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SUBSCRIPTION

Kuwait Times



THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

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King rejects questioning Saudi role as hajj organizer



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Poverty expert Angus Deaton wins Nobel Economics Prize



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PREMIER INAUGURATES NEW AL-RAZI HOSPITAL

DR OBAIDI SAYS OPENING MARKS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES



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Low Tide 06:22 & 18:35

STOP MOANING

conspiracy theories



By Badrya Darwish

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Hi guys. I haven't written for some time. Sorry, but I'm fatigued because I'm not writing. I'm fatigued with the news and that's why I'm not writing. All that I see around me is killing, corruption, hypocrisy and irresponsibility. And it's killing me. I'm talking about the whole Middle East, as if people are walking dead. They have no more feelings, no more passion. If you try to talk to them, it's like talking to a wall; talking to someone who has come out of a grave with no feelings and no responsibility.

Daesh is thriving here and there. No government can stop it. Either they are baking people or grilling or shooting or cutting off heads or destroying heritage or selling or raping women and children. And all of us are silent - it has become regular news. Or Syrian and Iraqi refugees sinking in the seas and jumping over walls and barriers in Europe to reach a safe haven, chased by security forces and tripped by camera-women.

So what can I write about? Even at home, open the papers and thank God it's not war, and though we had a horrific bombing, I pray to God it will never be repeated. But nowadays, all what we read about is the bad economy and the deficit and the scaremongering that Kuwait is soon going to become a poor nation. As if Kuwait has no more oil and is finished, past tense. And we are getting donations from the United Nations.

Please guys, media people, stop it! This is not encouraging for the local market or investors or businesspeople. It's very demoralizing for middle class businessmen and the majority of us. If someone plans to build a house, he will reconsider: Why should I renovate my house when we are approaching very bad days - let me save my money. This comes on many levels. Say I want to buy a new car, but then I read the papers and think I better save the pennies I have. I talk to my friends and they are all in the same mood.

How can the country prosper, for God's sake, when all we hear is financial gloom and doom? Are we really that poor and I didn't know about it and all of a sudden we are struck by poverty this year? OK, we had a bad year of oil prices going down. But it's only been a year. So stop moaning. This doesn't help the country or the nation.



KUWAIT: HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah (center) cuts the ceremonial ribbon as Health Minister Dr Ali Al-Obaidi (right) looks on during the inauguration of the new Al-Razi Hospital yesterday. (Inset) Dr Obaidi speaks during the opening. —Photos by KUNA and Joseph Shagra

KUWAIT: HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah yesterday inaugurated the new Al-Razi Hospital in the specialized health Al-Sabah area. The ceremony was attended by a number of sheikhs, ministers and high ranking state officials from the PM's diwan and the health ministry. Marking the event, Minister of Health Ali Saad Al-Obaidi delivered a speech on the occasion, affirming Kuwait's achievements in the health and developmental sectors, which were recognized by regional and international organizations.

The minister added that the new hospital is part of a comprehensive strategic plan by the ministry to improve the health system and provide better medical care. Obaidi said that the hospital will have an increase of 80 percent in bed capacity to reach 540 after the project's completion, noting its cost amounts to KD 31.4 million. The total area of buildings has reached 28,000 sq m, he added, indicating the hospital has 10 wings of 24 beds each. The project aims to refurbish and expand totally the main operating rooms and operating rooms for accidents to reach 12 as well as x-ray and physiotherapy departments and offices, he made clear.

Obaidi pointed to the decline in the mortality rates of infants and children under five years and rates of maternal mortality, affirming that Kuwait has provided protective vaccinations against childhood diseases, AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

Continued on Page 2

KUWAIT TO PRODUCE 4M BPD OF OIL BY 2020

KUWAIT: Oil Minister Ali Al-Omair said Kuwait still plans to produce 4 million barrels of oil a day by 2020, even as global crude prices have slumped. Omair made the comments yesterday at an oil and gas conference in Kuwait City. Omair said Kuwait's production now stood at 3 million barrels of oil a day and that any US decision to export crude oil wouldn't have an impact on Kuwait. Meanwhile, CEO of Kuwait Oil Co Nizar Al-Adsani said Kuwait may import natural gas from Iraq and Iran to power its electricity plants.

Asked about oil prices, Omair said that oil prices are determined by markets through supply and demand and global economic growth. He said that the OPEC kept the output ceiling at 30 million barrels per day during meetings in Nov 2014 and June 2015. Kuwait's contracts are not affected by oil prices, he said, stressing the continuation of the country's production plan. "We are seeking to achieve our aims. Today our production is about three million barrels per day," he said, noting that the pro-

duction will exceed three million during the first quarter of 2016. As for the influence of US decision regarding exporting oil to the global markets, he stated that the decision will not have any impact on OPEC.

Adsani said in a similar statement that the US decision will only affect light oil, not the Gulf or heavy crude. He noted that Kuwait seeks to import gas from Iran and Iraq for operating electricity plants. He said KOC signed this year a deal to establish three collection centers with a capacity of 100,000 barrels each, noting there are three facilities for early production with a capacity of 18,000 barrels.

Adsani underlined the importance of human resources in the area of industry, referring that the corporation seeks to train them for new projects and technology. He pointed out that the oil sector needs up to 30,000 workers after the start of environmental fuel projects, Al-Zour refinery and the expansion of drilling towers. He said that about KD 32 billion will be invested in the five-year plan. — Agencies

MINISTERS, OFFICIALS URGED TO SUBMIT FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES

PANEL RECOMMENDS FATCA APPROVAL

KUWAIT: The Cabinet has called on ministers and senior officials of state bodies to submit their financial disclosure reports to the Anti-Corruption Authority as soon as possible. The call was made by the Cabinet during its customary weekly meeting held at Bayan Palace yesterday under chairmanship of HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. The Cabinet spoke highly of all steps and measures taken by the authority to fight corruption in the country, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah said in a press statement following the meeting. The Cabinet hailed the prime minister's submission of the financial disclosure report to the authority yesterday as a

model and clear-cut message for abidance by the law.

Separately, the National Assembly's Foreign Affairs Committee yesterday recommended the approval of the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) agreement between Kuwait and the US. The committee also recommended joining the cooperative agreement for Arab states in Asia for research, development and training related to nuclear science and technology (ARASIA), the head of the committee Hamad Al-Harshani said in a statement following a committee session. They also advised the endorsement of the agreement between Kuwait and Egypt on double taxation avoidance and income tax evasion prevention. — KUNA

Kuwait Times



THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

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NEW AL-RAZI HOSPITAL INAUGURATED

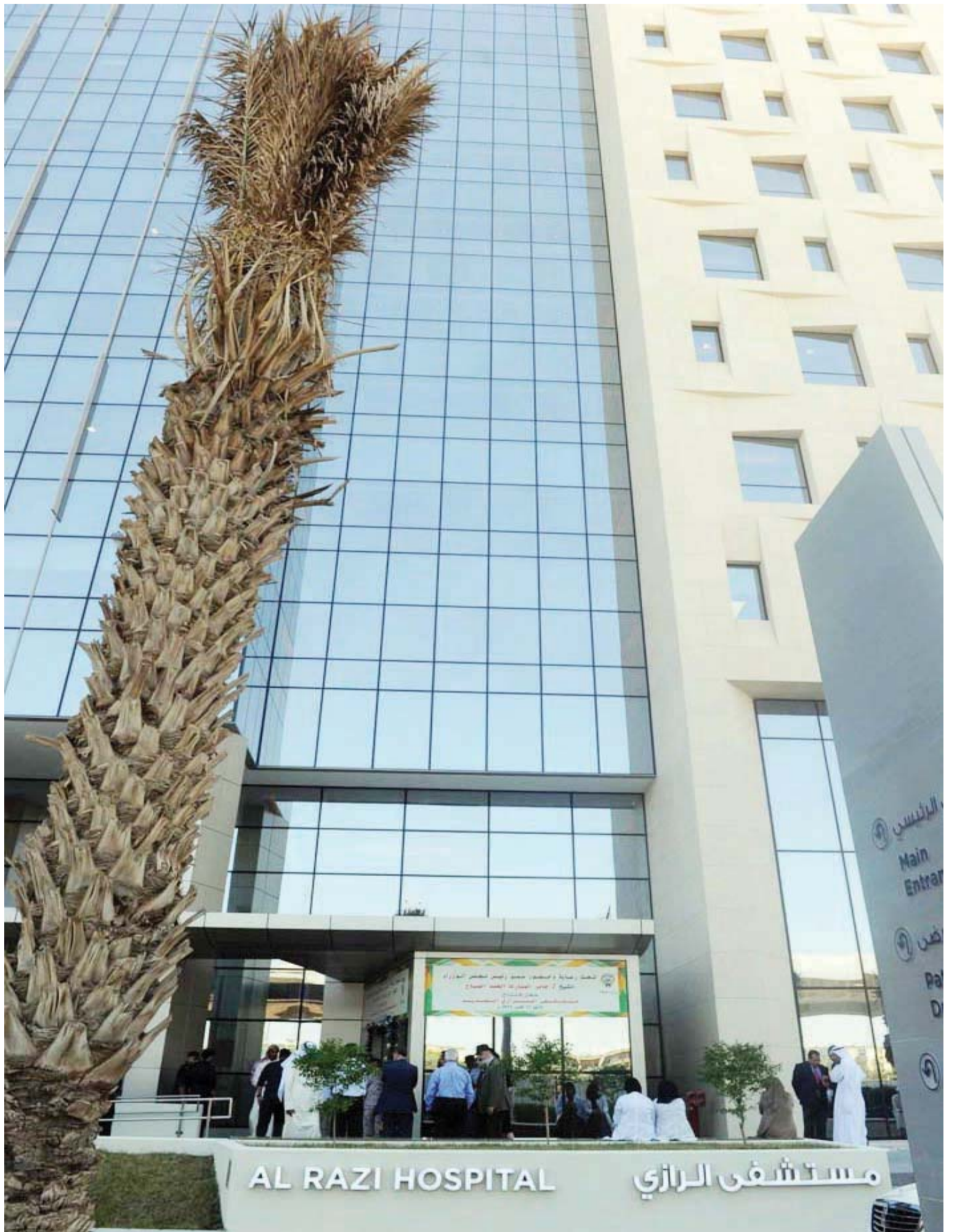
Continued from Page 1

The minister said Kuwait's achievements in the area of healthcare provided to people put it among leading countries in this field based on the reports of the World Health Organization and the 62nd session of WHO Regional Committee for Eastern Mediterranean. The committee's praise of the advanced health level in Kuwait is an "honor" for Kuwaitis, he stated. A cooperation protocol with Canada's Ottawa University will be hammered out at the beginning of 2016 to provide training courses for Kuwaiti doctors so as to upgrade their skills, Obaidi said, adding the ministry seeks through deals signed with international universities and hospitals and conferences to stay abreast with the latest scientific developments in this area. The minister noted

that what has been provided by the hospital to patients supports and enhances the health system to respond to key challenges in the sustainable development plan.

Obaidi said that the United Nations, by virtue of a General Assembly resolution adopted in April 2014, called for addressing these challenges through setting out a working plan with multiple axes for road safety implemented during 2011-2020.

After the speech, participants watched a documentary on future health projects in various governorates. Later, a lecture was delivered by Hospital Director Muna Abdulsamad and other doctors on the new facility, which includes 10 wards, operation rooms, an x-ray room and physiotherapy center. —KUNA



QATAR URGES GCC TO BOLSTER COOPERATION AMONG PROSECUTION BUREAUS

KUWAIT: Qatar's Attorney General Dr Ali Bin Fetais Al-Marri called for boosting cooperation among public prosecution bureaus in GCC states in order to form an integrated legal system that provides best services for citizens and residents. Al-Marri made his remarks Sunday during his speech at the opening of the 9th meeting of GCC Attorneys General, Public Prosecutors, and Heads of Investigation Departments, held in the Qatari capital. Integration would also establish an ideal model on regional meeting levels, which would surely serve joint national interests

and law-governed institutions, he added. Several successes were accomplished in past meetings regarding joint GCC action, Al-Marri said, noting that despite all these achievements; there are still more ambitions to attain the desires of people of the region through integration among various GCC sectors. On his part, GCC Secretary-General Dr Abdullahif Al-Zayani said the meeting's agenda includes several topics that are mostly relative to boosting the joint GCC action, adding that the topics are prepared by the General Secretariat in accordance with previous meetings'

resolutions. Also, Kuwait's Fahad Hamad Al-Atiqi, chief of criminal prosecution and international cooperation at Kuwait public prosecution, was awarded the "Hamed Al-Othman" prize along with five of his GCC counterparts on the sidelines of the meeting. Al-Atiqi expressed, in a statement to KUNA, his gratitude and appreciation to GCC attorney generals and chiefs of investigation departments for honoring him, dedicating the prize to his fellow colleagues at the Kuwaiti Public Prosecution.

Meanwhile, Kuwait Minister of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs

Yaqub Al-Sanea has affirmed that the proposed criminals' extradition treaty among the GCC states does not stipulate that Kuwait will be compelled to hand over Kuwaiti citizens to any of the Council's member states. In remarks published by the Kuwaiti daily, Al-Jarida, on Sunday, the minister indicated that he was surprised at criticisms of the tentative treaty, signed by the GCC officials during a recent meeting in Doha, affirming Kuwait's keenness on its citizens' interests. "The Government will

not under any circumstances breach provisions of the Constitution and will not adopt any accord that may violate the constitutional articles," he affirmed. According to the proposed accord, Kuwait is obliged to extradite a citizen of another GCC country wanted by the latter. This is applicable to the

case of a Kuwaiti present in another member country of the Council. Meanwhile in the Qatari capital, the daily Al-Sharq published today an interview with the Kuwaiti minister, saying that the GCC anti-terrorism law would not breach freedoms in the GCC states. — Agencies

PRIVATE COMPANIES' INVESTMENTS IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS HIT KD 3.5BN

KUWAIT: Secretary General of the Union of Investment Companies Dr Ramadan Al-Sharrah said yesterday overall private sector's investments in the State development projects amounted to KD 3.5 billion in 2015. In a statement, Al-Sharrah said the new corporate law aims at boosting direct foreign investments, also noting in this respect that the business sector provides up to 27-30 percent jobs of the private employment sector's second non-oil contributor to the gross domestic product (GDP). Moreover, investment companies have played a leading role in overhauling the domestic financial markets; by supplying the investors with valuable information, alternative financing tools, in addition to providing

greater opportunities to diversify entrepreneurs' assets with many products and funds.

Number of investment companies registered at the Central Bank of Kuwait and the Capital Markets Authority reached 95. Total managed assets by the CBK-registered companies reached KD 10.5 billion, along with capitals of investment companies, estimated at KD 4.5 billion. Regular accounts of these companies amounted to some KD 19.6 billion, while liabilities, KD 10.5 billion. Al-Sharrah expressed his belief that moralistic, social and environmental rules that regulate work of these companies should be re-examined in view of the global financial crisis, noting that their task should not be restricted to rapid

profits and should be developed to contribute to sustainable development.

Elaborating, he said financial allocations earmarked for the national economic ventures amounted to some five billion Kuwait Dinar (2015-2016), adding that the development plans aim at lifting the private sector's non-oil stake in the GDP by 56.5 percent. Increasing contribution of the private sector in the GDP can be attained via allocating more land to launch industrial projects, small and medium enterprises, preparing a proper business environment and updating relevant legislations for sake of hastening the private initiatives and boosting competition. — KUNA

GULF BANK SUPPORTS MOBILE GERIATRIC CARE UNIT

KUWAIT: To mark the "International Day of Older Persons," Gulf Bank sponsored visits by the Mobile Geriatric Care unit to all the governorates in Kuwait. The Bank sponsored the cost for six full teams of doctors, nurses, and physiotherapists to staff the mobile clinic during several visits. Gulf Bank was proud to sponsor this initiative to help

provide quality medical services and care for the elderly in Kuwait. This Mobile Geriatric Care unit fills the gap for those who are unable to come to hospitals or clinics for routine care; this clinic comes directly to them.

The Mobile Geriatric Care unit is a service provided by the Geriatric Welfare Department,

Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor and it travels to all the governorates in Kuwait. It is estimated that more than 3,500 persons and their families have benefited from the mobile clinic and its services. The services provided on the mobile clinic include: routine checkups and vital signs assessments; dental care; nutritional advice; diabetes care; and psychological consultations.

Internationally, this year marks the 25 anniversary of celebrating the International Day of Older Persons as designated by the United Nations. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon has called on all to do their part to make sure that no one, of any age, is left behind. It is estimated that by 2030, the population of persons of the age of 60 will be 1.4 billion; therefore we must all work to ensure we have the proper health and social services in place. This sponsorship is part of the Gulf Bank ongoing commitment to charitable and social activities. For more information about Gulf Bank's Corporate Social Responsibility activities, please visit the CSR page on the Bank's website <http://www.e-gulfbank.com> or its social media accounts on Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook.



Gulf Bank team with the Mobile Geriatric Care Unit during the visit.

Al Jamiat

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News

in brief



KUWAIT: The Ambassador of South Africa Mzolisa Bon visited Kuwait Times and discussed issues of mutual concern with the Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan.



KUWAIT: Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan yesterday received the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China Wang Di in his office. They discussed issues of mutual concern. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

PAYS BLAMES KUWAIT OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Youth and Sports (PAYS) held the Kuwait Olympic Committee responsible for not taking part in the 2nd GCC Games due in the Saudi city of Dammam next Thursday. The authority allocated an estimated budget worth about KD 400,292,250 for the Kuwaiti delegations participating in the games, it said in a press statement on Sunday, adding that the sum was transferred to the bank account of the committee by virtue of a letter sent to the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) on October 6. It said it was astonished at a letter sent by the committee to the authority on October 8, saying that the committee's board of directors decided on September 20 not to take part in the GCC Games, according to the statement. The authority added that it was not informed about the decision, and that the committee asked for increasing the budget to KD 663,944,750 as a precondition for partaking in the Gulf event. The authority urged the committee to bear its responsibility and play its due role towards Kuwaiti athletes citizens and to enable them to join the games and help in the success of this event in order to meet the aspirations and directives of GCC leaders.

SOFOSBUVIR-BASED DRUG VERY EFFECTIVE FOR HCV TREATMENT

A BREAKTHROUGH FOR HEPATITIS C PATIENTS

KUWAIT: A number of gastroenterologists agreed on Sunday that sofosbuvir substance (commonly known by its brand names Sovaldi, Hepcinat, EHEP, Resof, Hepcvir and SoviHep) helped cure up to 95 percent of the hepatitis C virus (HCV) patients. Kuwait's Ministry of Health is keen on providing the world's latest treatment regimens in order to ensure the highest possible cure rates, said Dr Ahmad Al-Fadhli, chairman of Haya Al-Habeeb Gastroenterology Center. He made the press remarks on the sidelines of a seminar on HCV which gathered German Dr Peter Bogisch and Dr Kosh Agarwal - consultant hepatologist at the Institute of Liver Studies, King's College Hospital, London, as

well as a number of noted local physicians. On his part, Dr Fuad Al-Ali voiced joy for the breakthrough which has been made in the treatment of HCV since the sofosbuvir-based drugs were marketed in 2013. He noted that he will deliver a lecture on the Kuwaiti program to eliminate HCV infection totally and declare the country free of this serious viral disease. "Twenty-nine out of 32 HCV patients in Kuwait have recovered completely after receiving sofosbuvir-based drugs in combination with other drugs," Dr Al-Ali said, noting that these regimens are now available in Kuwait. "The Ministry of Health used other ways to treat this infection two decades ago but these ways used to have side effects unlike

the sofosbuvir-based drugs which take three-month time to produce the desired result of complete recovery," he added. "Though fatal, the HCV infection rarely shows symptoms and is a silent attacker; it needs lab tests to be diagnosed. "It was first discovered in Kuwait in 1992. Some people had unknowingly got blood transfusion from HCV-hit donors at that time when the preventive measures were not as strict as nowadays," Dr Al-Ali went on. He highlighted the need to raise public awareness about the preventive measures, including the pre-marriage and pre-employment tests as well as the tests for newly-employed expatriates in Kuwait. Meanwhile, Chairperson of Thunayan Al-

Ghanim Gastro Center Dr Hayfaa Askar said the HCV which could cause cancer lymphomas in the liver could be defeated easily in three-month time through a one-tablet daily dosage of Sovaldi. Dr Ra'ed Al-Suwait, of Al-Jahra Hospital, said the Ministry of Health imported a first shipment of the second generation of Sovaldi which is enough to treat 300 patients. "The cost of Sovaldi is very high; it amounts to nearly KD 17,000," Dr Al-Suwait added. The Seminar gathered a number of gastroenterologists and pharmacists as well as experts in clinical chemistry and representatives of the Ministry of Health, the Blood Bank, the Red Crescent Society and the Patients Helping Fund Society. —KUNA

Oil investments down by 21%: OPEC's Al-Badri

KUWAIT: Oil investments for producing countries have declined by 21 percent, OPEC Secretary General Abdullah Al-Badri stressed yesterday. Al-Badri told the press, on the fringes of the 2nd Kuwait Oil and Gas Show and Conference 2015, that there is a clear decline in the production of oil shale following a fall of oil prices, noting that the current oil shale production reached the level of zero. In the next year, he said, world oil production will be in the minus, hence, it will reflect positively on OPEC. Nonetheless, he added that no one can predict the movement of oil prices. On a suggestion by the US Congress on exporting US oil, Al-Badri said that the decision will not affect OPEC production nor its markets, since oil markets are seeing a surplus at the moment. He added that there should be an agreement to reduce oil surplus in order to solve the retreat of oil prices. This solution should be a joint effort by OPEC and non-OPEC countries. The 2nd Kuwait Oil and Gas Show and Conference 2015 is a three-day exhibition that serves all areas of the oil and gas industry; including petroleum geosciences, exploration, production, refining and petrochemical products and service.

Kuwait face Lebanon in WCup, Asian qualifiers

KUWAIT: Kuwait national football team will face its Lebanese counterpart at Kuwait Sporting Club stadium today, in the sixth round of the double qualifiers for the World Cup 2018 in Russia and the Asian Cup 2019 in the UAE. Kuwait, currently in the second place with nine points, is looking forward to forget the last 0-1 defeat to South Korea, who currently has 12 points on top of its group (7th group). Meanwhile, the Lebanese team has six points in the third place; Laos has one point in the fourth by goal difference against Myanmar who currently sits in the fifth place. Both teams have the chance to directly qualify to the Asian Cup if they win tomorrow or be chosen as one of the best second place teams to qualify in the eight groups of 39 teams in the competition. The Kuwaiti team has won 1-0 against Lebanon in the first round of the qualifiers last September, while also winning 9-0 against Myanmar and 2-0 against Laos. Lebanon on the other hand, won 2-0 against both Myanmar and Laos and lost 0-3 against South Korea. Teams who achieve the first place in their groups will qualify along with the best four runners-up to the Asian Cup and will directly enter the World Cup qualifiers. The remaining 24 teams will play another qualifier round to win 11 seat in the Asian Cup while the 12th seat will go to the UAE, the hosting country.

Kuwait calls for 'coordinating' Arab stands on climate change

CAIRO: Kuwait's Assistant Foreign Minister for Legal Affairs Ghanim Al-Ghanim stressed Sunday the importance of coordinating stands among Arab states on negotiations of UN Treaty on climate change, and its impacts on different aspects, particularly economy. Ambassador Al-Ghanim made his remarks to KUNA on the sidelines of meetings of Arab negotiation group for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which kicked off earlier in the Egyptian capital. The two-day meetings are part of preparations for the international summit on climate change, slated for next December in Paris, France, Al-Ghanim, who heads the Kuwaiti delegation at the meetings, noted. A new legal instrument is expected to be issued during the international summit, he said, adding that the new instrument would include a number of commitments on countries such as reducing their carbon dioxide emissions, which are the main cause for global warming. The Kuwaiti delegation at the meetings include representatives for the oil ministry and Environment Public Authority (EPA).

Bahrain King declares Dec 17 'Martyrs Day'

MANAMA: Bahraini King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa said the 17th of December of each year, which coincides with Accession Day, had been set to be Martyrs Day in recognition of great men and women who sacrifice their lives for defending the Kingdom. "It is a source of pride and duty to recall our honorable martyrs whose names and sacrifices will remain milestones in the history of Bahrain and in memory of them we have decided to set the 17th of December of each year, which coincides with our Accession Day, to be the Martyrs Day to commemorate and honor our martyrs in recognition of their sacrifices and redemption for the sake of their country and Nation," the King said at inaugural ceremony of the Shura Council's second session of the fourth legislative term. He also announced that he had instructed the ministry of education to include the sacrifices of national heroes to the schools curricula. "Out of our appreciation and gratitude to the Bahrain Defense Force and the National Guard for their military duties with brotherly and friendly countries abroad since their establishment and for the humanitarian campaigns of the Interior Ministry, we have directed to document those tasks and participation and teach them to our sons and next generations within the curricula of the Education Ministry," he said.



ABK HOSTS 'LONG SERVICE EVENT' TO THANK STAFF FOR YEARS OF DEDICATION

KUWAIT: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) recently honored 77 of its employees for longstanding and dedicated service to the Bank. Held at the SymphonyStyle Hotel in Salmiya on 6th October, the dinner and ceremony celebrated the employees' loyalty, efforts and unwavering dedication throughout the years. Each employee honored during the awards ceremony had completed between 20 and 40 years of service with the Bank, with Abdulamir

Abdulhameed Behbehani and Mohammad Fathi Saleh, both celebrating 40 years. Commenting on the long-standing commitment and value of their contribution to the development of the Bank, Michel Accad, ABK Chief Executive Officer said: "Today we are celebrating the efforts and loyalty of some of our most valuable employees, each with 20 to 40 years of commitment and loyalty to ABK. We are immensely proud of these

individuals and grateful for their dedication. It is an honor to hand out these awards as we realize that more than half of the employees receiving awards have been with ABK pre-invasion days and have witnessed so much change over the years. On behalf of the Chairman, Board of ABK, and Management, we congratulate them." Staff members were given a personalized Memorabilia as well as a gift from the bank.



EQUATE SPONSORS 2015 GPCA RESPONSIBLE CARE CONFERENCE

KUWAIT: EQUATE Petrochemical Company, Kuwait's first international joint-venture in this industry, sponsored the 1st Responsible Care (RC) Conference 2015 by the Gulf Petrochemicals & Chemicals Association (GPCA). EQUATE President & CEO Mohammad Husain said, "RC is a critical element for sustainability in our industry and applying its principles is a true embodiment of EQUATE's commitment to the wellbeing and safety of individuals, the environment and societies as a whole. The GPCA RC Conference 2015 is an excellent opportunity to manifest our 'Partners in Success' slogan with stakeholders from around the globe on RC relevant topics and other fields of sustainability."

Husain added, "During 2014, the Gulf countries' total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) exceeded USD 1.6 trillion. Out of that total, the industrial sector, including chemicals and petrochemicals, had a share of almost 10%. At the same time, the petrochemical and chemical industries represent the Gulf's second main of income after petroleum. Therefore, the overall sustain-

ability and development of the petrochemical industry, through RC and other fundamentals, would have a positive impact on the future of Gulf countries."

EQUATE is the first Kuwaiti organization to receive the certification and accreditation of RC, which is an international voluntary initiative of the global chemical industry to address Environment, Health & Safety (EH&S) at all relevant levels. As part of its participation in the conference, EQUATE sponsored a professor and students from the College of Engineering & Petroleum at Kuwait University to attend the event and interact with other delegates. The college is represented by faculty member from the Department of Chemical engineering Dr Abdulwahab Al-Musallam, as well as the students, Yousef Al-Shamlan and Mohammad Al-Ajmi.

EQUATE's sponsorship of the professor and the students for this event and other previous GPCA activities is part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with the college during 2008 for overall partnership and cooperation in

industrial and academic fields. The 1st GPCA RC Conference 2015, is held in Dubai, UAE, from October 11-13. Under the theme "Next steps in the Responsible Care journey," the conference gathers top executives from petrochemical and chemical companies, as well as government bodies and other entities to discuss various RC topics.

Established in 1995 as Kuwait's first international joint-venture in this industry, EQUATE Petrochemical Company (EQUATE) embodies its "Partners in Success" slogan through the partnership between Petrochemical Industries Company (PIC), The Dow Chemical Company (Dow), Boubayan Petrochemical Company (BPC) and Qurain Petrochemical Industries Company (QPIC). Commencing production in 1997, EQUATE is currently the owner and single-operator of several fully integrated world-class petrochemical units, within the Greater EQUATE joint-venture, that annually produce over 5 million tons of the highest quality grades of Ethylene, Polyethylene (PE), Ethylene Glycol (EG), Polypropylene (PP), Styrene Monomer (SM), Paraxylene

(PX), Heavy Aromatics (HA) and Benzene (BZ).

The products are marketed throughout the Middle East, Asia, Africa and Europe. Alongside with being a leading industrial organization, EQUATE dedicates its utmost commitment and care to overall sustainability wherever it operates in cooperation with public and private bodies, including employees, the society and customers, in all relevant fields, such as human development, environment, education, health and public awareness. www.equate.com.

With EQUATE as one of its founding members, the Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association (GPCA) represents the downstream hydrocarbon industry in the Arabian Gulf. Established in 2006, the association voices the common interests of more than 240 member companies from the chemical and allied industries, accounting for over 95% of chemical output in the Gulf region. The industry makes up the second largest manufacturing sector in the region, producing up to US\$102 billion worth of products a year. www.gpca.org.ae.

VIVA PARTICIPATES IN 35TH GITEX TECHNOLOGY

KUWAIT: VIVA, Kuwait's fastest-growing and most developed telecom operator, announced its participation in the 35th GITEX Technology to present its wide latest range of products and services. The International GITEX Technology week 2015 will take place from 18 - 22 October 2015 in Dubai at the Za'abeel Exhibition Hall in the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre, and is considered the leading IT and technology exhibition and attracts a majority of decision makers in the Middle East.



On this occasion, Abdulrazzaq Bader Al-Essa, Director of Corporate Communications at VIVA, said: "We are honored to take part in GITEX for the fourth year in a row. It is an exciting experience for the VIVA family to participate in one of the world's most anticipated IT and technology exhibitions. Our participation in the GITEX Technology Week 2015 comes in line with our corporate strategy to

extend and present our services not only locally, but on a regional scale." Alongside VIVA, Saudi Telecommunication Company (STC) and VIVA Bahrain will be taking part in the exhibition and showcase their latest products and services through team of professionals.

This year, GITEX will debut a range of innovative and exciting industry features including Industry Briefings, where more than 1500 delegates and 150 speakers will debate tech trends in cutting-edge, sector-specific knowledge platforms; Developer Days, a series of dedicated workshops, tech demos, training programs and networking activities offered by leading OS platforms designed to enhance developers' in-show experience; a Social Plaza hosting the Influencers' Reception; the Bloggers Tweetup and Tech Talk Blogger Program which will double attendance from regional bloggers.

Expanded event features include the official press reception ShowStoppers, online community Connections, live streaming of social media, trending topics and tech news via the Content Hub. Enhanced interactive elements include the GSM Exchange Zone, a platform for the mobile product industry, the C-Level Majlis Lounge for senior executive networking, free Smart Sessions for knowledge-sharing, the Retailers and Distributors Lounge and the SME Zone. To find out more about VIVA's latest competitive promotions, products and packages, please visit one of the 69 VIVA branches, or the VIVA website at www.viva.com.kw, or call VIVA's 24 hour call center on 102.

SPECIAL PERMITS TO INSPECT OIL SITES

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Abdullah Al-Motoutah, Acting Manpower Authority Director, said that the authority had recently issued special permits for labor department inspectors to enter oil companies' sites to inspect the number of nationals working in companies that have subcontracts with KOC subsidiaries. Al-Motoutah explained that those inspectors used to be denied access to the oil facilities, especially the ones operated by foreign companies and that following the recent strike carried out by national laborers working in those companies, a special committee had been formed to make sure they fully observed related laws pertaining safety, security and accommodation.

Director of the Public Authority for Special Needs Affairs (PASNA), Dr Tareq Al-Shatti expressed amazement at calls made by authority employees to organize further sit ins warning that this would delay finishing transactions of people with special needs. Speaking on a press conference held on the sidelines of a sit in PASNA's employees syndicate organized yesterday morning, Al-Shatti stressed that the authority does its best to meet its employees' demands and that CSC had been already notified with the demands.

Al-Ajmi deportation case rejected

The appeal court yesterday rejected hearing a case filed to deport media figure, Saad Al-Ajmi on grounds that the case topic was not within its liabilities. Notably, Al-Ajmi's Kuwaiti wife had filed a case arguing that deporting her husband after withdrawing his citizenship would be illegal.

Al Watan case hearing set

A court yesterday set a hearing to be held October 26 to pass its verdict in a case filed by Interior Ministry Assistant Undersecretary for Public Security Major General Abdul Fattah Al-Ali against Al-Watan newspaper's editor-in-chief Sheikh Khalifa Al-Ali Al-Sabah. Al-Ali accused Sheikh Khalifa of insulting him while Al-Ali was in the middle of his duty, forcing the closure of Al-Watan newspaper headquarters upon an Information Ministry decision.

Insurance fees decree

Minister of Commerce and Industry Dr. Yousif Al-Ali issued a ministerial decree pertaining to the plan to amend fees the ministry collected for proceedings concerning insurance companies and agents stipulated in law number 24/1961. According to the amendment, the fees collected for issuing various insurance-related licenses would vary from KD 1 to KD 500.

Teacher bonuses

The Education Ministry yesterday approved bonuses for 157 expatriate teachers and school administrative staff members. The bonuses are labeled as 'excellent performance' rewards for the school year 2014-2015. In this regard, MoE Assistant Undersecretary for Administrative Affairs Fahad Al-Ghais explained that the list includes 120 teachers and 37 supervisors working in adult evening schools according to limited wage contracts. Al-Ghais also contacted CSC accordingly.

Shipping fees to increase

Chairman of Kuwait's Union for Foodstuff Manufacturers and Merchants, Abdullah Al-Bu'aijan said that shipping companies had recently informed various companies that the handling fees collected per imported container would increase. "This will surely increase the cost of import companies and consequently on the cost paid by consumers," he warned urging the Minister of Commerce and Industry to immediately stop the increases as they were 'absolutely unjustified at the time being', as he said. Al-Bu'aijan also urged the ports authority to do importers some justice and refund the huge sums it had collected from them.

KUFPEC SEEKING TO BUY ASSETS IN MALAYSIA

KUWAIT TAKES PART IN GEO-PETROLEUM CONFERENCE-EXHIBITION

KUALA LUMPUR: The Asian Conference-Exhibition for Geo-Petroleum Sciences 2015, hosted by the Malaysian oil company, Petronas, got underway yesterday with participation Kuwait Foreign Petroleum Exploration Company (KUFPEC). Tuan Zaid, in charge of KUFPEC's geological sciences department in Southeast Asia, said the Kuwaiti participation in the event, scheduled on October 12-13, was part of a plan to expand KUFPEC's investments in Southeast Asia and promote the company at the regional level.

He disclosed that KUFPEC is seeking to buy assets in

Malaysia, in partnership with Petronas, with aim of enhancing its status in regional countries, namely in Indonesia, Vietnam, Pakistan, Australia, China and the Philippines. Zaid indicated that now is a good time to buy such assets, considering global economic problems and declining oil prices. On his part, Efeendi Shin Abdullah, the deputy manager of Upstream Petronas, said in a statement at the opening session that the conference aims at exchanging information and experience in geo-political sciences among the attending experts and scientists who represent regional states and oil

companies. It is also an opportunity for them to deliberate plans for expanding oil explorations in the region, he said. Abdullah called for slashing operational costs in the petroleum industry, but cautioned that such an approach should not be at expense of quality of products. He also called for innovative ideas to shore up the sector, in shadow of the global economic crises and the oil bearish prices. Up to 1,778 oil and geology experts from 22 states are taking part in the event, themed "inspiring ideas for solutions in the geological sciences in the Asian continent." —KUNA

KRCS DELIVERS AID TO YEMENIS, SYRIANS

KUWAIT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) is continuing the delivery of humanitarian aid to the Yemeni city of Aden in cooperation with humanitarian organizations in the war-ravaged country. The society had delivered 5,000 food baskets in the past few days, KRCS' President Hilal Al-Sayer said yesterday, adding that the aid is part of the \$100 million donation by His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-

Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to Yemen. The society is exerting huge efforts to ease the suffering of Yemenis living in worsening conditions due to the ongoing war, said Al-Sayer, noting that it will continue to support and aid Yemenis in need.

Aid to Syrian families

Also, KRCS continued yesterday its humanitarian campaign, dispatching aid

to 600 Syrian families who sought refuge in the bordering Arsal area. The aid consists of food and cleaning materials, head of KRCS' delegation to Lebanon Musaed Al-Enezi said.

Al-Enezi noted that the campaign will boost its aid activities in other areas, particularly those that don't receive regular aid due to geographic difficulties. The current campaign will also conduct another

aid dispatch, including 15,000 food supplies covering wide range of Lebanese areas, in addition to other humanitarian projects. In recent days, KRCS opened a playground for Syrian children refugees in Katermaya village in Chouf District in Lebanon. After the inauguration ceremony, Al-Enezi said that the project is part of the support provided for refugees to alleviate their suffering. —Agencies

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Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: Photo shows Al-Hashimi II Ship - built in 2000. The ship is registered as the largest Arab wooden ship (Dhow) in the world by Guinness world Records. —KUNA



Al-Qabas

NATIONS OF MORALITY, BUT MORALS ARE GONE

By Ahmad Al-Sarraf

It is for sure that others and I have read Shawq's poem hundreds of times, over tens of years, and mostly to brag about remembering it by heart, and iterate it without caring for working according to its content, not as youthful students nor as teachers, and the English saying goes as "Easier said than done". Morals are not only good behaviors, but also include honesty, good acts, etiquette, politeness and respect of others. All these things were not known well by our fathers and grandfathers in the wider meaning of morals, because this needs academic education and awareness that is mostly not available at home - rather it is the duty of the educational apparatus, and this is what it did not do over the past half century, and the result was negative on the society as a whole.

This is what is going in our countries and Kuwait in particular, who cannot believe what is being committed in it in the form of unprecedented immoral acts such as thefts, dishonesty, embezzlement, lies in documents, commercial cheating, administrative corruption, claiming illness to not report to work, claiming being handicapped, forging school certificates - even by prominent religious scholars - and the acceptance by those equal to them of receiving salaries they do not deserve over a quarter of a century without remorse.

All of those are immoral acts that we did not consider them so because we lived through the illusion of linking morals with sexual matters for men and women, and forgetting or ignoring what is more dangerous and important than that. It is enough to look at the way we behave with simple people in the society such as domestic helpers and laborers, and even with expat teachers and doctors to find out how much we need in intense lessons in morals! Many of us do not even know the word "thank you" or "excuse me", and if they know it, they will be bashful to use them, maybe out of conceit. They also find it hard to apologize when they commit minor or major mistakes, and they justify the mistake.

We write this as a comment on the discovery of 100 students on scholarships in British universities who presented forged certificates stating that they passed the English language exams. Moreover, some of them launched sit-ins in front of the education ministry demanding that their scholarships not be suspended, and even their financial allocations! Here, we do not find it strange that large numbers of graduates of Western and American universities cannot speak good English, much less write it.

We do not want to go ahead, as the issue is still under investigation, but it is dangerous under all moral standards, and the reason is not because of not being religious, but it is due to the spread of immorality in every home and facility, and this is a bigger catastrophe than the spread of plague or the occurrence of a devastating earthquake, because natural catastrophes can be dealt with and controlled, but the destruction of one's morals have a long-term destructive effect. —Translated by Kuwait Times



Al-Anbaa

CARPENTRY TOOLS AND GRILLINGS

By Saad Al-Motesh

Every profession worldwide has its own tools. However, we may find someone owning some tools without even knowing how to use them properly. For instance, many houses have some carpentry and electric tools, but we cannot leave them handy for all family members lest children use them, and these may turn into dangerous tools in their hands. And now since politics has gained so much significance with the excuse of democracy, lawmakers have special tools that they alone are authorized to use. Nevertheless, many of them misuse such tools or use them for personal interests. These tools are grilling motions and legislations.

