers and coffee makers on the counter, added Bob Vila, the longtime home-improvement TV show host who now dispenses advice at [www.bobvila.com](http://www.bobvila.com).

"There was a generation for whom all of these things

were brand new luxuries and they wanted to show them off," he said. Now the emphasis is on decluttering. Builder Michael Menghini gets more and more requests for electrical outlets in pantries. "People want to leave their appliances out, they just don't want to leave them on their counters," said Menghini, president of Covenant Custom Homes in Overland Park, Kansas.

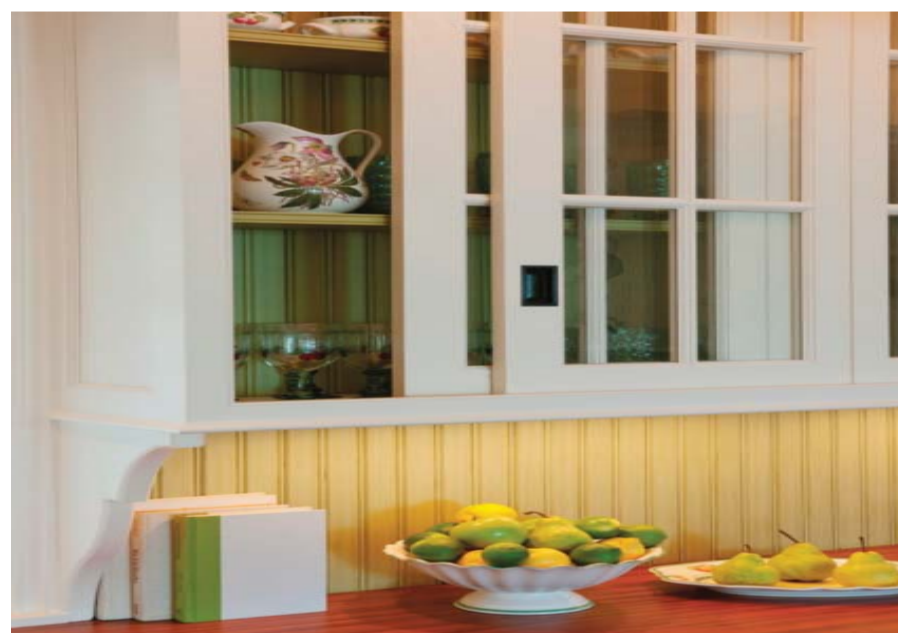
Storing appliances, large pots and serving pieces in a walk-in pantry also saves money, Vila said. It's cheaper to install open shelving in a pantry than to build more kitchen cabinets, which require counter tops and hardware. "I have been a booster of the concept of pantries for as long as I can remember," he said. "It minimizes the amount of money spent on kitchen cabinets." In older homes, finding space for pantries can be difficult. Many layouts will not accommodate them. One idea is to create space by installing kitchen cabinets that stretch all the way to the ceiling, Vila said. Even if they are hard to reach, they can hold things you don't use regularly. Another option: Add cupboards in the garage for appliances and non-food items.—AP



This photo provided by courtesy of California Closets shows the Retro Pantry.



This photo provided by courtesy of California Closets shows the Modern Pantry.



In this photo provided by Crown Point Cabinetry, custom details like sliding doors, elegant brackets and a beadboard back create a sophisticated pantry.



This photo provided by courtesy of transformhome.com shows a pantry.

## Doyenne of New Orleans dining scene turns 90

She dropped out of secretarial school and taught herself the restaurant business, mentored chefs who put Louisiana cooking on the culinary map, is the matriarch of a family that owns nearly 20 restaurants and is credited with creating nouvelle Creole cuisine. But Ella Brennan, who turns 90 on Friday, didn't do all that by cooking. When she started, she said Nov 17, "I had never cooked in my life." "She still hasn't," said her sister, Dottie Brennan. Her family will celebrate at the home she shares with sister Dottie Brennan.

Commander's Palace and two other restaurants run by Brennan's daughter and niece have marked the month with special menus. At Commander's Palace, one of the city's most illustrious restaurants, there's a \$90 tasting menu of "Ella's Favorites" - six dishes and two drinks. Through her stewardship of Commander's Palace and her mentorship of chefs across the city, Brennan has become one of the driving forces in the city's culinary scene.

