

A glimpse into
Kuwait's recent
pioneering past

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The man behind
the sleight of
hand

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13th Gulf
Shooting
Tournament
kicks off

47



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Kuwait Times Friday Times



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NO: 16675- Friday, October 23, 2015

Sword wielding attacker kills 2

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TROLLHATTAN: Police cordon off the scene of a primary and middle school yesterday, where a masked man armed with a sword severely injured an adult and four students before being arrested by police. (Inset) This picture made available to AFP by a student shows the masked man armed with a sword posing for a photo with two other students. — AFP



ZAIN SAUDI APPOINTS NEW CHAIRMAN, VICE CHAIRMAN

DUBAI: Zain Saudi, the kingdom's third-biggest telecommunications operator, has appointed Prince Naif bin Sultan bin Mohammed bin Saud Al Kabeer as chairman. The prince will replace Farhan bin Naif Al-Jarbaa, who submitted his resignation on Oct. 11, a statement to Riyadh's bourse said.

Bader bin Nasser Al-Kharafi, a member of Kuwait's Kharafi family which is a major shareholder in Zain, has been appointed Zain Saudi's vice-chairman, the statement added.

Local Spotlight

FACEBOOK UNDER ATTACK



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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Facebook is facing a propaganda war these days. It is being accused of promoting violence and murder. Everyone knows for sure what Facebook is, especially the Arabs. It had a major role in highlighting several coups in the Arab world, especially in Egypt, and even today and despite the multitude of social media apps, Facebook still occupies a good spot and attracts many people around the world. It is open, free and easy to access anytime and anywhere. But the honeymoon may soon end....

A non-governmental organization has launched a media war against Facebook, accusing it of contributing to the dissemination of hate and incitement, indirectly, on its pages. The organization claims that the Palestinians, who were the perpetrators of recent attacks against Israelis, have declared their intention to carry out suicide operations and expressed their desire to be "martyrs" on Facebook without any supervision or control. They say Facebook could have stopped this.

As for the calls for violence, discrimination and racism, I can say the same thing holds true for nearly all social media sites, politicians, TV channels and even cartoons nowadays. Everyone knows that social media is available to everyone to write and express whatever he/she pleases. I also know that it is not reasonable or acceptable to accept invitations to murder and violence, and I guess website owners have the power to stop these pages and remove them, but I do not see this happening very often. The problem is not with Facebook as a site, but with the users.

There is no doubt that the Middle East now is living under a state of violence, rage and confusion in most of its regions. People do not live in isolation from what is happening around them, and some may drift emotionally in the way they express their sentiments and use words or make suggestions that may not generally reflect their feelings.

I agree that some terrorist militias are using social media to spread their ideas because they do not dare to make public appearances, as well as there are those who use these sites for sex and dating. There are multiple reasons on the part of users, but companies should assume moral and societal responsibility towards what is being published on their sites.

The impact of Facebook is different from one country to another. In Kuwait, for example, Twitter is the most powerful tool for the majority of young people among other media apps and not Facebook. I see that WhatsApp now has become a hotbed of rumors and lies. It's a crisis, but no one is calling for the closure of these sites because this is not the right solution or the end to problems.

Photo

o f t h e d a y



Kuwait marine life is rich with fascinating creatures like seagulls. — KUNA

Kaffeeklatsch

BE THE CHANGE



By Shakir Reshamwala

shakir@kuwaittimes.net

The world is readying for a landmark UN conference on climate change in the French capital this December, and intense efforts are being made to ensure countries around the world commit to reducing emissions to slow global warming. But as the big, industrial developed and developing nations bicker, I believe individual efforts do matter.

Kuwait is a small country with a small population, but figures disproportionately in excessive consumption lists. People living in Kuwait are one of the world's top per capita users of water and electricity. This despite the fact that Kuwait is an arid country with hardly any sources of freshwater. Desalination plants burn up millions of barrels of oil to produce potable water, which is then wasted without a second thought. Cars, compounds and even streets being hosed with gushing water is a common sight.