Grilling motions supersede legislations because they are more dangerous. Legislations could be used by some for sectarian, tribal or categorical pur-

poses. However, they will not succeed because legislation requires unanimous approval including that of the government, which could be impossible to achieve whenever the project's purposes are suspected.

On the other hand, the more dangerous tools are grilling motions, because lawmakers can individually file and use them to put some pressure on this or that minister to make some personal or electoral gains. We all know that lawmakers are after pleasing their voters and that many grilling motions had been filed merely to please the visitors of a diwaniya, a certain family or certain groups. So, long live those who use grilling motions for the state's greater good and to hell with those using them to achieve personal gains. —Translated by Kuwait Times

Grilling motions supersede legislations because they are more dangerous.



Al-Anbaa

AUSTERE CLASHES AND LADDER-LESS SNAKES

By Sami Abdullatif Al-Nisf

Now that the terrorist IS has managed to destroy Arabs' suspicious past by destroying their rare human heritage and legacy and managed to destroy their present by giving enough excuses to all nations on this globe to invade its territories, this terrorist organization is now in the process of destroying their future through contaminating their children's minds by a new malicious online electronic game known as 'Austere Clashes', which teaches children how to kill and be extreme. However, this is not the first time innocent Arab child play is turned into a satanic, horrifying one.

Arab children used to pass their time playing snakes and ladders but many of them grew up to realize that the game was brutally practiced on Arabs arena where following severe destruction, the efforts of many patriotic national leaders who act as 'ladders' to reach possible solutions to some bloody problems have been impeded just when they were close to achieving them by giant 'snakes' represented by suspicious leaders who make impossible demands, which usually take all conflicts back to square one. The situations in Iraq, Syria and Libya are the best examples of this new game where snakes are multiplying and ladders are being smashed!

There is another satanic game Arab children play under the name of 'child in jungle', which asks players to gaze in an image of a very thick jungle and try to locate a child hiding amongst the trees and bushes. At first glance, players can only see leaves and branches, but very few of them will have a strong enough eyesight and vision to spot the child amongst visual complications. The situation in Syria is close to this where many complications are being created to hide and conceal international and regional ambitions to occupy and divide Syria.

It is also said that Arab tyrants usually cling to their seats and positions because they used to play the 'musical chairs' game where a player who finds no chair to sit on when the music stops is expelled. That is why many of them have grown up thinking so highly of seats and higher positions. In Lebanon's modern history, the late Rafiq Hariri was probably the best 'ladder' who managed to end the civil war and that is why snakes like Michel Aoun, had him broken and killed.

—Translated by Kuwait Times

FILIPINOS FOUND WITH DRUGS

KUWAIT: Drugs Control General Department arrested a Filipino and his girlfriend in Salmiya. Police found one kilogram of "Shabu" ready for sale in their flat, and they confessed the drugs are theirs. They said that they hoped to make a profit, especially as the price of Shabu rose lately. Both were sent to drugs prosecution.

Sister beats mom

A Lebanese accused his sister of beating their mother while at her place. A security source said the Lebanese took

his elderly mother to Maidan Hawally police station and gave policemen a medical report adding that the injuries were caused by his sister's beating. Hawally detectives are working on the case.

Cars on fire

Four cars that belong to two Lebanese, an Egyptian and a Yemeni caught fire in front of their building in Nugra area. The fire was put out, and detectives are working on the case to find out who caused the fires.

'WAFRA' TOTAL ASSETS REACH \$18.6 BILLION

KUWAIT: Regional Director of Wafra Investment Advisory Group, New York, Ghazi Al-Hajeri said that the company has continued to make profits year after year since its inception, bringing the total assets under management to about \$18.6 billion in mid-2015. According to Al-Hajeri, the Company invests 17 percent of these assets in "Wafra Capital part-

ners", an affiliate company that specializes in Islamic finance and is totally managed by "Wafra."

While 22 percent of these assets are allocated to alternative investments, 14 percent to private assets, 14 percent are invested in securities, and 17 percent of assets are invested in real estate. Direct investments constitute 3 percent of the total assets

and "other" investments make up the final 13 percent of the total assets. Al-Hajeri also stressed the importance the Company attaches to human capital development with the aim of capacity-building and fine-tuning of Kuwaiti citizens skills and capabilities to prepare them for the challenges they will have to meet when they work in investment fields. —KUNA

Kuwait Times International

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2015

TURKEY PM SAYS IS PRIME SUSPECT OVER WORST ATTACK

ANKARA: Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu yesterday said the Islamic State (IS) extremist group was the prime suspect in the double suicide bombings in Ankara that killed 97 and sparked anger over the authorities' failure to ensure security.

In his first interview since Turkey was scarred on Saturday by its deadliest ever attack, Davutoglu insisted that snap elections would go ahead as planned on November 1 despite the bloodshed.

The attack on a peace rally of leftist, labour and Kurdish activists ratcheted up tensions to new heights in Turkey as the government wages a relentless campaign against Kurdish militants and grapples with the presence of IS jihadists just inside the border with Syria.

"Looking at how the incident took place, we are probing Daesh as our first priority," Davutoglu told NTV television, using an alternative Arabic acronym for IS. He said that the attacks were carried out by two suicide bombers. "We are close to a name (for one bomber). That name points to an organisation," he said.

Davutoglu however remained cautious, saying that authorities were investigating three groups including Islamic State but also the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the far-left Revolutionary People's Liberation Party-Front (DHKP-C) as "potential suspects." With international concern growing over Turkey's stability, German Chancellor Angela Merkel was to visit Sunday to discuss Turkey and Syria, a spokesman said.

'No delay for elections'

Rallies in the wake of the bombings have been hugely critical of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, with demonstrators chanting slogans like "Erdogan murderer" and accusing the government of failing to prevent the attacks. "We lost many friends. But the government must know that we will not step back. We will continue to fight and will fight even harder," labour activist Vassaf Turgut told AFP in Ankara.

But Davutoglu denied there had been any security or intelligence failure. "It is not possible to talk about a failure in general," he said. He dismissed fears Turkey could be facing civil war like neighbouring Syria.

"This attack will not turn Turkey into Syria," Erdogan, in a written statement, has condemned the "heinous" attacks as an attempt to break the country's unity.

However the Turkish strongman has remained uncharacteristically silent in public since the attacks. On

Monday he has a range of top level meetings programmed including with spy chief Hakan Fidan, army head Hulusi Akar and Davutoglu.

The attacks came with Erdogan under huge political pressure as Turkey heads into the November 1 snap elections. His ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) failed to keep its overall majority in June 7 polls and then could not form any coalition. Erdogan called repeat elections for November 1 but opinion polls are showing that that the result appears likely to be much the same as before. Some commentators suggested that the Ankara attack could prompt the government to postpone the polls but Davutoglu insisted they would go ahead. "We will hold the elections under whatever circumstances," he told NTV.

'Like Suruc bombing'

The bombings had several parallels with a suicide bombing on July 20 against pro-Kurdish peace activists in the town of Suruc on the Syrian border that was blamed on IS and killed 34.

Turkish press reports said that investigators believed the type of bombs used in Suruc and Ankara were similar. The same forensic experts who worked in the aftermath of Suruc have now been sent to the Turkish capital. As investigators examine the theory that IS jihadists were behind the blasts, the Hurriyet daily reported that the authorities had taken DNA samples from families of 16 people suspected of being members of the group. They are also examining the theory that the missing elder brother of the Suruc suicide bomber Abdurrahman Alagoz could have carried out one of the suicide attacks, it added.

Turkish authorities have since Sunday arrested over 40 suspected members of IS across the country, but it is unclear if the raids had any link with the Ankara attacks.

The Suruc bombing caused one of the most serious flare-ups in Turkey in recent times as the PKK accused the government of collaborating with IS and resumed attacks on the security forces after a truce of more than two years. The military hit back, launching a "war on terror" against the Kurdish militants. The PKK on Saturday unexpectedly announced it would suspend all attacks-except in self defence-ahead of the polls. But the Turkish army kept up its campaign with more air raids on southeast Turkey and northern Iraq over the weekend, killing 49 suspected militants. — AFP

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CLINTON HAS EDGE IN NEVADA, SITE OF DEMS' FIRST DEBATE

LAS VEGAS: When the Democratic candidates for president take the stage for their first debate this week in Nevada, they'll do so in a state that serves as a reminder of why Hillary Rodham Clinton is the front-runner for the nomination.

For all the excitement generated to date by Clinton's main challenger, Vermont independent Sen. Bernie Sanders, and for all the anticipation about whether Vice President Joe Biden will decide to make a late entry into the race, it is the former first lady and her campaign that are set up to win Nevada, one of the first four states to cast ballots in the primary contest.

The southwestern state is home to large communities of immigrants - many who have only recently arrived in the US when



Hillary Rodham Clinton

combined with Nevada's baroque caucus system, which is so complex that the rules surrounding it run 51 pages, that means winning the state requires a higher degree of organization and effort to get-out-the-vote than in most others.

The Democrats gather in Las Vegas today for their first presidential debate, with several months to go before the primary contests begin. On the Republican side, a crowded field of candidates has already held two debates, with seasoned politicians unexpectedly struggling to emerge from the shadow of billionaire Donald Trump and other insurgent contenders.

Clinton installed staff on the ground in Nevada six months ago, and she now has 22 paid operatives in the state. They have recruited more than 3,000 volunteers, who have already held events in remote desert towns as well as the state's urban centers. Clinton herself has made wooing immigrants a keystone of her campaign; she announced her immigration policy approach at a Las Vegas high school this spring.

"That's a lot of shoe leather, and they've been on the ground for 5-6 months," Billy Vassiliadis, a veteran Democratic strategist in Nevada who isn't involved in the current race, said of the Clinton campaign's efforts. "That's going to be a challenge that I don't

think a Sanders can overcome, that - God bless his heart - I don't think Joe can overcome."

Knocking on doors

Meanwhile, Sanders' effort in the state has just one paid staffer, who arrived less than two weeks ago. Biden has yet to decide whether to run and does not have any formal campaign operation. None of the other candidates Clinton will debate tonight - former Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, former Rhode Island Sen. Lincoln Chaffee and former Virginia Sen. Jim Webb - have a campaign organization that can match Clinton's. All are largely afterthoughts in early preference polls.

The differences in the structural strength of the campaigns were evident this past weekend. While Sanders' single Nevada staffer had his first meeting with hundreds of Sanders volunteers at a community college on Saturday, Clinton's campaign flew in Democratic rising star Rep. Joaquin Castro of Texas in Las Vegas and former NBA player Jason Collins in Reno to cheer on volunteers and staffers who had been knocking on doors and making calls for months.

Sanders supporters argue they can catch up. "There is a movement here, even in Nevada, for Bernie Sanders," said Jim Farrell, Sanders' Nevada state director. "This is not a normal election cycle."

Clinton won the Nevada caucus in 2008 before ultimately losing the Democratic nomination to Barack Obama. Yet because of the Nevada's complex rules, she left the state with one fewer delegate than did Obama.

In US presidential primaries, candidates compete in each state for the support of party delegates, who choose the nominee at a national convention. Most states have a winner-take-all system that allocates all of its delegates to the candidate who wins its primary election. But Nevada holds caucuses rather than elections, and has intricate rules that can generously apportion delegates to runners-up.

That's something noted by some Sanders backers as they tout the potential for the enthusiasm for his campaign to ultimately trump Clinton's structural edge. Clinton's team is targeting the state's diverse electorate, hosting Filipino-style potluck dinners and courting black pastors as well as Nevada's influential corps of immigrant-rights activists. And what the campaign does in Nevada will pay off across the country, said Marlon Marshall, the Clinton campaign's director of public engagement. "The diversity of Nevada and the outreach programs you use there can help us reach out to those communities in other states," he said. —AP



ACHAN: In this photo taken on Sunday, Syrian army soldiers walk in Achan, Hama province, Syria. Russian jets intensified their airstrikes yesterday in the central Syrian province as government and allied troops pushed out insurgents from local villages to expand their control of the area, activists and a military statement said. —AP

EU DEMANDS HALT TO RUSSIA STRIKES ON SYRIAN REBELS

RUSSIA'S INTERVENTION AN UNWELCOME 'GAME-CHANGER'

LUXEMBOURG: The EU demanded yesterday the "immediate" halt of Russian air strikes against moderate Syrian rebel groups and warned a lasting peace was impossible under Moscow-backed President Bashar al-Assad. EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini called Russia's military intervention in Syria an unwelcome "game-changer" that jeopardised peace efforts and risked clashes with western aircraft targeting Islamic State jihadists. "The recent Russian military attacks that go beyond Daesh (IS) and other UN-designated terrorist groups, as well as on the moderate opposition, are of deep concern and must cease immediately," the EU's 28 foreign ministers said in a statement.

"This military escalation risks prolonging the conflict, undermining a political process, aggravating the humanitarian situation and increasing radicalisation," they said.

EU leaders meet Thursday for a summit likely to be dominated by the Syrian conflict which has claimed some 250,000 lives and driven about 12 million people-half the population-to flee their homes. Many of them have given up hope of an end to the war and have flooded into Europe seeking refuge, helping drive the worst migrant crisis since World War II.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Sunday Russia's military actions in Syria were meant to

"stabilise the legitimate authorities and create conditions for finding a political compromise."

Russia, which insists its attacks on "terrorists" include IS targets, has important military facilities in Syria and has backed Assad and his father before him against all rivals for decades.

Meanwhile in Moscow, the defence ministry said its planes hit 53 targets in Syria over the past 24 hours as it steps up its bombing campaign. Russian jets conducted strikes in the provinces of Hama, Homs, Latakia and Idlib and destroyed "terrorist" command posts, defensive positions, training camps and ammunition depots, the ministry said in a statement. It said the bombing raids had severely disrupted supply chains for IS fighters.

EU foreign ministers for their part urged Russia to "focus its efforts on the common objective of achieving a political solution to the conflict." They said this required "a peaceful and inclusive transition" but it was not clear if Assad would have any role in it, reflecting sharp divisions over his immediate future.

For the longer term, ministers agreed he had no place in Syria. "There cannot be a lasting peace in Syria under the present leadership and until the legitimate grievances and aspirations of all components of the Syrian society are addressed," they said.

Dangerous 'game-changer'

Mogherini warned earlier that Russian intervention in Syria was a dangerous and worrying "game-changer." Mogherini, a former Italian foreign minister once viewed as sympathetic to Moscow, said Russia must direct its attacks against IS, not the Western-backed rebel groups seeking Assad's ouster.

She refused to be drawn on Assad's future, stressing that the EU would back UN efforts to broker a peace deal. "This is a process which has to have all the relevant actors around the table," she added.

One EU diplomat, who asked not to be named, said: "Everyone knows that you cannot build a transition without Assad."

British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond appeared anxious to leave no wriggle room on that question after several of his fellow foreign ministers also suggested that Assad would inevitably be involved in any transition. "EU foreign ministers have just agreed a clear and united position against Assad, IS and recent Russian actions in Syria." "Assad bears greatest responsibility for 250,000 deaths/millions displaced."

(He) cannot be partner in fight versus IS or part of Syria's future," Hammond said in tweeted messages. —AFP

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TALIBAN THREATEN SECOND AFGHAN CAPITAL AS INSURGENCY SPREADS

KABUL: Fighting intensified around the Afghan city of Ghazni yesterday, as Taliban militants threatened to seize a second provincial capital after briefly occupying Kunduz in the north last month.

The clashes around Ghazni, some 130 km (80 miles) southwest of Kabul, underlined the worsening security situation across Afghanistan, where national soldiers and police are struggling to cope now the bulk of foreign forces have withdrawn.

Yesterday's violence followed days of sporadic fighting near Ghazni, and prompted most shops, schools and universities there to close.

Many residents attempted to flee to the capital Kabul or nearby districts, adding to a growing number of internally displaced people within Afghanistan. Government officials said they still had the upper hand.

"Hundreds of Taliban attacked from two directions and the fighting is still on some 7 km away from the

provincial capital," Ghazni's Deputy Governor Mohammad Ali Ahmadi told Reuters. "The Taliban planned to attack and seize the capital but we were on the alert and repelled them," he said.

The headline Islamist militant movement, seeking to topple the Western-backed government in Kabul and restore its regime 14 years after being toppled, also said it had blocked the highway from Kabul to the southern city of Kandahar.

The Taliban warned motorists to avoid the key transport corridor linking the capital to the south, which was rebuilt with the help of Western aid. There was no independent confirmation of their claim to have blocked the route.

Earlier yesterday, a local U.N. staffer was shot and killed by two gunmen on a motorbike as she was on her way to work in Kandahar.

"She was fatally wounded and later died in hospital," said Mujib ur Rahman, a UN press officer in

Kandahar. On Sunday, a suicide bomber attacked a convoy of foreign troops during Sunday morning rush hour in Kabul, wounding at least three civilians.

KUNDUZ WARNING

Since the withdrawal of international troops from most combat operations at the end of last year, the brunt of fighting has been borne by Afghan forces.

Any hopes of a negotiated settlement with the Taliban were dealt a blow earlier this year, when a power struggle broke out following confirmation that the movement's founder, Mullah Omar, had died two years earlier.

Under new leader Mullah Akhtar Mansour, the Taliban have mounted a wave of attacks in Kabul and beyond, culminating in the seizure of Kunduz in a carefully orchestrated offensive.

While some areas in mountainous regions near Pakistan and in the southern province of Helmand

have long been under the control of the Taliban, the fall of once sleepy Kunduz, some 230 km (150 miles) from Kabul, represented a sharp escalation.

It was the first time the Taliban, which imposed harsh Islamic law when in power including public executions and denying women the right to education and work, had taken a major provincial capital since 2001. Government forces have since wrested back control of most of Kunduz.

It was also a stark warning of how far the Taliban has extended its reach into regions once thought secure, stretching government forces and piling pressure on President Ashraf Ghani's fragile national unity government.

The worsening violence has caused alarm in Washington, where President Barack Obama must decide on whether or not to stick to an earlier decision to cut US troop levels in Afghanistan to a small U.S. embassy-based force after 2016. — Reuters



MINSK: A file picture taken on May 10, 2015 shows Belarus' President Alexander Lukashenko applauding during a signing ceremony with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping (not pictured) in Minsk. — AFP

BELARUS LEADER LUKASHENKO WINS FIFTH TERM IN LANDSLIDE

ELECTION FALLS SHORT OF DEMOCRATIC STANDARDS: OSCE

MINSK: In a development that surprised no one, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko yesterday was declared the winner of a fifth term following an election campaign boycotted by the opposition.

Lukashenko won 83.5 percent of Sunday's vote in the former Soviet republic, according to Lidia Yermoshina, chairwoman of the Belarusian Central Election Commission. She said Lukashenko's closest contender, Tatyana Korotkevich, had captured less than 5 percent of the vote.

Lukashenko's share of the vote increased from the 79.7 percent the authoritarian leader of 21 years was reported to have won in 2010. Belarus, a nation of 10 million in central Europe, is heavily dependent on Russia's cheap energy supplies, but is trying to distance itself from Moscow after Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula last year and backed separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine.

Observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe said Belarus didn't fulfill its democratic commitments in holding its vote but stopped short of the sweeping criticisms that previous elections in Belarus have received.

Kent Harstedt, the leader of the OSCE's mission in Belarus, told reporters yesterday that observers were disappointed by shortcomings during the counting. Harstedt also said Belarusian authorities created "an uneven playing field for campaigning," blurring the line between Lukashenko's candi-

dacy and the interests of the state. Harstedt, however, praised Belarusian authorities for allowing "all candidates to campaign throughout the country."

Staggering turnout

About 100 opposition supporters held a peaceful protest march after polls closed Sunday to show their discontent with the ballot. Opposition activists also cast doubt on the high turnout, which election officials said was over 87 percent.

"The election commissions made up the results as they wished," opposition leader Anatoly Lebedko said. "I'm amazed by the scale. They made up a staggering turnout, with half-empty polling stations."

Valentin Stefanovich of the human rights group Vesna said some polling stations had 50 percent of their ballots cast early. Yermoshina explained the high turnout by saying many people - about 36 percent - had opted for early voting. She said all the ballots had been counted inside Belarus but those cast at embassies abroad have yet to be counted.

Russian President Vladimir Putin promptly called to congratulate the 61-year-old Lukashenko. The Kremlin said the results of the vote "showed wide support for Lukashenko from Belarusian public."

Putin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the two leaders also discussed Russia's plans to set up an air base in Belarus, an

idea that seems to have irked both Lukashenko and the opposition in Belarus.

Political prisoners released

Western leaders were only mildly critical of the election. "The support for Lukashenko does not come as a surprise, nor does the level of the support," German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said. "As far as we could observe from Berlin, there has also not been the level of repression around the time of the elections that we have seen in the past."

Steinmeier also lauded Lukashenko for releasing political prisoners before the vote. Speaking to election observers from former Soviet republics, Lukashenko said yesterday that as a head of the state he "did his best" to guarantee a fair election.

"I had to say it out loud yesterday: we went to such lengths to make sure the West finally sees elements of democracy in Belarus," Lukashenko said. "And, to be honest, they certainly did."

The European Union and the United States first imposed sanctions on Lukashenko and other Belarusian officials in 2006 when he jailed one presidential candidate. Then, after the 2010 vote, he jailed 8 more presidential candidates.

An EU official told The Associated Press last week that the EU may suspend sanctions against Belarus by the end of the month. The official, who wasn't authorized to issue public statements, spoke on condition of anonymity. — AP

CAMPAIGN TO KEEP BRITAIN IN EU WARNS EXIT WOULD WEAKEN COUNTRY

LONDON: Supporters and opponents of Britain's European Union membership squared off for battle ahead of a referendum due by 2017, with the campaign to stay in becoming the last to launch yesterday. "Britain Stronger in Europe" is being led by businessman Stuart Rose, who highlighted the economic and diplomatic benefits of Britain remaining in the 28-member bloc and warned of the dangers of leaving. "Do we choose to be stronger in an economy that creates opportunity into the future and the power to shape events?" he said in a speech. "Or do we choose to be weaker by taking a leap into the unknown, less able to influence global developments that may risk our economy and may compromise our safety?"

Rose, a Conservative lawmaker in Britain's upper house of parliament and the former boss of department store Marks and Spencer, described the referendum as Britain's most important vote in a generation. The vote could be held as early as next year and could profoundly affect British politics and the country's place as one of Europe's economic hubs. Britain's membership of the EU has proven a divisive issue in the past, and has often led to damaging rows within the ruling Conservative Party. The "In" campaign will include three former prime ministers, former Labour minister Peter Mandelson, and businesswoman and Conservative House of Lords member Karren Brady among other prominent figures. The launch of "Britain Stronger in Europe" follows the rolling out of two campaigns for the country to leave the EU.

"Vote Leave", including members of both the Conservative party and the main opposition Labour party, launched last week, while "Leave.EU"-led by the UK Independence Party (UKIP) — was unveiled in September. UKIP leader Nigel Farage has played down reports of rifts within the camp advocating a so-called "Brexit", saying the two campaigns are "complementary". He also dismissed the benefits of EU membership laid out by Rose. "He argued that we are stronger in the world, have more influence and more clout. Has he forgotten that the United Kingdom no longer even has a seat on the World Trade Organization and that Brussels now wants a single EU seat on the UN Security Council?" "The EU has a star spangled banner. He's welcome to it. I prefer the Union Jack."

In or out?

Prime Minister David Cameron, who leads the Conservative government, in 2013 promised to hold the vote amid pressure from UKIP and the eurosceptic wing of his own party. Those campaigning to leave say Britain will be better able to control its borders, write its own laws and will be free of the economic crises that have roiled the EU in recent years. But Cameron has vowed to renegotiate Britain's membership before putting it to the vote, and is lobbying for more powers for London and the ability to opt out of closer political integration.

"What matters is that there is a proper and reasoned debate," the prime minister's spokeswoman said at a regular briefing on Monday. "It will be an important choice facing our country and we need to consider it carefully."

Legislation paving the way for the vote is being debated by the House of Lords, parliament's upper chamber, having passed its first hurdle in June, although several other stages remain. Polls indicate a narrow gap between those who want Britain to stay in the EU and those who want to leave. A poll in September put the anti-EU camp ahead for the first time since November 2014. According to the poll by Survation, 43 percent said they would vote to leave the EU, compared to 40 percent who would stay, with 17 undecided. — AFP



PASSAU: Migrants wait at a platform of the central train station in Passau, southern Germany, after they arrived in Germany yesterday. — AFP

GERMAN CONSERVATIVES AGREE ON 'TRANSIT ZONES' FOR REFUGEES

BERLIN: German Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives and her Bavarian allies have agreed on a plan to set up "transit zones" at the border to filter out migrants who clearly have no chance of gaining asylum, Bavarian Premier Horst Seehofer said yesterday.

Seehofer, who heads the Christian Social Union (CSU), sister party to Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU), said a concrete proposal would be drawn up by the two parties, the Bavarian government and the federal government, this week.

However, the Social Democrats (SPD), the junior partner in Merkel's national coalition, expressed strong reservations. With its relatively liberal asylum laws and generous benefits, Germany is a magnet for many of the hundreds of thousands of refugees and migrants fleeing war and poverty in the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

While Merkel insists that Germany can cope with the influx and will benefit from it, communities around the country are struggling to house and support the refugees, and the CDU has slipped in opinion polls.

Bavaria, the point of entry for many of the thousands who reach Germany each day, said on Friday it was at the limit of its capacity.

A draft bill already circulated by the CDU-run Interior Ministry provides for transit zones to hold refugees at land

border crossings so that asylum requests can be examined before they are allowed in.

The bill, which Reuters has seen, says this will allow those whose applications are inadmissible or clearly unfounded to be turned back.

This would affect people without papers or with fake documents, migrants from countries deemed "safe", or those who do not present sufficient reason to justify an asylum request.

However, if a decision could not be made within a week, or accommodation could not be provided at the border, the migrant would be allowed in anyway.

Critics say that what is possible at an airport is not easy to replicate along a land border more than 3,500 km long.

SPD Justice Minister Heiko Mass spoke of "mass holding camps in no man's land".

"To detain tens of thousands of refugees at the border will cause more problems than it solves," he told the daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung. Thomas Oppermann, head of the SPD parliamentary group, said in a statement that the plan was "impossible to implement in practice, and wrong in human terms". The German government still officially expects 800,000 new arrivals in 2015, while media have quoted internal government papers saying up to 1.5 million people could come. — Reuters

ROMANIA'S LEFTISTS CHOSE NEW LEADER, GEAR UP FOR ELECTION

BUCHAREST: Romania's ruling Social Democrats (PSD) have elected a former minister convicted of electoral fraud as their new leader to replace a previous chief now facing a corruption probe, vote returns showed yesterday.

Preliminary results of a weekend ballot showed wide support for Liviu Dragnea, who took over as interim PSD leader in July when Prime Minister Victor Ponta stepped down from the party leadership after being indicted for forgery, money laundering and serving as an accessory to tax evasion.

Dragnea was the only candidate to lead the party into the municipal and national elections due next year. Final results have yet to be announced but a PSD official told Reuters: "Yes" votes for Dragnea are overwhelming, way above 90 percent."

A former development minister and close Ponta ally, Dragnea was convicted of electoral fraud in May for trying to rig a 2012 referendum and given a one-year suspended jail sentence. He has denied the charge and his appeal is due to be heard next month.

Party data showed about 435,000 people or 81 percent of PSD's members took part on Sunday in the unprecedented vote. The PSD previously had senior party officials pick their leader.

"The PSD cannot and must not miss the opportunity to become the first modern party in Romania," Dragnea, 52, told reporters.

Analysts say the ballot was meant to give PSD leadership internal legitimacy ahead of municipal polls in the summer of 2016 and a parliamentary election due late in the year. "This party is experiencing a crisis of legitimacy after Ponta and ahead of elections. It's being eroded by multiple causes (such as) graft cases involving many senior leaders there," political analyst Cristian Patrascu said.

"Ironically, even though this new election system was made necessary by one having had a problem with the law, the PSD is strengthened and gets a powerful leader. Dragnea's election also sends a message of unity after Ponta's exit."

Dragnea has said the ruling coalition will support Ponta, who has so far withstood intense pressure to resign from the opposition and from President Klaus Iohannis, a centrist rival who defeated him in last November's presidential polls. — Reuters

PORTUGAL LEFT BLOC SEES NEW GOVT DEAL POSSIBLE

LISBON: Portuguese far-left party said it could back the main opposition Socialists to form a government, raising the possibility that budget policies imposed during its bailout will be abandoned. The Left Bloc said Pedro Passos Coelho, now serving as caretaker prime minister after his centre-right coalition won the most votes but lost its parliamentary majority in an Oct. 4 election, would fail to win enough backing to govern again.

The inconclusive election result left markets largely unmoved last week, but the prospect of prolonged political uncertainty as Portugal's divided left tries to form a government unsettled investors yesterday. "The next few weeks will be a test for the political environment and risk is already up," said Banco Best trader Alfredo Mendes. "Banks are the engines of the economy. If there are signs that the economy will be rudderless because there is no government, banks could be weakened."

Economists fear that a change in economic policy or a long delay in forming a government could undermine the Portuguese

economy's revival after three years of recession made worse by harsh austerity imposed under a now-completed bailout.

Left Bloc leader Catarina Martins met with Socialist counterpart Antonio Costa yesterday, days after the Communist party said it would back a Socialist-led administration.

Together, the three parties hold a majority in parliament, but there are large policy differences between them and a leftist had been seen as unlikely. "The (centre-right) government is over as of today, because it will not have support in parliament, but also because there is another government solution that corresponds to people's expectations and that can be the alternative that the country needs," Martins said.

"Conditions have been created for a basic consensus on the Left Bloc's terms for allowing the creation of a government." Socialist leader Antonio Costa said there were "possible points of convergence" with the Left Bloc, especially on how to give more disposable income back to the Portuguese.—Reuters



ROME: Members of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, from left, Kathleen Mc Cormack, Catherine Bonnet, Bill Kilgallon and Sister Kayula Gertrude Lesa, attend a press conference, in Rome, yesterday. Pope Francis' sex abuse commission has begun an important new phase of its work: bringing the expertise of its members to bishops' conferences in the developing world that have long lagged behind Anglophone countries in crafting guidelines to prevent abuse and care for survivors. — AP

BANGLADESH ARRESTS ISLAMISTS FOR SLASHING PASTOR'S THROAT

DHAKA: Bangladesh police said yesterday they had arrested five Islamists for the attempted murder of a Christian pastor whose throat was slashed in the latest of a string of attacks blamed on religious extremists. The five members of the outlawed Jamayetul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) group have been detained on suspicion of planning or carrying out last week's attack on Baptist pastor Luke

Sarker in the town of Iswardi. One of those arrested was suspected of having attacked Sarker before making his getaway on the back of a motorbike, while the other four were believed to have been involved in plotting the attack.

"They carried out the attack to draw international attention and destabilise the country," district police chief Alamgir Kabir told AFP. Sarker, who runs a church in the

mainly Muslim northwestern town, was attacked on October 5 while trying to respond to a question about Christianity. He was rushed to hospital but medical officials say he is now recovering. The attack came only days after gunmen shot dead an Italian aid worker and a Japanese farmer. The Islamic State organisation has claimed responsibility for both of those killings.

Attacks on Christians, who make up

less than one percent of Bangladesh's 160 million people, are rare although 10 people were killed in 2001 when Islamists bombed a church in the southern district of Gopalganj. Experts say Islamist militants pose a growing danger in Muslim-majority Bangladesh, warning that a long-running political crisis has radicalised opponents of the government.

The assassination of four atheist blog-

gers since the turn of the year undermines the government's efforts to lay down the threat posed by hardliners, experts say.

The JMB killed 28 people in 2005 when they carried out a series of bomb attacks on courts. While its top leaders were subsequently executed for the bombings, police say the JMB is now regrouping. —AFP



KATHMANDU: Nepal's President Ram Baran Yadav, second left, administers the oath of office to newly elected Prime Minister Khadga Prasad Oli, right, at the Presidential building in Kathmandu, Nepal, yesterday. Nepal's new prime minister took the oath of office and appointed the leaders of groups that are protesting the new constitution as his deputies. —AP

NEPAL'S NEW PRIME MINISTER SWORN IN

KATHMANDU: KP Sharma Oli was sworn in as Nepal's prime minister yesterday, tasked with unifying the quake-hit country after a new constitution triggered deadly protests, a border blockade and a nationwide fuel shortage.

Oli, a former deputy prime minister who heads one of Nepal's main communist parties, is credited with having pushed through a deal on the constitution after years of disagreement. After his election on Sunday he urged political unity to try to resolve the stand-off with protesters from the country's Madhesi minority, who say the charter's terms will exclude them from power in the national assembly.

Yesterday Oli appointed two deputy prime ministers from parties that opposed elements of the constitution passed in September, months after an earthquake that killed nearly 9,000 and left many more homeless.

They are Kamal Thapa, head of the royalist Rastriya Prajatantra Party

Nepal (RPP-N), and Bijay Kumar Gachhadar who leads one of Nepal's Madhesi parties.

Nepal's Maoists, who fought a 10-year civil war with the state that led to the fall of the monarchy, have also joined the ruling coalition government-meaning they will serve alongside Thapa's royalist RPP-N.

The country's largest party the Nepali Congress is expected to form the opposition after its candidate, former premier Sushil Koirala, lost out to Oli in Sunday's election for prime minister.

Oli has pledged to quell protests over the new constitution and end a blockade that has led to national fuel rationing, as well as accelerate reconstruction after the earthquake in April.

Landlocked Nepal is completely reliant on India for its fuel supplies. The blockade by protesters at a vital border checkpoint, and tightened security on the Indian side, has sparked a nationwide shortage. —AFP

BRITISH TROOPS AMONG FIVE DEAD IN KABUL CHOPPER CRASH

KABUL: Two Britons were among five NATO troops killed in a helicopter crash in Kabul, a second blow for British forces after a Taliban suicide bomber targeted their convoy in the capital. The incidents came just two weeks after the resurgent militant group overran the key northern city of Kunduz, their biggest military victory in 14 years of war.

The helicopter crashed while landing at the NATO headquarters in Kabul, the military coalition said, ruling out any insurgent activity behind the incident. "The (crash) resulted in the death of five Resolute Support (NATO) personnel and the injury of five others," it said in a statement, without revealing their nationalities.

The defence ministry in London confirmed that two British Royal Air Force personnel were among those killed, adding that an investigation had been launched into the crash.

Resurgent Taliban

The latest deaths bring to 456 the total number of British forces, personnel and defence ministry civilians killed serving in Afghanistan since it joined the US-led invasion of the country in 2001.

The crash came just hours after a Taliban suicide car bomber struck a British forces convoy in central Kabul, wounding at least three civilians including a child, Afghan officials said. No British casualties were reported. The British defence ministry confirmed their convoy came under attack and said the explosion was caused by an improvised explosive device. The rush-hour bombing caused a powerful explosion in the capital, sending plumes of smoke into the sky and littering the area with charred pieces of twisted metal.

The Taliban said Sunday's attack was carried out to avenge the recent "barbaric bombardment in Kunduz that martyred our civilians and doctors". On October 3 a US air strike pummeled a hospital in Kunduz run by Doctors Without Borders (MSF), killing at least 12 staff and 10 patients. The medical charity shut down the trauma centre in response, branding the incident a "war crime" and demanding an international investigation into the incident, which sparked an avalanche of global condemnation.

The Pentagon announced Saturday it would make compensation payments for those killed or injured in the strike, while suggesting that US forces in Afghanistan could also pay for repairs to the hospital. But MSF Sunday said it had officially not received any compensation offer, adding that it would not accept funds for repairs in line with its policy of rejecting support from governments.

President Barack Obama has apologised over the strike, with three different investigations-led by NATO, US forces and Afghan officials-currently under way.

The Taliban captured Kunduz city for three days last month, in a stinging blow to Afghan forces, who have largely been fighting on their own since the end of NATO's combat mission in December.

The emboldened insurgents have stepped up attacks on government and foreign targets since they launched their annual summer offensive in late April. The Afghan government claims to have wrested back control of Kunduz city but sporadic fire-fights continue with pockets of insurgents as soldiers, backed by NATO special forces, conduct door-to-door clearance operations. —AFP

INDIAN PM SEEKS TO CEMENT POWER AS KEY STATE VOTES

MODI PROMISES BILLIONS OF DOLLARS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN BIHAR

SAMASTIPUR: India's poorest state, Bihar, began voting yesterday in a high-stakes election that premier Narendra Modi hopes will help his government push through a faltering reform drive. The Indian leader, who has promised billions of dollars for development in Bihar, urged people to come out and vote "in large numbers" as polls opened in the first phase of the election.

"I want jobs for the young people of Bihar," he told a campaign rally on Monday. "Bihar must become the strength of our nation." Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won a landslide victory in general elections last year, but the reforms it promised have been blocked in the upper house of parliament, where it lacks a majority.

Modi's National Democratic Alliance is hoping to wrest control of Bihar state with a promise of economic development in a state where two-thirds of people lack access to electricity.

"What is most important for us is jobs," college student Sangeeta told reporters outside a polling booth in Bihar early yesterday. "If there are jobs, the youth won't have to leave the state and go elsewhere for employment."

The prime minister has personally addressed 10 major campaign rallies, going all out to secure victory in the populous eastern state that would give his government some of the extra seats it needs to break the current logjam.

Too close to call

The BJP needs a win after suffering a humiliating defeat in February elections for the New Delhi state assembly to a fledgling anti-corruption party. But analysts and opinion polls indicate it is too close to call. Modi is up against an unlikely alliance of two powerful local leaders, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and his predecessor Lalu Prasad Yadav, who has served time in prison for corruption.

Their rivalry goes back decades, but both men-who command widespread support among the lower castes-have put their differences aside to thwart Modi.

Kumar, a long-time critic of Modi, is credited with kick-starting development and quashing corruption and is seeking a third term. His tenure contrasts

Religious tensions

The campaign has also been dogged by religious tensions after a Muslim man was lynched by a Hindu mob in the neighbouring state of Uttar Pradesh last month over unsubstantiated claims that he was eating beef. Hindus consider cows to be sacred.

After 10 days of silence on the killing, Modi on Thursday used an

ous state, has never been ruled by BJP on its own, with elections traditionally won by regional parties and alliances. Many of its 104 million people still vote along caste lines. Some observers say Modi has put off pushing through contentious reforms including a land acquisition bill ahead of the polls for fear of losing votes. While growth is now purring along at



SAMASTIPUR: Indian security personnel guard as women voters stand in a queue to cast their votes at a polling station during the first of the five phase voting for state legislative assembly at Mahmoodpur village, in Samastipur district of India's eastern state Bihar, yesterday. —AP

sharply with that of his predecessor Yadav, a sharp-witted former railways minister who presided over years of stagnant growth and spent time in prison for embezzlement.

Bihar has long been notorious for corruption, and as the first phase of voting got under way yesterday, Kumar's party was forced to drop a top-ranking minister after he was caught on camera apparently accepting bundles of cash from a businessman.

election rally in Bihar-which is majority-Hindu but has sizeable Muslim, Christian and Sikh minorities-to appeal for unity.

Parts of the state are also in the grip of Maoist insurgents who have a history of trying to intimidate voters, but local media said yesterday's voting passed off peacefully. Voting will be held in five phases, with results due on November 8. Nearly 10 million voters are eligible to vote in the first phase and there are 583 candidates.