It was at Commander's Palace, the bright blue-and-white restaurant in the Uptown neighborhood, that Brennan and her late brother, Dick, hired such legends as Paul Prudhomme and Emeril Lagasse, way before they were international celebrities. She's "the best talent scout," said John T. Edge of the University of Mississippi's Southern Foodways Alliance, which studies and documents what it describes as the South's diverse food cultures. "She's identified the young talent, often-times making unconventional choices that end up having national impact and shaping our idea of American cuisine."

Prudhomme was one such unconventional choice. The Cajun, who died in October, didn't have formal culinary education when she hired him as the first American chef to head a major New Orleans restaurant, shortly after she took over Commander's Palace. Brennan is also known for mentoring chefs in her kitchen and in others around the city. John Besh never worked for her. But she would come to restaurants where he worked, order champagne and call him to her table to talk.

"She truly wanted to know that we were all growing and that this evolution would continue," he said. Once he opened his own restaurant, she offered contacts with suppliers and

suggestions to promote himself, his restaurants and the city, Besh said. At Commander's Palace, Brennan held weekly "foodie meetings" to discuss any and all aspects of food. She took family and other staffers on trips to learn from restaurants and stores in New York and abroad. And she'd write notes - sometimes blunt - of instruction.

Lagasse said one note he was given read: "When you come to work tomorrow, do me a favor and leave your ego at home." Brennan started in the restaurant business in high school, working for her oldest brother, Owen E. Brennan - first at the Old Absinthe House bar and then the Vieux Carre restaurant -

the predecessor to Brennan's. After high school she took some secretarial courses but soon left to work full-time for her brother. "I kept telling him his restaurant stinks," with food that couldn't compare to their mother's cooking, she said.

Eventually her brother challenged her to do better, and she took over much of the work. Brennan read everything she could find. She talked with vendors of seafood, meat, produce and wine, and with the restaurant's cooks. Her brother sent her around the country and abroad to learn from other restaurateurs.—AP



In this photo, Ella Brennan, center, laughs as she poses for a photo with daughter Ti Adelaide Martin, right, Lally Brennan, sister Dottie Brennan, second left, and Commander's Palace executive chef Tory McPhail, left, at her home adjacent to the restaurant in New Orleans.—AP

## Radcliffe is jealous of Redmayne's 'Fantastic Beasts' costume

Like many, former "Harry Potter" star Daniel Radcliffe saw the photos of Eddie Redmayne as Newt Scamander in "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them," and he's got some serious costume envy. Radcliffe commented on Redmayne's attire in an interview with NME this week, lamenting his boy wizard wardrobe. "Oh, Eddie, in your brilliant costume," Radcliffe joked. "I got jeans and a zip top for 10 years and you've got a great coat already?"

Radcliffe starred as the titular wizard in the massively lucrative "Harry Potter" franchise from 2001 to its end in 2011. "Harry Potter" spinoff "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them" follows "The Theory of Everything" Oscar winner Redmayne's magizoologist Newt Scamander in 1920s New York. Author JK Rowling is making her feature screenwriting debut on the film, with David Yates, who helmed several of the last "Harry Potter" installments, directing. The weirdest part for Radcliffe and the "Harry Potter" legacy, though, isn't the Warner Bros spinoff-it's the upcoming stage production "Harry Potter and the Cursed Child."

"It's weird," he said of seeing someone else play Potter. "But I'm happy for it to go on without me. I've no ownership of it." "Now that I know [Harry's in it] I actually really want to see it," he went on. "It would be a mental thing to try and see it with lots of very excited Harry Potter fans. But I kind of would like to know what happens now." "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them" hits theaters Nov 18, 2016. "Harry Potter and the Cursed Child" will start playing in London in July, 2016.—Reuters



Kuwait Fashion Week



Photo shows the organizers of the event, (center) Rabab Mouhamad founder and Fashion consultant of Kuwait Fashion Week, (right) Nasser Al-Sidani, owner of Merrill Lynch company and (left) Ali Haiydar, owner of Auguri Center and podium designer are shown on stage. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayat and Joseph Shagra

# Elegance, style and creativity



History was written on November 23, 2015 when Kuwait Fashion Week was inaugurated under the patronage of Sheikha Bashayer Nayef Jaber Al-Sabah and Sponsored by Merrill Lynch International. The founder and concept brain behind this Premier sensation is Rabab Hamadi, a fashion consultant evangelist who pulled off in spite of local hurdles and pain stricken challenges, the unbelievable, Kuwait's very own Fashion Week.

This is a nod of recognition and admiration to the courageous women of the Gulf and Rabab being one of these aspiring profiles has worked over 15 years in the biggest fashion houses of Kuwait and Beirut.

Her dream was to achieve a quantum leap in Kuwait's fashion world. Motivated by this dream, the idea to establish a fashion week in Kuwait on par with the International fashion weeks finally materialised.

The event sponsors were: Merrill Lynch International, Kuwait Airways, Salon Brigitte, Kuwait Times, Diet Care, Wrap It, Zen Jewellery, Al-Randi Record Company, Auguri Center for Ali Haidar, Al-Abdul Jaleel Travel Agency, El-Joun Medical Center and Misk Flowers Perfume.

Guests of honour: Sheikha Bashayer Nayef Jaber Al-Sabah, actress Elham Al-Fadala, owner of Jumeirah Hotels Kuwait, Khawla Moubarak Al-Hasawi and many more.

International Media: Fashion One TV, Fashion 4K TV, Al Arabiya TV, RTL TV from Benelux, LUXE TV, MBC, LBC, Al Arabiya TV, ELLE Magazine Scandinavia, PLAZA Magazine, FEMME Magazine, Mondanité Magazine, AL Sharkiah Magazine, Precious 7 Magazine from New York, Gaby Lteif from Radio Monte Carlo Paris, Pashion Magazine, Arab Week, CPP The Luxury of Business, Spirit and Flesh Magazine from New York, and the stylist of Her Majesty Queen Silvia of Sweden.

The international media were beyond impressed by the artistic and daring innovations streaming the catwalk. The comments from the press were that the haute couture outfits were "modern, elegant, fresh and perfect for the red carpet in LA, New York and Monte Carlo".

The geniuses that showcased at KFW for three consecutive days are: Gossaci (Alaa Saad El-Deen), TM Fashion Group (Tareq Ediz), Atelier Lab, (Nizar Romani), and Atelier Lioness (Elie Abou Mrad, Fadi Seklawi, Patrik Basil), Saled Qubaisi, Haya Al-Bughali, Anfal Al-Saleh, Juliette N White) Safi Rabah, Hair and make-up was the first day by Ilham Shalabi and Salons Brigitte showcased the latest beauty trends for hair and make-up and also beatified the models the second day of the event.

The Models were flown in from Paris and to keep them healthy and energised they were delivered daily Diet Care lunch boxes. The brand Diet Care is the leading certified health care provider for nutritional food in Kuwait and is awarded as Kuwait's Super brand.

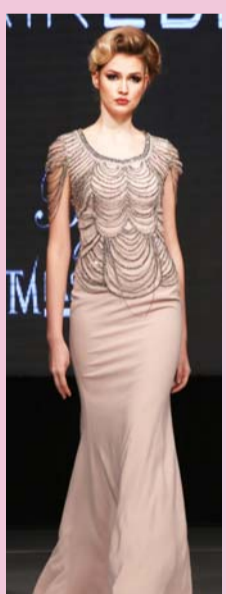


Photo shows Turkish designer Tareq Ediz by TM Fashion Group showcases his designs on the first night at Kuwait Fashion week.

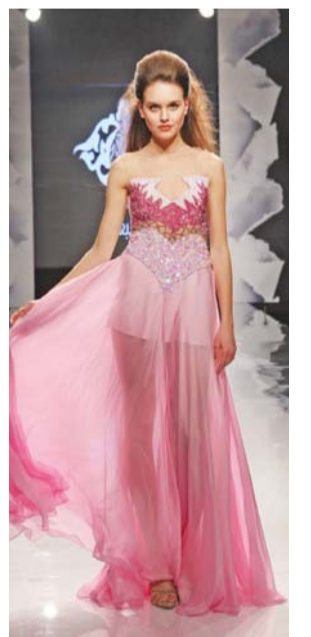




Lebanese designers Elie Abou Mrad, Patrik Basil and Fadi Seklawi for Atelier Lioness greets the audience on stage.