Bihar, India's third-most popu-

around seven percent, complaints have been mounting about his failure to nail down major reforms. The BJP has a majority in the lower house of the parliament, but only about a quarter of the 245 members in the upper house, where seats are distributed based on the strength of political parties in state assemblies.

That has allowed the opposition parties to block the government's land, taxation and other legislative reforms needed to overhaul the economy. —AFP

INDIAN FAR-RIGHT PROTEST PAKISTANI BOOK LAUNCH

MUMBAI: An Indian activist yesterday accused far-right protesters of dousing him in black ink over the launch of a former Pakistani foreign minister's book, in the latest apparent attack on free speech in the country.

Sudheendra Kulkarni, who was organising the launch event in Mumbai, condemned the incident as an "attack on democracy" as he

addressed the media in Mumbai, his face and hair covered in ink.

He said he was assaulted as he left his home in Mumbai by activists from the far-right Hindu nationalist Shiv Sena party who wanted to intimidate him. India and Pakistan have been arch-rivals ever since gaining independence from Britain in 1947, and have

fought three wars, two of them over the divided territory of Kashmir.

"A group of ten or 15 Shiv Sainiks mobbed me, they stopped my car, asked me to come out, they caught me, started abusing me, they said we had ordered you to stop the launch this evening, you didn't listen to us, this is what we'll do with you," said Kulkarni.

The Shiv Sena, a junior partner in a ruling coalition with the Bharatiya Janata Party in the Maharashtra government, was last week accused of using threats to force the cancellation of an appearance in Mumbai by the renowned Pakistani singer Ghulam Ali.

There are growing concerns over freedom of speech in India after the execution-style killing in August of M.M. Kalburgi, a leading secular scholar who had angered headline Hindu groups.

Several Indian winners of the prestigious Sahitya Akademi (National Academy of Letters) award have handed back the prize in recent days to protest that incident. The writers said they were also protesting the government's failure to condemn the lynching last month of a Muslim man suspected of eating beef.

Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri's "Neither a Hawk nor a Dove: An Insider's Account of Pakistan's Foreign Policy" was due to be launched in the western Indian city later on Monday.

Kulkarni vowed to press ahead with the event, saying the state government had promised extra security in the face of threats from Shiv Sena. "We will not buckle under this coercion, it's an assault on democracy, an assault on the Indian constitution and assault on Indian culture," said Kulkarni. —AFP



MUMBAI: Indian activist Sudheendra Kulkarni (L), whose face was blackened by ink in an alleged attack, looks on as former Pakistani foreign minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri speaks to media in Mumbai yesterday. —AFP

TWO ALLIES OF CHINA EX-SECURITY CHIEF JAILED FOR GRAFT

BEIJING: Two former senior Chinese politicians were convicted of corruption and given lengthy prison terms yesterday, courts said, the latest figures to be jailed in President Xi Jinping's anti-graft campaign. Both men are seen as allies of Zhou Yongkang, the former security chief who became the highest-level victim of Xi's drive when he was jailed for life in June, in what many observers say was a political purge. Jiang Jiemin, the former head of the body that regulates China's state-owned firms, was sentenced to 16 years, the Hanjiang Intermediate People's Court said on a verified social media account.

He was convicted of "accepting bribes, large amounts of money and property from unknown sources, and using state-owned companies for personal gain", it added. Li Chunheng, former vice Communist Party boss of Sichuan-one of Zhou's former powerbases-was sentenced to 13 years for accepting bribes and abuse of power, according to a statement from the Xianning Intermediate

People's Court posted on Sina Weibo.

Jiang is a former head of the China National Petroleum Corporation, a post previously held by Zhou, and Jiang and Li are reportedly part of a Communist Party faction with roots in the oil industry, known as the "petroleum gang".

Aside from the prison sentences, both men will have one million yuan (\$158,000) in personal assets confiscated, the statements said. Jiang and Li both accepted the sentences and will not appeal, the courts added. Communist Party authorities have waged a much-publicised campaign against endemic graft since Xi ascended to the organisation's leadership two years ago.

But critics say no systemic reforms have been introduced to increase transparency and help battle the problem, while anti-corruption demonstrators have been jailed.

Corruption trials of former officials in China are closely managed by the ruling party, which retains control of China's police, prosecution and courts.

Suspicion of spying

Meanwhile, two more Japanese citizens are being held in China on suspicion of spying, bringing the total number to four, Japanese media reported. Japan and China acknowledged last month that two Japanese had been arrested in May on suspected spying charges - one in Zhejiang province and the other near the North Korean border in Liaoning.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told a regular news conference on Monday that Chinese authorities are investigating the latest case and have given Japan relevant information. She said she was unaware of how many people had been detained.

Japan's Foreign Ministry refused to confirm or deny the reports. The two earlier cases are the only ones linked to spying allegations that the Japanese government has been informed of, said Kazunari Kotake, an official in the ministry's department in charge of the safety of overseas Japanese.

The government has warned Japanese visitors to China to use extra caution. Japan is not taking any immediate additional steps in response to the newly reported detentions, Kotake said.

Japanese public broadcaster NHK said over the weekend that the latest cases involved a man in his 60s who was arrested in Beijing, and a woman in her 50s who was arrested in Shanghai. The woman was the most recent case to surface but both were detained in June, it said.

China enacted an anti-spying law last November, in a move experts said was aimed at increasing surveillance of foreigners' activities in the country. The four people had businesses or connections with China and frequently visited the country, according to Japanese media reports.

In 2010, four employees of a Japanese construction company were accused of filming a Chinese military site in Hebei province but were released within weeks. — AP

HK PHOTOGRAPHER TO FACE THAI TRIAL OVER FLAK JACKET

SAMUT PRAKAN: A Hong Kong photographer detained in Thailand for carrying a bulletproof jacket and helmet will face trial after pleading not guilty yesterday to a weapons possession charge. The case has sparked an outcry from media freedom groups, who say journalists should not be punished for carrying body armour and protective gear in and out of dangerous zones.

Anthony Kwan Hok-chun, who works for the Hong Kong-based Initium media group,



HONG KONG: Hong Kong photojournalist Anthony Kwan Hok-chun walks as he arrives at Samut Prakan provincial court yesterday. The Hong Kong photographer detained for carrying a bullet proof jacket and helmet in Thailand will face trial after pleading not guilty to a weapons possession charge. — AFP

was briefly held on August 23 after trying to depart Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi airport with a flak jacket and helmet in his hand luggage. Both items are classified as weapons under Thai law and Kwan was charged with breaching the Arms Control Act-punishable by up to five years in jail. He was in Thailand to cover the aftermath of August's deadly Bangkok bombing.

Kwan told reporters on Monday after the hearing at the Samut Prakan provincial court, near Bangkok, that he denied the charge. "I'm not confessing... I don't think that a flak jacket is a weapon and I definitely didn't know it was illegal here," he said. His plea means he will face a trial starting next month. The court granted Kwan bail and his lawyer later said he was free to leave the kingdom until the trial.

"I think everyone in my situation would be a little bit concerned. I'm preparing for the worst but hoping for the best," Kwan added. Thailand's classification of protection equipment as a weapon that requires a license has been criticised by media groups, who say they are vital pieces of kit for reporters in a country where political violence routinely spills onto the streets.

Around 10 campaigners, mostly journalists, on Monday rallied in Hong Kong outside a building that houses Thailand's consulate calling for the case against Kwan to be dropped.

"This (his arrest) was unreasonable. Journalists face all kinds of situations and sometimes it can be dangerous. Anthony carried a bulletproof vest to protect himself and he was not the first one to do so," Ho Ka-tat, vice chairman of the Hong Kong Press Photographers Association, told AFP. The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand in a statement late Sunday also expressed disappointment at the charge.

"Thai authorities should consult with the media community... to explore a way around the 1987 law, which was surely not intended to prosecute journalists carrying out their normal duties," the statement said. — AFP



MANILA: Philippine President Benigno Aquino III, 6th from left, raises hands with the ruling Liberal Party presidential candidate Mar Roxas, 5th from left, and his running mate Maria Leonor "Leni" Robredo, 6th from right, as they announce the senatorial slate for next year's elections in suburban Quezon city, north of Manila, Philippines yesterday. — AP

PHILIPPINES' TURBULENT ELECTION SEASON KICKS OFF

MAYOR OF SOUTHERN ISLAND OF MINDANAO SHOT DEAD

MANILA: The Philippines' election season kicked off yesterday with politicians registering for thousands of posts, launching a typically raucous and deadly seven months of campaigning in a famously chaotic democracy.

A successor to President Benigno Aquino will be chosen in the six-yearly polls, with the frontrunners a savvy politician accused of corruption, the adopted daughter of a movie star and a low-key stalwart of the ruling Liberal Party.

Aquino, who has won international plaudits for tackling systemic corruption and for his solid economic stewardship, is imploring voters to choose longtime ally Mar Roxas to continue his "straight path" style of governance. "This is a campaign to continue the straight path, a campaign to make our hopes possible, a campaign that will continue the heroic story of the Filipino people," Aquino said at a rally to announce the Liberal Party's Senate ticket.

But Roxas has struggled in opinion polls and is facing strong challenges from Jejomar Binay, the current vice president who is being investigated for graft, and Grace Poe, a political novice riding on her late father's popularity.

The start of a week-long registration process began on Monday for more than 18,000 positions up for grabs-from the presidency down to village captain level-in the May elections.

Binay, a former Aquino ally who now heads the main opposition party, was the first of the major candidates to register at election headquarters in Manila yesterday morning.

Binay had been a clear leader in opinion polls until the Senate and ombudsman began investigating him for alleged corrupt activities when he was mayor of Makati, the financial district in the Philippine capital. Binay has insisted on his innocence.

Democracy challenges

The Philippines, a former US colony of 100 million, has struggled to establish a stable democracy, with many of the problems blamed on dictator Ferdinand Marcos's rule from 1965-1986.

But his son and namesake is running for the vice presidency next year as an independent, insisting his late father's rule was benign and that voters will focus on present problems rather than the past.

"There are corrupt Filipinos... within and outside the government who are killing our economy and keeping us poor," Marcos, 58, said at a weekend rally alongside his controversial mother and former first lady Imelda.

Another feature of the Philippines' democracy has been politicians resorting to violence to eliminate rivals or cheating to rig polls. The mayor of a town on the turbulent southern island of Mindanao was shot dead yesterday, hours after filing his candidacy for re-election.

Randy Climaco was travelling with relatives and followers through his town of Tungawan when men fired upon their vehicle, a police report said. "Mayor Climaco died on the spot while four of his companions were wounded," it added.

On October 1 a roadside bomb injured a local mayor and killed three of his bodyguards in the violence-wracked southern island of Basilan.

The most infamous incident occurred in 2009, when the warlord family of a southern province allegedly massacred 58 people to try to stop a rival registering his candidacy for provincial governor.

While some members of the Ampatuan family accused of orchestrating the massacre are behind bars and on trial for the murders, many others are expected to compete in the polls.

These include Sajid Ampatuan, who has been charged with murder but was allowed to post bail this year. "I am not here to scare the people but to make their vision real," Ampatuan, who registered yesterday to run for a village mayor position in his family's stronghold, told AFP by phone.

Another enduring challenge for the nation's democracy has been the power of elite clans who

dominate national, provincial and local posts, according to political analysts. "Philippine politics has always been governed by the elite... I don't think the dynasties will change," Ateneo University political science professor Benito Lim told AFP.

Roxas, for instance, is the grandson of a former president. And while Binay does not come from a political family, since rising to influence he has set up his own dynasty, with his wife and children becoming powerful politicians. Only celebrities, such as movie or sporting stars, have generally been able to challenge the elites.

Boxing hero Manny Pacquiao, 36, is one of those. The eight-time world champion is currently a member of the House of Representatives and will next year run for a higher-profile Senate seat. — AFP

MISSIONARIES OF CHARITY ENDS ADOPTION SERVICES IN INDIA

KOLKATA: The Missionaries of Charity, the Roman Catholic order founded by Mother Teresa, has decided to close its adoption services in India after the country amended its rules to make single parents eligible to adopt.

The religious order said that allowing single or divorced parents to adopt goes against its beliefs.

India's Central Adoption Resource Authority reviewed its guidelines in July in an effort to make adoptions more transparent and enable more people to adopt children. It also made it mandatory for all prospective parents to register with the national adoption agency.

Previously, adoption agencies and homes across the country could bend adoption rules or make it harder for certain people to adopt because there was no national monitoring mechanism.

The new government order states that "any prospective adoptive parent, irrespective of his marital status and whether or not he has his own biological son or daughter, can adopt a child."

The Missionaries of Charity looks after

abandoned children, including those with special needs, at homes across the country called Nirmal Shishu Bhawans. While the order will no longer place children for adoption, it said it would continue to care for abandoned children who aren't chosen for adoption.

"Missionaries of Charity has decided to discontinue adoption of children at its centers after the government has announced its new guidelines. But the organization will continue to nurture and provide shelter to the destitute and orphan children," Sunita Kumar, the group's spokeswoman, said yesterday.

A government minister criticized the order's decision. "They have cited ideological issues with our adoption guidelines related to giving a child up for adoption to single, unwed mothers. They have their own agenda and now when they have to come under a unified secular agenda, they are refusing it," Women and Child Development Minister Maneka Gandhi said last week, after the order had voiced its displeasure with the government's new adoption policies.

SEVEN INDONESIANS ON TRIAL OVER ALLEGED IS LINKS

JAKARTA: Seven Indonesian men went on trial yesterday accused of links to the Islamic State group, and could face the death penalty if found guilty of breaking anti-terror laws.

They were all charged with being part of an "evil conspiracy" and accused of a range of crimes, from trying to aid acts of terror to supporting IS, which has been banned in the world's most populous Muslim-majority country since October last year.

Three of the accused-Ahmad Junaedi alias Abu Salman, Ridwan Sungkar alias Abu Bilal, and Helmi Muhammad Alamudi alias Abu Royan-allegedly went to Syria to join IS last year and received military training, prosecutors said.

"Not only was the defendant declared that he joined IS, he also joined military training in ISIS camps," prosecutor Teddy Irawan told a Jakarta court, opening the case against Sungkar. ISIS is an alternative name for the Islamic State group.

"The defendant was aware that the objec-

tive of the training was preparation to launch acts of terror," he added.

One defendant, Tuah Febriwansyah alias Muhammad Fachry, was accused of running websites with pro-IS content, uploading articles such as one named: "Pledging loyalty to ISIS, why not?". All the defendants were being tried separately.

The lawyer for six of the defendants, Asludin Hatjani, said he hoped his clients could escape the IS-linked charges as most of their crimes were alleged to have taken place before Indonesia banned the group.

Hundreds of Indonesians are feared to have travelled to the Middle East to join IS, which controls vast swathes of territory in Syria and Iraq. Several have been detained on their return.

However, counter-terror officials complain that current laws are still too weak to stop extremists leaving for Syria and to block the spread of radical information on the Internet.— AFP

POLITICIANS UNITE AGAINST BELEAGUERED MALAYSIA PM

KUALA LUMPUR: Influential former Malaysian premier Mahathir Mohamad and some key ruling party members demanded yesterday that embattled Prime Minister Najib Razak answer a barrage of corruption allegations.

On the same day, a whistle-blower and his lawyer detained for their efforts to expose graft allegations against Najib were charged with attempting to "sabotage" the country's banking sector.

Critics want Najib to explain massive sums allegedly missing from state-owned development company 1MDB which he launched, as well as the revelation in July that nearly \$700 million in mysterious transfers had been made to his personal bank accounts.

"Unless somebody speaks up, the government will get away with doing all kinds of wrong things," Mahathir told a press conference, according to The Star newspaper.

"So they may take action against me or any one of us but somebody has to take the risk to voice our disquiet, anger and feeling that the government is not looking after the interests of this country."

Joining Mahathir, Malaysia's leader from 1981-2003, at the press conference were several heavyweights from the ruling United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), which has held power since 1957, including party deputy president and the country's former deputy premier, Muhyiddin Yassin.

Muhyiddin who has repeatedly called for Najib to shed light on the corruption allegations, was stripped of his deputy premier title by Najib in July. Both Najib and 1MDB vehemently deny any wrongdoing.

'Line in the sand'

Tensions have been simmering in UMNO ranks since allegations of corruption surrounding Najib and 1MDB surfaced in July, Ibrahim

Suffian, head of the Merdeka Center polling firm, told AFP. "This is a confluence of different strands of dissent within UMNO coming together," he said. "A line has now been clearly drawn in the sand-between on one side and Najib on the other-and the first salvo has been fired." Last week Malaysia's nine state sultans, in a rare statement, said failure to investigate the allegations against Najib had created a "crisis of confidence". They called for a probe to be revived.

Inquiries have stalled after Najib fired his attorney-general in July and after police raided the anti-corruption agency offices in August.

Malaysia's central bank said it had formally recommended criminal proceedings be launched against 1MDB in August but the recommendation has since been dismissed by a Najib-appointed attorney general. Mahathir and others at the press conference also condemned the detention of the whistle-blower and his lawyer.

Khairuddin Abu Hassan, a former UMNO member, was arrested in September after launching an international campaign to expose the allegations. His lawyer Matthias Chang was arrested last week for suspected involvement in the campaign.

Facing the possibility of 15 years in jail if found guilty, they were charged on Monday with attempting to "sabotage Malaysia's banking and financial services sector", The Star and the New Straits Times reported.

Regulators in the United States and elsewhere are now reportedly looking into the affair, with authorities in Switzerland and Singapore saying they had frozen some accounts as they probe possible money-laundering and other crimes.

Najib's allies say the money deposited into his accounts was "political donations" from Middle Eastern sources, but have refused to provide details. — AFP



People release 88 doves as political leaders and families of victims of the Bali bombings gather on Sydney's Coogee Beach yesterday to mark the 13th anniversary of the terrorist attack that killed 88 Australians. Twenty locals from the eastern Sydney suburb died in the bombings at Kuta in 2002. — AFP

US AIR-DROPS AMMO TO REBELS IN SYRIA

BEIRUT/WASHINGTON: US forces have carried out an air drop of small arms ammunition to Syrian Arab rebels in northern Syria, barely two weeks after Russia raised the stakes by intervening in the war on the side of President Bashar Al-Assad. A US military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said yesterday the air drop of supplies to the opposition fighters on Sunday was part of a revamped US strategy announced last week to help rebels in Syria battling Islamic State militants.

Last week, Washington shelved a program to train and equip "moderate" rebels opposed to Assad who would join the fight against Islamic State. The only group on the ground to have success against Islamic State while cooperating with the US-led coalition is a Kurdish militia, the YPG, which has carved out an autonomous zone in northern Syria and advanced deep into Islamic State's stronghold Raqqqa province.

Yesterday, the YPG announced a new alliance with small groups of Arab fighters, which could help deflect criticism that it fights only on behalf of Kurds. Washington has indicated that it could direct funding and weapons to Arab commanders on the ground who cooperate with the YPG. Syrian Arab rebels said they had been told by Washington that new weapons were on their way to help them launch a joint offensive with their Kurdish allies in the city of Raqqqa, the de facto Islamic State capital. The Russian intervention in Syria has wrong-footed the US administration of President Barack Obama, which has been trying to defeat Islamic State while still calling for Assad's downfall.

After joining the 4-year-old war in Syria, an attempt by President Vladimir Putin to win over opponents of Russia's bombing cam-

paign was snubbed on Monday, with Saudi sources saying they had warned the Kremlin leader of dangerous consequences and Europe issuing its strongest criticism yet. Putin met Saudi Defence Minister Mohammed bin Salman on the sidelines of a Formula One race in a Russian resort on Sunday.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said yesterday that those talks, along with discussions with the United States, had yielded progress on the conflict, although Moscow, Washington and Riyadh did not agree in full "as yet". But a Saudi source said the defence minister, a son of the Saudi king and one of the chief architects of its regional policy, had told Putin that Russia's intervention would escalate the war and inspire militants from around the world to go there to fight. Riyadh would continue to support Assad's opponents and demand that he leave power, the source said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

European foreign ministers, meeting in Luxembourg, issued a statement calling on Moscow to halt its bombing of Assad's moderate enemies immediately. They were unable to agree on whether Assad should have any role in ending the crisis but they did decide to extend sanctions by essentially freezing the assets of the spouses of senior Syrian figures. "The recent Russian military attacks ... are of deep concern and must cease immediately," ministers said in their most strongly-worded statement on Russia's intervention in a war which has claimed the lives of 250,000 people and caused a refugee crisis in neighbouring countries and Europe. "The military escalation risks prolonging the conflict, undermining a political process, aggravating the humanitarian situation and increasing radicalization," said the ministers. — Reuters

SAUDI KING REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO HAJJ

RIYADH PLANS TRIPLING OF UMRAH VISAS

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's King Salman said yesterday that "irresponsible comments" and criticism of the kingdom's management of the hajj will not affect his country's oversight of the annual Islamic pilgrimage. It was the king's first official response to denunciations by regional rival Iran, which has questioned Saudi Arabia's custodianship of the hajj following a deadly crush Sept 24 that killed at least 1,480 pilgrims, according to an AP count based on official statements from nations whose citizens died.

Iran's death toll of 465 is the highest announced by any country thus far. Egypt's Foreign Ministry on Monday said the death toll among Egyptians has climbed to 181, with 53 still missing. Immediately after the disaster, Iran's leaders accused Saudi Arabia Sunni rulers of mismanagement and ineptitude, and top Shiite clerics and lawmakers are calling on the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to manage the hajj.

In an apparent reference to those comments, Salman said the kingdom "will not allow any hidden hands" to politicize the tragedy and divide Muslims. "Irresponsible comments that aim to take political advantage of this incident, and cause dissension and division in the Muslim world, will not affect the role of Saudi Arabia and its great duty and responsibilities in the service of pilgrims" the king said in remarks carried by the official Saudi Press Agency. The king delivered his remarks during a Cabinet session in the capital Riyadh. Salman stressed that Saudi Arabia has been honored by God to serve Islam's holy sites in Makkah and Madinah, and is dedicated to ensuring the comfort and safety of pilgrims, who

are commonly referred to by the kingdom as "guests of God".

The king's comments come a day after Saudi Prince Turki Al-Faisal, whose brother is governor of Makkah, told AP that the kingdom would not be entertaining Iranian calls to share management or security of the hajj because Riyadh considers it "a matter of sovereignty" and a "privilege". The royal Al Saud family, which governs Saudi Arabia and for which the country is named after, derives enormous prestige and legitimacy from being the caretakers of the hajj and holy sites in Makkah and Madinah, which draw millions of pilgrims from around the world annually. King Salman, in line with past Saudi monarchs, holds the title of "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques" in reference to the Grand Mosque in Makkah and Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) mosque in Madinah, where he is buried.

Saudi Arabia's Health Ministry has said 769 pilgrims were killed in this year's hajj disaster. Health and security officials have not immediately responded to AP requests for clarification on the death toll figures announced by individual countries and the tally given by Saudi officials. Saudi Arabia is investigating the tragedy, which took place just outside Makkah in an area called Mina. Survivors say a large crowd heading to perform one of the final rites of hajj met another large crowd coming from the opposite direction on a narrow street flanked by iron gates. People in the middle were crushed and suffocated as crowds in the back, unaware, continued to push forward. It was the second tragedy to strike this year's hajj. On Sept 11, a massive crane collapsed onto the Grand Mosque, killing 111 worshippers

in Makkah.

Efforts to identify the dead continue at a health ministry facility guarded by security officers in the Makkah suburb of Muissem, sources say. Representatives from foreign consulates are allowed in to the single-storey building to try to identify bodies through albums of photographs, said a source familiar with the operation. Authorities are also using DNA and fingerprint analysis. Access to the site by journalists is denied. Muissem is home to the Muala cemetery which many Saudis choose as their final resting place because it is near Islam's holy sites.

Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia is planning to triple the number of visas it issues for the umrah pilgrimage, newspapers reported yesterday. The Saudi Gazette and Okaz newspapers quoted Hajj Minister Bandar Al-Hajjar as saying that as many as 1.25 million pilgrims are expected to arrive each month starting next year. That compares with 400,000 a month now, the reports said. The new system would allow full use of massive expansion projects at the kingdom's holy sites, Hajjar was quoted as saying. Umrah is a lesser pilgrimage carried out any time during the year.

The major hajj pilgrimage, which all Muslims with the means are expected to complete at least once in their lives, this year drew about two million faithful. The number had declined, particularly because of a multi-billion-dollar expansion which began four years ago at the Grand Mosque in Makkah. The 400,000-sq-m (4.3-million-square-foot) Grand Mosque enlargement is the equivalent of more than 50 football pitches, and it will allow the complex to accommodate roughly two million people at once. — Agencies

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THE U.S. TO SUSPEND ITS
SYRIAN REBEL TRAINING PROGRAM...ROHINGYA VICTIMS
ENDURE STRESS OF
LIMBO IN THAILAND

By Alisa Tang

The strapping 23-year-old Rohingya Muslim was matter of fact as he described being forced onto a boat in Myanmar for a tortuous two-month-long journey, beaten and kicked by traffickers as he watched scores die of starvation and thirst along the way. He said he was abandoned in May in a jungle camp in Thailand's deep south near the Malaysian border, discovered and rescued a few hours later by Thai police and taken to a shelter tucked away amid tropical vegetation and rubber plantations. But his calm demeanour cracked when he spoke about his wife and one-year-old daughter.

On many evenings in this compound of cement buildings that has become home to 66 male Rohingya trafficking victims from Myanmar and 19 from Bangladesh, the man cried, homesick. Late last month, the shelter staff took pity on him, granting him a five-minute phone call to his home in Sittwe in western Myanmar's Rakhine state. "I could hear my baby crying," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation under the wary gaze of the shelter director, who monitored the interview he had reluctantly permitted with the condition that the man's identity was protected. "I want to go home. I miss them," the Rohingya man added, falling silent and bending over as he crumpled in sadness.

Swept up by trafficking rings taking advantage of the tens of thousands of Rohingya Muslims fleeing violence and apartheid-like conditions in Myanmar, this man may never go back home. The predominantly Buddhist country does not recognise the Rohingya as citizens and says any trafficking victims must pass nationality verification before being allowed back to Myanmar. He is now among about 600 Rohingya stranded in limbo in Thai shelters and immigration detention centres, some suffering depression and other mental illnesses after their ordeals, with little access to mental health care.

Escape by Boat

Communal violence and clashes in 2012 in Rakhine state forced 140,000 Rohingya from their homes into squalid camps. Myanmar maintains the Rohingya are illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, and denies them citizenship, healthcare, education and other basic rights. Since then, tens of thousands of Rohingya have fled, paying smugglers to take them in rickety boats in the hope of reaching Malaysia. Some said they were abducted by traffickers and forced onto boats. Migrants from Bangladesh, including some Rohingya, were also among the boat people.

Criminal gangs orchestrating the exodus diverted some migrants to secret camps near the Thai-Malaysia border, holding them for ransom and killing and torturing those whose families could not pay up. Others died of disease and neglect. After the discovery in May of dozens of graves on the Thai-Malaysia border, smugglers abandoned thousands of migrants at sea to avoid being caught in the widening net of Thai and Malaysian investigators.

The Rohingya rescued from trafficking camps are now stuck in shelters - identified as "people of concern" by the United Nations' refugee agency (UNHCR) and granted temporary protection in Thailand. They are separated from their families and face an uncertain future. "When you combine those emotions with the memories of the physical trauma being on a boat for several weeks or having been confined in brutal smugglers camps, then the trauma is compounded," said Jeff Labovitz, head of the International Organization for Migration mission in Thailand. "In some cases the asylum seekers and migrants endured starvation, beatings, extortion, and rape."

UNHCR says the common mental health issues among Rohingya refugees in Malaysia are "mild to moderate levels of stress, anxiety and depression", due to factors including trauma they faced at home as well as the daily stress of living in a country where they cannot legally work or go to school. "Some refugees, especially new arrivals, who had been held in traffickers' camps before arriving in Malaysia, have been known to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorders (including flashbacks and nightmares)," said UNHCR in Malaysia.

Phone Home as Therapy

In the Thai shelter, a phone call with loved ones has proven one of the best therapies for those who have been through traumatic experiences and face an uncertain future, shelter staff and aid workers say. The International Committee for the Red Cross, through its "restoring family links" programme, provided 1,411 short phone calls last year to the family members of Bangladeshi and Myanmar migrants held in immigration detention centres in Thailand. —Reuters

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GUN VIOLENCE RESEARCHERS AN ENDANGERED SPECIES?

By Mike Stobbe

Amid the bloodbaths of 21st-century America, you might think that there would be a lot of research into the causes of gun violence, and which policies work best against it. You would be wrong. Gun interests, wary of any possible limits on weaponry, have successfully lobbied for limitations on government research and funding, and private sources have not filled the breach. So funding for basic gun violence research and data collection remains minuscule - the annual sum total for all gun violence research projects appears to be well under \$5 million. A grant for a single study in areas like autism, cancer or HIV can be more than twice that much.

There are public health students who want to better understand rising gun-related suicide rates, recent explosions in firearm murders in many US cities, and mass murders like the one this month at an Oregon community college, where a lone gunman killed nine people. But many young researchers are staying away from the field. Some believe there's little hope Congress will do anything substantive to reduce gun violence, regardless of what scientists find. And the work is stressful - many who study gun violence report receiving angry emails and death threats from believers in unrestricted gun ownership. Currently, guns rank among the top five killers of people ages 1 to 64, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Deaths from gunfire have been holding steady at about 32,000 a year, with nearly half of them occurring in the South. But while the rates for gun murders and unintentional shooting deaths have been falling, firearm suicides - which account for 60 percent of gun deaths - have been rising. And nonfatal shooting injuries have reached their highest level since 1995.

US health researchers began to take a hard look at gun violence about 30 years ago, when firearm homicide rates were climbing to what were described as epidemic proportions. "The line is: If it's not a public health issue, why are so many people dying?" said Philip Cook, a Duke University economist who in the 1970s began studying the impact of guns on society. The CDC, the federal government's lead agency on the detection and prevention of health threats, took an early leading role in fostering more research into violence. But beginning in the 1980s, the National Rifle Association tried to discredit CDC-funded studies, accusing the agency and the

researchers the agency funded of incompetence and falsifying data. NRA officials in Washington did not respond to repeated AP requests for comment for this story.

CDC Sideline

In 1996, lawmakers sympathetic to the NRA took the \$2.6 million CDC had budgeted for firearm injury research and earmarked it for traumatic brain injury. Congressional Republicans also included language directing that no CDC injury research funding could go to research that might be used, in whole or in part, to advocate or promote gun control. Exactly what that language meant wasn't clear. But CDC officials, aware of how vulner-



In this Oct 21, 2002 file photo, National Rifle Association President Charlton Heston holds up a rifle as he addresses gun owners during a "get-out-the-vote" rally in Manchester, New Hampshire. —AP

able their injury research center was becoming, ultimately adopted a conservative interpretation. The agency ceased to be the main engine driving gun violence research.

With the CDC largely out of the picture, gun violence researchers turned to other sources. But there wasn't much. The field withered, with limited funding and not much new blood. In the last decade, funding for gun violence grew so tight that Dr. Gary Wintemute, a long-time gun violence researcher at the University of California at Davis, spent more than \$1 million of his own money to keep different gun violence research projects going. Much of the research that has been done has had to be

relatively simple - based on small surveys or on what limited data has been collected on guns and on gun-related injuries and deaths.

As state and federal officials debate gun laws or violence prevention programs, it's often not clear how well they'll work. To answer such questions, researchers ideally would like to know the exact number, type, and distribution of guns, as well as who owns them and where people got them. They'd like to know how and where they're stored, and to track use of gun safety courses.

Risk

That's all key data for determining actual risk and what actions best reduce risk. Researchers have wondered if there will be a turning point that might cause more people to advocate for research. Then came the Dec 2012 carnage in Newtown, Connecticut, where an armed 20-year-old man entered an elementary school and used a semiautomatic rifle to kill 20 first graders and six adult school staff members before killing himself. It was the deadliest mass slaying at a school in US history.

The White House directed the CDC to research the causes and prevention of gun violence. The actions included a call for Congress to provide \$10 million to the CDC for gun violence research. The prestigious Institute of Medicine convened a special committee of experts to develop a research agenda. But Congress did not budget money to the CDC for gun violence research. It didn't strip away the legislative language that had chilled CDC activity on guns, either. The research agenda was not formally adopted by anybody.

Some young researchers are put off by the frustration of working in a field where their findings would likely be politicized, and have little impact. Worried about ensuring a flow of funding, even those most intrigued by gun violence must spend a lot of time working on other topics. Meanwhile, the longtime leaders in gun violence research aren't getting any younger; many are in their 60s and 70s.

Some, worried that the field may soon shrink through attrition, are working hard to recruit successors. Dr. Michael Levas, a young researcher in Milwaukee, is drawn to the area of gun violence, and fascinated by its potential, but he won't commit to it. "If the climate was right and the funding was there, it would make sense to focus on gun violence prevention," he said. "But right now, it would be a dead end." —AP

BOY WITH GOLDEN GUN BEING GROOMED TO RULE?

By Anna Malpas

He is 11 years old but has already attended the UN General Assembly, had his picture taken with US President Barack Obama and met a pope - and he has his own golden gun. Meet Kolya, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko's illegitimate son who some believe is being groomed to succeed his authoritarian father, a man once dubbed Europe's last dictator. On Sunday, the tall, fair-haired boy cast his father's ballot as the Belarusian leader - who won a fifth consecutive term by a landslide - voted at a physical culture institute near his home on the outskirts of the capital Minsk.

The 61-year-old strongman's ultra-close, and often bizarre relationship with his third son, the child of his doctor, has held the former Soviet state in thrall, where Lukashenko's personal life is widely discussed, albeit cautiously. Lukashenko himself has acknowledged that Kolya is the son of a doctor, not of his wife Galina, who is hardly ever seen at his side and who is the mother of his two much older sons - 39-year-old Viktor, a presidential aide on national security, and 35-year-old Dmitry, who heads the president's sports club.

Galina, a retired teacher, has never been a public figure, although Lukashenko has spoken gratefully of her role in helping his early career. Kolya's mother is widely assumed to be Lukashenko's former personal doctor, Irina Abelskaya. Kolya's existence only became widely known when he was three, according to the Belarusian Partisan website. At four, Lukashenko took him to an ice hockey match.

The pair's devotion to each other is obvious, with the two often appearing in matching outfits-whether in suits or in military uniform, with the country's top military brass saluting the boy as if he was a five-star general. It was at war games with Russia that Kolya's now notorious golden pistol made its first public appearance in 2009, with then

Russian president Dmitry Medvedev admiring it as the five-year-old strutted around proudly with it in a holster at his waist.

Only His Father Could Feed Him

Lukashenko's biography page on his website provides no details of his personal life, but photographs show him walking hand-in-hand with Kolya at a World War II Victory Day parade. Late last month Lukashenko and his son, who was baptised Nikolai, posed awkwardly in formal suits next to the smiling Obamas at the UN in a photograph also posted on Lukashenko's website. Kolya was also spotted by journalists sitting solemnly in the Belarusian delegation's box at the UN General Assembly, usually reserved for top

diplomats. In 2008, Lukashenko told Russian tabloid Komsomolskaya Pravda that Kolya, then four, would only let his father feed and dress him. And he told US academic Grigory Ioffe - who wrote a book about the Belarusian strongman this year - that he is bringing up his son himself and that Kolya's mother sees him no more often than that the rest of the population do on television.

Kolya, who was born a day after his father turned 50, has met the previous pope, Benedict, the late Venezuelan strongman Hugo Chavez and Chinese President Xi Jinping, among others. After a 2011 terrorist attack in the Minsk metro, Kolya went down to survey the aftermath hand-in-hand with his father and lay flowers, state television

showed. In an interview with Russia's Rain TV last year, Lukashenko said that Kolya had met his wife several times and Kolya's mother did not mind this.

Imperious Behaviour

Jokes about Kolya's being groomed as Lukashenko's successor are swapped by Belarusians, who say the president will rule "until Kolya". Lukashenko himself in 2012 told Chavez that "there is someone to take over the baton of our cooperation in 20-25 years' time". Rumours fly of Kolya's imperious behaviour towards staff or even his older brothers. The Belgazeta opposition newspaper wrote that state television showed Kolya "make a strange gesture - a kind of dismissive wave - at his elder brothers Viktor and Dmitry" at a recent church ceremony.

The paper suggested that on some level Belarusians are jealous of Kolya, as a "later and more beloved child." "The fact that Kolya shook hands with Hugo Chavez, gave an alphabet book to Benedict XVI and was kissed on the cheek by [Chinese First Lady] Peng Liyuan, while the electorate has to go to work in the morning... just adds melodramatic fire to this love triangle," it said.

But several Belarusians told AFP they viewed Lukashenko's behaviour toward his son as abnormal, saying it put enormous psychological pressure on the child. "I think it's classic paranoia," said opposition leader Mikola Statkevich. "The loving father's quirk is easy to understand, although hard to approve," wrote Belgazeta.

Lukashenko, whose main home is just outside Minsk, says he sends his son to an ordinary village school, and television has shown Kolya taking part in a school play. Belarusian journalists worked out that so far this new school year, Kolya has missed a week of school on trips to China and New York. Some attribute Kolya's high-profile status to advice from British image maker Timothy Bell, who was hired in 2008 to soften the dictator's fearsome reputation. —AFP



A picture taken on Sept 28, 2015 shows Belarus' President Alexander Lukashenko and his son Kolya posing for a photo with US President Barack Obama and US First Lady Michelle Obama during a luncheon at the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly at the UN headquarters in New York. —AFP

BLIND HOPES FOR ESCAPE

AMSTERDAM: Netherlands coach Danny Blind is clinging to the hope that Turkey will lose at home today and offer the Dutch a backdoor route to possible Euro 2016 qualification.

The Netherlands, third at the World Cup last year, can only make next month's playoffs if Turkey lose at home to Group A leaders Iceland on Tuesday while they beat the second-placed Czech Republic at home in Amsterdam in their final match. With Iceland and the Czechs guaranteed the top two places — and automatic qualification for the finals in France — Turkey and the Dutch are battling for third spot and a playoff berth.



Turkey are third with 15 points and have a two-point lead over the Netherlands, who can only finish above them if they win and the Turks lose because the Dutch have a worse head-to-head record and would miss out if the teams were level on points.

"We have to win and we are focused on that and then hope the other match result works out for us," said Blind at yesterday's pre-match news conference.

The Dutch had hoped they would leapfrog Turkey on Saturday when they beat Kazakhstan 2-1 away but the Turks secured a surprise 2-0 win over the Czechs in Prague the same night.—Reuters

MUGURUZA PULLS OUT FROM HK

HONG KONG: Spanish world number four Garbine Muguruza has withdrawn from this week's Hong Kong Open due to a lingering ankle injury, organisers said yesterday.

Muguruza, who turned 22 last week, claimed the biggest title of her fledgling career by beating Switzerland's Tímea Babcsinszky 7-5 6-4 on Sunday to win the China Open, rising to fourth in the rankings, a point behind third-placed Russian Maria Sharapova.

"Muguruza suffered a left ankle injury while playing in the Wuhan Open at the beginning of October," Hong Kong organisers said on the tournament website (www.hktennisopen.hk).

"The Spaniard ... will now rest the injury ahead of a likely appearance at the season-ending WTA Finals beginning on Oct. 25," they added.

Muguruza's run to the final in Wuhan, where she lost to Venus Williams, and her success in Beijing meant she reached finals in back-to-back weeks for the first time.

Her withdrawal in Hong Kong follows those of Belarusian Victoria Azarenka, Eugenie Bouchard of Canada and Germany's Sabine Lisicki, who are also injured.—Reuters

KOMPANY FIT TO PLAY QUALIFIER

BRUSSELS: Vincent Kompany has been declared fit and is expected to return from injury to play for Belgium in their last Euro 2016 qualifier today despite the reservation of his club manager.