# Kuwait FASHION Week

Models showcase designs for Atelier Lioness made by Lebanese designers, Elie Abou Mrad, Fadi Seklawi and Patrik Basil.



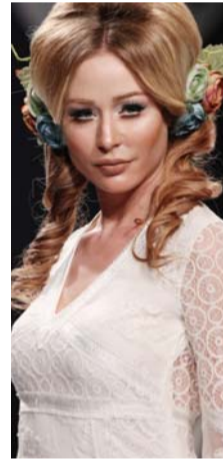
Models show designs for Lebanese designer Saied Qubaisi by TM Fashion Group.

Models showcase creations for Kuwaiti designer Haya Al-Bughali on stage.

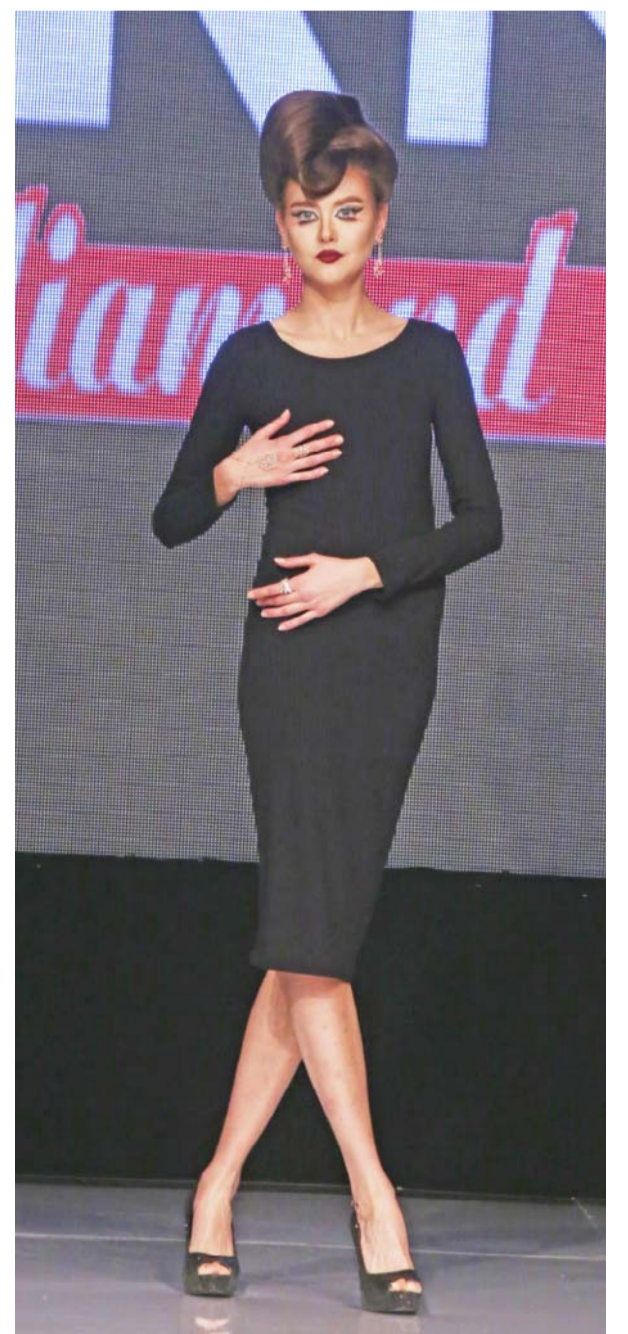
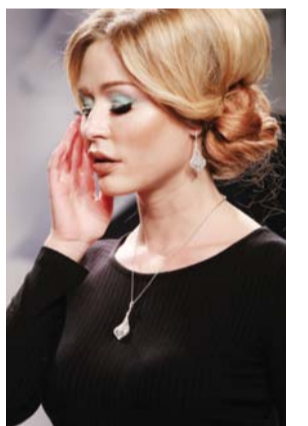
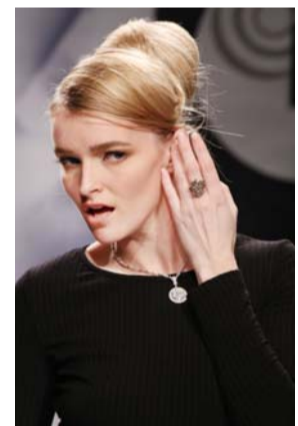
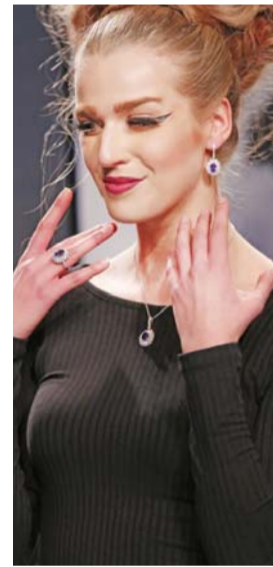