"Vincent Kompany has participated fully in training and without any problems. I expect that he will be ready for the match against Israel," coach Marc Wilmots told reporters on Sunday. "He has worked hard in training and knows his own body well."

Kompany's call-up for the two qualifiers against Andorra, which Belgium won 4-1 on Saturday, and Israel in Brussels today were criticised by Manchester City.

City manager Manuel Pellegrini said the 29-year-old was not yet fit enough to play after a calf injury kept him out of the club's last five outings since the home loss to Juventus in the Champions League on Sept. 15. "I've not been in contact with Man City myself but the club are kept up to date with developments. I think it will be good for Man City if Kompany gets some match time," added Wilmots.

Belgium have already qualified for the Euro 2016 finals but can rise to number one in the next FIFA rankings if they beat Israel in what is expected to be a festival atmosphere in Brussels.—Reuters



CARDIFF: Players in a scrum during the Rugby World Cup Pool D match between France and Ireland at the Millennium Stadium.—AP

IRELAND TOP GROUP BUT AT A HEAVY COST

LONDON: Ireland beat France 24-9 in a brutal Cardiff encounter to earn a quarter-final meeting with Argentina, leaving the well-beaten French the daunting prospect of facing New Zealand as the Rugby World Cup's pool phase came to a close on Sunday. In the most eagerly-awaited match outside of Pool A, Ireland overcame their Six Nations rivals for the first time in four World Cup meetings. But the win came at a heavy cost, with the flyhalf Johnny Sexton and captain Paul O'Connell in danger of missing the rest of the tournament.

Ireland have never previously reached the semi-finals but have given themselves every chance this time, while France will have to repeat their stunning 2007 quarter-final win over the All Blacks in a game that is also a re-run of the 2011 final.

It will not be plain-sailing for the Irish, however. Argentina warmed up nicely with a nine-try, 64-19 thrashing of Namibia and look a considerably more dangerous attacking side than the toothless French. Earlier on Sunday Italy ended their under-

whelming involvement with a 32-22 win over a spirited Romania to secure third spot in Pool D and automatic qualification for 2019.

The hosts of that tournament, Japan, signed off from their best-ever World Cup with a 28-18 victory over the United States, becoming the first team to win three pool games and not progress—having only ever won one match in all their previous World Cups. The game of the day, however, was in Cardiff. France and Ireland had both cruised through their first three pool games with an eye on Sunday's finale and the Millennium Stadium produced an atmosphere worthy of the occasion.

Ireland fans were in the majority but their faith was severely tested by early injuries to Sexton and O'Connell, with the latter likely to be forced into retirement from international rugby three weeks earlier than planned after 109 Ireland appearances and seven for the British and Irish Lions.

The squad's strength in depth was illustrated, however, by the way they took the problems in

their stride to lead 9-6 at the break.

They then strangled the life out of a disappointing France in the second half and underlined their dominance with tries from Rob Kearney and Conor Murray. "I'm incredibly proud of the performance," Ireland coach Joe Schmidt said. "It was a battle that was attritional but a battle that showed a fair bit of character in the side."

Argentina's final outing in the pool phase was a considerably less taxing affair and nine different Pumas players scored a try. Juan Martin Hernandez, playing at flyhalf, Matias Moroni, Horacio Agulla, Facundo Isa and Lucas Nogueira helped them to a 36-7 halftime lead, with Matias Alemanno, Leonardo Senatore, Julian Montoya and Tomas Cubelli joining in after the break as the Pumas turned on the style against the tiring Africans.

Namibia, as they have all tournament, showed real grit and were rewarded with tries for Johan Tromp, JC Greyling and Eugene Jantjies.

UPLIFTING MOMENT

The largely amateur team also provided one of the uplifting moments of the tournament when giant prop Johnny Redelinghuys was given the chance to convert Jantjies' last-minute try to mark his 50th and final international.

After lumbering up, his kick dropped short and wide but produced smiles and handshakes all round and earned the loudest cheer of the day from the Leicester crowd.

It is easy to forget how dire Japan's record was before this year, with their only win in seven previous tournaments coming against Zimbabwe in 1991 and an unwanted World Cup record to their name when New Zealand hammered them 145-17 in 1995. However, after shocking South Africa in their opening game and then beating Samoa, they played with confidence and panache to beat the United States in Gloucester but finished behind Scotland, who gathered two bonus points and also beat Japan. Loose forward Amanaki Mafi and

wingers Yoshikazu Fujita and Kotaro Matsushima scored tries for Japan, with fullback Chris Wyles and winger Takudzwa Ngwenya replying for the Americans, who depart having lost all four games.

Italy, still the only Tier One country never to reach the quarter-finals, looked set for a convincing win when tries by Leonardo Sarto, Edoardo Gori, Tommaso Allan and Alessandro Zanni had them in control at 29-3. But Romania, who came from 15-0 down to beat Canada on Tuesday, again hit back with two tries for Adrian Apostol and one for Valentin Poparlan in a rousing final 15 minutes. There was bad news for Wales after their defeat by Australia on Saturday as back Liam Williams became the latest to join their long injury list and has been ruled out of the rest of the tournament with a foot injury. Wales face South Africa in the quarter-finals while Australia will take on Scotland, both games at Twickenham next weekend. The other two quarter-finals will be at the Millennium Stadium.—Reuters



INDIANAPOLIS: Indiana Fever's Briann January (center) heads to the basket as Minnesota Lynx's Seimone Augustus (left) and Anna Cruz (right) watch in the first half of Game 4 of the WNBA Finals basketball series.—AP

FEVER FORCE GAME 5

INDIANAPOLIS: Shenise Johnson scored 15 points and Marissa Coleman added 14 to help the Indiana Fever beat the Minnesota Lynx 75-69 on Sunday night, forcing a decisive Game 5 in the WNBA Finals.

As they've done all playoffs, the Fever found a way to stave off elimination. Indiana is 5-0 in elimination games this postseason and 9-2 since the 2012 playoffs when it beat Minnesota for its lone title. Game 5 is tomorrow in Minnesota.

Trailing 38-36 early in the third quarter, Indiana took control with a 13-2 run. Johnson scored the final four points of the burst.

Indiana led 51-44 before Coleman scored five straight, including a 3-pointer that gave the Fever the biggest lead of the series for either team at 58-44. That was the Fever's only basket in a nine-minute stretch. Indiana had just one basket in the final quarter allowing Minnesota to rally within four behind Maya Moore, but the Lynx could get no closer.—AP

LOGANO RACES INTO 3RD ROUND OF PLAYOFFS

CONCORD: Joey Logano has been to victory lane four times this season, and all four trips required him to beat reigning Sprint Cup champion Kevin Harvick.

The latest win, Sunday at Charlotte Motor Speedway, was a critical and confidence-building victory. He again shrugged off Harvick to earn an automatic berth into the third round of the Chase for the Sprint Cup championship. Harvick, who has 11 second-place finishes this season, has been runner-up to Logano three times. Harvick finished third in Logano's win at Watkins Glen, where Harvick ran out of gas while leading on the last lap.

"When you can beat (Harvick) any day, any time, that's a big deal for us," team owner Roger Penske said. "I think that it was good that we could at least be on a level playing field with him today." Harvick led 581 laps in the opening round of the Chase and routed the field last week at Dover to advance into the second round. But he never made it to the front at Charlotte, the opening race of the second round of NASCAR's playoffs, as Logano led 227 of the 334 laps.

Now Logano, who made it to the finale last season, doesn't have to worry about this daunting second round of the Chase. The series races next week at Kansas and then four drivers will be eliminated Oct. 25 at Talladega. "It helps us sleep here the next couple of weeks," Logano said. "This helps us recharge our batteries and get ready for the next round."

He feels good right now, but isn't crowing about his head-to-head success this season with Harvick. "I think there's a lot of fast race cars out there

right now," Logano said. "Last week, obviously, (Harvick) was dominant. This week we had a really fast car. Next week, who knows? You can't rely on anything." Harvick, who didn't lead a lap of a race that was scheduled for Saturday night but pushed to Sunday afternoon because of rain, was satisfied with second after struggling all weekend.

"If those are the off days, we'll be just fine," Harvick said. Martin Truex Jr. finished third - his career-best eighth top-five of the season - but wasn't breathing any easier about his Chase hopes. "Logano is the only one who is going to sleep the next few weeks," Truex said. "We still think we need to win next week." The top six finishers were Chase drivers as Denny Hamlin finished fourth and was followed by Kurt Busch and Carl Edwards.

Austin Dillon, who is not racing for the title, was seventh. Jeff Gordon, making the final start of his career at Charlotte, struggled for the first half of the race but salvaged an eighth-place finish. Logano teammate Brad Keselowski staved off a loose wheel over the closing laps as Chase drivers took eight of the top nine spots.

It was a far more difficult day for JGR drivers Matt Kenseth and Kyle Busch, who started side-by-side on the front row. Kenseth's race began to unravel when he missed his pit stall and fell back to 20th on a restart. From there, racing in traffic, he had contact with Ryan Newman that sent him into the wall. It was the first of many brushes with the wall for Kenseth, who also had to serve a penalty for too many crewmen working on his car during one of his stops for repairs. He was

finally put out of his misery when a broken part sent him into the wall - again - and to the garage. He finished 42nd and dropped to last in the Chase field. "Everything kind of snowballed," said the pole-sitter. "This is the best I can do. It's amazing I have a job. One thing led to another and then another." Things weren't much better for teammate Busch, who started second and was one of the strongest cars for most of the race.

But running third when a caution forced teams to choose a pit strategy, he headed to pit road, then changed his mind at the very last second. Only problem? Kyle Larson, running second, decided at that moment he wanted to duck onto pit road.

The two cars collided and both dropped to the middle of the pack dur-

ing their respective repairs. "I'm sure it doesn't matter, but please apologize as much as you can," radioed Larson, who is not running for the championship.

Busch finished 20th and he and Kenseth are now in the bottom four of the Chase standings. "It's tough, and we're going to have to battle through what we've got right now," said Busch, who was eliminated in the second round last year because he was wrecked at Talladega in the elimination race. Hendrick Motorsports could commiserate with the Gibbs issues. Kasey Kahne, who ran in a 5k Sunday morning for his foundation, suffered two early tire issues that sent him to the garage just 58 laps into the race. Then contact between Carl Edwards and Dale Earnhardt Jr. sent Earnhardt into the wall.—AP



CONCORD: Joey Logano celebrates in Victory Lane after winning the NASCAR Sprint Cup series auto race at Charlotte Motor Speedway.—AP

AN EXCITING OUTCOME IN PRESIDENTS CUP, NOTHING MORE

INCHEON: The best Presidents Cup in 10 years revealed exactly what the Americans need to do if they want to win the Ryder Cup. Lobby for an increase in points.

The International team long believed that playing more matches gave the Americans an advantage because of their depth, and the fact this Presidents Cup wasn't decided until the final match suggests some truth to that. It was a petty argument. The International team was disappointed the matches were not reduced from 34 to 28, and the Americans were irritated by a compromise that reduced them to 30. This was as close as the Presidents Cup has ever come to hard feelings.

That's why the two cups only the look the same from the outside. One contains a bone dry martini, the other a lava flow. And that's why the Americans should celebrate great golf and a great victory without thinking it was a big step toward solving their recent Ryder

Cup woes.

It's not going to hurt. The assistants that US captain Jay Haas had with him last week were Ryder Cup captain Davis Love III, Fred Couples, Jim Furyk and Steve Stricker. At least three of them will be central figures at the Ryder Cup for the rest of the decade or more. The idea behind that Ryder Cup Task Force was to build some continuity.

Even so, the Presidents Cup is more like a dress rehearsal compared with opening night that is the Ryder Cup. The theater was full at the Jack Nicklaus Golf Club Korea, and cheers resounded from across the course for great shots. The players just couldn't figure out what they meant. The Koreans had never seen such a collection of golf stars before. Except for Bae Sang-moon and Danny Lee, this was not a partisan crowd.

During one of the early practice rounds, as five players were in one group and there were laughs all around, one of the coaches was hopeful that the

Americans could take this relaxed mood with them to Hazeltine for the Ryder Cup next year.

But they can't. Or at least they haven't. The Ryder Cup is different. The stakes are higher, the scrutiny more intense. The competition is tougher. Golf gets personal that week.

International captain Nick Price spoke all speak about how difficult it was to pull together 12 players from seven countries on three continents who spoke six languages (more considering Anirban Lahiri also speaks Bengali and some Punjabi), and how proud he was of how well they bonded. What he didn't mention is that the flag is manufactured, and so is the name of the team.

The running joke in the early days of the Presidents Cup was that it was the United States against Florida because so many were PGA Tour members. That hasn't changed. Thongchai Jaidee of Thailand was the only International

player who won't have full PGA Tour status next season.

That's what prompted Couples, golf's version of Yogi Berra, to say, "They're all Americans, they were just born in a different country." But this is about more than a country, a continent or even a flag. The Ryder Cup rivalry is about a tour.

It's the European Tour - "country cousins" is the term Padraig Harrington once used - against the PGA Tour that is so rich and powerful that it's where most Europeans want to play. You can create a rivalry, but not a chip on the shoulder. That's personal.

And you can't transfer that winning feeling from one cup to the other, either. They are separate events. Americans play loose and make putts in the Presidents Cup because that's all they've been doing since it started in 1994 (except for 1998 in Australia, when a lot of them were shopping online for Christmas). Europe is loose and making

putts in the Ryder Cup because they've been winning. It takes the Americans winning the Ryder Cup, and winning it again, to change that. And the Americans haven't won consecutive Ryder Cups since the year Jordan Spieth was born.

The tide is shifting in the Ryder Cup. The youth movement is strong, and most of it resides in America - Spieth, Dustin Johnson, Fowler, Patrick Reed, with a host of others who will make it harder than ever to get on a team.

That ebb didn't start Sunday in South Korea. It won't start until next fall in Minnesota. Among the guests last week on a bone-chilling Sunday was Derek Sprague, the PGA of America president who already is doing his part to boost US chances by not making the Ryder Cup about him. Love was driving by when he saw Sprague, called him over and said, "I've already some ideas for next year." Sprague went over to hear them. "Hand warmers," Love said.—AP



Jason Holder in action in this file photo.

SRI LANKA AND WEST INDIES FACE OFF WITH YOUNG GUNS

GALLE: Sri Lanka and the West Indies will look to offload past baggage and begin a new era with fresh young talent when a two-Test series starts in Galle tomorrow.

Sri Lanka are rebuilding following the retirement of their batting greats, Mahela Jayawardena and Kumar Sangakkara, within the space of a year.

The West Indies, already hit by the reluctance of senior pros like Chris Gayle and Dwayne Bravo to play Test cricket, faced further turmoil when coach Phil Simmons was stood down for the tour for speaking out against his board's selection policies.

Former fast bowler and selector Eldine Baptiste, who will serve as interim coach for the tour, will try to ease newly-appointed Test captain Jason Holder into the role.

Holder, a 23-year-old all-rounder who has played just eight Tests, was a surprise choice to replace the seasoned Denesh Ramdin as captain. "We have a very young team and a young captain," Baptiste said. "My job is to keep the team focused for the Test matches." The West Indies are searching for their maiden Test win on Sri Lankan soil, where they have played nine matches since 1993 — losing five and drawing the other four.

Both teams will look to bounce back after a lacklustre year. The West Indians lost to South Africa and Australia, while the home series against England was drawn 1-1.

Angelo Mathews' Sri Lanka crashed to a 2-0 series defeat in New Zealand and lost home series to Pakistan and India by identical 2-1 margins. Like their rivals, Sri Lanka too have an interim coach in Jerome Jayaratne, who was given charge of the team after Marvan Atapattu resigned in the wake of the defeat against India.

Jayararatne, who did not play international cricket but made his mark as head of the Sri Lanka board's coaching department, has already described Mathews' boys as the "worst

fielding side in Asia".

He refused to take victory for granted against the young touring side. "I would like to believe that we have a better chance of getting back to winning ways, but I definitely won't underestimate them," he said. Only two players from either side have played more than 50 Tests—Mathews and Rangana Herath for Sri Lanka and batsman Marlon Samuels and Ramdin for the West Indies.

Herath, the 37-year-old left-arm spinner, could prove to be the difference when the first Test starts at the picturesque Galle International Stadium, a venue that traditionally favours spin.

Herath took seven for 48 against India in August, helping Sri Lanka bounce back to win that Test by 63 runs. In June Pakistani spin twins Yasir Shah and Zulfiqar Babar combined to grab 13 wickets between them as Sri Lanka suffered a 10-wicket defeat at the same venue.

In the absence of star spinner Sunil Narine, who was not picked for the Tests, the West Indies will rely on leg-break bowler Devendra Bishoo, who has claimed 50 wickets in 13 Tests so far. Sri Lanka's batting in the absence of Jayawardena and Sangakkara will revolve around skipper Mathews, who hit three centuries in the home Tests against Pakistan and India.

Sri Lanka (from) - Angelo Mathews (capt), Lahiru Thirimanne, Dimuth Karunaratne, Kaushal Silva, Dinesh Chandimal, Rangana Herath, Dhammika Prasad, Kusal Perera, Dushmantha Chameera, Nuwan Pradeep, Tharindu Kaushal, Suranga Lakmal, Dilruwan Perera, Milinda Siriwardena, Kusal Mendis.

West Indies (from) - Jason Holder (capt), Kraig Brathwaite, Jermaine Blackwood, Carlos Brathwaite, Devendra Bishoo, Darren Bravo, Rangana Chandrika, Shane Dowrich, Shannon Gabriel, Shai Hope, Denesh Ramdin, Kemar Roach, Marlon Samuels, Jerome Taylor, Jomel Warrican.—AFP

NZ'S ANDERSON RULED OUT OF AUSTRALIA TOUR WITH INJURY

WELLINGTON: All-rounder Corey Anderson has been ruled out of New Zealand's tour of Australia with a back injury and been replaced by Mitchell Santner, the team said yesterday.

The 24-year-old Anderson suffered the injury on New Zealand's tour of England and had not recovered sufficiently to shoulder a bowling workload, selector Gavin Larsen said in a statement. "Corey hasn't been able to recover as quickly as we hoped and we've chosen not to try to rush him back," said Larsen. "We've always said there were a number of checkpoints for him to meet before our departure date, and we're now in a position to confirm he's not ready."

"With that in mind, it's better for him to continue his rehabilitation." The 23-year-old Santner, who bowls left-arm spin as opposed to the brisk medium pace of the burly Anderson, impressed in the limited overs portion of New Zealand's tour of England and

was included for their series against Zimbabwe and South Africa but had to withdraw with a broken thumb.

"Mitch (is) an all-rounder who can bat at number six or seven and he's also a front-line bowler," Larsen added. "It's a good opportunity for him. We believe his left-arm spin will add some variety to our options and his batting is well-suited to the conditions expected across the Tasman."

New Zealand will play three tests in Australia, including the first twilight match in Adelaide, where a pink ball will be used. The first test in Brisbane begins on Nov. 5. The side had an intra-squad trial match in Hamilton last week under lights with a pink ball. Off-spinner Mark Craig said there was little difference between the pink ball and the white ball used for limited overs matches, but the trial had been good to become accustomed to what to expect under differing conditions.—Reuters

'THE FINISHER' FINISHED? INDIA DEBATE ON DHONI

NEW DELHI: The "helicopter shot" has disappeared, the boundaries are not flowing from his bat and the whisper is now growing louder that Mahendra Singh Dhoni is no more the middle-order finisher who could single-handedly get India over the line.

Even for his ardent fans, and he is still the most popular player in the cricket-mad country, it was painful to watch Dhoni struggle in Sunday's one-day series opener against South Africa.

Time and again, he tried the big shots that once came out of his blade with amazing regularity and time and again he could not connect.

Known for his penchant to seal victory with a six, exhibited famously in the final of the 2011 World Cup, Dhoni managed only one boundary in his 31-ball ordeal as the wheels came off India's chase in the final overs in Kanpur. Not that he did not try.

He stepped out against Morne Morkel, made room against Dale Steyn and ran hard between the wickets in the scorching heat, trying to do with the legs what his bat could not.

His laboured batting was all the more evident seen against centurion Rohit Sharma's effortless strokemaking at the other end during their 55-run stand. "Dhoni used to be great when the ball was pitched up to him," former captain K. Srikkanth told yesterday Times of India newspaper.

"But bowlers ... have understood that the key is not to give him any room to manoeuvre and Dhoni would not be the same player (again). "Dhoni can still be an accumulator but I don't think we are going to see the same devastating MSD in the days to come."

Going through a lean patch, Dhoni has also baffled many by wishing to bat higher in the order, having rejected the same suggestion for the large part of his career. Former captain Anil Kumble is part of the fast-dwindling tribe still convinced that Dhoni remains India's best "finisher".

"I don't think his role has changed. I don't think he should be pushed at number four to play a different role. He is still a good finisher," said Kumble. "One hit (in Sunday's match) and we would have been talking differently. His strike rate has obviously come down and the pitch did not help either."

Dhoni also blamed the low-bounce at Green



KANPUR: India's captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni miscues a shot to get out while playing against South Africa in this file photo.—AP

Park Stadium and rued how unforgiving the fans are. "It's not an easy job, it does not always work your way," he said after the loss. "It's a gamble but of course that's my job in the side.

I'm somebody who has to finish the job for the team. "When you finish a lot of many games, people always remember the ones you have not finished."—Reuters

PAKISTAN GET YASIR SCARE, FINN OUT FOR ENGLAND

ABU DHABI: Pakistan's chances of defeating England in today's opening Test match in Abu Dhabi suffered a blow yesterday when key leg-spinner Yasir Shah suffered a back spasm during practice.

The 29-year-old Shah stumbled in his follow-through and apparently hurt his back. "Yasir's injury is a concern and could be a jolt," skipper Misbah-ul-Haq told a press conference yesterday. "We are looking into it and hope that he is okay by tomorrow morning."

Pakistan are relying heavily on Shah and fellow left-arm spinner Zulfiqar Babar to win the three-match series in the United Arab Emirates. Shah took 24 wickets in Pakistan's 2-1 win in the Tests in Sri Lanka in July and was seen as the danger man for England, who were routed 3-0 by spinners Saeed Ajmal and Abdul Rehman here in 2012.

"Obviously he (Shah) is a key player for us but we are hoping for the best," said Misbah. "We are looking into calling one of the two left-arm spin-

ners who played in the warm-up game in Sharjah."

Pakistan are already without key batsman Azhar Ali, ruled out of the match with a foot infection. His place is likely to go to Shoaib Malik, who has not played a Test for five years.

Azhar's absence will put more pressure on Younis Khan, Misbah and Sarfraz Ahmed to shoulder the batting. Younis amassed 468 runs against Australia and hit a match-winning 171 not out in Pakistan's last Test in Sri Lanka, leaving him just 19 behind Pakistan's highest tally of 8,832 set by Javed Miandad.

Pakistan have been forced to play in the UAE due to security fears at home but have never lost a series here, winning four and drawing three.

Misbah admitted England are more prepared this time. "I think they are more prepared and know what mistakes they committed the last time so we need to also focus and improve our performance. We have to be at our best to be up there."

England skipper Alastair Cook admitted Shah's loss could be crucial for Pakistan. "You never know with these things," said Cook. "Of course it would be a loss for them. As always, the day before a big series we're concentrating on matters which are important to us."

"He is clearly a fantastic bowler who not many of us have faced. He's had a good start to his Test career," said Cook of Shah.

England were also hit by injury to paceman Steven Finn, who took four wickets in the second warm-up game, also in Sharjah. "It's a bitter blow for him, he bowled really well in that warm-up match," said Cook. "Over the last 12 months he's made huge strides back to where we would like him to be." England's answer to Pakistan's spin challenge will likely be underwhelming. Leg-spinner Adil Rashid is set to make his Test debut, six years after playing his first one-day international.

Moeen Ali is favourite to play as opener in a makeshift arrangement, with additional duties of bowling off-spin, despite never having opened the innings even in a first-class match.

If that happens, Moeen will be Cook's seventh partner since Andrew Strauss retired in 2012. Joe Root and Ben Stokes-England's leading performers with the bat-will be tested against quality spin. Dubai will host the second Test (October 22-26), with the final match in Sharjah (November 1-5).

Squads (from):

Pakistan: Misbah-ul-Haq (captain), Ahmed Shehzad, Shan Masood, Mohammad Hafeez, Fawad Alam, Asad Shafiq, Younis Khan, Shoaib Malik, Sarfraz Ahmed, Yasir Shah, Zulfiqar Babar, Wahab Riaz, Imran Khan, Rahat Ali, Junaid Khan.

England: Alastair Cook (captain), Moeen Ali, James Anderson, Samit Patel, Jonny Bairstow, Ian Bell, Stuart Broad, Jos Buttler, Alex Hales, Liam Plunkett, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, Ben Stokes, James Taylor, Mark Wood.

Umpires: Bruce Oxenford (AUS) and Paul Reiffel (AUS) TV umpire: Sundaram Ravi (IND) Match referee: Andy Pycroft (ZIM).—AFP



Yasir Shah

VARANE IS KEY AT THE HEART OF FRANCE'S BACK 4

PARIS: With six goals in two matches, France's offensive potential was on display last week as the host nation stepped up its preparations for next year's European Championship.

Karim Benzema ended a one-year drought with the national team with two goals against Armenia and Olivier Giroud left his confidence struggles behind with two more against Denmark. Teenage prodigy Anthony Martial and Antoine Griezmann also excelled.

After the 2-1 win in Copenhagen, which extended the team's winning streak to four matches, France coach Didier Deschamps said competition within his squad is so dense it's making

it tough on him. "We've maintained our positive dynamics, with different players, but each player should feel important and do their best to make my choices tough ones to make," Deschamps said. "Among the 23-man squad, there are a lot of players who also deserve to have a chance."

But of all the decisions Deschamps will need to make before finalizing his team for Euro 2016, there is one player he can't do without: Raphael Varane at center half.

Since last year's World Cup in Brazil, where France lost to Germany in the quarterfinals, Varane has become the essential piece in Deschamps' puzzle.

The 23-year-old Real Madrid defender is the only player to have started all 14 matches played by France since then, wearing the captain's armband three times. As host, France has already qualified for Euro 2016 and all of those matches were friendly games. Varane, who made his international debut two years ago, has been impressing for a while with his technique, speed and physical qualities. Back in 2011, he was hailed as Laurent Blanc's natural heir by France great Zinedine Zidane, and Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho regards him as "the best central defender in the world."

It was Mourinho who installed Varane

as a regular starter when he was in charge of Real Madrid, recruiting the Frenchman as the club's third-choice center back behind Sergio Ramos and Pepe.

"I was not doing well and I was unable to do the things I wanted to do on the field," Varane once told Le Journal du Dimanche newspaper of his time with Mourinho. "So he took it up with me. He asked why I wasn't running more in training. At first I was not impressed, but I eventually realized he was right. I had to do more."

Varane has since cemented his status at Madrid, where he remains in competition with Pepe. With France, he is an

undisputable starter, and a leader by example. Against the Danes on Sunday, he played just one half but thwarted every incursion in the French box with incisive tackles and interceptions.

"One of my objectives is to be as regular as possible, to string together matches," said Varane, who has played with six different partners in the back, including Mamadou Sakho, Laurent Koscielny and Eliaquim Mangala. "Now it's time to assess our form against Germany and England (in November)." With Varane offering all guarantees, the main issue for Deschamps is to find the adequate man to play alongside him in the heart of the French back four. —AP

CONTE: NO EURO GIFT FOR NORWAY

MILAN: Italy are chasing a seventh win in 10 Euro 2016 qualifiers when they host Norway in Rome today hoping to seal top spot in their group, their coach Antonio Conte has warned.

Italy, the beaten finalists at Euro 2012, qualified for next summer's showpiece in France thanks to a one-sided 3-1 win in Azerbaijan complete with goals from Eder, Stephan El Shaarawy and Matteo Darmian on Saturday.

The win left Italy top of Group H with a two-point cushion on Norway, who they face in their final qualifier in Rome. But any thoughts Italy might take it easy at the Stadio Olimpico were quickly dispelled by Conte after a win that provided further evidence the Azzurri, after first round exits at the last two World Cups, may have turned the corner.

"We will give Norway our utmost respect: in Rome it will be a great game," said Conte. Despite a few jitters, Italy dominated Robert Prosinecki's men and should have added more to their goals tally in Baku. But producing a repeat on Tuesday could prove more difficult, especially with Norway yet to seal qualification for next summer's finals in France.

Per-Mathias Hogmo's men maintained second spot thanks to a patchy 2-0 win over Malta, but Croatia's 3-0 rout of Bulgaria means they sit only two points behind in third place.

To secure the second of two automatic qualifying spots Norway need to beat

Italy for the first time since 2000, when current Italy goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon and Conte, playing midfield, were on the end of a 1-0 defeat in Oslo.

Complicating matters for the visitors is the fact Croatia will be heavily tipped to claim an away win at Malta, who sit bottom of the group with just two points from nine games.

A Norway draw with Italy, combined with a Croatia win in Malta would see both sides finish on 20 points, although Croatia would finish in second place because they have scored more goals in direct fixtures between the sides.

Earlier in the campaign, Croatia beat Norway 5-1 in Zagreb and Norway beat Croatia 2-0 in Oslo. Most of which should be of minor concern to Conte, who is intent on using Tuesday's qualifier as another stepping stone towards building what he terms his "little war machine" for next summer's tournament.

After two consecutive World Cup washouts, Italy, the four-time world champions, may no longer instill fear like they used to. But Italy's rejuvenated side has given Conte an extra swagger.

"For France 2016 we're not among the favourites, and I can't tell you whether in Europe we're among the top four, the top six or the top 18," said the former Juventus handler.

"We're still growing as a squad and we still have plenty of work to do. But we're hoping to build our own little war machine." —AFP



COPENHAGEN: Denmark's goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel throws the ball during the friendly international football match between Denmark and the hosts of the Euro 2016 France at Parken arena.—AFP

GIROUD DOUBLE DOWNS DENMARK

COPENHAGEN: France striker Olivier Giroud netted twice in the opening six minutes as his side cruised to a comfortable 2-1 victory over Denmark in their friendly encounter on Sunday.

It was a night to forget for Danish keeper Kasper Schmeichel, who let somehow contrived to let Giroud's tame shot squirm under his body in the fourth minute after a superb through ball from teenager Anthony Martial.

The 28-year-old was not helped by some non-existent defending two minutes later as Giroud was left unmarked to volley Lucas

Digne's cross goalwards. But once again Schmeichel spilled the ball and Giroud finished at the second attempt, looking almost embarrassed as he accepted the congratulations of his team mates.

Denmark's defensive difficulties were mirrored by their lack of firepower up front as, despite some good work by Nicklas Bendtner and Christian Eriksen, they did little to trouble the French rearguard.

Instead it was France who continued to create the better chances. Giroud almost complet-

ed his hat-trick in the second half but Schmeichel blocked the striker's attempted chip with his chest. Martial also went close, nearly netting his first international goal for France when he clipped his half-volley narrowly over after chipping down Blaise Matuidi's pass with 10 minutes to go. Erik Sviatchenko thundered home a late consolation goal for Denmark but France's Didier Deschamps will be the far happier of the two coaches, while Morten Olsen has plenty to ponder as his side heads for the Euro 2016 playoffs.—Reuters



ASTANA: Dutch team players attend a training session in this file photo. —AP

DARK DAYS FOR DUTCH AS EURO HOPES SLUMP

AMSTERDAM: The Netherlands, who were within a penalty shootout victory of reaching the 2014 World Cup final, now stand on the brink of missing the European Championships for the first time since 1984. Winners of their only major tournament in 1988, when Marco van Basten and Ruud Gullit inspired them to continental victory over Russia in Germany, their fall from grace has been one of football's greatest mysteries as they now stare Euro 2016 elimination squarely in the face.

Euro semi-finalists in 2000 and 2004, quarter-finalists in 2008, they were only beaten by an Andres Iniesta extra-time goal in the 2010 World Cup final by Spain, before their run to the last four in Brazil, last summer, where Argentina defied them after a 0-0 draw after 120 minutes in Sao Paulo.

Guus Hiddink was the man entrusted to guide them through qualifying for the 24-team tournament that will feature in France for the first time in a format that seemed to appear a formality for Europe's regular contenders.

However two defeats in their three opening matches against the Czech Republic and Iceland made their task difficult and their record of four wins, four defeats and a draw leaves the Dutch two points behind Turkey with one game to play.

The Turks host Iceland and are in control of their own destiny, to book a playoff spot, while the Netherlands must beat the Czechs in Amsterdam to keep their slender hopes alive. "The whole qualifying tournament has all been very difficult. We now no longer have it in our own hands. I feel terrible, really terrible," star striker Robin van

Persie said after the 3-0 September defeat in Turkey.

Danny Blind has since replaced the departed Hiddink but the Czech Republic are guaranteed their place in France, alongside Iceland, while Turkey hold a stranglehold on the playoff bound third spot.

Only a Dutch win and a Turkish defeat, at home to Iceland can rescue a desperate situation. The team still boasts several household names such as van Persie, Wesley Sneijder, injury-prone Arjen Robben and Klaas-Jan Huntelaar but the biological clock has been ticking against an ageing team that may be past its sell-by-date.

The defence has also been called into question with inexperienced players such as Bruno Martins Indi, Stefan De Vrij, Jeremy Bruno, all 23, and 19-year-old Jairo Riedwald, in a rearguard described by former Dutch great Johann Cryuff as "astonishingly" lacking in quality.

Under current Manchester United manager Louis van Gaal, the team leaned on a strong defensive foundation and struck on the counter-attack with devastating effect that almost carried them to a first-ever World Cup.

Hiddink went back to the more traditional 4-3-3 but it was a disaster that cost the well-travelled 68-year-old his job. At club level, the status of former European champions Ajax and finalists PSV Eindhoven has crumbled and a Champions League quarter-final place is rare at best.

Elimination today will force reconstruction but it now appears a certainty that the Netherlands will fail to qualify for a major tournament for the first time since the 2002 World Cup and first European Championships since 1984. —AFP

FIFA ETHICS COMMITTEE SAYS PLATINI COMPLAINTS 'NOT VALID'

ZURICH: FIFA's ethics committee has rejected criticism from UEFA president Michel Platini over the manner of his suspension, saying the argument that he was not allowed to defend himself is "not valid." Platini, the head of European soccer's governing body, was suspended for 90 days last Thursday along with FIFA president Sepp Blatter pending a full investigation against them.

The announcement intensified a scandal around world soccer's governing body. FIFA's ethics probe followed reports of a payment of two million Swiss francs (\$2.1 million) from FIFA to Platini in 2011, nine years after he completed a spell working for Blatter as an adviser.

The Swiss Attorney General said on Sept. 25 it had opened a criminal investigation into Blatter concerning the payment and a separate Caribbean television rights deal. Platini is regarded as somewhere "between a witness and an accused person" in the payment case, the Attorney General has said. Platini, a candidate for the FIFA presidential election due to be held in February, described the allegations against him as "based on mere semblances" and "astonishingly vague."

The Frenchman said he had been willing to cooperate fully with the authorities carrying out various enquiries in compliance with the strictest procedural rules which, he said, FIFA had flouted.

A statement issued on behalf of FIFA's ethics judge Hans-Joachim Eckert rejected suggestions that Platini had not been fairly treated and that he had been interviewed for five hours by FIFA's ethics investigators. The argument put forward by Michel Platini's lawyers that their client had not had the possibility to defend himself before the adjudicatory chamber of the FIFA Ethics Committee before his suspension is not valid, it said.

"After the investigatory chamber of the FIFA ethics committee had heard him for more than five hours on Oct. 1, 2015 - with the hearing documented on more than 50 pages - the chairman of the adjudicatory chamber, Hans-Joachim Eckert, did not see a need for a second hearing with Mr Platini."

"This proceeding is fully in line with ... the FIFA Code of Ethics." FIFA is due to hold an election on Feb. 26 to replace Blatter. The election committee will decide on who will be accepted as full candidates shortly after the deadline for nominations on Oct. 26. That deadline could pose problems for Platini if he remains under a provisional ban.—Reuters



ZURICH: A file photo taken on May 28, 2015 shows UEFA President Michel Platini gesturing during a press conference. —AFP



Matches on TV

(Local Timings)

EURO QUALIFIERS 2016

Italy v Norway	21:45	Abu Dhabi Sport
Abu Dhabi Sport		Cyprus v Bosnia And Herz 21:45
Bulgaria v Azerbaijan	21:45	Abu Dhabi Sport
Abu Dhabi Sport		Turkey v Iceland 21:45
Belgium v Israel	21:45	Abu Dhabi Sport
Abu Dhabi Sport		Latvia v Kazakhstan 21:45
Malta v Croatia	21:45	Abu Dhabi Sport
Abu Dhabi Sport		Netherlands v Czech Rep 21:45
Wales v Andorra	21:45	Abu Dhabi Sport



WARSAW: Poland's players celebrate after they won the Euro 2016 Group D qualifying soccer match against Ireland at the National Stadium. —AP

POLAND DEFEAT IRELAND TO SECURE EURO SPOT

WARSAW: Striker Robert Lewandowski scored the winner to secure Poland a place at Euro 2016 with a 2-1 victory in Warsaw on Sunday that consigned a battling Ireland side to the playoffs.

Lewandowski's header just before halftime in the Group D match was his 15th goal in the last six games for his club Bayern Munich and country. He also equalled Northern Ireland forward David Healy's scoring record for a Euro

qualifying campaign with 13 goals.

Ireland, who finished with 10 men after captain John O'Shea was shown a second yellow card, needed to win or draw by at least 2-2 to steal second spot behind world champions Germany.

Poland went ahead in the 13th minute as midfielder Grzegorz Krychowiak fired home from outside the area after a corner. Jon Walters equalised for Ireland three minutes lat-

er after defender Michal Pazdan brought down Shane Long.

"I have to tell you I'm so proud," Lewandowski shouted through a microphone to fans wearing a red and white "Vive la Pologne 2016" T-shirt while his team mates uncorked champagne on the pitch.

"The Irish team did not create any real opportunities. We deserved to advance, we were the better team and played a good quali-

fying round," he told Polsat TV.

Poland co-hosted the 2012 tournament with Ukraine and will be playing in their third straight Euro finals. Ireland, who finished third on 18 points behind Poland with 21 and Germany on 22, head for the playoffs hoping to replicate the form they showed in beating Germany 1-0 earlier this week.

"I think the message is still pretty clear. We're still there but we have two games to go,"

coach Martin O'Neill said. "The win with Germany gave us a lift, but we didn't have the same intensity. Players were ready, but it was hard to replicate it away against a good Polish side." Asked if Lewandowski could win the Ballon D'or world footballer of the year award, he said: "Yeah, very possibly. A very fine player. I say that he is a world class player and he knows the game. Poland must be delighted to have him." —Reuters

ROMANIA CLAIM EURO TICKET WITH VICTORY OVER FAROES

FAROE ISLAND: Romania qualified for the Euro 2016 finals when they comfortably won 3-0 in the Faroe Islands on Sunday to clinch the second automatic qualifying place in Group F.

The victory left unbeaten Romania with 20 points, one behind already-qualified Northern Ireland, who ended their campaign with a 1-1 draw in Finland.

Hungary remained in third place on 16 after losing 4-3 in Greece and will try to reach the finals via the playoffs. Constantin Budescu, who replaced the ineffective Claudio Keseru in Romania's starting lineup, scored twice before the break and almost grabbed a hat-trick in the second half.

Alexandru Maxim put the result beyond doubt with their third goal eight minutes from time. "It was a difficult campaign but we expected that because it was a balanced group," said manager Anghel Iordanescu. "We deserve to qualify."

"We're very happy though I wanted to secure qualification against Finland in Bucharest (on Thursday) because I wanted to share the joy with our fans," he added.

"It is a success Romanian football was looking for. Our guys played really well from a tactical point of view. We should have qualified earlier, not to keep our supporters under pressure."

Iordanescu's side could not have wished

for a better start, going ahead thanks to Budescu's first international goal after a well-worked free kick in the fourth minute.

Budescu then scored an astonishing goal from a seemingly impossible angle on the right touchline with his shot looping over goalkeeper Gunnar Nielsen on the stroke of halftime.

Budescu's strike revived memories of former great Gheorghe Hagi's amazing goal against Colombia at the 1994 World Cup when Romania, under Iordanescu, reached the quarter-finals for their biggest achievement. Maxim wrapped up the victory when he played a one-two with Bogdan Stancu before sliding the ball into the net.

Romania, criticised by some pundits for their defensive approach, conceded only two goals in the campaign, fewer than any of the 53 teams in the qualifying competition in Europe.

"I think the boys deserve congratulations for what they've done throughout the whole campaign and I don't want to miss (former coach) Victor Piturca, who has made a huge contribution, Iordanescu said. The coach, who guided Romania to Euro 96 and the 1998 World Cup, began his third spell in charge last October, replacing Piturca who quit after agreeing to join Saudi Arabia's Al Ittihad on a lucrative contract. —Reuters



LEIPZIG: Germany's Max Kruse (left) celebrates after scoring his side's second goal during the Euro 2016 Group D qualifying soccer match against Georgia. —AP

GERMANY EDGE GEORGIA

LEIPZIG: Three-times European champions Germany needed a 79th minute goal from substitute Max Kruse to edge past Georgia 2-1 on Sunday and book their spot at the Euro 2016 finals after another wasteful performance in their final Group D qualifier.

World Cup winners Germany, who needed only a draw, squandered over a dozen clear chances in the first half alone before Thomas Mueller's 50th minute penalty finally put them ahead. Georgia, already out of the running to qualify, levelled three minutes later with captain Jaba Kankava's superb 20-metre volley. Kruse came to the rescue three minutes after coming on by slotting home from a Mesut Ozil pass to make sure the world champions, who had to put celebrations on hold after Thursday's shock 1-0 loss in Ireland, finished top on 22 points.

"We have never had such a difficult qualification in the last 10 to 12 years," Germany coach

Joachim Loew told reporters. "Usually we cruised through but this time we kept dropping points."

"We sang the same song as in Ireland. Three, four huge chances early on and then the mistakes start creeping in. First of all, we are satisfied with the qualification but not satisfied with our last two games. That is not our standard. We have work ahead of us."

The hosts, eager to bounce back from the Ireland defeat and finish their campaign on a high, made a bright start with Mueller's powerful drive forcing Nukri Revishvili into a good save in the third minute.

The keeper topped that with a superb one-handed save to deny Marco Reus, who squandered another golden chance when he fired over from three metres out with the hosts piling on the pressure and the game mostly in the Georgian half.

Manuel Neuer's reflex save to keep out

Tornike Okriashvili's shot in the 28th denied the visitors in their only attack from the opening 45 minutes.

The Germans, without the injured Bastian Schweinsteiger and Mario Goetze, went ahead through Mueller's penalty, his ninth goal in the qualifiers, but the joy was short-lived due to 29-year-old Kankava's spectacular equaliser.

Buoyed by the goal, Georgia became more daring and twice more tested Neuer as the home fans grew impatient with the whistles and jeers becoming louder.

However, the Germans regained control and substitute Kruse, who had come on for Andre Schuerrle, settled their nerves with a fine low drive in the 79th. "The coach told me to step on the gas," Kruse said. "Georgia did it very well and it was not easy for us. We don't want to make it too big a deal but the coach has also said we need to be more efficient." —Reuters



ATHENS: Hungary's Roland Juhasz (right) is challenged by Greece's Kostas Mitroglou during the Group F Euro 2016 qualifying match between Greece and Hungary. —AP

HUNGARY HEAD FOR PLAYOFFS

ATHENS: Hungary will battle for a spot at Euro 2016 via the playoffs following a 4-3 defeat against Greece in a highly entertaining duel in Athens on Sunday which gave the former European champions their first win in their final match.

Substitute Panagiotis Kone won it for Greece four minutes from time with a thumping header, some consolation for a campaign which the 2004 champions finish at the bottom of Group F on just six points. Hungary had already been assured of at least a playoff place before the game, and finish third in Group F behind Northern Ireland and Romania.

Greece's interim boss Kostas Tsanas had given youth a chance by starting PAOK Thessaloniki midfielder Dimitris Pelkas and AEK Athens FC forward Kostas Mantalos, as well as young PAOK full-backs Stelios and Kostas Stafylidis.

That paid dividends after just five min-

utes when Kitsiou's low cross found Stafylidis at the back post for Greece's first home goal of the campaign.

Hungary were almost level in the 22nd minute but Balzs Dzsudzsk's deflected shot was directed just wide by striker D-niel B'de's outstretched right boot.

But after Pelkas blazed a shot over the bar for Greece, Hungary drew level in the 26th minute when Gerg Lovrencsics beat Stafylidis to head past Greek goalkeeper Orestis Karnezis.

Greece began the second half in the same attacking vein, but it was Hungary who went ahead against the run of play, Kriszti-n NEmeth prodding home from barely a metre out after Dzsudzsk's corner was flicked on by ikos Elek.

Greece's response was instantaneous, Panagiotis Tachtsidis sprinting through onto Mantalos' pass to score just two minutes later. —Reuters

WALES, N IRELAND EMERGE FROM ENGLAND'S SHADOW

LONDON: In the week that the campaigns for the United Kingdom's referendum on European Union membership were launched, the nation's representative football teams have given a resounding 'yes' to European participation.

Wales and Northern Ireland have joined England in securing a place at next year's European Championship in France, meaning the UK will send three teams to a major tournament for the first time in 30 years.

Scotland have missed out, but should the Republic of Ireland prevail via the play-offs, there will be four teams from the British Isles at a major competition for only the second time after the 1958 World Cup. It is part of a wider pattern of breakthroughs by smaller nations, with Northern Ireland (population 1.85 million) and Wales (3.06 million) qualifying alongside Iceland (329,000) and Albania (2.89 million). But while the tournament's expansion from 16 teams to 24 was always going to allow the lesser lights to shine, neither Wales nor Northern Ireland qualified through the back door.

Northern Ireland finished top of their group, while Wales were leading Group B-ahead of the Premier League heavyweights of Belgium-until Saturday's 2-0 defeat against Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The loss in Zenica was Wales' first of the qualifying campaign, but Cyprus' 2-1 win over Israel in Jerusalem meant that Chris Coleman's side qualified for their first major tournament since the 1958 World Cup. Gareth Bale, who described the result as "the best defeat of my life", has been central to Wales' success, top-scoring with six goals and playing a part in eight of the nine goals his side have scored. Given a free role akin to his new, central positioning under Rafael Benitez at Real Madrid, the 26-year-old responded with decisive strikes in wins over Andorra, Belgium and Cyprus.

But he would not have been in a position to settle matches were it not for a new-found defensive robustness-the fruit of an innovative 3-5-1-1 formation-that has seen Wales concede only four times in nine matches. Coleman has also been able to build

on the success of his predecessors John Toshack-who blooded players like Bale, Aaron Ramsey and the captain, Ashley Williams-and the late Gary Speed, who laid the foundations for Wales' resurgence before his death in an apparent suicide in November 2011. "When Gary Speed took over, I think he realised that standards had dropped off the field," former captain Kevin Ratcliffe wrote in The Observer.

"He added preparation and put the right people in place, and Coleman has carried that on. We are a proper international country now, not-as we used to call it-'Rag-ass Rovers'."

Northern Ireland were handed a relatively benign draw, but they were nonetheless the fifth seeds in Group F and, like Wales, had never previously qualified for a European Championship.

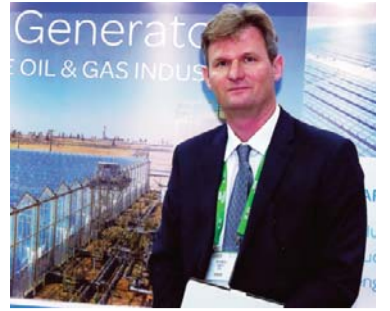
Expectations were low after a World Cup qualifying campaign that had seen them finish second-bottom of their group and which featured a humiliating 3-2 loss to Luxembourg in September 2013. —AFP

Kuwait Times BUSINESS

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GCC FIXED EXCHANGE RATES REGIMES ARE HERE TO STAY



NEW YORK: Traders work near the post that handles EMC Corp on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange yesterday. Dell is buying data storage company EMC in a deal valued at approximately \$67 billion. — AP (See Page 27)

DELL TO BUY EMC IN RECORD \$67BN DEAL

RECORD TECH TIE-UP TO SPEED UP ITS MOVE INTO THE CLOUD, MOBILE MARKET

NEW YORK: Dell said yesterday it was buying EMC, the world's largest data-storage provider, for \$67 billion in a record tech tie-up to accelerate its move into the cloud and mobile market.

The mega merger would combine Dell, whose core global personal computer business is facing declining PC demand, with EMC's strength in enterprise storage.

Dell said the acquisition of EMC "will create the world's largest privately controlled, integrated technology company" in the \$2 trillion information technology market. Founded in 1984, the Texas-based Dell has been struggling against the growing success of smartphones and tablets, and founder Michael Dell and private-equity firm Silver Lake Partners bought out other shareholders in 2013 to take the company private.

With EMC, Dell will beef up its firepower in storage and data management for businesses and could take on industry behemoths IBM, Hewlett-Packard and Cisco. The deal

also gives Dell cloud software giant VMware, which is 80 percent owned by EMC. Dell said that VMware will remain an independent, publicly traded company.

"We believe a deal with Dell would make sense for EMC and over time we expect the market to continue to consolidate to larger players that are able to offer full hardware solutions as opposed to piece parts," said Sherri Scribner, a Deutsche Bank analyst.

Competing with Amazon, Microsoft

The tie-up will make Dell "exceptionally well-positioned for growth in the most strategic areas of next generation IT including digital transformation, software-defined data center, converged infrastructure, hybrid cloud, mobile and security," chairman and chief executive Michael Dell said in a statement.

Dell is hoping to offset the continued weakening of the PC market, where sales volumes fell 10.8 percent in the third

quarter, according to IDC. The combination with EMC gives it the scale and capacities to expand its offer in cloud computing, a rapidly growing market.

Businesses are buying fewer servers, considered expensive, and are turning toward cloud infrastructure services such as those offered by Amazon Web Services, Microsoft, Salesforce and Google. The shift toward the cloud has hurt EMC's storage business, where sales rose only 1.0 percent in the second quarter compared with double-digit growth five years ago.

EMC has been under pressure from US activist investment fund Elliott Management, which took a roughly 2.0 percent stake in EMC last year. Elliot notably pushed for the independence of VMware, which had been reportedly in the crosshairs of HP, Oracle and Cisco.

Under the agreed deal, EMC shareholders will receive \$24.05 per share in cash and a tracking stock linked in VMware, for an estimated combined value of \$33.15 per

EMC share. That represents a 19 percent premium to EMC shares' closing price Friday. The EMC board of directors has approved the merger and will recommend approval by shareholders. Michael Dell created the PC company in his dorm room at the University of Texas and led it to become a global heavyweight known for direct service to customers. He will be the combined company's chairman and CEO.

The transaction is expected to close between May and October next year. Dell's headquarters will stay in Round Rock, Texas, while the headquarters of the combined enterprise systems business will be in Hopkinton, Massachusetts, where EMC is based. Shares in EMC were up 1.2 percent at \$28.19 in morning trade on Wall Street, while VMware tumbled 10.7 percent to \$70.25. The Dell acquisition dwarfs other tech merger deals, according to Dealogic. The previous record-holder was Avago's \$37 billion takeover of Broadcom, announced in May, to create a mobile chipmaking powerhouse. — AFP

KUWAIT'S HYDROCARBON WEALTH BACKS ECONOMIC STRENGTH: MOODY'S

FRANKFURT: Despite the prospects of a delayed oil price recovery, Kuwait's very high levels of economic and fiscal strength will continue to support the country's credit profile and its Aa2 rating with a stable outlook in 2015 and 2016, Moody's Investors Service has said yesterday. Moody's report, entitled "Kuwait, Government of" is available on www.moody's.com. Moody's subscribers can access this report via the link provided at the end of this press release. The rating agency's report is an update to the markets and does not constitute a rating action.

Moody's expects that oil prices will start a gradual recovery in 2017. It projects that the price of Brent crude will average \$55 per barrel this year and \$57 per barrel the following year.

Given the oil sector's importance to the Kuwaiti economy, the agency expects a sizable contraction in nominal GDP in 2015 and only a small recovery in 2016. On the other hand, while real GDP will only grow at a projected average rate of 1.5 percent in 2015-16, this will mark a recovery from a 1.6 percent contraction in 2014.

"Kuwait's government revenues are sensitive to oil price movements, because oil revenues account for about 80 percent of total revenues. But we still expect the government to register small fiscal surpluses of around 1.8 percent of GDP this fiscal year and next given Kuwait's low fiscal breakeven oil price" says Steffen Dyck, a Moody's Vice President-Senior Analyst.

"Kuwait's sizeable assets will also provide a buffer allowing its public finances to withstand the impact of lower oil prices for longer," says Dyck.

"We forecast that the Kuwaiti government's nominal debt level will remain broadly unchanged throughout 2015-16, because our oil price assumptions point to continued fiscal surpluses." According to Moody's, Kuwait's debt level was 6.5 percent of GDP at end-2014. However, owing to the projected contraction in nominal GDP, the government debt-to-GDP ratio will rise to a still very low level of around 8.5 percent in 2015-16.

POVERTY EXPERT ANGUS DEATON WINS NOBEL ECONOMICS PRIZE

STOCKHOLM: US-British economist Angus Deaton won the Nobel Economics Prize yesterday for ground-breaking work using household surveys to show how consumers, particularly the poor, decide what to buy and how policymakers can help them.

"By emphasising the links between individual consumption decisions and outcomes for the whole economy, his work has helped transform modern microeconomics, macroeconomics and development economics," the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said.

"To design economic policy that promotes welfare and reduces poverty, we must first understand individual consumption choices. More than anyone else, Angus Deaton has enhanced this understanding," it said. Deaton, 69, is a professor at Princeton University in the United States and described winning the prize as a little like being struck by lightning.

"If you're my age and you've been working for a long time you know this is a possibility," he said on Princeton's website. "But you also know there are a huge number of people out there who deserve this. That lightning would strike me seemed like a very small probability event. It was sort of like, 'Oh my goodness, it's really happening!'"

Deaton was honored for three related achievements: developing with his colleague John Muellbauer around 1980 a system for estimating the demand for different goods; studies of the link between con-

sumption and income that he conducted around 1990; and work he carried out in later decades on measuring living standards and poverty in developing countries with the help of household surveys.

He is "an economist who looks more closely at what poor households consume to get a better sense of their living standards and possible paths for economic development. He truly, deeply understands the implications of economic growth, the benefits of modernity, and political economy," Tyler Cowen, an economics professor at George Mason University in Washington, said on his blog Marginal Revolution.

His research has shown how the clever use of household data can shed light on issues such as the relationship between income and calorie intake - increased income does indeed lead to more calories being consumed. It also showed the extent of gender discrimination within the family - girls are discriminated against when households have to tighten the belt. "Deaton's focus on household surveys has helped transform development economics from a theoretical field based on aggregate data to an empirical field based on detailed individual data," the Academy said.

Optimist economist

Deaton is optimistic about economic progress in the world. In his 2013 book "The Great Escape" he outlined how overall human welfare - especially longevity and



US-British economist Angus Deaton

prosperity has risen spectacularly over time, even though the inequality gap between rich and poor has widened.

Speaking to reporters at the Nobel press conference by video link, Deaton said he believed poverty would continue to decline. "I do foresee a decrease. I think we've had a remarkable decrease for the past 20-30 years. I do expect that to continue," he said, noting however that there were still 700 million extremely poor people according to the World Bank, "so we are not out of the woods yet."

Deaton said reducing poverty would for example resolve the current migration crisis which has seen more than 630,000 people

landing on Europe's doorstep this year.

"What we see is the result of hundreds of years of unequal development... that left a whole part of the world behind," he said. "Poverty reduction in poor countries would solve the problem but not in the short term."

Scotland born

Deaton was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, and has taught at Cambridge University and the University of Bristol. He has been a professor of economics and international affairs at Princeton since 1983. Earlier this year, he was elected a member of the US National Academy of Sciences.

He is the 76th winner of the economics prize, a discipline that has been dominated by Americans since it was first awarded in 1969. A total of 55 laureates have been US nationals, including those with dual citizenship. Deaton wins the prize sum of eight million Swedish kronor (about 860,000 euros, \$950,000). Deaton will receive his prize at a ceremony in Stockholm on December 10, the anniversary of the death of the prizes' creator, Swedish scientist and philanthropist Alfred Nobel.

The economics prize is the only Nobel not originally included in Nobel's last will and testament. It was established in 1968 by the Swedish central bank to celebrate its tricentenary, and first awarded in 1969. The other prizes have been awarded since 1901. The economics prize caps this year's Nobel season. — AFP

OIL GLUT, EQUITY MARKET CONCERNS WEIGH ON OIL

NBK ECONOMIC REPORT

KUWAIT: The volatility that characterized oil markets in late August gave way to a more settled period in September, with benchmark crudes, Brent and West Texas Intermediate (WTI), trading within the \$46-49.0 per barrel (bbl) and \$44-46.0/bbl ranges, respectively, for most of the month. At September's close, Brent settled at \$47.2/bbl while WTI reached \$45.1/bbl. Both crudes were still down near six-and-a-half-year lows, however, depressed by continued worries about economic growth in emerging markets, particularly China's, and by the persistence of the crude oil supply glut. The US Federal Reserve's decision to hold interest rates steady was partly an implicit acknowledgment of the former, while the supply overhang dynamic was further evident in the rise to record levels of OECD commercial oil stocks and continued price discounting by regional oil producers Kuwait and Iran. The current discount of Kuwaiti export crude (KEC) against Saudi Arabia's benchmark Arab Light for Asian customers is the largest in 10 years as efforts intensify even among OPEC members to retain market share.

Meanwhile, in the futures markets, the price for long-dated crude oil continues to trade higher than spot crude (i.e. crude for immediate delivery). (Chart 2.) The differential between the two prices in the so-called contango curve has narrowed, however, indicating that the appetite for storage for speculative purposes may be waning. As of September 30, according to the futures market, the price of Brent crude is expected to increase to \$55.2/bbl by December 2016 and to \$58.6/bbl by December 2017.

Crude supply glut should ease in 2016 as oil demand rebounds and oil supply begins to be negatively affected by low oil prices.

The expectation that oil prices will rebound going into 2016 and beyond is based on a predicted unwinding of the demand/supply mismatch. The oil supply glut, which the International Energy Agency (IEA) estimated to be around 1.6 million barrels a day (mb/d) during the third quarter of this year (3Q15), should begin to ease as demand rebounds from the lows of 2014 and supply growth slows due to cuts in investment and ultimately production due to low oil prices.

Looking ahead, the current oil surplus could steadily decline and turn into a deficit of almost -0.5 mb/d by 4Q16 (Chart 4.) as oil demand growth outpaces oil supply growth. On the demand side, 2015 should see demand rising to a five-year high of 1.7 mb/d before moderating in 2016 to 1.4 mb/d. Preliminary estimates for 3Q15 show that demand growth topped 1.7 mb/d for the third quarter in a row, boosted by better-than-expected numbers from the US, China, Europe and Russia. (Chart 5.) Improving macroeconomic fundamentals, baseline revisions in the US and still strong demand from China's petrochemical and transport sectors helped keep demand firm. Underpinning this trend is the stimulative effect on crude oil demand of lower oil prices.

Conversely, low oil prices are having a negative effect on global supplies, especially on non-OPEC crude oil production. According to the IEA, non-OPEC supply growth, having peaked in 4Q14 at 2.6 mb/d, is expected to slow considerably, to -0.3 mb/d by the end of the year before bottoming out at -0.9 mb/d at the end of 2Q16. For 2015 as a whole, the IEA expects non-OPEC supply growth to slow to 1.1 mb/d, from 2.3 mb/d last year. In 2016, non-OPEC supply growth is projected to contract by 0.5 mb/d. The IEA anticipates that a significant portion of this will be due to declines in US light tight oil production (LTO) i.e. shale. With oil prices below the estimated breakeven cost for major US shale plays, the decline in drilling and completion rates that has been observed since the start of the year is expected to extend well into 2016.

OPEC output, meanwhile, at 31.9 mb/d in August, remains elevated near the 22-month high recorded in July and well above the group's official production ceiling of 30 mb/d. Production has surged by more than 1.5 mb/d year-on-year (y/y) even while prices have fallen by more than 50% over the same period. Compared to July, however, OPEC production did decline by 20,000 b/d on slightly lower output from Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Angola among others. Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia, along with the UAE and Iraq, continues to pump at or near record levels. Saudi Arabia's output of 10.2 mb/d in August was the sixth in a row to top 10.0 mb/d, suggesting that the kingdom remained steadfast in its pursuit of market share. Elevated output was also in response to heightened domestic power demand during the hot summer months.

Iraqi production, which includes output from the Kurdistan Regional Government's (KRG) oil fields, hit another all-time high, of 3.76 mb/d, in August. Output has surged despite the conflict with Islamic State (IS) and plunging oil prices.

Kuwait, meanwhile, boosted oil production by 70,000 b/d to 2.89 mb/d, according to official sources. This was the highest figure in a year, and resulted from the successful application of enhanced oil recovery (EOR) techniques to the country's maturing fields. Otherwise, output could conceivably be down by at least 250,000 b/d in view of the cessation of production from both the Khafji and Wafra oil fields that Kuwait shares with Saudi Arabia in the Neutral Zone. The two countries have yet to resolve the operational dispute that shuttered production.

For the third month in succession, Iranian production edged up in August, to 3.18 mb/d. Iran is preparing the ground for a full return to the oil markets in early 2016 when sanctions are expected to be lifted. Iran expects output to rise by 500,000 b/d as soon as sanctions are removed and by 1.0 mb/d within months. Many observers view this figure as optimistic, however.

Iran's return to the oil markets in 2016 amid the persistent supply glut that has forced down prices is likely to dominate proceedings at OPEC's next meeting in December. It remains to be seen whether the group will accommodate Iran by lowering individual quotas or continue with its Saudi-led strategy of resisting production cuts in the interests of preserving market share.



UM QASR: Iraqi merchants from the Basra region demonstrate outside the gate of the port of Um Qasr to scrap the new tax law, yesterday. Arabic slogan reads: "No for tax on sales". — AFP

OPEC SEES MORE DEMAND FOR ITS CRUDE OIL IN 2016

IEA SAYS NON-OPEC SUPPLY TO FALL IN 2016

LONDON: OPEC forecast yesterday that demand for its oil in 2016 would be much higher than previously thought as its strategy of letting prices fall hits US shale oil and other rival supplies, reducing a global surplus. In a monthly report, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) forecast the world would need 30.82 million barrels per day (bpd) from the group next year, up 510,000 bpd from the previous prediction.

OPEC's forecast, if realized, would be a further indication its strategy is working. The group last year refused to prop up prices and instead raised output, seeking to recover market share taken by higher-cost rival production. Oil is trading just below \$53, half its price of June 2014. Supply outside OPEC is expected to decline by 130,000 bpd in 2016, the report said, as output falls in the United States, the former Soviet Union, Africa, the Middle East and much of Europe. Last month, OPEC predicted growth of 160,000 bpd. "This should reduce the excess supply in the market and lead to higher demand for OPEC crude," OPEC said in the report, "resulting in more balanced oil market fundamentals".

The higher call on OPEC comes despite weaker global demand growth overall. OPEC trimmed its estimate of 2016 world oil demand growth by 40,000 bpd to 1.25 million bpd,

citing slower growth in China. Other forecasters also expect less oil from non-OPEC. The International Energy Agency, which advises industrialized countries, sees an even bigger drop in their supply in 2016. The next IEA report is due out today. Output in the United States - the biggest source of non-OPEC supply growth in recent years - is being hit by reduced drilling activity and tighter credit conditions have reduced companies' access to funds, OPEC said. The report said OPEC members continue to boost supplies. According to secondary sources cited by the report, OPEC pumped 31.57 million bpd in September - up 110,000 bpd from August and almost 2 million bpd more than its prediction of the demand for its crude this year.

With the higher demand it expects for OPEC crude in 2016, the report points to a 750,000 bpd supply surplus in the market next year if the group kept pumping at September's rate, down from 1.23 million bpd indicated in last month's report.

In the third quarter of 2016, demand for OPEC crude will rise to an average of 31.50 million bpd, OPEC predicted - similar to current output and leaving almost no surplus. Saudi Arabia, the driving force behind OPEC's refusal to cut output, told OPEC it trimmed production to 10.23 million bpd in September, a further decline from June's record rate. — Reuters

VW DIESEL CARS RECALLED IN CHINA, SALES HALTED IN SINGAPORE

BEIJING: Volkswagen said yesterday it is recalling 1,950 diesel vehicles in China to change engine software it has admitted cheats on emissions tests and Singapore suspended sales of the company's diesel cars. The German automaker admitted last month that 11 million of its vehicles worldwide were fitted with cheating software to beat emission tests.

The recall in China applies to 1,946 Tiguan sport utility vehicles and four Passat B6 sedans, all of them imported, the company said. It said it was developing technical solutions and had yet to submit them to Chinese authorities for approval. Volkswagen's business in China, the largest auto market by number of vehicles sold, has suffered little impact from the emissions scandal due to the lack of popularity of diesel cars among Chinese drivers. But foreign companies are closely watched by Chinese authorities, and state media publicize suggestions of misconduct.

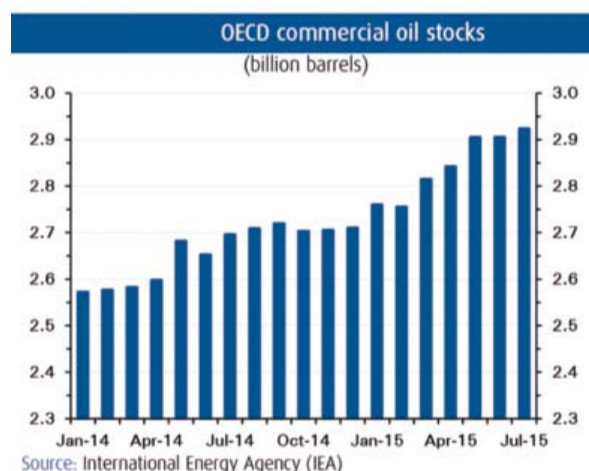
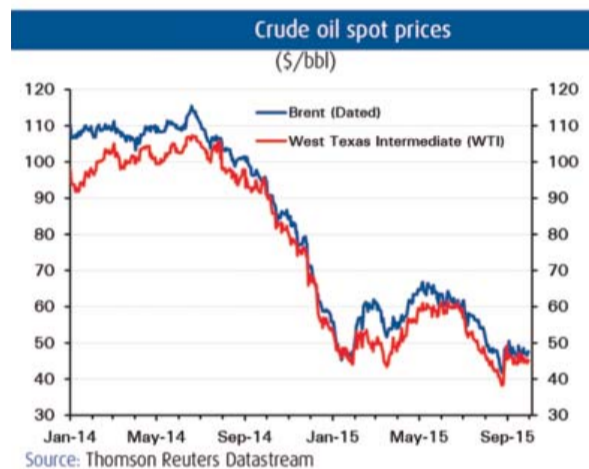
Europe's biggest automaker has acknowledged it installed software dubbed "defeat devices" on diesel vehicles that switched on pollution controls when cars underwent emissions tests and switched off during driving to improve performance.

S&P cuts rating

Meanwhile, the international credit rating agency Standard and Poor's on Monday cut by one notch the long-term debt rating of German auto giant Volkswagen in the wake of the pollution-cheating scam involving its diesel vehicles. S&P said in a statement it was downgrading VW's long-term debt rating to A- and could cut "by up to two more notches" again in future in face of the "wide-ranging negative credit consequences following its admission that it installed software designed to manipulate diesel engine exhaust emissions in 11 million vehicles."

"Volkswagen would like to sincerely apologize for any inconvenience caused to our customers," the company said in a statement. "We would like to assure that we will do everything humanly possible to win back trust and take care of any concerns."

In Singapore, the National Environment Agency said in a statement that sales of the company's diesel cars would be suspended until models were rectified to meet official emissions guidelines, adding that it "takes a serious view of any misrepresentation by Volkswagen Group." — AP



HSBC WHISTLEBLOWER FALCIANI FAILS TO APPEAR AT SWISS TRIAL

ZURICH: Herve Falciani, a former employee of HSBC's Swiss private bank who leaked information on clients and their tax situation, failed to appear at his Swiss trial yesterday, forcing it to be rescheduled.

Falciani, who is based in France, is accused in Switzerland of unauthorized acquisition of data, financial espionage and violating Swiss bank and business secrecy rules.

"It was simply postponed because he was not present," a spokeswoman for the Federal Criminal Court in Bellinzona said, adding that the trial would resume on Nov 2. She declined to say whether Falciani would now be tried in absentia next month, as legal experts have suggested. "We will see if he comes or not. We don't know," she said. HSBC's Swiss unit has been in the spotlight since 2008, when Falciani, a former IT employee at HSBC, fled Geneva with files that were leaked to the media and are alleged to show evidence of tax evasion by clients. The French daily Le Monde has said it identified more than 106,000 clients.

Authorities in France, Austria, Belgium and Argentina have also said they are investigating.

Falciani, 43, has said he is a whistleblower trying to help governments track down citizens who used Swiss accounts to evade tax. Swiss prosecutors say he is a thief who betrayed his employer.

Geneva's public prosecutor searched HSBC's lakeside Swiss office in February after opening a criminal inquiry into allegations of aggravated money laundering. The media leaks on HSBC accounts held in Switzerland unleashed a public storm around the British bank. HSBC has apologised to customers and investors over the previous failings of its Swiss business and said it has overhauled the operation. Falciani told a Spanish paper in May the revelations so far were "only the tip of the iceberg", and that tax authorities had access to a lot more data. — Reuters

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EUROPEAN STOCKS EDGE LOWER AFTER RALLY

LONDON/MILAN: European shares nudged lower yesterday but remained close to one-month highs reached after a rally last week, with German utilities soaring on easing concerns over nuclear costs. E.ON and RWE both rose more than 10 percent in their biggest one-day bounce in seven years after Berlin concluded the companies had set aside enough money to decommission their nuclear plants. The pan-European FTSEurofirst 300 index was down 0.23 percent and the euro zone's blue-chip Euro STOXX 50 index fell 0.23 percent. Traders said that it was no surprise some investors were taking profits following last week's gains, while

Japanese markets were closed for a holiday and the United States was celebrating Columbus Day. "The market is consolidating after last week's rally also because of the holidays in the US and Japan," ActivTrades chief market analyst Carlo Alberto De Casa said. He said investors would be focusing on Chinese trade balance data, but most of all on US economic statistics later this week for more indications as to when the Federal Reserve will increase rates, the real focus for markets in recent weeks. Rolls-Royce and Safran both dropped more than 4 percent, with traders citing a negative

impact on those shares from media reports over the weekend of a European regulatory investigation into the airline maintenance market. Biotechnology group Novozymes fell 3.8 percent after Goldman Sachs downgraded its shares to "sell" from "buy". Fiat rose 1.6 percent after the carmaker disclosed pricing for the initial public offering of Ferrari that could value its luxury sport car unit at close to \$10 billion. The strong gains in utilities E.ON and RWE helped the German blue-chip index DAX outperform Europe. The index, which remains some 20 percent below a

record high reached in April, was up 0.24 percent. Hampstead Capital hedge fund manager Lex Van Dam said the DAX now looked in better shape. "Finally some good news out of Germany, with the utilities RWE and E.ON leading the way. I am quite constructive on the market," he said. China stocks, yuan jump Chinese investors jumped back into stocks yesterday in heavy volume trade that pushed prices to seven-week highs, boosted by hopes for more economic stimulus after the central bank expanded a scheme that increases banks' ability to lend. The yuan rose to its highest levels since its surprise devaluation on Aug. 11 sent shock waves through global markets, with investors fearing the worst for an economy that for years has been the growth engine of the world.

monetary easing," said Wu Kan, head of equity trading at Shanghai-based investment firm Shanshan Finance. The CSI300 index of the largest listed companies in Shanghai and Shenzhen stock markets rose 3.2 percent, while the Shanghai Composite index gained 3.3 percent. Both hit their highest levels since Aug. 24, although they are still down more than 30 percent from their highs in mid-June, the start of a market rout that rocked global markets and prompted heavy-handed intervention from Beijing that shook investor confidence. But in a sign that investors may be returning to the market, trading volumes in Shanghai jumped over 60 percent from the previous session, and were nearly triple the low hit on Sept. 30. It marked the first sharp pick up in trading volume in conjunction with a rising market since August. While that can point to potential buying strength, this week effectively is the first proper trading week for Chinese markets this month following a long holiday that took up most of the past two weeks. So it is unclear if the rally is sustainable given that the value of many shares is still relatively high. Comments from Yi Gang, deputy governor of the People's Bank of China (PBOC), added to the more positive market tone. He was quoted in official media as saying the stock market correction was "almost over." Global markets also have been supported by expectations that central banks, including the US Federal Reserve, would keep borrowing costs low to try to revive the sluggish global economy. —Reuters

Table with multiple columns: Index, Change, Closing, Last Closing, High, Low, Volume, Value (KD), Trades, Last, Change. Includes sections for Monday 12 October 2015, Global Stock Indices, and various market categories like Oil & Gas, Basic Materials, Industrials, Consumer Goods, Health Care, Banks, etc.

China stocks, yuan jump Chinese investors jumped back into stocks yesterday in heavy volume trade that pushed prices to seven-week highs, boosted by hopes for more economic stimulus after the central bank expanded a scheme that increases banks' ability to lend. The yuan rose to its highest levels since its surprise devaluation on Aug. 11 sent shock waves through global markets, with investors fearing the worst for an economy that for years has been the growth engine of the world. The mood yesterday was a far cry from June, July and August when Chinese stocks appeared to be in freefall and authorities were scrambling to put a floor under markets with an unprecedented flurry of rescue measures. Hopes for more economic stimulus measures from Chinese authorities prompted buyers back into the market. China is due to announce a five-year plan for the economy later this month and over the weekend the central bank increased a pilot scheme on bank lending to several major centres, including Beijing and Shanghai. The scheme allows banks to refinance high quality credit assets. "The policy may not immediately inject a lot of liquidity into the economy, but it has boosted expectations of

National Bank of Kuwait Financial Markets Daily Report At 02:00 PM Previous Day. Includes Global Stock Indices, MENA Stock Indices, Global Currencies Exchange Rate, MENA Currencies Exchange Rate, Global Interest Rates, and Global Bond Yields.

Kuwait Oil & Gas Show 2015



The 3D show.



KUWAIT: Daniel Palmer at GlassPoint booth at the exhibition. —Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat

GLASSPOINT'S MIRAAH PROJECT A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR KUWAIT: OFFICIAL

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: GlassPoint Solar is participating in the 2nd Kuwait Oil and Gas Show (KOGS) taking place from October 11-14 at Kuwait International Fairgrounds in Mishref. On the sidelines of the exhibition, Daniel Palmer, vice president of sales, told Kuwait Times that GlassPoint's Miraah project will be a great opportunity for Kuwait. "We are here in Kuwait because we believe that Kuwait is a very important market in our future business," he said, highlighting the solar enhanced oil recovery application for Kuwait's heavy oil fields.

"Kuwait is about to start developing its heavier resources, so it recently sanctioned the first phase of a field in the north, and this field is going to consume a huge amount of energy to make steam. Heavy oil needs steam to produce, and normally this steam is generated using natural gas, but Kuwait is short of natural gas. Luckily, Kuwait has abundant sunshine, and it is free. Our technology can generate steam for oil-field operations using solar power, and we believe that it is great opportunity for Kuwait to use solar power in oilfields. You will get steam at a lower cost than by using natural gas, which can be available for the generation of electricity," Palmer said.

Palmer explained how solar

enhanced oil recovery (EOR) can help Kuwait achieve its 2020 and 2030 strategies. "There is enough fuel available for the first phase, but by using solar, you can make four times more steam than with fuel, so they can increase production fourfold and use the fuel to reach strategic goals faster without burning natural gas," he said.

He pointed out that Miraah will be one of the largest solar plants in history, producing 1,021 MW of peak thermal energy. GlassPoint is building the project in partnership with Petroleum Development Oman, the largest oil producer in Oman and a joint venture between the government, Shell, Total and Partex. Miraah will use concentrated sunlight to generate 6,000 tons of solar steam each day. The steam will feed directly to PDO's existing thermal EOR operations, providing a substantial portion of the steam required at the Amal oilfield in southern Oman.

Miraah will save 5.6 trillion btu of natural gas each year. The mega project dwarfs all previous solar EOR installations and is more than 100 times larger than the pilot project built by GlassPoint for PDO in 2012. When complete, the total project area will span three square kilometers. The project will break ground in late 2015 with steam generation from the first glasshouse module projected to begin in 2017.

CHINA TO SET NEW PLAN FOR TROUBLED ECONOMY

BEIJING: China's Communist rulers will gather later this month, state media said yesterday, to set a course for the world's second-largest economy over the next five years, as slowing growth raises global concerns.

The Communist Party meeting, known as the Fifth Plenum, is expected to focus on structural reform and easing state control—although such moves have been repeatedly promised before.

The world's most populous country has enjoyed a decades-long boom since the ruling party embraced market economics and opened up to the rest of the world from the late 1970s.

The process has transformed the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people and propelled the country to global prominence.

But growth has been slowing for several years, and analysts say the party needs to embrace further liberalisation to avoid falling into the stagnation of the "middle income trap", when developing countries fail to fulfil their full potential. The Communist Party continues to issue regular economic guidance, including Five Year Plans and annual targets for the country's growth.

The Fifth Plenum will be held from October 26 to 29, the official Xinhua news agency reported Monday, citing a statement from the Central Committee.

It will finalize the 13th Five Year Plan, which will start next year. Under President Xi Jinping, who took power in 2012, the Communist Party has pledged to give markets a decisive role in the economy. But

large-scale interventions into the country's falling stock market this summer have called into question the government's willingness and ability to follow through.

Beijing has poured hundreds of billions of dollars into the market and cut interest rates, among other measures, following a rout that saw the Shanghai Composite Index plunge from a high of over 5,000 in mid-June to a low of just under 3,000 in August.

The ruling party has committed to making China a "moderately prosperous society" by 2020, when the plan will complete, a goal that includes doubling per capita income for urban and rural residents from 2010 levels.

Continually rising prosperity is a key element of the Communist Party's claim to legitimacy, but the target has seemed less and less achievable as China's economy has slowed in recent years, weighed down by overcapacity and falling exports.

Leaders have regularly promised a "new normal" of slower but more sustainable growth, led by domestic consumer demand, but the transition is proving bumpy and global markets have been spooked by recent economic figures. At the meeting in October, leaders are expected to discuss reform of state-owned enterprises that continue to drag on expansion, and their conclusions will be formally approved by the rubber stamp legislature next year.