Makeup and hair artist Brigitte Khoury greets the audience on stage.

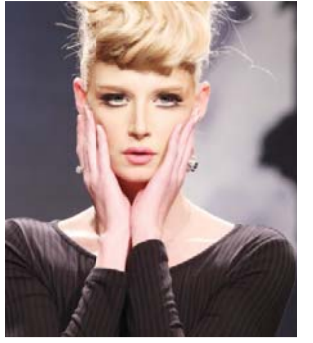
K u w a i t FASHION Week



Kuwaiti designer Rasha Al-Wazan greets the audience on stage.



Models showcase diamond Jewelry for ZEN Diamond.



People dance in front of a 12-meter-high Christmas tree constructed of 121 old windows that come from local old houses as it is illuminated in Rakvere, Eastern Estonia yesterday.—AFP

## Iran orchestra barred over women musicians

A high-profile performance in Iran by the Tehran Symphony Orchestra was cancelled at the last minute because it was due to feature female musicians, its furious conductor said yesterday. Ali Rahbari said he was told 15 minutes before the orchestra was scheduled to play at a major sporting event that they could not. "The chairs were laid out and everything looked fine," he said, referring to the World Wrestling Clubs Cup competition which opened in the Iranian capital on Thursday. "But before performing the national anthem, all of a sudden they announced women cannot play on stage."

Neither Rahbari or the ISNA news agency, which reported his comments, detailed who "they" were. "I was offended and said it was impossible for me to accept such an insult," Rahbari added. "We either play all together or we leave". Efforts to resolve the issue failed. "It's absolutely impossible for women to play musical instruments on stage," Rahbari quoted organizers of the ceremony as saying. Banned from singing solo in public since the Islamic revolution of 1979, female Iranian musicians have repeatedly complained of having been stopped from performing, particularly outside Tehran.

But Thursday's refusal, according to ISNA, was the first time a performance by the Symphony Orchestra, one of Iran's oldest, had been cancelled because of its female members. "They invited us themselves and yet they disrespected us," Rahbari said. "Why shouldn't they be allowed to perform the national anthem of their country?" The issue of music in public has resurfaced in

the past year with artists repeatedly complaining they have been stopped from performing at short notice despite having official authorization. Iran's President Hassan Rouhani, a moderate elected in 2013, has said that as long as artists and musicians have a permit from the culture ministry then no one should stop them from working.

But many concerts have been cancelled regardless with little explanation. Religious leaders have spoken out against them and conservatives claim music can "excite and cause deviation" among the country's youth. Since 1979, state television has rarely shown musical instruments on screen. Recent concert cancellations have been viewed by some Iranians as a tactic used by the country's ultraconservative establishment to push back against Rouhani's government. Rouhani has urged moderation and he was the political driving force behind a July deal with six world powers, led by the United States, on Iran's nuclear program.

But that agreement was followed by warnings from Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei that the country must protect itself against American "infiltration". At the wrestling competition at Tehran's Azadi stadium, two Iranian clubs took first and third place. The Titan Mercury Wrestling Club from the United States, who entered the stadium with an Iranian man carrying the US flag, came second.—AFP



A file picture taken on March 16, 2015 shows Iranian conductor Ali Rahbari (center) and the Tehran Symphony Orchestra greeted by the audience after performing at the Vahdat Hall in Tehran.—AFP

## Forger claims Da Vinci masterpiece is supermarket checkout girl

One of Britain's most notorious art forgers has claimed responsibility for what is believed to be a Leonardo Da Vinci masterpiece, saying it was inspired by a supermarket checkout girl, the Sunday Times reported. Experts agree that Da Vinci created "La Bella Principessa" in the 15th century, but Shaun Greenhalgh, who has spent time in jail for art forgery, claims he made the chalk and ink drawing when he worked at a supermarket in Bolton, northern England.