Plenums are key meetings of China's Communist leaders on specific issues, such as one last year on the rule of law, which issued guidelines intended to centralize the party's power. —AFP



BUENOS AIRES: A man walks by signs posted at the entrance of the Argentine Economy Ministry reading in Spanish; "Together we will fight against the loan shark vultures," referring to an unresolved dispute over \$1.5 billion in unpaid debts after its record \$100 billion default in 2001, known locally as "vulture funds," in Buenos Aires, Argentina.—AP

SOLAR-POWERED OIL PRODUCTION CAN STRENGTHEN ENERGY SECURITY

GLASSPOINT SHOWCASES SOLAR ENHANCED OIL RECOVERY TECHNOLOGY

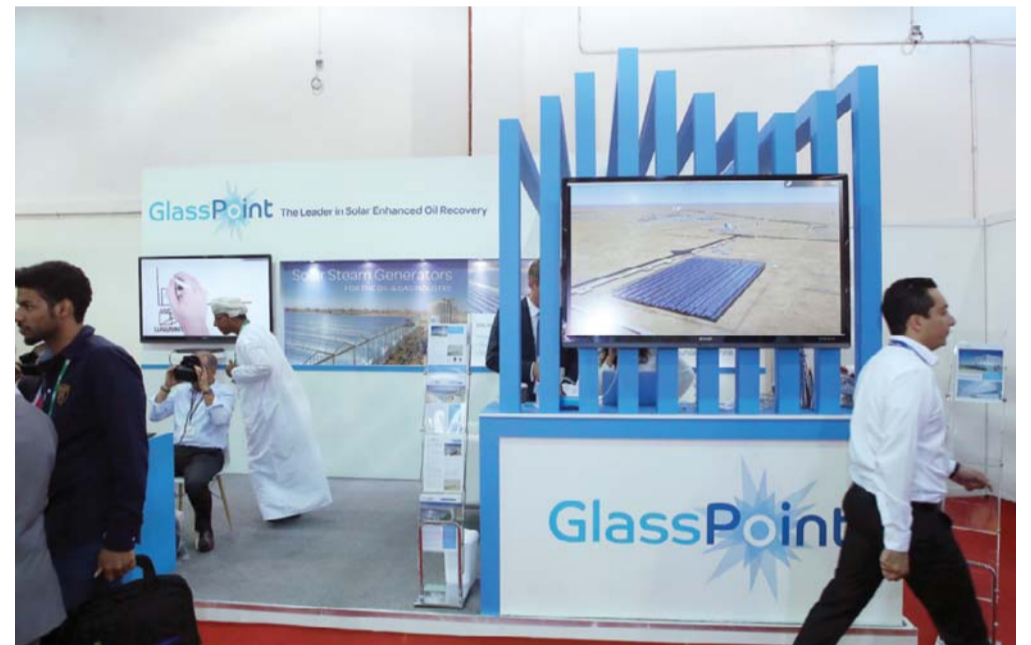
KUWAIT: GlassPoint Solar, the global leader in solar enhanced oil recovery (EOR), is showcasing its innovative solar steam technology at the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) Kuwait Oil & Gas Show and Conference 2015 (KOGS) that commenced on Sunday. The show will last till October 14.

Engineers, executives and students will learn how GlassPoint's solution can empower oil producers with an economic alternative to using natural gas in heavy oil production.

At the exhibition, GlassPoint unveiled a virtual reality 3D tour of Miraah, its landmark project with Petroleum Development Oman in southern Oman. Announced in July, the mega project will harness the sun's energy to produce an average of 6,000 tons of steam per day, replacing valuable gas. The virtual reality demonstration allows visitors to immerse themselves with one of the world's largest solar plants, experiencing first-hand how solar technology can be deployed in Kuwait to achieve the country's energy goals.

"Kuwait is challenged by significant natural gas shortages, which is increasingly needed for electrical power generation. Planned thermal EOR projects in Kuwait will require large amounts of imported natural gas or other fuel to generate steam, putting the state's heavy oil production in competition with other gas users," said Hussain Shehab, GlassPoint's Kuwait Country Chairman. "Solar can provide the vast majority of a field's steam needs at the lowest cost, reducing future dependence on imported gas. In light of today's low oil prices, solar is a strategic solution to optimize production costs and strengthen energy independence."

Commenting on the company's growth in Kuwait, Shehab added, "Since GlassPoint opened its office in Kuwait last year, we have been seeking the right people and resources to support the country develop its heavy oil sus-



The GlassPoint booth.

tainably. We are thrilled to announce the appointment of May Alzanki as GlassPoint's Sales and Business Development Director. May brings more than 15 years of experience within the international oil and gas industry and the financial sector in Kuwait, including senior roles at Kuwait Energy, Kuwait Financial Centre ("Markaz") and Kuwait Oil Company ("KOC")."

GlassPoint CEO Rod MacGregor commented, "The high cost of producing heavy oil coupled with year-round sunshine makes Kuwait one of the largest markets for solar powered oil production worldwide. However, high winds, dust and sandstorms create a tough operating environment for solar. GlassPoint's enclosed trough technology has been proven to not only sur-

live, but thrive in these harsh desert conditions. Our pilot in south Oman has exceeded performance targets for nearly three years, which led to the award of a project over one hundred times larger. The opportunity for solar EOR in Kuwait is just as massive, exceeding dozens of gigawatts of thermal demand."

As part of KOGS, MacGregor will participate on the panel session "Managing Innovation" moderated by Kuwait Oil Company and Chevron. GlassPoint is also presenting two co-authored technical papers "Solar Enhanced Oil Recovery Application to Kuwait's Heavy Oil Fields" presented by VP Daniel Palmer and "Economics of Steam Generation for Thermal EOR" by Director of Sales Marwan Chaar.

RUSSIA'S GAZPROM RESUMES GAS SUPPLIES TO UKRAINE

MOSCOW: Gazprom yesterday resumed gas supplies to Ukraine after receiving prepayment of \$234 million from Kiev, assuaging European fears about a new energy crisis ahead of the winter heating season.

The resumption of gas supplies comes as fighting in the east has largely died down, fuelling hopes that the conflict that has claimed more than 8,000 lives can be resolved. "Gazprom began supplying gas to Ukraine at 10:00 am (0700 GMT) today," Gazprom chief Alexei Miller said in a statement. Moscow received \$234 million of the \$500 million expected from Kiev, Miller said, adding that Ukraine had requested the delivery of 114 million cubic meters per day, the maximum volume of gas that could be delivered by Gazprom. Ukraine's state gas pipeline operator Ukrtransgas declined to immediately comment yesterday but the firm said last week that Kiev was ready to purchase two billion cubic meters of natural gas from Russia in October.

Moscow late last month agreed to resume gas supplies to Ukraine after reportedly offering Kiev a rebate, ending months of talks overshadowed by the crisis in eastern Ukraine and fears for Europe's energy security. Russian energy minister had said that the price offered was competitive with those for the gas supplied to countries neighboring Ukraine.

In June, Ukraine announced it was suspending all purchases of natural gas from Russia over a price dispute after EU-mediated talks broke down.

Russia supplies around a third of Europe's gas, with roughly half of it flowing via Ukraine.

Yury Korolchuk, an analyst with the Institute of Energy Strategies in Kiev, told AFP. He said that 16 billion cubic metres of gas Ukraine currently had in its underground storage facilities were not enough to safely get through the winter.

"God forbid that severe cold hits us in January-February and Europe takes more (gas). This is a huge risk," he added. "We need at least 19 billion cubic metres to pump into our storage facilities to ensure gas transit." The resumption of deliveries could help Kiev accumulate 17 billion cubic metres of natural gas by October 21, the "absolute minimum for the security of gas transit to Europe," said analysts from VTB Capital bank.

But these reserves could not be enough if the winter is harsh, they warned. End-of-year haggling over energy prices had been a familiar problem between Russia and Ukraine but ties collapsed altogether after a popular uprising in Kiev ousted Kremlin-backed leader Viktor Yanukovich last year.

Kiev has been seeking to diversify its supply base away from Russia after Moscow cut gas supplies to Ukraine in 2006 and 2009, interrupting transit to Europe. Moscow hiked the price it charges Ukraine following the ouster of Yanukovich, which unleashed a pro-Russian insurgency in the east of the ex-Soviet country. With Russia slipping into recession on the back of lower oil prices and

Western sanctions over Ukraine, the economy ministry said Gazprom could produce 414 billion cubic metres of gas this year, an all-time low due to weak demand, among other reasons.

Last week Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said a "real truce" had begun in eastern Ukraine but a long-lasting peace with pro-Kremlin insurgents would still take some time. —AFP

GLENCORE PUTS AUSTRALIAN, CHILE MINES UP FOR SALE

ZURICH: Mining giant Glencore, under pressure from a crash in commodity prices and weighed down by debt, announced yesterday it had begun talks to sell copper mines in Australia and Chile.

"The sale process is in response to Glencore receiving a number of unsolicited expressions of interest for these mines from various potential buyers," the firm said in a statement. It warned that the process "may or may not result in a sale" of the two mines.

The mines in question are the Cobar mine in southwestern Australia, which produces some 50,000 tons of copper in concentrate annually, and the Lomas Bayas in the Atacama desert in Chile, which produces around 75,000 tons of copper cathode each year. Glencore said yesterday it would not provide further information on the possible copper mines sales until they had been concluded "or disclosure is otherwise required." Analysts with the Canaccord institute said it was difficult to estimate the value of the two sites without any financial details from the company.

But it suggested the Cobar mine could be worth \$100-\$150 million, while the Lomas Bayas mine might fetch up to \$500 million. It said the mines might be a good fit for copper production specialist Antofagasta, listed on the London stock exchange, "if the price is right."

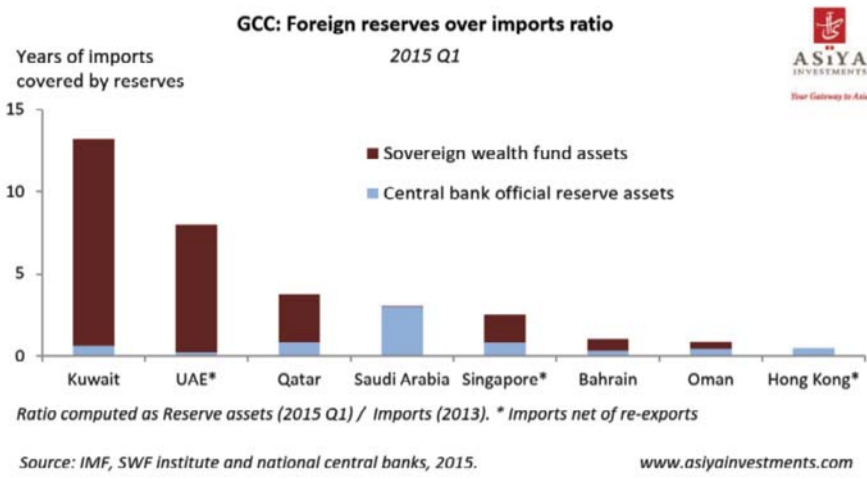
Following yesterday's announcement, Glencore saw its share price slide 1.47 percent to 127.20 pence in late morning trading on the London stock exchange.

The debt-laden Swiss company, which has been hard-hit by a commodity price collapse, has faced wild fluctuation in its share price in recent weeks amid investor fears that sinking commodity prices will affect its ability to meet outstanding debt obligations.

At the beginning of September, Glencore announced a series of drastic moves aimed at cutting its towering \$30-billion debt by a third. Among other measures, the company has raised \$2.5 billion in share sales, has halted dividend payments until further notice and has said it will sell off a number of assets.

Faced with shrinking metals prices, Glencore has already mothballed output at two copper projects in Africa, and closed a platinum mine in South Africa. And last week, the mining giant announced it would slash its output of zinc by a third by suspending zinc operations at mines in two mines Australia and Peru, and cutting production elsewhere.—AFP

'God forbid severe cold'
'This is a resumption of cooperation,'



GCC FIXED EXCHANGE RATES REGIMES ARE HERE TO STAY

ASIYA CAPITAL INVESTMENTS ANALYSIS ON ASIA

By Jordi Rof

KUWAIT: The sustainability of the fixed exchange rate currency systems in the GCC is starting to be questioned, due to the weakness of oil prices. There are important reasons to believe that low energy prices could undermine the credibility of pegs in the region. Oil-related products are the main export of Gulf countries, thus, oil prices affect export revenue heavily. The historically persistent current account surplus of the region could actually turn into a deficit, draining foreign reserves of central banks and putting pressure on the pegs. When fixed exchange rate regimes are under pressure, currencies are prone to suffer speculative attacks as devaluation or the shift to a free-floating regime becomes more likely. Free-floating regimes have several advantages, but would also be an issue for Gulf nations, as currency risks for cross-border trade and investments would be introduced. Also, devaluation expectations could trigger sizeable capital outflows that would put GCC currencies under further pressure. The effect of low oil prices is already evident in exports revenue throughout the region, and even in the balance of payments (BoP) in 2015 Q1. Saudi Arabia and Qatar registered a BoP (current plus financial account balances) deficit of 14 percent and 21 percent of GDP respectively, mainly due to a current account deterioration.

Holdings of foreign reserves are the guarantee that makes a fixed exchange rate credible. Saudi Arabia has the largest volume of central bank reserves in the Gulf, both in absolute and relative terms, enough to finance about three years of its imports and nine years of a BoP deficit of 10 percent of its GDP. Considering only central bank reserves, the rest of the GCC countries appear to be in a much meagre position. However, sovereign wealth fund (SWF) assets, usually not included in central bank reserves, could be used for monetary

policy purposes. A mere portfolio reshuffle, from foreign assets to GCC-currency-denominated assets, could offset a current account deficits through the financial account and boost central bank reserves. Currency regimes in Kuwait, the UAE and Qatar look even more robust than in Saudi Arabia when SWF are accounted for. These countries would be capable of financing BoP deficits of 10 percent of their GDP for 35, 32 and 16 years respectively. Even Bahrain and Oman, could withstand relatively long periods of low oil prices, since they could finance up to one year of imports with their national reserves, and five years of an equivalent BoP deficit. Compared similarly-sized economies without floating currency systems such as Singapore or Hong Kong, Gulf states seem well-positioned in terms of reserves.

Authorities in the GCC have enough resources to guarantee the fixed exchange regime in the medium run. However, exchange rate adjustments will also depend on the evolution of oil prices in the long run, and the potential benefits and risks of a devaluation. We expect oil prices to recover gradually in the next 12 months in our baseline scenario. Also, the uncertainty that a devaluation would cause in inward investment would be likely to hurt Gulf nations, which are hoping to boost foreign investment as a strategy to diversify their economies. Overall, a devaluation looks unlikely for the time being. Even so, Gulf countries should implement further long-term reforms to improve the sustainability of their economies and currency regimes. Diversification is particularly important as it would shield the BoP from oil price volatility. Advancing towards a more integrated GCC currency system could also improve financial stability, as the relatively weak reserves position of the smaller countries in the region could undermine the credibility of the whole bloc in case of pressure on the currency system.

BURGAN BANK'S AIRPORT WORKING HOURS DURING HIJRI NEW YEAR HOLIDAY

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced yesterday that its airport branch will resume normal working hours during the upcoming Hijri New Year Holiday from 8:00 am to 10:30 pm, whereas other branches will be closed from Wednesday 14th October 2015 to Thursday, 15th October 2015. The bank will resume normal working hours throughout its operations and branches on Sunday, 18th October 2015.

This step comes in line with the bank's initiative in accommodating banking requirements for customers during the public holidays.

For more information on any products or services, customers are required to contact Burgan Bank's call center 1804080 during the Hijri New Year Holiday. On this occasion, Burgan Bank extends its best wishes and greetings to the public.

FLYDUBAI TO DISPLAY ITS BUSINESS CLASS AND GROWING NETWORK

KUWAIT: flydubai, Dubai-based airline operating out of Sheikh Saad Terminal, will showcase its business class and onboard services at The Avenues mall in Kuwait from October 14-17, 2015. The interactive display stand will sample some elements of the flydubai travel experience and shed lights on its fast growing network.

flydubai's Business Class seats will be on display at the stand, equipped with the airlines in-flight entertainment system, which has more than a 1,300 hours of non-stop movies, TV shows and music. The stand also presents useful information, interactive route map and games like "Where in the

World?" a photo booth, fun activities like a giant postcard slide puzzle.

Visitors to the flydubai stand will be given a promotional code which will allow them to avail a 10% discount off certain flights between Kuwait and Dubai. The booking period will be from Oct 14-17, 2015.

The flydubai interactive display stand will be located on the ground floor of The Avenues mall at Dom (1) near Paul restaurant. The stand will run daily throughout the mall's working hours: 10am-10pm from Wednesday, October 14 to Saturday, October 17, 2015.



JAZEERA AIRWAYS' SHAREHOLDERS OK VOLUNTARY REDUCTION OF CAPITAL

TOTAL PAYOUTS IN 2015 REACH KD52.7 MILLION

KUWAIT: In an Extraordinary General Meeting of shareholders held yesterday, Jazeera Airways' shareholders approved a board recommendation to reduce the company's capital from KD42 million to KD20 million through a share buyback program to readjust the company's capital to match the size of current operations after exiting the aircraft leasing business.

The company will buy back 220 million shares at the nominal share price of 100 fils, resulting in a KD22 million shareholder payout, which when combined with the company's special dividends payout of KD20 million in June, and with KD10.7 million in 2015 accumulated earnings and other reserves that are required by law to be distributed as part of the capital reduction, the company's cash payout to shareholders in 2015 will total KD52.7 million.

Jazeera Airways Chairman Marwan Boodai said, "Today's shareholder approval to adjust the company's capital is the last step of the company's successful strategic exit from the capital-intensive aircraft leasing business earlier in the year. Going forward, our focus will be on the growth opportunities available in our home market within the passenger airline business, which generated over 80% of the company's net profit last year. We believe that passenger airline business in Kuwait will continue to grow strong and we are well prepared to take advantage of this growth". Cash payouts to Jazeera Airways shareholders in 2015: KD52.7 million • Distributed



- KD20 million in special dividends for 2014. Approved in May 2015, and distributed in June 2015.
 - To be distributed by year-end:
 - KD22 million to buy back 420 million shares
 - KD10.7 million in accumulated earnings up to June 30, 2015, and other reserves
- The capital reduction process will also

include the settlement of all debts held by the company, resulting in a debt-free company by year-end.

The company's share buyback program will be the first voluntary share buyback program exercise in Kuwait based on the new share buyback procedures stated by Kuwait's new Commercial Companies Law (97/2013).



DUBAI: The Business Leadership Excellence Award winners.

WADHAWAN WINS BUSINESS LEADERSHIP AWARD



DUBAI: Kumar Wadhawan speaks during the event.

KUWAIT: S. Kumar Wadhawan, Chairman of Samara Group, won Business Leadership Excellence Award at the World Leadership Congress (WLC) which was concluded on October 6, 2015 at Taj Dubai, UAE. The award was presented at a gala dinner ceremony which was well-attended by over 200 participants from 65 countries including the US, Europe, GCC and Asia.

The World Leadership Congress Awards recognize outstanding business leaders and organizations for their commitments to excellence, developing best practices and innovative strategies.

Upon receiving the award, Wadhawan said we are very much delighted and honored to receive this prestigious World Leadership award and the recognition it signifies.



DUBAI: S. Kumar Wadhawan, Chairman of Samara Group, receives the Business Leadership Excellence Award at the World Leadership Congress (WLC) which was concluded on October 6, 2015 at Taj Dubai, UAE.

MAURITIUS HOPES TO DRUM UP INVESTMENT

PORT LOUIS: Mauritius wants to boost slower investment flows and its economy by opening offices in Europe and Asia in the next six months to promote itself as a regional hub for finance, manufacturing and other businesses, its investment board said. The island is pitching itself as a gateway to Africa, boasting the highest ranking on the continent in the World Bank's East of Doing Business list. It wants to draw in more Asian investment and boost traditional European links.

Foreign direct investment into Mauritius reached 14.1 billion rupees (\$400 million) in 2014 but has slipped so far in 2015, reaching 4.76 billion rupees in the first six months.

"We should reach above 10 billion (rupees in 2015)," Ken Poonosamy, managing director of the Board of Investment told Reuters, adding that 2014 numbers were "inflated a bit" because of several hotel acquisitions that year. "People are looking at Mauritius as a services platform. The services sector is not really FDI intensive, but they are creating jobs," he said, adding Mauritius' attractions were a flat 15 percent tax rate and access to two African trade blocs.

To encourage investment, the board opened an office Paris in June and will open a London bureau before the end of the year, he said. It also plans an office in Switzerland.

An office in Johannesburg, aimed at build-

ing on a growing amount of South African business, opens in November. In a bid to draw more firms and capital from Asia, the board is also setting up an office in New Delhi this year and one in Beijing was expected to launch in the first quarter of 2016.

The Mauritius economy has been recovering from the global financial crisis. But growth for 2015 has been revised down this year from 4.1 percent to 3.6 percent.

Mauritius is seeking to expand its financial services industry and manufacturing to broaden out from tourism and sugar production. The economic growth forecast for 2015 has been revised down this year from 4.1 percent to 3.6 percent. — Reuters



SANTA CLARA: The sun is reflected in the exterior of Dell Inc's offices in Santa Clara, California. Dell is buying data storage company EMC in a deal valued at approximately \$67 billion, the companies announced yesterday. EMC offices are seen (right). Michael Dell will serve as chairman and CEO of the combined business. —AP photos



JUDGE INVALIDATES RULE AGAINST TELESCOPE MOUNTAIN PROTESTS

HONOLULU: A judge issued a decision late Friday invalidating the state's emergency rule aimed at curbing protests against the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope atop the Big Island mountain of Mauna Kea, the Honolulu Star Advertiser reported.

The Hawaii circuit court granted a partial motion for summary judgment, according to a joint statement issued late Friday by state Attorney General Douglas Chin and state Board of Land and Natural Resources Chairwoman Suzanne Case. "The state acknowledges the court's decision and will abide by it," the statement said. "We remind people traveling to Mauna Kea that even in light of today's ruling existing laws and rules remain. It is always illegal to block the road. This includes standing in the road or placing obstructions in the road. These laws will continue to be enforced."

David Kauila Kopper, the lawyer who filed the lawsuit against the rule on behalf of a Hawaii resident, praised the decision as honoring the wishes of Native Hawaiians who regard the mountain as sacred.

"The State adopted an illegal rule to prevent opposition to the TMT at the expense of sincere cultural practices and public expression," Kopper, who works with the Native Hawaiian Legal Corporation, said in a statement.

The state land board approved the emergency rule after a heated July 10 public meeting. Protesters have been camping on the mountain in an attempt to block construction. Construction has stalled since April, and the company hasn't indicated when it will resume. The rule prohibited being within a mile of the Mauna Kea access road between 10 pm and 4 am, unless in a moving vehicle. The rule also prohibited, at any time, sleeping bags, camping stoves, tents and propane burners on the mountain.

Last month, TMT International Observatory announced that, despite the protests, it still expects the Thirty Meter Telescope to be ready in 2024. TMT officials said design and production of telescope parts and structures have continued in the six months since protests halted land clearing at the construction site, The Hawaii Tribune-Herald reported. — AP

FORD TO INVEST \$1.8BN IN CHINA RESEARCH

BEIJING: Ford Motor Co is investing \$1.8 billion to develop technologies aimed at attracting Chinese car buyers, underlining China's importance to automakers despite slowing sales growth. The American automaker said yesterday it will expand its research and development center in the eastern city of Nanjing and work on autonomous driving, smartphone connectivity, more efficient powertrains and other technologies.

Global automakers see China as a key source of sales growth and are spending heavily to appeal to Chinese tastes. Some have broken with a strategy of selling the same models worldwide and are creating China-only vehicles. Automakers are stepping up investment despite an unexpectedly sharp downturn in sales this year. In July, General Motors Co announced a \$5 billion initiative with its main Chinese partner to develop vehicles to be sold in China, Brazil, India and Mexico.

Auto sales in China declined in August for a third straight month, contracting by 3.4 percent from a year earlier to 1.4 million vehicles. Ford's August sales declined by 3 percent to 79,608, while year-to-date sales were off 1 percent at just over 700,000. Demand has been hurt by congestion in Beijing, Shanghai and other major cities that has made car ownership less attractive and by official efforts to curb traffic and smog by limiting the number of new vehicle registrations.

Ford said features it hopes to offer in China include introduction next year of SYNC 3, a system that allows hands-free control of phones, entertainment, climate control and navigation. Ford said it will add a vehicle test center in Nanjing, expanding its ability to develop products in China. The company has 10 manufacturing facilities in China. The Nanjing Research and Engineering Center employs 1,900 people and is one of eight global product development centers. In April, Ford and a local partner said they would spend \$1.1 billion on a factory in China's northeast. — AP

SOUTHWEST OPERATIONS APPEAR ON TRACK AFTER DAY OF DELAYS

AIRLINE WARNS TRAVELERS TO PLAN AHEAD

DALLAS: A day after technological problems delayed hundreds of flights, operations appear to have returned to normal yesterday for Southwest Airlines. Southwest said that it was still working to get some delayed or displaced customers into open seats and to deliver baggage, but it expected the technical systems that run its customer service to perform normally.

The Dallas carrier had been warning passengers to arrive at the airport two hours early yesterday and print boarding passes beforehand, but airline officials now say that travelers should expect a normal day. Southwest suffered intermittent technical issues on its website, mobile app and in its phone centers and airports check-in systems Sunday. It was using backup systems to check-in travelers lacking printed or mobile boarding passes.

Airline representatives have not said what caused the problem, but did say there was no indication that hackers were involved. There were about 500 delays out of 3,600 flights scheduled Sunday. Passengers reported long lines at several locations across the country, including major airports like Los Angeles International, which provided water and canopies to those stuck waiting in line outside.

Yesterday morning, Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport tweeted that operations were returning to normal with few delays and diminishing passenger lines.

Earlier, Southwest Airlines said hundreds of flights have been delayed by technical issues and warned passengers flying to arrive two hours early and print boarding passes before coming to the airport.

The Dallas-based company said it was using back-up systems around the country to check-in travelers lacking printed or mobile boarding passes but technology problems that began Sunday morning were continuing. Southwest said about 450 of the 3,600 flights scheduled for the day had been delayed. Representatives for Southwest did not say what caused the problem or how long it would take to resolve. Spokesman Brad Hawkins said there was "absolutely no indication now" that the problems were the result of hacking.

At Los Angeles International Airport earlier in the day, several dozen people crowded the Southwest terminal waiting to be issued hand-written tickets.

EJ Schultz, a reporter for Ad Age who was taking a Southwest flight from Chicago's Midway International Airport, said the airline was telling people at the gate that travelers with paper boarding passes were fine. But those who had downloaded their tickets onto their mobile phones were told they had to stand in line, he said.

check-in for a boarding pass. When she went downstairs to the curb-side check-in, she said there were about a couple hundred people in line there as well.

By the time she got in line to go through security, it was around 10:15 am. "The clock was ticking and the flight took off," said Mitnick, who was trying to get to Detroit through a different flight to Chicago. In a statement, Southwest said it was still having "intermittent" technical issues on its website, mobile app and in its phone centers and airports check-in systems. It said that



DALLAS: A Southwest Airlines jet lands at Love Field in Dallas. — AP

Schultz said he didn't understand why Southwest didn't announce that people should print out their boarding passes at home before getting to the airport.

"If everyone had done that, it would've saved so much time," he said. Schultz said there was a line of about 50 people at the Southwest gate. His flight took off roughly 15 minutes after its scheduled departure time of 4:30. The long lines at check-in may mean some passengers didn't make their flights.

Emily Mitnick, who was flying to Detroit from Denver International Airport, said she missed her 10 am flight, even though she parked her car around 8 a.m. She estimated that about 1,000 people were in line at the

while it is working on the issues, workers at airports are helping customers with their itineraries.

Last month, American Airlines experienced computer problems that prevented passengers from checking in and briefly halted flights on select routes. Airline officials said at the time that they fixed the problem after less than two hours, and that there was no indication that its system had been hacked. In July, hundreds of United Airlines flights were delayed after the airline experienced computer problems for the second time in just over a month. A United representative said at the time that the glitch was caused by an internal technology issue, and not an outside threat or hacker. — AP



LAS VEGAS: Departing Southwest Airlines passengers wait in line at McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas on Sunday. — AP

CHINA PLANS STRICTER REGULATION OF UBER-LIKE SERVICES

SHANGHAI: China plans to more strictly regulate online ride-sharing services, according to draft rules and state media, in what analysts said yesterday could be a "devastating blow" to an industry pioneered by US firm Uber. The Ministry of Transport unveiled proposed regulations which bar private cars from participating in such services, the rules posted on its website at the weekend showed.

Such a move would force vehicles and drivers to be registered with the government, the China Daily newspaper reported yesterday. Ride-sharing services, which can connect customers directly with drivers through smartphones, have threatened the traditional taxi industry and contributed to protests by cab drivers in China.

The Chinese market is currently dominated by domestic firm Didi Kuaidi, which was formed through the merger of companies

backed by Internet giants Tencent and Alibaba.

But Uber, in which Chinese search giant Baidu has invested, is trying to make greater inroads into the potentially vast market and has announced plans to invest around \$1.0 billion in China and expand into 100 cities within a year.

The draft rules say foreign companies must set up servers in China and meet requirements for "national security", but gave no details. Analysts said the regulations, if implemented as announced, could hurt the nascent business. "If it takes effect, it'll be a devastating blow to the industry," Zhang Xu, a Beijing-based analyst at market research firm Analysys International, told Bloomberg News. "Ride-hailing operators would need to pay high costs to retain existing private-car drivers, and they may not manage to keep drivers in the end," Zhang said. — AP

VW EX-CEO WINTERKORN TO QUIT REMAINING POSTS

FRANKFURT: Martin Winterkorn, the former boss of Volkswagen who quit last month, will step down from his remaining posts related to the company, the Sueddeutsche Zeitung newspaper and TV stations NDR and WDR reported yesterday, without citing sources.

The resignations are expected in the coming days, as soon as a few remaining formalities have been dealt with, they said. Winterkorn resigned as CEO of Volkswagen after Europe's largest carmaker admitted cheating in diesel emissions tests in the United States, triggering the company's biggest business scandal in its 78-year history, but he retained a number of key

positions within the Volkswagen group. He is chief executive of Porsche SE, the family-owned holding company that controls a majority stake in Volkswagen, as well as chairman of VW's flagship luxury brand Audi, trucks division Scania and the group's newly-created Truck & Bus holding.

Labour leaders have been putting pressure on Winterkorn to resign from his remaining posts within the group, one person familiar with the matter told Reuters.

The former CEO did not attend a supervisory board meeting at Audi last week, where deputy board head Berthold Huber stood in for him as chairman, the person said. — Reuters

CLIMATE CHANGE THREATENS FUTURE OF CANADA HUNTERS

FORT SIMPSON, Canada: Indigenous hunter Jim Antoine has watched the decline of caribou herds with alarm, convinced that global warming is at least partially responsible for the crisis in Canada's far north. An important food source for the Dene people, an indigenous group living in the northern boreal and Arctic regions of Canada, as well as for other northern communities, the caribou population has crashed in recent years. Scientists, hunters and government officials say there are several possible causes for the fall in numbers of the woodland caribou but climate change is likely a significant driver.

In parts of the Northwest Territories, average annual temperatures have already risen more than 3 degrees Celsius in the past two decades, a local politician said, impacting everything from housing, transport to caribou numbers. This comes amid fears the world may fail to cut greenhouse gas emissions enough to meet a target of limiting a global temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times - the focus of a major UN conference in Paris in December where 193 countries will seal a new deal to slow climate change.

"We live with (climate change) everyday," Antoine told the Thomson Reuters Foundation at his suburban home in Fort Simpson, a mostly Dene community of about 1,200 residents just over 500 km (310 miles) south of the Arctic Circle. "In the old days, it stayed cold for a longer time and there was more water on the land ... all of that will impact the animals," said Antoine, who was the premier of the Northwest Territories in the late 1990s, munching on sauteed moose meat.

The caribou crisis is one manifestation of climate

change facing residents in a region considered the "canary in the coal mine" by environmentalists, as global warming is felt here first and often with more intensity than other areas. The Arctic ecosystems, Greenland ice sheet and tropical coral reefs are systems earmarked as particularly vulnerable to rising temperatures. Scientists fear greenhouse gas emissions from human activity are causing the Arctic to warm twice as fast as the global average, according to a Cambridge University study in September.

Crises Seen Moving South

Wildlife are particularly affected by the changes. The number of breeding females in one major caribou herd, a key population indicator, dropped by half between 2015 and 2012, the territorial government said in late September. In 1986, the herd was about 470,000 strong. Now it's 16,000. As warming continues across the once frozen north, residents worry the situation will get worse.

The Cambridge study warned of a possible \$43 trillion hit to economic damage by the end of the century as rising temperatures melt permafrost and long-buried carbon dioxide and methane seep from the ground, creating a catastrophic feedback loop. With hunted meat drying above the stove, a roaring wood fire keeping the place warm, and massive hunting dogs roaming around, Joseph Antoine, a relative of Jim's with decades of experience on the land, worries about the future. "This decline of the caribou is not going to stop," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "Certain areas had a huge amount of caribou at one time."

While indigenous hunters are feeling the effects of climate change first, the problems they

have faced over the past two decades with increasing ferocity will invariably impact larger populations further south, scientists said. Earlier melts and later freezing of winter ice could also be to blame for smaller caribou populations, disrupting migration routes to breeding grounds or winter food sources.

The crash in the caribou population is not unique to Canada with similar declines happening across the north, said Nancy Maynard, an Emeritus Scientist with NASA. The numbers of reindeer - a cousin of the caribou - in Norway and Russia's eastern regions are declining rapidly, she said, citing ice melts, increased forest fires linked to warming, and industrial development as possible causes. "The changes are happening so fast and it's dramatic how people are forced to cope," Maynard said. "The rate of change has accelerated and it has been surprising scientists."

Healthy Eating at Risk

In northern villages like Fort Simpson, caribou hunting isn't just a cultural practice honed over generations, or a marker of indigenous identity, but a key food source in a region where groceries normally cost more than double southern prices. The decline in the caribou population is exacerbated by high costs of trucking or flying food in the Northwest Territories, an area larger than Egypt but with less than 50,000 people. "People are nutritionally affected by the caribou (decline)," politician Bob Bromley told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in the territorial capital, Yellowknife. "They have been raised on caribou and their bodies are adjusted to deal with that kind of food. Store-bought food is not

as healthy and usually has higher fat and sugar content than they are used to."

With a growing reliance on shop food, obesity is rising, physical activity declining and lifestyle-related ailments like diabetes and cancer increasing among indigenous people particularly, the government said in a 2014 report. Across northern Canada, the number of people depending on food aid more than doubled between 2013 and 2008, according to a report from Food Banks Canada. It said more than 3,500 people in Canada's three northern regions - the Yukon, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories - now depend on food assistance in a "dire public health emergency".

The shift in the climate has also made hunting less safe as the ice in some regions isn't freezing as deeply and melts earlier, said Jamal Shirley, a manager at the Nunavut Research Institute in Canada's northernmost territory. Many residents hunt on snowmobiles and rely on traditional knowledge of ice thickness to navigate frozen lakes but a number of younger people, without the traditional knowledge of ice, have died in recent years by falling through when fishing. "With all of these factors occurring at the same time as climate change, it's hard to look at the challenges in isolation," Shirley told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "Ultimately, nature is in control here and human beings are vulnerable."

But few have faith that their situation will improve following the climate talks in December this year. "The countries doing the polluting aren't going to stop," said Jim Antoine. "We aren't the ones causing climate change but we are the ones living with it." — Reuters

LAOS SUFFERS VACCINE-LINKED CASE OF POLIO

GENEVA/LONDON: Laos has suffered a case of vaccine-derived polio, the World Health Organization said yesterday, in a new setback to a global plan to eradicate the crippling disease after the virus resurfaced in Ukraine and Mali. The WHO said an 8-year-old boy died of the disease on Sept 11, and genetic sequencing suggested the virus strain has been circulating in the area of Bolikhamxay province, which has low immunization rates, for more than two years.

There is no cure for polio, which attacks the nervous system and can cause irreversible paralysis within hours of infection. But a global vaccination campaign has all but beaten the wild polio virus, with only Pakistan and Afghanistan reporting cases of wild polio virus infection this year. Specialists have warned that vaccine-derived cases - such as this one in Laos and previous ones in Ukraine and Mali - could hamper progress towards global eradication.

The WHO stressed that "ending polio for good requires eliminating both wild and vaccine-derived polio". It added, however, that because of relatively limited travel to and from this area, and because of extra immunisation campaigns planned in response, the risk of international spread of this polio strain from Laos is low. Laos has been free of the wild polio virus since 1993, but poor immunisation rates mean people are at risk of infection with strains of the virus that can mutate in sewage after being excreted by immunised children.

The risk of vaccine-derived polio cases can be avoided by switching from using live oral polio vaccines (OPV) - which are highly effective, cheap, easy to deliver but contain live virus, - to "inactivated" vaccines (IPV), which are not effective for fighting endemic disease but contain no live virus. The WHO said the use of OPV is being scaled down in a phased manner as countries eliminate circulating wild polio virus strains. — Reuters

INDIAN CHILDREN LABOR TO BRING SPARKLE TO MAKEUP

GIRIDIH, India: Her face caked in dirt and hair matted with sweat, eight-year-old Lalita Kumari hacks away at pieces of rock containing an elusive mineral that adds a dash of sparkle to lipstick and nail polish. While taking a breather in the hollow of a shimmery sand hill, Lalita says she has not known any other way of life after toiling in the mines of India's eastern Jharkhand state since she was aged four. "I want to go to school but there is never enough at home for us to eat. So I have to come here and work," said the pony-tailed youngster, her blistered hands hid behind her back after laying down her pickaxe.

Lalita is among hundreds of children who help their families make ends meet by spending their day collecting mica, their stomachs often hungry while the sun beats down on their heads. Two decades ago the Jharkhand government shut down the mines over environmental concerns but tonnes of scrap left behind continue to lure impoverished villagers. The mica adds glitter to powders, mascara and lipsticks of top global brands although a complex supply chain makes pinning down the exact origin almost impossible, say activists.

The families of the children who collect the mica often sell it to small traders who in turn sell it to big suppliers. In 2009, German pharma giant Merck was accused of using mica mined by children and supplying it to brands such as L'Oreal and Revlon. Merck has since implemented several measures to make sure that "all mica used for the manufacture of our pigments comes from child labour free sources," the company said in a statement to AFP.

Ugly Side of Beauty

Activists however say remote areas make monitoring impossible and there is no way to guarantee the mica is child-labour free. "I think for companies the situation has become a kind of passing the buck," said Bhuvan Ribhu of Bachpan Bachao Andolan NGO whose founder Kailash Satyarthi won last year's Nobel peace prize for his work combatting child labour. "It's a collective responsibility of anyone who is procuring any mica from this region to come forward and ensure that all the children are in school," Ribhu told AFP.

Major companies insist their suppliers follow good prac-



KODERMA, India: In this photograph taken on Aug 4, 2015, deaf Indian child labourer Nagina (center) and others collect mica at a scrap mine in this district of the eastern Indian state of Jharkhand. — AFP

tices. "Merck, our main supplier in India, only sources mica from legal gated mines and has submitted proof that its entire supply chain is secured," a spokeswoman for L'Oreal said in an email to AFP. Repeated mails by AFP to Revlon, which is also supplied by Merck, went unanswered. Although child labour below 18 is illegal with fines and jail terms for offenders, poor enforcement means rules remain on paper.

Children like Lalita often injure themselves with the pickaxes, while fine mica dust enter their eyes and chest, causing chronic health problems. During the annual monsoon, they risk snake bites and being buried alive by collapsing slag piles. "In a place where poverty is so entrenched it is difficult to convince parents to send kids to school," said Ram Bachan Paswan, a district labour superintendent. "Moreover these mines do not exist on paper so that makes our task very challenging."

Father-of-four Shibhu Yadav acknowledges that his children spend their days mining for mica to keep the family's heads

above water. "This is the main source of livelihood for us," he said, pointing at glittering silver and red mounds outside his ramshackle house. "If it had not been for the mica, we would have starved to death," said Yadav who says his family makes about 1,000 rupees (\$17) a month from mica gathering.