"I drew this picture in 1978 when I worked at the Co-op (supermarket)," wrote Greenhalgh in new book "A Forger's Tale," extracts of which appeared in the Sunday Times. "The 'sitter' was based on a girl called Sally who worked on the checkouts," he added. "Despite her humble position, she was a bossy little bugger and very self-important." Experts

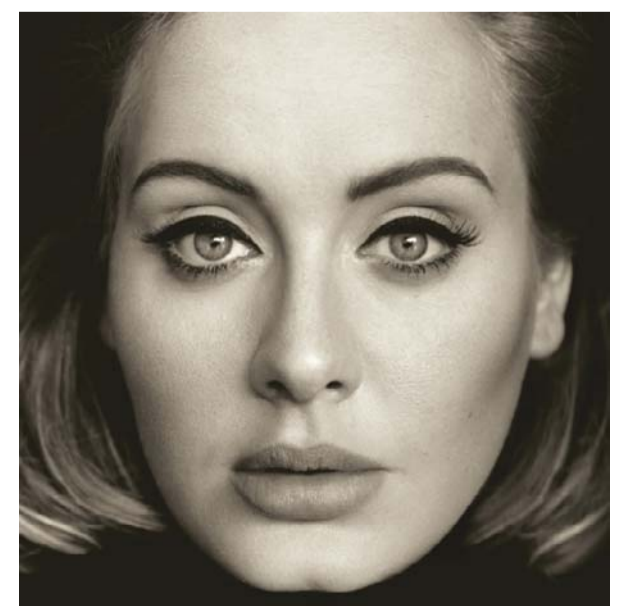
concluded in 2008 that the profile of a blonde-haired woman was a "remarkable drawing by Leonardo," and it has since been exhibited as a da Vinci in Italy and valued at £100 million (\$150 million, 142 million euros).

Greenhalgh, who was arrested in 2006 and jailed for four years and eight months, claims he used an 1587 council document for the canvas and schooldesk lid as the backing. While executing the artwork, he turned it 90 degrees clockwise to mimic da Vinci's left-handed style, he wrote. However, a laboratory recently released evidence suggesting the chalk pigment was at least 250 years old. Greenhalgh claimed he made his own pigments from organic materials of an appropriate age, digging up iron-rich clay.—AFP

## Adele smashes records with 3.38 mln

British singer Adele's new album sold a record 3.38 million US copies in its first full week, Nielsen Music said, becoming the biggest-selling album of 2015 in an astonishing feat for an era when artists rarely top 1 million. In just seven days on sale, "25", the first album in four years by the Grammy-winning singer, easily outsold the entire year's figures for country-pop superstar Taylor Swift's hit album "1989", according to official figures released by Nielsen on Saturday. Swift's album has sold some 1.76 million US copies in 2015. The figures for "25" were the biggest single-week sales tally for an album since Nielsen began tracking sales in 1991. The first week numbers for "25" put the sultry singer at the head of an elite club of artists, including Britney Spears, Whitney Houston, Eminem and Lady Gaga, whose albums have debuted with more than 1 million US copies. Last week, it took just four days for the album to break the 15 year-old first-week sales record held by NSync's 2000 album "No Strings Attached." "25" also broke records in Canada and Britain, where its 800,307 copies sold were more than the last 19 No. 1 albums in Britain combined, the Official Charts Company said last week. Worldwide figures were not available.

The sales numbers reflect the wide appeal of the emotional and personal ballads by the 27-year-old British singer, as well as the decision by her independent record company XL Recordings not to make the album available for streaming services including Spotify, Apple Music, Deezer and Google Play. Fans were therefore obliged to pay for the physical CD or to download it from services like iTunes. However, it is available on US online radio service Pandora although fans cannot choose what tracks or times they can listen. Adele last week announced a stadium tour of Britain, Ireland and continental Europe, starting in February 2016. No plans have yet been announced for North America or Asia.—Reuters



This CD cover image released by Columbia Records shows, '25', the latest release by Adele.—AP