Back to School

Cosmetic giants such as Estee Lauder and Chanel have recently joined a scheme to help fund the education of children going back to schools, working alongside Satyarthi's NGO. Thirteen-year-old Seema Kumari says she can now fulfill her dream of becoming a teacher. But she is one of the lucky ones and other youngsters see no end in sight to their labours. "We know mica is used in powder and lipstick," said Pushpa Kumari, whose weathered features belie her 13 years. "It makes women look prettier," she said, balancing a tray full of mica on her head. "But look what it does to us." — AFP

CLINIC PAGE



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Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم

استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

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The Ambassador of Democratic People's Republic of Korea So Chang Sik hosts a reception at the embassy on the occasion of 70th birthday of the Workers Party of Korea. Top officials and media persons attend the event. —Photos by Joseph Shagra



The Ambassador of Vietnam Nguyen Hong Thao hosted a reception on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the National Day of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam at Crowne Plaza Hotel. The event attracted many dignitaries, diplomats and members of the media. —Photos by Joseph Shagra



EMOTIONALLY FAREWELL FOR VICAR REV S PHILIP

The St Stephen's Indian Orthodox Congregation, Kuwait gave an emotionally touching farewell to its founder Vicar Rev Fr Saju Philip in the send-off function which took place after the Holy Qurbana held at the Ace Hall, Subway building in Abbasiya on 9th October, 2015. He came to Kuwait in 2011 and served the Orthodox Church brethren in a highly exemplary manner during the last four years. He took over as the first Vicar of the parish on January 1, 2014 and served them till September end. Fr Saju is noted for his significant role in the growth and establishment of two Orthodox parishes in Kuwait celebrating the 1st Holy Qurbanas of theirs, as well as helping the parishes to establish themselves. In the past, he displayed his divine insight to pastoral matters by passing out from the Nagpur Theological Seminary in 2009 as the best outgoing Seminary student.

Fr Saju took special initiative and got fully involved in forming units of the Holy Church's spiritual organisations like Sunday School, Prayer Groups, Mortha Mariam Samajam, Youth Movement, Choir and Acolytes movement and

guide them all by clear cut and foresighted plans and advice. The initiative and dedication to bring up such organisations in such a short time is highly commendable and appreciated. When he completed 3 years in Kuwait and when the parent Calcutta Diocese decided to post him elsewhere, due to the parish members constant requests, Fr Saju was given and extension of one more year by the Supreme Chief of the Church, His Holiness Baselios Marthoma Paulose II.

After the Holy Qurbana on 9th October, 2015, a meeting presided by the Parish Trustee Raju K was arranged to bid farewell to the outgoing Vicar. Parish members representing the various spiritual organizations spoke on the occasion extending their heartfelt wishes to Fr Saju and family. Mathews Oommen, Alex P George, Babukkutty Mathew, John Varghese, Biju Kumbazha, Robin Abraham, Shibu Abraham, Binu Varghese, Susan Varghese and Ajoy Jacob George who spoke on the occasion reminisced the great experience they had with which Achen while he dedicated his services to the parish. Parish Secretary Binu Thomas welcomed the

gathering and the Co-ordinator Laji Joseph proposed the vote of thanks.

In his reply speech Fr Saju thanked everyone who did extend their co-operation and commitment to him and for the benefit of the Church and the parish. From the various Orthodox parishes of Kuwait, there were hundreds who came and attended the meeting. Fr Saju was also the President of Kuwait Ecumenical Churches Fellowship (KECF) and Kuwait Zone Orthodox Christian Youth Movement during the past 4 years.

He was given a great farewell by the large number of devoted parishioners, well-wishers and all who were close to him at the Airport yesterday evening. Achen with his family bid farewell to Kuwait via Gulf Air flight bound to Trivandrum and will be soon taking charge of the new parish he is given charge of, in Itanagar, Arunachalpradesh in the North Eastern part of India. The parishioners and all his well-wishers wish him all the best and pray he could be blessed to do wonders in the name of God Almighty in the new tenure also.

HIS HOLINESS CATHOLICOS TO ATTEND HARVEST FESTIVAL CELEBRATIONS

The annual Harvest Festival and Sunday School Golden Jubilee closing ceremony of St Gregorios Indian Orthodox Church (MahaEdavaka) - the largest parish of Malankara Orthodox Church (est. in AD 52), is being held at Al Jeel Al Jadeed school auditorium, Hawally. The parish is actively involved in humanitarian aid to the needy and poor especially in the remote and undeveloped areas of North India. The Calcutta Diocese to which this parish belongs, has won many accolades from the state government for uplifting the lives of thousands of villagers through many developmental projects, one of which was the 'Makodia Mission', an ambitious project adopting hundreds of villages and developing it.

In a rare gesture of appreciation, one of the streets has recently been named after the (Late lamented) Dr Stephanos Mar Theodosios, the first Metropolitan of Calcutta Diocese. The Harvest Festival of Kuwait parish is to support its humanitarian/ charity projects. The day-long event will showcase variety cultural programs, public meeting, procession, food festival, American auction, games etc besides a full length musical show by a team of artists lead by RemyaNambesan, the playback singer and cine artist.

Along with the Harvest Festival, the year-long Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Sunday School will also be concluded. The Sunday School had a meek start in 1964 and has grown to be the largest School in Malankara Orthodox Church with 1350 students and 135 teachers in fifty years. During the Jubilee year, various programs such as Personality & Career Development Classes, Teachers training, Workshops on Learning skills, Seminars for parents,

Inter-Sunday school competitions, Alumni meet, Vacation Classes, Talent scan etc were conducted with the support of professionals from each area.

His Holiness Baselios Marthoma Paulose II, the supreme Head of Malankara Orthodox Church, along with Diocesan Bishop HG (Dr) Joseph Mar Dionysius, Director of Orthodox Syrian Sunday School of the East (OSSAE), Director of Sunday School Outside Kerala Region (OKR), Diplomats and other dignitaries will attend the events. Release of 'Reference Book', Golden Jubilee Medallion, Souvenir, inauguration of

Golden Jubilee Special Educational aid for poor students, honoring of senior teachers, prize distribution for competition winners etc., are included in the main event. There are many important announcements expected from the Supreme Head, acknowledging the selfless support Kuwait parish has been extending to various activities of the Church for the past 60 years. During the short visit, His Holiness will inaugurate the first Sunday School Alumni Association in Kuwait, which is going to be a landmark announcement in the history of Malankara Church.





ACK IN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH CQU AUSTRALIA

A delegation of senior staff members from the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) recently visited Central Queensland University (CQU) in Australia. The purpose of the visit was to finalize arrangements regarding expansion of the strategic partnership between the two educational institutions. As a result of the new partnership agreement, CQU will endorse all programs of study at Diploma and Degree levels in

Engineering and Business delivered by ACK. Commenting on this initiative, ACK Dean, Dr Gad Elbeheri noted that previously there were separate arrangements with a number of international partners.

By consolidating agreements with the one major international partner, Dean Elbeheri explained that students will benefit from a more seamless flow of learning between their diploma and degree studies. In addition, Dean

Elbeheri highlighted that ACK students will in future gain from access to a CQU international office based at ACK. This office will provide information regarding CQU and especially concerning the opportunity now for ACK degree graduates to continue into a Masters program at CQU in Australia. To coincide with this new arrangement, Dean Elbeheri also mentioned that in 2016, ACK will offer two Masters Scholarships at CQU for outstanding

ACK Degree graduates either in Engineering or Business.

Another key outcome from the expanded strategic agreement is the exchange of faculty and students between ACK and CQU. For students, this will enable ACK students to benefit from learning and life experiences in Australia and for CQU students to spend a semester in Kuwait. For faculty members, the opportunity for ACK academic staff to spend time at CQU

in Australia will strengthen the already close communications between the two institutions. Dean Elbeheri added that the expanded strategic agreement now includes the establishment of a joint research committee as well as reciprocal adjunct faculty status for ACK and CQU faculty. He noted that this will enable ACK academic staff to now officially share and collaborate on research projects with their CQU counterparts.



MILLENNIUM HOTEL & CONVENTION CENTRE HOLDS BLOOD DONATION DRIVE

Millennium Hotel & Convention Centre Kuwait, the newly opened 5-star hotel located in Salmiya held its first blood donation drive in partnership with the Kuwait Central Blood Bank aimed at boosting the nation's vital blood reserves. The drive was hailed as a success thanks to the dozens of hotel staff and management who rolled up their sleeves to donate blood. The hotel designated one of its ballrooms for the occasion, where donation stations and facilities were set up for the day.

"We are aware of the important role played by the Kuwait Central Blood Bank in saving lives, and we at Millennium & Copthorneplc consider

it an obligation to do what we can to help," explained Dani Saleh, Area General Manager of Millennium & Copthorne Hotels Kuwait. Saleh added that a single donation can potentially save three lives, and praised the "incredible professionalism" of the Kuwait Central Blood Bank staff who work year-round to secure the country's blood supply.

Millennium & Copthorne Hotels plc is a dynamic, global hotel company, which owns, asset manages and/or operates over 120 hotels worldwide. With almost 40,000 rooms worldwide, the company is present on all continents with a portfolio of brands which serve different market

segments, representing quality and value in every class.

From a single property in Abu Dhabi, Millennium & Copthorne, Middle East & Africa has expanded into various neighboring destinations and is now recognized as one of the fastest growing regional hotel management companies in the Middle East & Africa. Along the way, the company has cultivated partnerships with reputable and respected owners. Millennium & Copthorne currently operates 22 hotels, has over 10 hotels due to open within the next year and aims to operate 50 properties within the next three years for the MEA region.



HSBC KUWAIT WELCOMES NEW KUWAITI GRADUATES

Fawaz Al-Khaldi, Fawaz Al-Tarrah, Sara Al-Saleem and Jenan Al-Abdulrazzak joined HSBC Kuwait after successfully completing the Tomouh program assessment. Tomouh is HSBC's MENA-wide graduate program and aims to identify and develop GCC nationals as future leaders in the banking and finance industry.

"Nationalization is a priority for us in Kuwait as we strive to invest in local talent and develop Kuwaitis as future leaders in HSBC," said Roger Winfield, CEO of HSBC in Kuwait. "The four candidates that were recruited for the Tomouh program are exceptional candidates and we are thrilled to welcome them as part of our team," he added.

The Tomouh program spans over 18 months and includes on-the-job train-

ing, short term attachments to the regional office in Dubai as well as various technical and soft skill workshops tailored specifically to the recruits and their business areas. The four successful candidates joined different business areas in the bank. Fawaz Al-Khaldi, joined the commercial banking business, Fawaz Al-Tarrah is working in markets, Sara Al-Saleem in the operational side of the bank and Jenan Al-Abdulrazzak has joined the risk team.

"I applied for this program because I want to be part of a dynamic team of international professionals. HSBC offers unique opportunities with many possibilities for a long-term career in international banking," said Sara Al-Saleem. "I have always wanted to be a part of an international organization where I can

develop in my profession," says Fawaz Al-Tarrah. "It is a privilege to be a part of this team and I already know that I have a great career ahead of me if I use all the opportunities available to the best of my abilities," Jenan Al-Abdulrazzak added.

"The selection process was not easy. We were interviewed by a panel of professionals, we had to write a number of tests and we had to showcase our problem-solving skills in a number of situation simulations. The fact that I was successful is a great honor for me," said Fawaz Al-Khaldi. Roger Winfield further said: "HSBC offers a solid foundation based on strong corporate values that talented, ambitious individuals can benefit from for a longstanding and prosperous career. We look forward to working with all four of our new graduates."

LA MAMMA PIZZERIA IN FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON KUWAIT

La Mamma Pizzeria, one of the most authentic and contemporary Italian pizzerias offered in the second floor of Four Points by Sheraton Kuwait, serving a variety of Italian pizzas with fresh ingredients that were carefully put together and baked in a very special firewood oven achieving a crispy crust and providing guests with the most distinctive and original flavors of the Italian villages where the menu contains lots of mouth watering dishes produced to the highest

quality to suit your appetite.

To fully satisfy your craving, La Mamma Pizzeria offers you different types of Anti Pasta, Paste e Risotti, Le Zuppe, and Dolci all prepared by Chef Luigi Salerno who comes from South Italy, awaiting you to take the fresh aromas of the exquisitely baked pizza bread, putting his long years of experience in Italian food into your favorite dishes. In addition to that; indulge in the comprehensive daily specials, which vary from day to day.

The "La Mamma" pizzeria provides guests with a relaxed atmosphere through the contemporary decorations of trendy colors and wooden furniture that evokes the simple and rustic charm of the Italian villages while overlooking the historical Al Jahra gate.

Experience the taste of authentic Italian dishes right in the heart of Kuwait City. Whether you're in town for work or fun, La Mamma Pizzeria is always a great choice for a unique Italian food experience.



GIVE WINGS TO YOUR CHILD'S DREAMS - STUDY IN CANADA

Glinks International Consultancy (www.glinks-studyabroad.com) with a continuous success in UAE now comes in Kuwait to help those parents who want their children to study in Canada. Attend Glinks Seminar and Information Session On 14th October (Wednesday) from 11am to 6pm at Hotel Ibis Salmiya, Salem Al Mubarak Street, Salmiya 24755, Kuwait and meet Karuna Ausman, International Student Recruitment Specialist. Canadian Institutions are recognized and respected globally for their excellence through high accreditation standards, program diversity, flexibility, research and work experience opportunities, modern facilities and top quality teachers. A degree from Canada gives students the qualifications to be international-

ly successful after graduation.

Choosing the best school, university and education pathway for student has always been an important and difficult task for most of the parents since kindergarten to college. If you choose the best quality of education, you may have to compromise with your budget however many of the readers might struggle to decide which country, university and course to opt. Glinks is here to take all your worries away and will provide you the best solutions. Students studying in Grade 8th onwards may visit with their parents. Discover the immense opportunities of studies, work and settlement in Canada. Hurry! Plan for next intake now! Give a Global Perspective to Your Child's Career! For details call/ whatsapp/ sms: +971 50 703 7747



NSS KUWAIT CELEBRATES 'THIRUVONAPPULARI 2015'

NSS Kuwait conducted this year's Onam celebration at Carmel School Khaitan on 2nd October 2015 in the presence of a grand audience. Indian Ambassador Sunil Jain was the chief guest of the celebration attended by more than 2,000 people including NSS Kuwait members, dignitaries and well-wishers.

The inauguration function started at 10:30 am after the traditional welcome to Mahabali with Thalappoli, Pulikali and Chendamalam. Ambassador Sunil Jain inaugurated the function by lighting the lamp. NSS General Secretary S Vijayakumar welcomed the honorable guests. Bajju Pillai, NSS President gave the presidential speech.

Sunil Jain in his inaugural speech congratulated NSS for the welfare activities being conducted in India and in

Kuwait, especially the Cancer Care Scheme, Balika Help Fund and NSS Jyothi. He also urged that NSS should continue such activities for the welfare of all Indian Community.

Vanitha Samajam convener Deepa Pillai addressed the audience and wished happy Onam to all. Sajith C Nair, charity convener talked elaborately on the welfare activities of NSS Kuwait and requested all members to join the mission. After felicitation speeches by the other distinguished guests, NSS Treasurer Guna Prasad extended the vote of thanks. The cultural programs of Kerala Padayani, Thayampaka, Thiruvathira, Vallappattu and the dance drama "Navadurga" by Upasana dance School were the highlights of NSS Onam day celebration.

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KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (08/10/2015 TO 14/10/2015)

SHARQIA-1 THE WALK 12:45 PM 24 HOURS 3:15 PM AHWAK 5:30 PM 24 HOURS 8:00 PM AHWAK 10:15 PM 24 HOURS 12:45 AM	JAZBAA THE MARTIAN 9:15 PM 12:15 AM	JAZBAA THE MARTIAN 6:15 PM 9:15 PM 12:15 AM
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Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
JZR	239	Amman	00:20
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30
THY	772	Istanbul	00:35
JAD	301	Amman	00:45
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55
JZR	539	Cairo	01:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40
RJA	642	Amman	01:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:50
OMA	643	Muscat	02:05
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15
KKK	6507	Istanbul	02:15
UAE	853	Dubai	02:25
QTR	1076	Doha	02:55
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:05
FDB	067	Dubai	03:15
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15
KAC	1544	Cairo	03:35
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:45
THY	1464	Istanbul	03:55
MSC	401	Alexandria	04:00
THY	770	Istanbul	04:40
THY	6376	Istanbul	05:05
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10
MSC	409	Asyut	05:55
KAC	416	Jakarta/Kuala Lumpur	06:00
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	06:15
BAW	157	London	06:35
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30
BBC	6029	Dhaka	07:30
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:45
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:55
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:55
QTR	1086	Doha	07:55
KAC	154	Istanbul	08:10
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15
KAC	352	Kochi	08:15
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25
KAC	362	Colombo	08:30
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:10
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25
KAC	350	Kochi	09:40
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
IRA	675	Lar	09:40
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40
MEA	404	Beirut	10:55
MSC	405	Sohag	11:20
JZR	561	Sohag	11:25
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30
JZR	165	Dubai	11:50
OMA	641	Muscat	11:50
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45
MSC	411	Asyut	12:55
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
KAC	620	Doha	13:10
KAC	514	Tehran	13:45
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	13:55
KAC	672	Dubai	13:55
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05
AXB	393	Kozhikode	14:15
FDB	057	Dubai	14:20
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:20
SVA	500	Jeddah	14:30
RJD	135	Abu Dhabi	15:00
KAC	788	Jeddah	15:00
OMA	645	Muscat	15:05
BBC	039	Riyadh	15:30
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
NIA	251	Alexandria	15:50
RJA	640	Amman	15:55
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	16:00
FDB	051	Dubai	16:10
JZR	325	Al Najaf	16:15
QTR	1072	Doha	16:20
KAC	178	Vienna	16:55
KAC	562	Amman	17:00
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
UAL	982	Istanbul	17:25
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
JZR	177	Dubai	17:45
FDB	065	Dubai	18:05
JZR	483	Istanbul	18:20
KAC	502	Beirut	18:35
KAC	786	Jeddah	18:35
KAC	542	Cairo	18:55
QTR	1080	Doha	18:55
KAC	618	Doha	18:55
KAC	742	Dammam	19:00
KAC	166	Paris/Rome	19:00
KAC	104	London	19:00
UAE	875	Dubai	19:05
GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05
FDB	063	Dubai	19:10
ABY	123	Sharjah	19:20
JAI	572	Mumbai	19:35
KAC	774	Riyadh	19:40
FDB	061	Dubai	19:50
OMA	647	Muscat	20:00
KAC	674	Dubai	20:00
MEA	402	Beirut	20:15
JZR	482	Istanbul	20:15
ABY	126	Sharjah	20:20
UAE	856	Dubai	20:40
KAC	101	London/New York	20:55
ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	21:10
QTR	1071	Doha	21:15
IRA	674	Lar	21:15
FDB	056	Dubai	21:25
KAC	501	Beirut	21:30
KAC	561	Amman	21:30
KAC	165	Rome/Paris	21:45
GFA	214	Bahrain	22:10
MEA	405	Beirut	22:10
KAC	541	Cairo	22:25
UAE	874	Dubai	22:35
RBG	554	Alexandria	22:40
MSC	402	Alexandria	22:50
JZR	324	Al Najaf	23:00
KAC	785	Jeddah	23:00
JZR	176	Dubai	23:20
FDB	076	Dubai	23:55

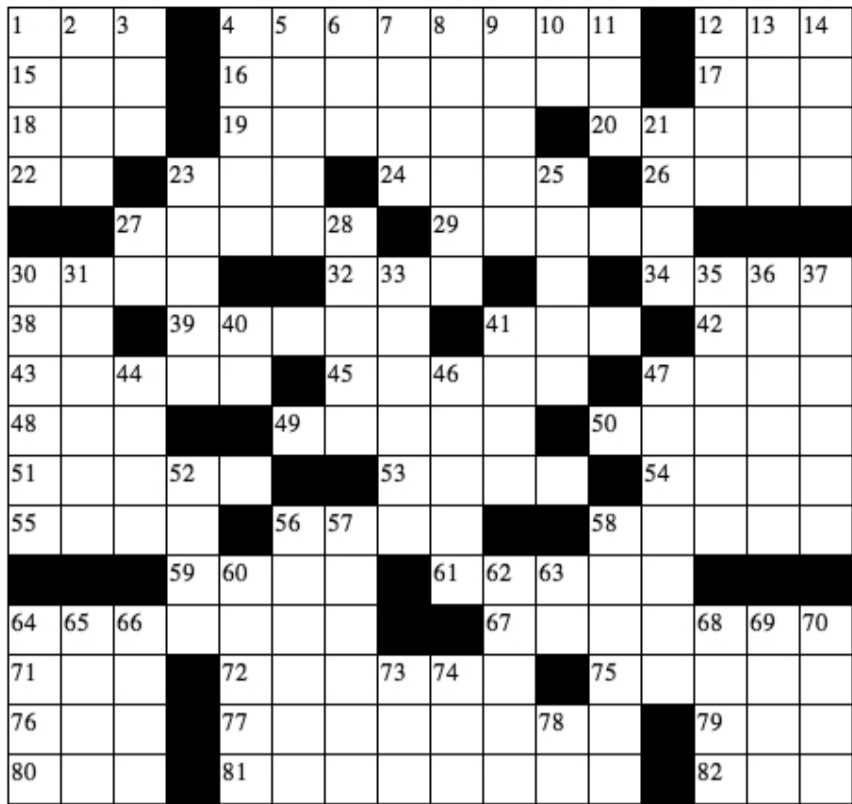
Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers to use seats

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
OMA	642	Muscat	13:15
MSC	412	Asyut	13:55
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:40
QTR	1079	Doha	15:05
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:05
FDB	058	Dubai	15:05
KAC	617	Doha	15:15
AXB	394	Kozhikode	15:15
KAC	673	Dubai	15:20
SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
KAC	773	Riyadh	15:55
KAC	741	Dammam	15:55
OMA	646	Muscat	16:05
RJD	136	Abu Dhabi	16:10
ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:45
NIA	252	Alexandria	16:50
RJA	641	Amman	16:55
BBC	040	Chittagong/Dhaka	17:00
JZR	266	Beirut	17:05
FDB	052	Dubai	17:10
QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
UAL	982	Bahrain	18:40
JZR	538	Cairo	18:40
FDB	066	Amman	18:45
JZR	238	Dubai	18:55
GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
QTR	1081	Doha	19:55
KAC	361	Colombo	20:00
ABY	124	Sharjah	20:00
UAE	876	Dubai	20:00
JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35
FDB	062	Dubai	20:35
KAC	287	Dhaka	20:40
KAC	1543	Cairo	20:55
KAC	343	Chennai	20:55
KAC	353	BLR	21:00
OMA	648	Muscat	21:00
DLH	636	Dammam	21:00
KAC	351	Kochi	21:05
MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
MSR	607	Luxor	21:40
DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	22:05
FDB	074	Dubai	22:10
ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
KAC	381	Delhi	22:20
UAE	860	Dubai	22:25
KLM	415	Dammam/Amsterdam	22:25
KAC	349	Kochi	22:30
KAC	301	Mumbai	22:30
QTR	1075	Doha	22:40
GFA	220	Bahrain	22:45
KAC	153	Istanbul	23:00
ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:00
KAC	205	Islamabad	23:05
KAC	345	Ahmedabad	23:05

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

CROSSWORD 1048



ACROSS

1. The residue that remains when something is burned.
4. Moths whose larvae are cutworms.
12. A bachelor's degree in theology.
15. A digital display that uses liquid crystal cells that change reflectivity in an applied electric field.
16. Bubble shells.
17. An implement used to propel or steer a boat.
18. United States liquid unit equal to 4 quarts or 3.785 liters.
19. Any of several tropical and subtropical tree-like herbs of the genus *Musa* having a terminal crown of large entire leaves and usually bearing hanging clusters of elongated fruits.
20. A can for storing tea.
22. The blood group whose red cells carry both the A and B antigens.
24. A circular segment of a curve.
26. A Hindu prince or king in India.
29. A state in New England.
30. A lymph node that is inflamed and swollen because of plague or gonorrhea or tuberculosis.
32. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
34. Acute lung injury characterized by coughing and rales.
38. An associate degree in nursing.
39. Arboreal snake of central and southern Africa whose bite is often fatal.
42. The fatty flesh of eel.
43. Marked by excessive enthusiasm for and intense devotion to a cause or idea.
45. (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.
48. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
49. Largest crested screamer.
50. The process of combustion of inflammable materials producing heat and light and (often) smoke.
51. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
53. Cassava with long tuberous edible roots and soft brittle stems.
54. Any broad thin and limber covering attached at one edge.
55. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
59. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
61. A nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medicine (trade names Advil and Motrin and Nuprin) used to relieve the pain of arthritis and as an analgesic and antipyretic.
64. (Old Testament) The son of Abraham who was cast out after the birth of Isaac.
67. One of two flaps attached to a cap to keep the ears warm.
71. The cry made by sheep.
72. Not done.
75. The basic unit of money in Nigeria.
76. A mature blood cell that contains hemoglobin to carry oxygen to the bodily tissues.
77. Invested with legal power or official authority especially as symbolized by having a scepter.
79. (British) Your grandmother.
80. East Indian tree bearing a profusion of intense vermilion velvet-textured blooms and yielding a yellow dye.
81. The shell of a marine organism.
82. 10 grams.

DOWN

1. Primitive chlorophyll-containing mainly aquatic eukaryotic organisms lacking true stems and roots and leaves.
2. Someone who works (or provides work-

- ers) during a strike.
3. A lipoprotein that transports cholesterol in the blood.
4. A clique that seeks power usually through intrigue.
5. Jordan's port.
6. Being one more than nine.
7. An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
8. A medium (art or business) that disseminates moving pictures.
9. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
10. A white soft metallic element that tarnishes readily.
11. A former agency (from 1946 to 1974) that was responsible for research into atomic energy and its peacetime uses in the United States.
12. A member of a pastoral people living in the Nilgiri hills of southern India.
13. A pilgrimage to Mecca.
14. Genus of prickly shrubs and small trees of the Caribbean region.
21. A particular geographical region of indefinite boundary (usually serving some special purpose or distinguished by its people or culture or geography).
23. The mother-in-law of Ruth whose story is told in the Book of Ruth in the Old Testament.
25. Deciduous shrub of North America.
27. A small pellet fired from an air rifle or BB gun.
28. A region of Malaysia in northeastern Borneo.
31. Not subjected to an aging process.
33. A member of an agricultural people of southern India.
35. The process of remembering (especially the process of recovering information by mental effort).
36. Of or relating to a cuticle or cuticula.
37. Ready to fall asleep.
40. A public promotion of some product or service.
41. South American armadillo with three bands of bony plates.
44. A small cake leavened with yeast.
46. A genus of Platelea.
47. Important European leguminous forage plant with trifoliate leaves and blue-violet flowers grown widely as a pasture and hay crop.
52. (Old Testament) In Judeo-Christian mythology.
56. From that place or from there.
57. Ground snakes.
58. A full skirt with a gathered waistband.
60. A unit of magnetic flux density equal to 1 maxwell per square centimeter.
62. United States industrialist who manufactured plows suitable for working the prairie soil (1804-1886).
63. A state in the eastern United States.
65. A island in the Netherlands Antilles that is the top of an extinct volcano.
66. One who works hard at boring tasks.
68. Swedish soprano who toured the United States under the management of P. T. Barnum (1820-1887).
69. Any of various strong liquors distilled from the fermented sap of toddy palms or from fermented molasses.
70. Sudden sharp painful emotion.
73. (Roman mythology) Goddess of abundance and fertility.
74. Last or greatest in an indefinitely large series.
78. Angular distance above the horizon (especially of a celestial object).

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You aren't willing to give up your freedom, even in a trade for a less stressful path in life. However, you might choose being responsible today over being independent -- although you may not be happy with your decision. Unfortunately, clinging to your annoyance can create serious problems. Expressing your negativity and then letting it go enables you to avoid feeling resentment later on. Living an ordinary life in an extraordinary manner inspires you to reach spiritual satisfaction.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Recent promises have you climbing the walls today, leaving you with little time to enjoy life's pleasures. Although your goals are straightforward, nothing is simple while everyone is making demands on your time. Unexpressed emotions can turn a casual encounter into a tangle of intrigue. Don't wait to address the source of a problem if you already understand the current dynamics. The sooner you start untying the knots, the faster it will go.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Your passions are running the show today, making you feel less confident of your decisions. But the intensity of relationship dynamics grows stronger as your emotions sink into the shadows of your subconscious. There isn't a lot of room for faulty logic now, so think through your plan before you initiate a process that can't be stopped midstream. Taking the time to consider what your heart needs empowers you to make the right choice.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You strive to see both sides of a relationship issue today, but are forced to take a position later on. The Moon's afternoon shift into emotional Scorpio reminds you that your feelings control so much of your behavior, you may not be able to change the outcome of the present situation. Listen to your inner voice now, but also be certain that your plan makes practical sense before doing something you soon regret. Using both your head and your heart allows you to see the full picture.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

There is still a lot of hard work to do over the next few weeks and you're thankful that all the noise is beginning to settle down. But instead of trying to tie up loose ends, you're more likely inclined to take the day off for rest and relaxation now. Balancing your hectic schedule with a bit of peaceful solitude at home today may be the smartest use of your time. Stepping away from the fray can be enough to revitalize your sense of purpose.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You're able to assimilate big changes into your life without too much difficulty now. However, you're not interested in simply trading a relaxing day for one filled with distractions. Happily, making a commitment to express yourself creatively motivates you to realize your greatest potential. Share whatever thoughts come to mind, even if it complicates the picture today. It really doesn't matter what artistic medium you choose, just let your imagination be your guide.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You can't find enough time to kick back today, but you might believe you will get away without fulfilling all of your responsibilities. However, there is a difference between pursuing ambitious goals and simply honoring your promises. You may have to make up for lost time later in the evening if your laziness gets the best of you early on. Balancing work with play is a safer strategy than going to either extreme. Shuffling your priorities allows you to manage your calendar with finesse.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You reach a significant fork in the road today, yet your current map isn't clear about where either path leads. Unfortunately, your decision-making process is a lot more complicated now because of this ambiguity. Nevertheless, the Moon's shift into your sign later in the day triggers your final answer, emboldening you to paint your future exactly as you visualize it in your imagination. Follow your heart and you can't go wrong.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

It's a whole new ballgame once you decide that you're ready to step up to the plate and get to work. Surprisingly, you may procrastinate for a while, yet the momentum shifts so quickly today that you need to make pragmatic choices or you'll drift off course. Ironically, your dreams reveal the most sensible strategy at this time. Integrating your most creative visions with your current reality is your best recipe for a winning season.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Your social life continues to be on the move as the emotional Moon enters your 11th House of Community. Although your friends may be overwhelmed with your relentless intensity, you just want to do the right thing. You're not interested in making mistakes that will send the wrong message. However, giving yourself permission to have fun is more important than anything else now. Nevertheless, you can deepen the connections in a significant relationship if you don't try so hard.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

You may enjoy thrill of imagining whatever is around the next bend, but other people's demands can squelch the excitement today. The Moon's afternoon shift into your 10th House of Public Responsibility reminds you that you're not as independent as you wish. Establishing new priorities helps you navigate your way through tricky territory. But choose your path carefully because your current choices will likely have a lasting impact.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You aren't interested in casual conversations today because you feel as if you're running out of time to connect on an emotional level. You have no patience for social games that distract you from the real issues on your mind. However, it's not always easy to find the right person to bring into your confidence. Listen closely to your intuition and allow the universe to pick your audience. Sharing a story about your personal journey can inspire others to choose love over fear. Spreading light is what you Fish do best.

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

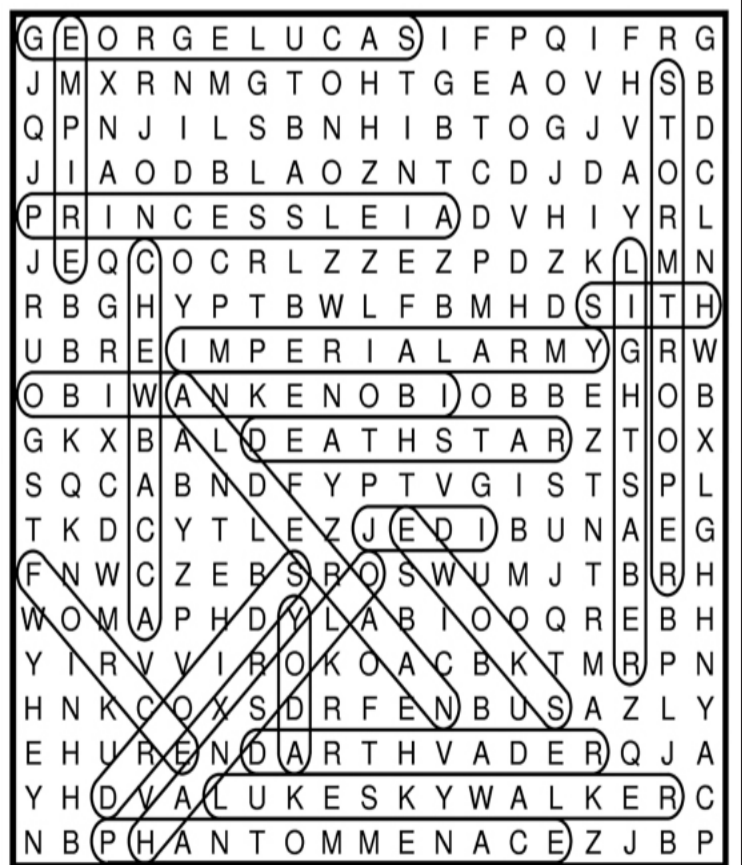
SCOTLAND WORD SEARCH PUZZLE



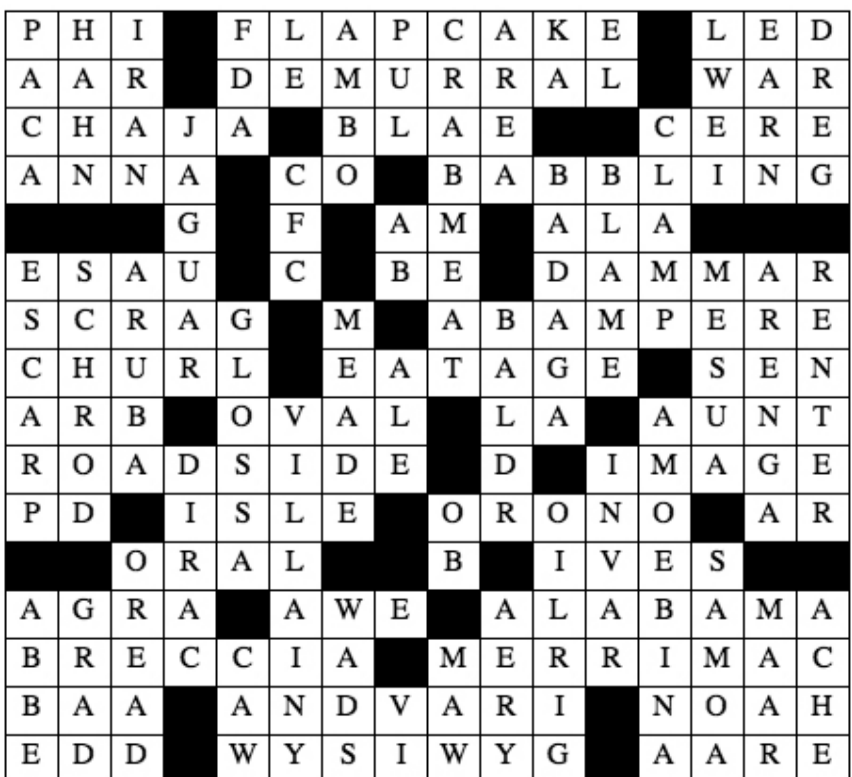
- | | | | |
|------------|-----------|---------------|---------------|
| ABERDEEN | CASTLES | GREEN FIELDS | ISLANDS |
| BAGPIPES | DUNDEE | HADRIANS WALL | LOCH LOMOND |
| BEN NEVIS | EDINBURGH | HAGGIS | LOCH NESS |
| CAIRNGORMS | GAELIC | HIGHLANDS | ROLLING HILLS |
| CALEDONIA | GLASGOW | IRISH SEA | TARTAN |

Yesterday's Solution

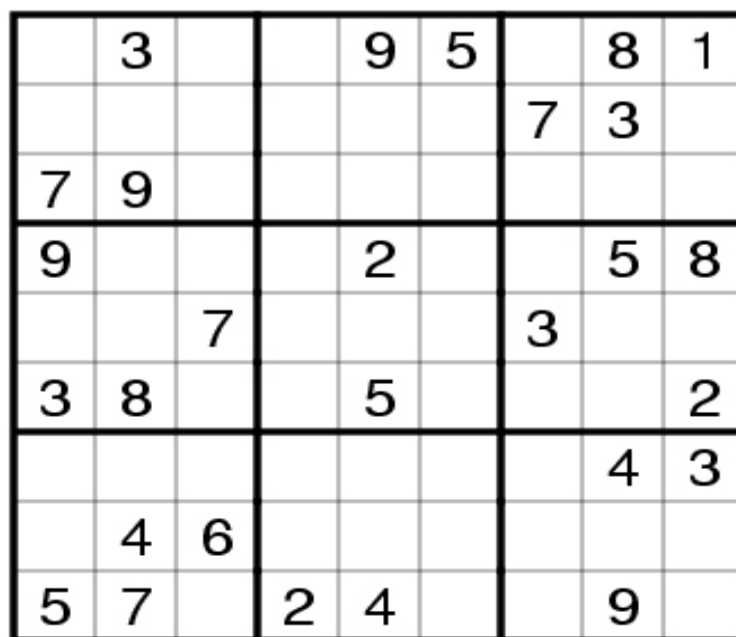
SOLUTION TO STAR WARS PUZZLE



Yesterday's Solution

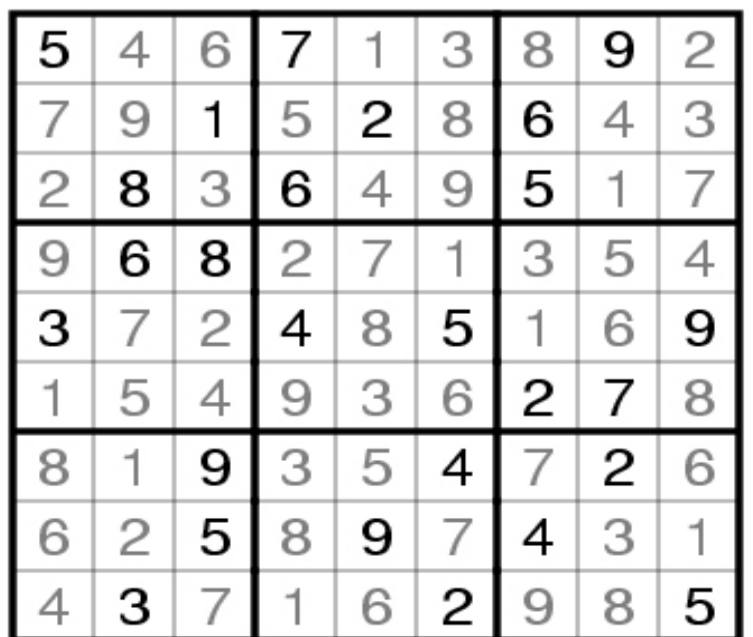


Daily SuDoku



medium

Yesterday's Solution



very hard

For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadisiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Luxembourg	00352
Albania	00355	Macau	00853
Algeria	00213	Macedonia	00389
Andorra	00376	Madagascar	00261
Angola	00244	Majorca	0034
Anguilla	001264	Malawi	00265
Antigua	001268	Malaysia	00660
Argentina	0054	Maldives	00960
Armenia	00374	Mali	00223
Australia	0061	Malta	00356
Austria	0043	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Nigar	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	Sao Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Toga	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lithuania	00370		

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw

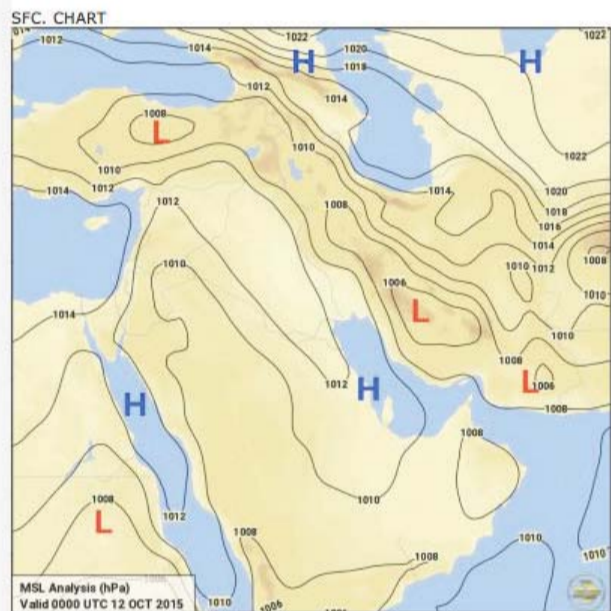


Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 12/10/2015-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

MAX Temperature 38 °C

By Day: Sunny with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 15 - 40 km/h with a chance for raising dust over open areas
By Night: Fair with light to moderate north westerly to light variable wind, with speed of 08 - 28 km/h



Four-Day Forecast

	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Expected Weather	sunny	partly cloudy + scattered rain later on	partly cloudy + scattered rain	sunny
Min Temp °C	25	26	25	24
Max Temp °C	39	38	38	37
Wind Direction	variable	variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly	variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly	variable wind changing to light to moderate north easterly
Wind Speed km/h	06 - 20	08 - 28	10 - 32	06 - 26

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings

NO CURRENT WARNINGS

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C REC	Max °C EXP
KUWAIT CITY	27	37
KUWAIT AIRPORT	26	38
ABDALLY	21	39
BUBYAN	18	38
JAHR	25	39
FAILAKA ISLAND	24	36
SALMIYAH	28	35
AHMADI	27	35
JAL ALIYAH	22	38
QAROH ISLAND	30	33
UMM AL-MARADEM	30	34
NUWAISSIB	25	39
WAFRA	25	37
MANAGISH	23	40
SALMY	22	38
MUTRIBA	21	39

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	38
Min Temp (°C)	28
Max Rel Hum (%)	38
Min Rel Hum (%)	13
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	60 N
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

Sunrise	05:48
Sunset	17:22

Prayer Times

Fajr	04:29
Sunrise	05:48
Zuhr	11:35
Asr	14:53
Sunset	17:22
Isha	18:38



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	Plastic Surgeons	Paediatricians	Endocrinologist
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor 25622444	Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf 22547272	Dr. Khaled Hamadi 25665898	Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman 25339330
Dr. Samy Al-Rabaea 25752222	Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari 22617700	Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed 25340300	Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari 25658888
Dr. Masoma Habeeb 25321171	Dr. Abdel Quttainah 25625030/60	Dr. Zahra Qabazard 25710444	Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr 25329924
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy 25739999	Family Doctor	Dr. Sohail Qamar 22621099	Physiotherapists & VD
Dr. Mohsen Abel 25757700	Dr Divya Damodar 23729596/23729581	Dr. Snaa Maarroof 25713514	Dr. Deyaa Shehab 25722291
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl 25732223	Psychiatrists	Dr. Pradip Gujare 23713100	Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees 22666288
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly 25732223	Dr. Esam Al-Ansari 22635047	Dr. Zacharias Mathew 24334282	Rheumatologists:
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan 22613623/0	Dermatology	Dr. Adel Al-Awadi 25330060
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner 2455050 Ext 510	Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University 23845955	Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah 25722290
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali 25644660	DrAdrian arbe 23729596/23729581	Dentists	Internist, Chest & Heart
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel 25646478	Dr. Verginia s.Marin 2572-6666 ext 8321	Dr Anil Thomas 3729596/3729581	DR.Mohammed Akkad 2455050 Ext 210
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah 25311996	Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan 22655539	Dr. Shamah Al-Matar 22641071/2	Consultant Cardiologist
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory 25731988	Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami 25343406	Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed 22562226	Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary 22620166	Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly 25739272	Dr. Abidallah Al-Amer 22561444	Assistant Professor Of Medicine
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz 25651426	Dr. Salem soso 22618787	Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan 22619557	Head, Division of Cardiology
General Practitioners	General Surgeons	Dr. Abdalateef Al-Katrash 22525888	Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital 25339667
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi 2455050 Ext 123	Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer 22610044	Dr. Abidallah Al-Duweisan 25653755	Consultant Cardiologist
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar 24719312	Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher 25327148	Dr. Bader Al-Ansari 25620111	Dr. Farida Al-Habib 2611555-2622555
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaazem 22639920	Internists, Chest & Heart	Neurologists	MD, PH.D, FACC
Dr. Kathem Maarafi 25730465	Dr. Adnan Ebil 22639939	Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri 25633324	Inaya German Medical Center
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah 25655528	Dr. Mousa Khadada 22666300	Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan 25345875	Te: 2575077
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi 24577781	Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan 25728004	Gastrologists	Fax: 25723123
Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Rfae 25333501	Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra 25355515	Dr. Sami Aman 22636464	
Urologists	Dr. Mobarak Aldoub 24726446	Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly 25322030	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy 22641534	Dr Nasser Behbehani 25654300/3	Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali 22633135	
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul 22639955			
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah Al-Awadi 22616660			
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C) 25313120			
Dr. Leons Joseph 66703427			

Psychologists /Psychotherapists

Soor Center
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Kaizen center
25716707

Noor Clinic
23845955

William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677
Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677



South African artist Lehloholo Mkhasibe points at a collective artwork done for the Soweto Theatre. —AFP photos

Cow dung and old tyres inspire South African township artists



South African artist Lehloholo Mkhasibe stands by one of his sculptures at FUNDA art foundation.



South African artist Mzi Gojo stands in his studio among his artworks at the FUNDA art foundation.

On land that is both a marshy field and a rubbish dump in the township of Soweto, artist Mzi Gojo is looking for a special material to use in his latest work—cow dung. “The good thing about summer is that the cow dung is very green and it stays very green on my canvas,” he explains. Gojo is a member of Ubuhle Bobuntu (“beauty of humanity” in Zulu), a group of artists who use recycled materials and experimental techniques to express their own lives in modern South Africa. The 12 artists are all from Soweto, the former heartland of the violent struggle against apartheid that has now developed into a sprawling town of brick houses and tin-roofed shacks outside Johannesburg.

Gojo, 33, carefully mixes the dung in water and adds a little bit of glue to achieve the variety of colors and textures needed to produce his mysterious, elegant abstract paintings. As well as a normal brush, he uses a broken comb, a blade or a piece of plastic grid. “Cow dung is like a soccer ball. I can control it,” he told AFP, wearing an immaculate white shirt and brown chinos on his search through wasteland and stagnant water for the exactly right droppings. “Winter cow dung makes a nice brown (color). Calf dung is yellowish because they only drink milk, but it is so hard to get it here. I was using this material when I was young. I used to clean the house, and we used dung to make huts. It reminds me of the good times,” said Gojo, whose paintings sell for between 5,000 and 50,000 rand (\$370 and \$3,700).

‘An alternative way’

Every artist in Ubuhle Bobuntu has their own technique and recycles whatever they can best exploit for their work: plastic bottle caps, burnt matches and even old bread or human hair. “There is

no art shop in Soweto. We don’t have the money. So we had to come up with an alternative way,” said Lehloholo Mkhasibe, one of the group’s founding members. “We wanted to create a new language, away from the conventional techniques created by the old masters,” he said, dressed in a black beret and wearing circular John Lennon-style glasses. “I was so stressed (after I left school). It is so hard to find linocard. I could not buy any. I had to think outside of the box.”

Mkhasibe, who uses his garage as a studio, spent months developing a technique in which he stacks strips of old car tyres together to create a canvas and then cuts into the material to create a black and white image. It is a method that earned a commission from Austrian energy drinks company Red Bull. For Victor Mofokeng, bread can be transformed into the perfect means of artistic expression by molding it or toasting it, and the stale loaves thrown away by supermarkets produce a vivid green.

One of his painting uses a stunning spectrum of subtle colors to depict youngsters who brandish banners reading “No work, No food”. The intriguing techniques and production of Ubuhle Bobuntu have attracted increasing attention since it launched in 2011, with exhibitions already held in Soweto and at the “Museum Africa” in Johannesburg. This year, the group’s best-known artist Pauline Mazibuko, who works with recycled magazines to make colorful collages, exhibited her work in Santa Fe, New Mexico. For Charles Nkosi, the enthusiastic head of fine arts at the Funda art college school in Soweto, the group represents an approach that says much about how people live today. “They are reinventing the world and beautifying it with what people dismiss,” he said. —AFP

Gloria and Emilio Estefan celebrate immigrants in musical

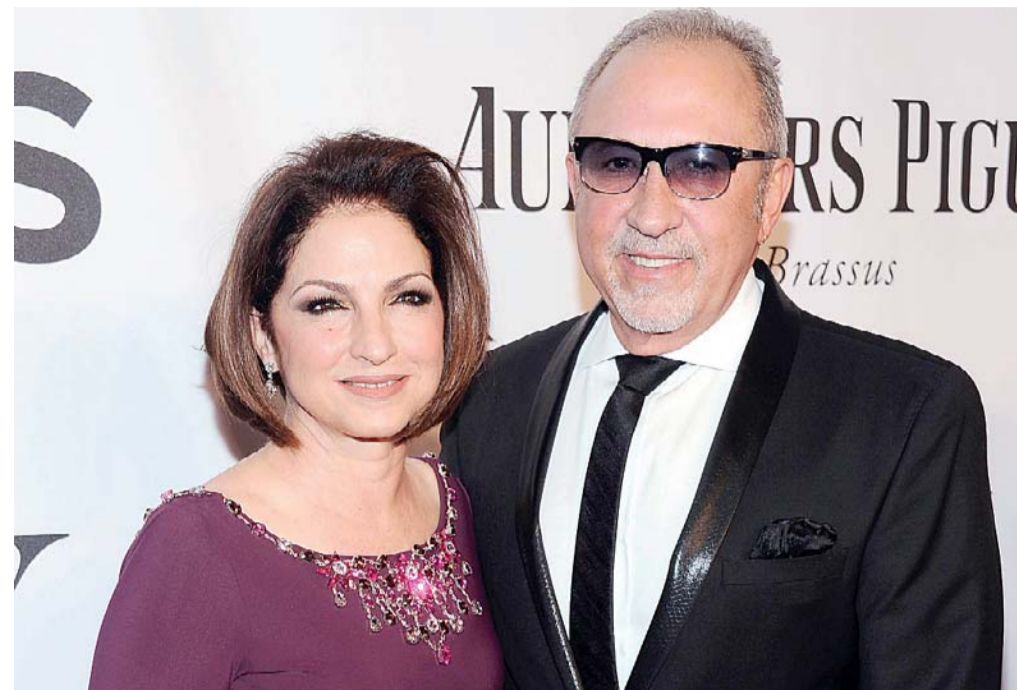
With some US presidential candidates on the campaign trail demonizing immigrants, a powerhouse husband-and-wife team, who both happen to be immigrants themselves, hope they can offer some balance—and some pop songs. Gloria Estefan and her husband, Emilio, are shepherding their musical biography “On Your Feet!” to Broadway this fall. It’s a show that celebrates two Cuban-Americans who embraced the American Dream and now own enough Grammy Awards to fill a swimming pool.

“We’ve been around long enough already to have gone through several election cycles. Every single time, fear gets brought into the equation,” said Gloria Estefan. “This is a great balance because we need to remind people, ‘Hey, we’re just people.’” The musical uses the Estefan hits “1-2-3,” “Turn the Beat Around” and “Conga” to tell the story of how the budding singer and producer met, battled for crossover success, handled interfamily squabbles and overcame a bus crash that nearly claimed Gloria’s life. It’s the specific story of two people who fled the country of their birth, made a new life in Miami and rose to the top of the music world. But the Estefans say it’s a celebration of immigration for a nation of immigrants.

Mexican and Muslim immigrants

“It doesn’t matter where you come from. Unless you’re a Native American Indian, you’re not from here. Somewhere down the road, you came from somewhere else,” said Gloria Estefan, who has sold over 100 million albums. “It’s always the last person in that gets bashed.” “On Your Feet!” comes as some Republican candidates for the White House have slammed Mexican and Muslim immigrants. “One thing those people don’t realize is that we don’t take this country for granted. We want to make a contribution,” said Emilio Estefan, who has guided the careers of such luminaries as Shakira, Ricky Martin and Jennifer Lopez.

While they acknowledge their life story hasn’t included typical dramatic fodder for a musical—a descent into drugs, say, or infidelity or murder—the Estefans think it will connect with audiences. “We haven’t led controversial lives, but it’s human. Everybody’s going to identify with somebody on that stage,” said Gloria Estefan. Emilio Estefan hopes some of it can be inspiring. In high school, he asked a teacher if he could learn music but was told he was too old. “I won 19 Grammys. So don’t let anybody change your



File photo shows Gloria Estefan, left, and Emilio Estefan pose for photos at the 68th annual Tony Awards at Radio City Music Hall in New York. —AP

life. Do what you think is best for you,” he said, laughing.

The team they’ve assembled is impressive, including “Kinky Boots” director Jerry Mitchell, “Memphis” choreographer Sergio Trujillo and book writer Alexander Dinelaris, who wrote the “Birdman” screenplay. (“I’m glad we got him before he won the Oscar or else we wouldn’t have been able to afford him,” jokes Gloria Estefan.) Finding the actor to play Emilio was easy. Josh Segarra, on Broadway in “Lysistrata Jones,” won the role at the initial readings. (“He’s so good-looking that Emilio didn’t want to look anywhere else,” Gloria Estefan said.)

‘Magic City Memoirs’

Landing the right actress to play Gloria was harder and it came down to the wire. The winner was Ana Villafane, who appeared in the film “Magic City Memoirs” and who initially auditioned via video. “Ultimately, what it came down to was not somebody who was going to be my clone at all. I wanted somebody who could interpret my life,” said Gloria Estefan, who is a seven-time Grammy winner. “It was one of those

moments. She walked in and there was just something. Then she sang. She didn’t particularly sound like me but it didn’t matter because we were drawn in.”

It was only after Villafane got the job that Gloria learned the young woman was half-Cuban, raised in Miami and even attended her high school, Our Lady of Lourdes Academy. “She knew culturally where I come from,” Estefan said. The musical, which will have seven members of Miami Sound Machine in the orchestra, will also feature an original song with lyrics by Gloria and music by their daughter, Emily. Emily Estefan, who will be 21 in December, is a dead-ringer for her mom and attends the Berklee College of Music. She recently surprised her parents with news that she had quietly written and recorded an album in her Boston apartment. “I’m in awe of her,” said her proud mother. If she sings and looks like mom, why not ask Emily to play her mom in the show? Gloria asked her daughter exactly that and got this response: “Are you kidding me? I’d have to kiss my dad. It’s too weird.” That made sense to Gloria: “I thought about it and said, ‘You’re right.’” —AP

That New York twang: Nashville calls on Big Apple schools

As the Bronx middle schoolers harmonized in their auditorium and plucked out basic chords on ukuleles and guitars, in walked their music instructor, Liz Rose—a Grammy-award winning country songwriter from Nashville. Rose has penned tracks for some of the biggest names in the business, including Taylor Swift. But on this recent fall day, she helped 19 students write an original tune called “Everybody’s Perfect.”

“Y’all are awesome,” Rose said as she approached the stage. “Y’all made me cry.” Country music and New York City don’t go hand in glove; the city has only one country radio station, which came on the air two years ago after a 17-year drought. Nonetheless, Music City musicians are partnering with a nonprofit that is providing music education in New York City schools to help boost it as a core subject. The students at Pelham Gardens Middle School in the Bronx are among 500 students in 15 schools around the city to participate; they receive 10 lessons on how to write lyrics, and one class in each school has a videoconference session with a musician in Nashville.

The Nashville-New York connection is made through the Country Music Association Foundation, which began in 2006 to help fund music education programs in Nashville and is branching out across the country. In recent years, it has donated to the New York-based nonprofit Education Through Music, which helps provide music education to all students in 50 low-income elementary and middle schools in all five city boroughs. It also works with Words & Music,

based out of the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Nashville, which provides a curriculum for both music and language arts teachers to develop language skills through the art of songwriting.

Education programs

The Country Music Association Foundation wanted to bring the two together, and the program was born.

Paisley, Paul Simon and Carrie Underwood.

For many of the New York kids, country music was unfamiliar territory. Corey Stuckey, 12, said he has been inspired to write songs in the past by hip-hop and R&B artists such as R Kelly and Ludacris. But now he is opening up to country, too. “I like country music because of the tone of it,” the seventh-grader said. “It’s

Full backpacks

“It’s not different for whoever you’re writing with. It’s about getting them to talk,” she said. “And then I would ask them questions and put a line together.” Ultimately they wrote: “Everybody’s Perfect,” an homage to the difficulties of life at a new school. Moesha Masters, 11, helped come up with the inspiration for the title. “I moved a lot and it was hard making friends,” she said. “And I realized I’m not perfect. But after I looked at that I realized everyone’s perfect in other ways.” “Ice cream, money and MetroCards and full backpacks and school is hard!” the students sang. With lots of oohs and aahs and an upbeat, catchy melody, the students’ song emulated more the contemporary pop-country of Taylor Swift than the old-country twang.

Peter Pauliks, director of programs for Education through Music, urged the students at the rehearsal to enunciate every word so that a diverse audience would understand the song’s message. “In Nashville, I don’t think they even have MetroCards,” he reminded them.

Kyle Young, chief executive officer of the Country Music Hall of Fame, says he was moved when he saw the students from the Bronx onstage at All for the Hall, dressed in their blue school uniforms under T-shirts for Words & Music and Education Through Music. “This is why we go to work every day,” he said. “It’s not about the genre, it’s about giving kids an opportunity to express themselves and create.” —AP



In this photo, Liz Rose, center, a Grammy-award winning country music songwriter from Nashville, rehearses a song with students at Pelham Gardens Middle School in the Bronx borough of New York. —AP

Rose, who won a Grammy with Swift for best country song in 2010 for “White Horse,” first met her students over Skype. Rose helped them write the lyrics for the song, which they performed this past week at All for the Hall, a benefit concert for education programs at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum at the Best Buy Theater in Times Square. Students shared the stage with Brad

kind of like reggae, but it’s different because it’s more calming,” Rose said she applied the same techniques she uses when collaborating with professionals. She had the students shout out whatever was on their minds, and they said things like, older kids are tall, ice cream and hallways. She quickly jotted down everything they said and then started to place the words together like puzzle pieces.

Oscar winner Annaud slams Academy for China film block

Acclaimed film director and Oscar winner Jean-Jacques Annaud furiously denounced the Academy Award organizers yesterday after he said they ordered his Sino-French co-production “Wolf Totem” out of the running for being insufficiently Chinese. Annaud told AFP he was “stunned” by the last-minute move and accused the Hollywood-based Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences of a “banana republic level of arbitrariness.” Wolf Totem, shot in Mandarin and Mongolian, is based on a semi-autobiographical novel recounting a “sent-down” youth’s time among nomads in Inner Mongolia during the Cultural Revolution, and

his attempts to raise a wolf in captivity. It was filmed in China using Chinese actors, and Chinese media reported widely that it would be the country’s 2016 candidate for Best Foreign Language Film. But Annaud cited a letter from the Academy as telling him: “When we looked at the creative makeup of Wolf Totem and realized that the director, two of the three writers, one of the producers, the DOP (director of photography), the editor and the composer were not Chinese, we determined that the film could not qualify as a Chinese entry.”

Annaud—who previously won the same Oscar with a 1976 film for the Ivory Coast—told

AFP by telephone: “I believe that the selection committee completely forgot the importance of actors in a film. It’s the same as ignoring the content of the film. ‘I am stupefied,’ he said. “Suddenly, the rules changed. It was almost a banana republic-level of arbitrariness.” The Academy picks nominees for the foreign-language Oscar from submissions from individual countries, which can only put forward one movie each year. Chinese contenders are chosen by the secretive State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television, which is also in charge of media censorship in the Communist-ruled country. —AFP

Tokyo fashion: Superior street style lost in transaction



Models display creations by US designer Todd Snyder during the Tokyo 206 Spring/Summer Tokyo Fashion Week in Tokyo yesterday. Tokyo fashion week opened yesterday with a show by the US designer, an arrangement observers say underlines the absence of local labels on the world stage despite the city's reputation for edgy street wear and shaping global trends. —AFP photos

Tokyo fashion week opened yesterday with a show by a US designer, an arrangement observers say underlines the absence of local labels on the world stage despite Japan's reputation for the edgiest streetwear. More than fifty fashion houses will exhibit their collections over the next six days, casting a spotlight on designers working with materials ranging from denim to handwoven silk. "There is no shortage of design talent in Japan," said Akiko Shinoda, director of international affairs at Japan Fashion Week Organization, which is responsible for the event. "Unfortunately many designers and textile houses are still quite unknown outside Japan, (so) we need to promote them," Shinoda told AFP. At times Tokyo's pavements feel like their own catwalks, with youngsters sporting an array of weird and wonderful ensembles. Beanie hats worn high on girls' heads seem to be everywhere this autumn, even with the mercury still in the mid twenties. But

while Tokyo's fashionistas are applauded by bloggers and columnists worldwide for their daring and sophistication, the wealth of street style inspiration hasn't translated into big business-for Japanese designers anyway. Frenchman Loic Bizel was among the first style hunters to cash in on Tokyo's unique status as a laboratory of trends back in 2001. "This city is so ahead of the curve when it comes to fashion, trends begin here and then months later, maybe even a year later, they go global", Bizel told AFP. The Tokyo-based trend-spotter plays a key role in this process. For anywhere between \$700-\$1,200 a day, he takes clients representing retail giants like H&M, Nordstrom and Zara on a tour of Tokyo's most edgy boutiques, tucked away along quiet side lanes and often known only to fashion insiders. Bizel's clients pay big bucks to his company, Tokyo Fashion Tour, to scout inspiration. "In one case, we had buyers from Primark who must have bought

some \$20,000 worth of samples in a single day, in the end they had to buy extra suitcases to carry all the stuff," Bizel said. **Faked in China** All too often trend-setting designs from boutique Tokyo shops are adapted or even copied outright, particularly by Chinese manufacturers, for a fraction of the original cost. "Most Japanese designers work on a small scale, they don't have patent protection or legal teams who can fight back so it's easy for big brands to copy their designs and make money from it." Industry veterans like Shinoda acknowledge the severity of the situation and say they are pushing local designers to secure their trademarks and protect their labels against fraud. "Unfortunately we see many instances of our designers' logos being copied and trademarks being registered by companies in China," she said.

"We have to find a solution." Tokyo fashion week kicked off with a nod to American classics by US designer, Todd Snyder, whose pin-striped shirts, cotton shorts and sweatshirts wouldn't have looked out of place on a college campus. Linen suits and brogues made an appearance, as did a surfboard to suggest that life wasn't all work and no play for Snyder's male and female models, many of whom were of Japanese origin and whose ages ranged from 19 all the way up to 60-years-old. In contrast, the models featured in Japanese label Keisuke Yoshida's show looked like they cut class to turn up at the runway, with girls dressed in pleated miniskirts and ankle socks, while one male stomped down the catwalk in a pair of pants vertically slit to reveal a pair of leopard-print boxer shorts. Japanese designer Soshi Otsuki's show featured men dressed in culottes and silk shorts layered over pants in a largely monochrome collec-

tion. Traditionally Japanese designers-with notable exceptions like Issey Miyake, Kenzo and Comme des Garçons' Rei Kawakubo-have not paid much attention to overseas markets. "For a long time... the fashion industry in Japan did consistent and sufficient business solely in the domestic market, so there was no need (to pursue) international markets," said Izumi Miyachi, deputy managing editor of Yomiuri Shimbun newspaper. The country's chronic birth rate drop however has prompted a slowdown in domestic consumption, Miyachi told AFP. Some Japanese designers with global ambitions-from legends like Yohji Yamamoto to thriving new label, Sacai-prefer to stage shows in Paris instead of Tokyo. But that doesn't worry the organizers of Tokyo fashion week. "We can't compete with Paris, Milan or New York," Shinoda said. "But what we can do is provide a platform for young designers who are starting their careers." —AFP



Models display creations by Japanese designers Hokuto Katsui and Nao Yagi during the 2016 Mint designs spring/summer collection in Tokyo yesterday during Tokyo Fashion Week.



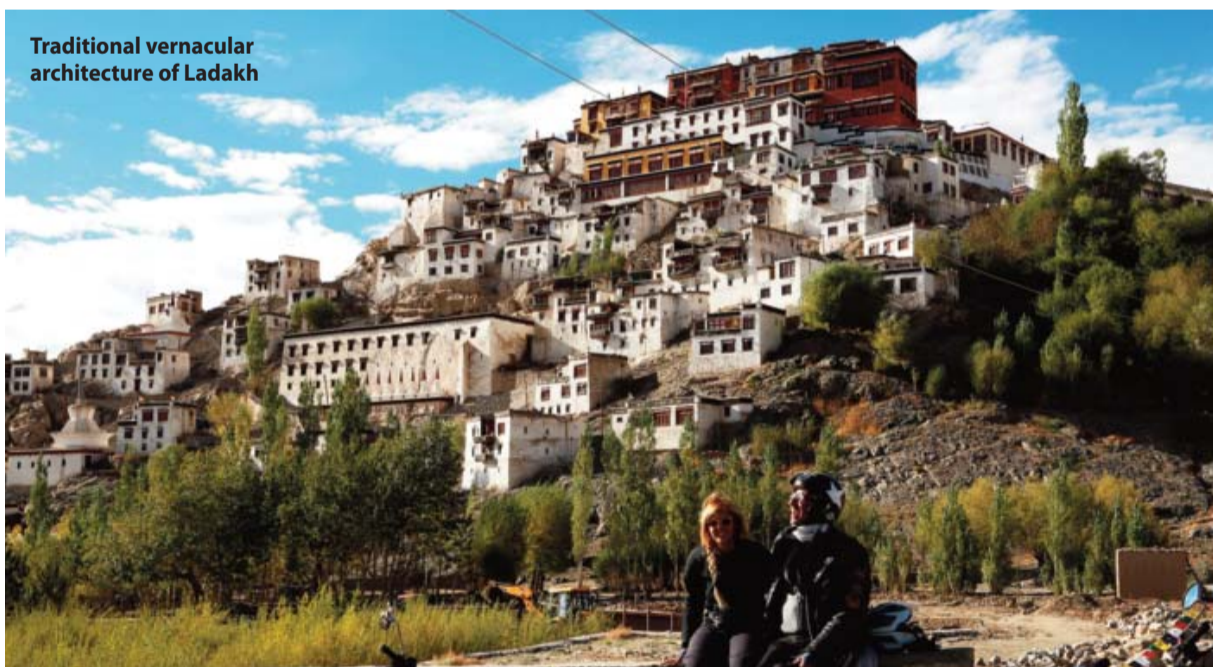
The breathtaking Lake Pangong — Photos by Waleed Shaalan

Motorcycling across the Land of High Passes

'Exploring the Indian Himalayas on an Royal Enfield'



The mountain top around Leh



Traditional vernacular architecture of Ladakh



The view from the hotel room in Sumoor



Using the engine to stay warm

By Waleed Shaalan

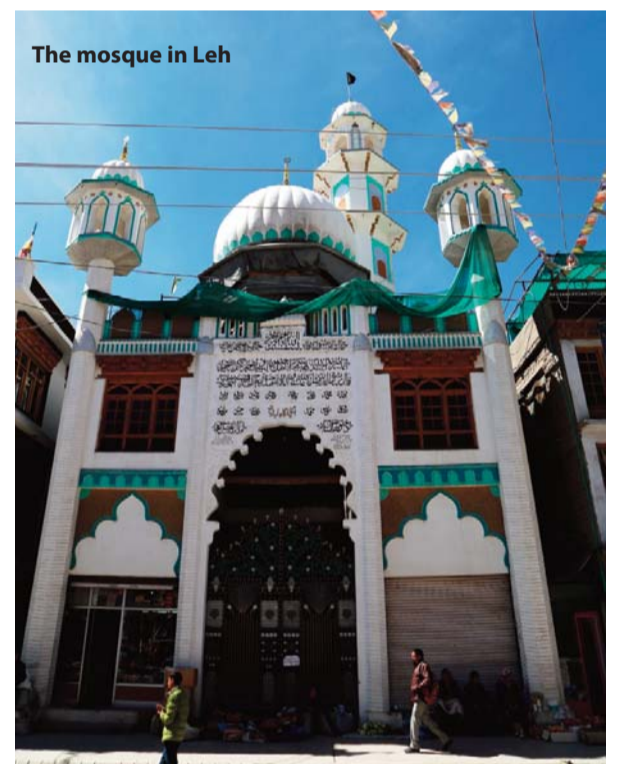
Living in Kuwait made it much easier for me to pursue my passion of motorcycle travel. I bought my first big bike in Kuwait in 1998 and started my slow journey of driving around the world. From my early trips of putting the bike on the ferry to tour Iran, to my drives across Arabia to tour the MENA region and flying my bike out of here to Europe and the rest of the world.

The support I get from my friends at Tri Star motorcycle is phenomenal. I decided after my 50th birthday to take my travels further where I share my experience with a broader audience through social, printed and multi media. Last month I was on the verge of signing with a major satellite TV station for a travel documentary and after taking two months leave from work they abruptly cancelled. It was a blessing in disguise as I decided to take matters in my own hand and produce it myself.

In 48 hours I had arranged an epic journey across the Indian Himalayas in Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir and organized an award winning director and used whatever was available from my camera to my son's go pro and iPhones to film a documentary. We are sponsoring my friend Ebrahim Al Kandari's initiative iDream Kuwait where he is training Kuwaitis with disabilities to work in the private sector. After arranging a meeting with our CEO and securing support on a corporate level, I am personally dedicating this film to support and bring awareness to his cause.

The motorcycle is the perfect solution for my desire to fly and fear of heights, I chose India and specifically Ladakh which means the land of high passes so I can drive the world's highest road and soar like an eagle without having to fly.

We had to deal with the reality of altitude sickness and take it very seriously as the sudden ascent from living at sea level in Kuwait to starting our journey over 3,500m required gradual acclimatization and precautions. I prepared a full support vehicle with spare parts, oxygen tanks, a mechanic, crew etc to reduce the risk especially for my wife who came along for the ride. We were very fortunate to arrive in Leh during their annual festival as most of the year this region is closed off by snow. This is a time where the locals go out and celebrate traditional sports of archery, polo, music and food. This worked well with our acclimatization schedule and gave us a chance to experience the culture and test the bikes and gear.



The mosque in Leh



The full moon reflecting against the Himalayas



Wild horses

Travel



Stupas



Stok Palace



Snow Leopard Hotel in Nubra Valley



On the way to the world's highest road



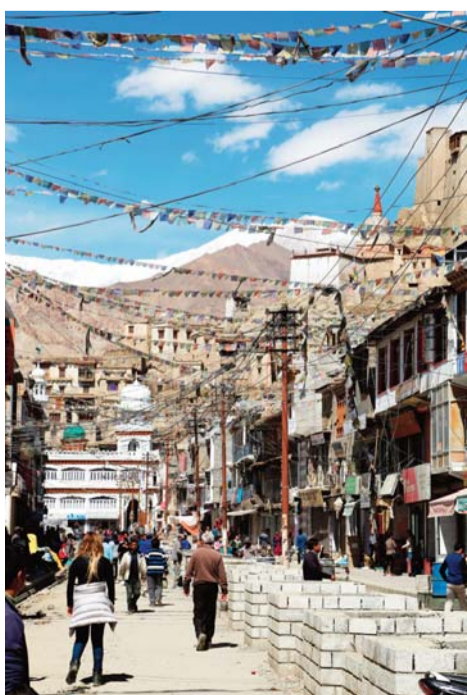
Chungpa semi nomadic tribes milking the goats



Festival of Ladakh musicians



A local Ladakhi woman trying my glasses



Leh under construction after being damaged from the 2010 floods



Made it to the top



Monks



The annual festival of Ladakh playing polo, archery

After obtaining the permits we learned that we have to leave a day earlier. Though this put us at risk of altitude sickness, we left anyway. The first day we attempted the third highest pass, to get used to riding the rough and battered roads of the mighty Himalayas. A land where nature dominates man and must be treated with utmost respect and admiration.

The Royal Enfield, the bike that worked like a mule.

Built originally for World War II the company decided to open in India and was later bought by the Indians and they still build the bike the same way with no additional innovation or technology you would find in today's bikes. The 1 cylinder 500cc impressed me so much as we drove it across every possible terrain one could imagine a cocktail of ice, snow, mud, sleet, rock, gravel and sand. About 15 Km to the top, the roads were grueling. I decided my wife should ride in the support van and I rode alone. The temperatures were dropping rapidly and as we went up oxygen went down. At 4 km away, the road was blocked due to an avalanche and they began to clear it. Time was not on our side as staying more than 30 minutes could be a hazard to our health. At the last minute the road opened and we ascended victoriously to the top. It was a great feeling of being on top of the world riding with the clouds side by side with the birds.

Jullay is a Ladakhi word of positivity. It's the Swiss Army knife of language and is used for everything positive: Good morning; Good Evening; Good Night; I am OK; I am happy; Welcome; Thank you; Have a great day, etc. I liked this word so much that I decided to call the film Jullay.

Thanks to my friend the Kuwaiti director Hamad Al-Sarraf who has volunteered to co direct and post produce the movie making it a true collaboration.

For more of my travels, follow me on Instagram at @waleedsha3lan or Snapchat Waleed Shaalan.



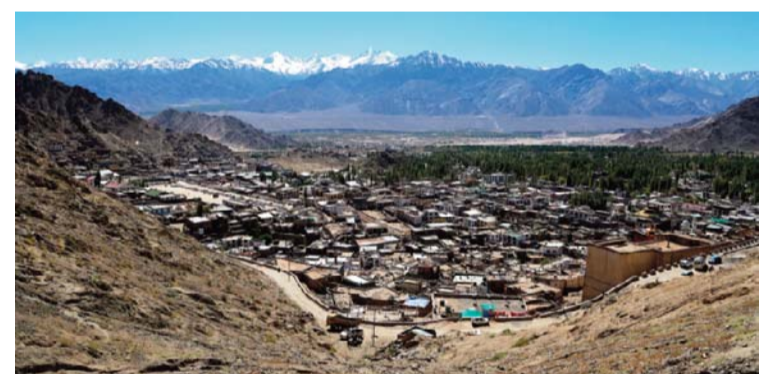
The festival of Ladakh, archery



The road to Lake Pangong



Lake Pangong



Leh



Happy to go to school



Rest stop

Tokyo fashion: Superior street style lost in transaction

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Teenage girls and drama therapy break new ground in Iraq



Haneen, who has spent most of her life in orphanages, says she used to stay weeks locked up in herself, aimlessly eating, watching TV and sleeping through each day. Last week, the 13-year-old Iraqi girl was beaming with joy and excitement when the crowd at a Baghdad theatre gave her and her friends a rousing round of applause. "Now I'm happy. I sing, dance and joke with my friends from the orphanage," she said. "I have changed. People are asking me: 'What happened? Have you gone crazy?'"

What happened was a project set up by the Ruya Foundation for Contemporary Culture in Iraq and aimed at introducing drama therapy in a country where almost everybody has suffered some kind of trauma. The play at the Theatre Forum, an edgy arts centre that opened in a beautiful old building on the banks of the Tigris, was the culmination of a months-long program. Six theatre professionals were trained in Beirut by Catharsis, a drama therapy centre led by director Zeina Daccache, known for her work with prisoners and migrant workers in Lebanon. Bassem Altayeb was one of the trainees. He took the lead in helping a small group of teenage girls from the Dar Al-Zuhur orphanage in Baghdad put together a play that tackles the issues they face.

Self-esteem

"Each one found some confidence and self-esteem, built their character... The script is about the girls saying: 'We too have a right to live, to be protected and have dreams,'" he said. On stage, one of the girls puts on an old white-haired man's mask and, in a disturbing scene filled with doom, takes a young bride still clutching her doll to a nuptial room. Lost childhood, early marriage, social inequalities: the play tackled a range of issues with a spontaneous mix of humor and gritty bluntness.

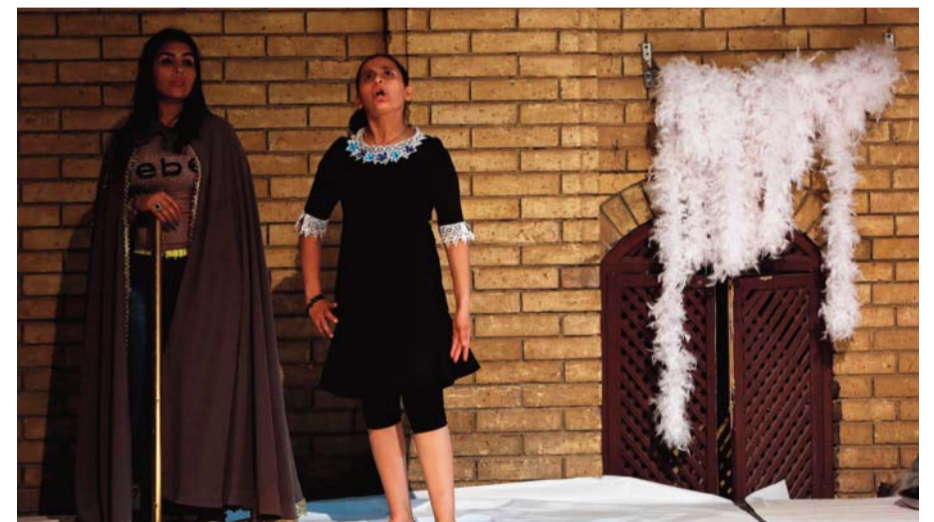
The young troupe also took a swipe at politicians and echoed the despair that is driving the country's youth out of Iraq and onto Europe's shores, drawing hearty laughter but also a few embarrassed chuckles from the crowd. "I am proud of them today," said a misty-eyed Iman Hassoon, the orphanage's principal, after the show. "I sometimes get men coming to the orphanage asking to adopt one of the girls," she said, adding that she always refuses because she is afraid they will end up enslaved as maids or for prostitution. "I hope they can use the energy they found with this play to protect themselves and carve a place of their own in society," Hassoon said.

'Damaged society'

For decades, Iraqis have been battered in turn by dictatorship, economic sanctions, foreign and civil conflicts—sometimes several of those at the same time. Violence continues to be omnipresent with car bomb blasts, images of massacres and beheadings sowing death and fear across the country, while the chaos has also allowed thieves, extortionists and traffickers to prosper. The drama therapy project explores a way of "addressing people and their problems in an extremely damaged society such as Iraq, that has experienced so much trauma and violence," said Tamara Chalabi, chair of the Ruya Foundation.

"Iraq is a society for men, not really for women... These girls are particularly vulnerable," added Furat Al-Jamil, an Iraqi-German artist who also works with Ruya. "The first time Ruya Foundation visited the orphanage, the girls were very shy, they were hiding, all of them wore scarves. Now you see them... liberated from a lot of inhibitions," Jamil said. After the play, the girls themselves could hardly believe their own transformation.

Ruqayyeh, an elfish 13-year-old who played the child bride, burst into tears when the lights came back on and the audience stood up to clap. "I had always dreamt of being an actress, of being on stage... But I used to be depressed and bored, nobody liked hanging out with me. Now everything's changed and the girls love me." — AFP



Iraqi girls from the Dar Al-Zuhur orphanage perform in a play at the Theatre Forum in the capital Baghdad. — AFP photos