The same goes for power plants, which also swallow millions of barrels of oil, yet power consumption is so high, that blackouts occur occasionally as the grid fails to keep up with demand. Despite appeals for rationalization, lights are left blazing and the air conditioning turned down to bone-chilling temperatures 24/7. It does not help that water is practically free and electrici-

ty dirt cheap, while heavily-subsidized fuel adds to rising pollution, gridlocked streets and poor public transport.

Kuwait is also not far behind in other excesses. Obesity and diabetes are widespread and food waste is rampant. The seas and bays are polluted, fish and sea mammals are dying and desertification is a constant menace to the state's greenification efforts. In the face of these challenges, Kuwait is trying to educate the public and moving to end or reduce subsidies on power and petrol to bring a semblance of sanity to consumption patterns. Falling oil prices and a looming budget deficit are adding a sense of urgency to these efforts.

But each one of us can strive on our own by using less power and water, walking short distances instead of taking the car, carpooling with colleagues to commute to work, shopping smartly for groceries and other perishables and spreading awareness about reducing our carbon footprints.

We may not be able to prevent the glaciers melting, the seas rising or the haze dissipating by our efforts, but at least we will get the satisfaction of having done something for the environment. After all, charity begins at home.

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Kuwait Times

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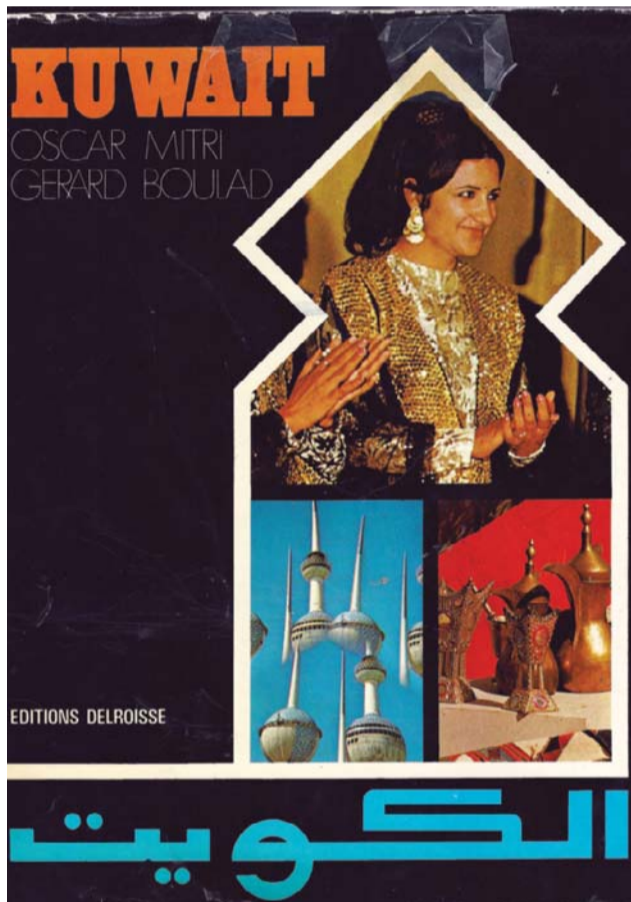
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On national feast days or purely sporting occasions, there are processions of majorettes parades, streamers and floral floats.



General view of the town of Al-Ahmadi.



A glimpse into **Kuwait's** recent pioneering past

By Athoob A Al-Shuaibi

"**T**his land, almost unknown to the West at the beginning of this century, was haunted by three wicked fairies at the dawn of time - the Heat Fairy, the Drought Fairy and the Aridity Fairy. And then, one rainy morning in February 1938, the good Oil Fairy waved her magic wand, and everything changed overnight, and a miracle was accomplished. The miracle is that of the emirate of Kuwait."

This passage is not taken from a Disney film script or a fictional children's book. These words were said describing the

development of Kuwait in 1975 by Canadian Gerard Boulad and Frenchman Oscar Mitri, two photographers who published a detailed pictorial book punctuated by facts composed in a fictional style that reflected their fascination with the land of Kuwait and its people.

The lensmen came during the reign of Sheikh Sabah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, when the late Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah was the crown prince and prime minister. They documented the period of economic prosperity followed by the discovery of oil. "We realized that this tiny country really is a great one," they wrote.



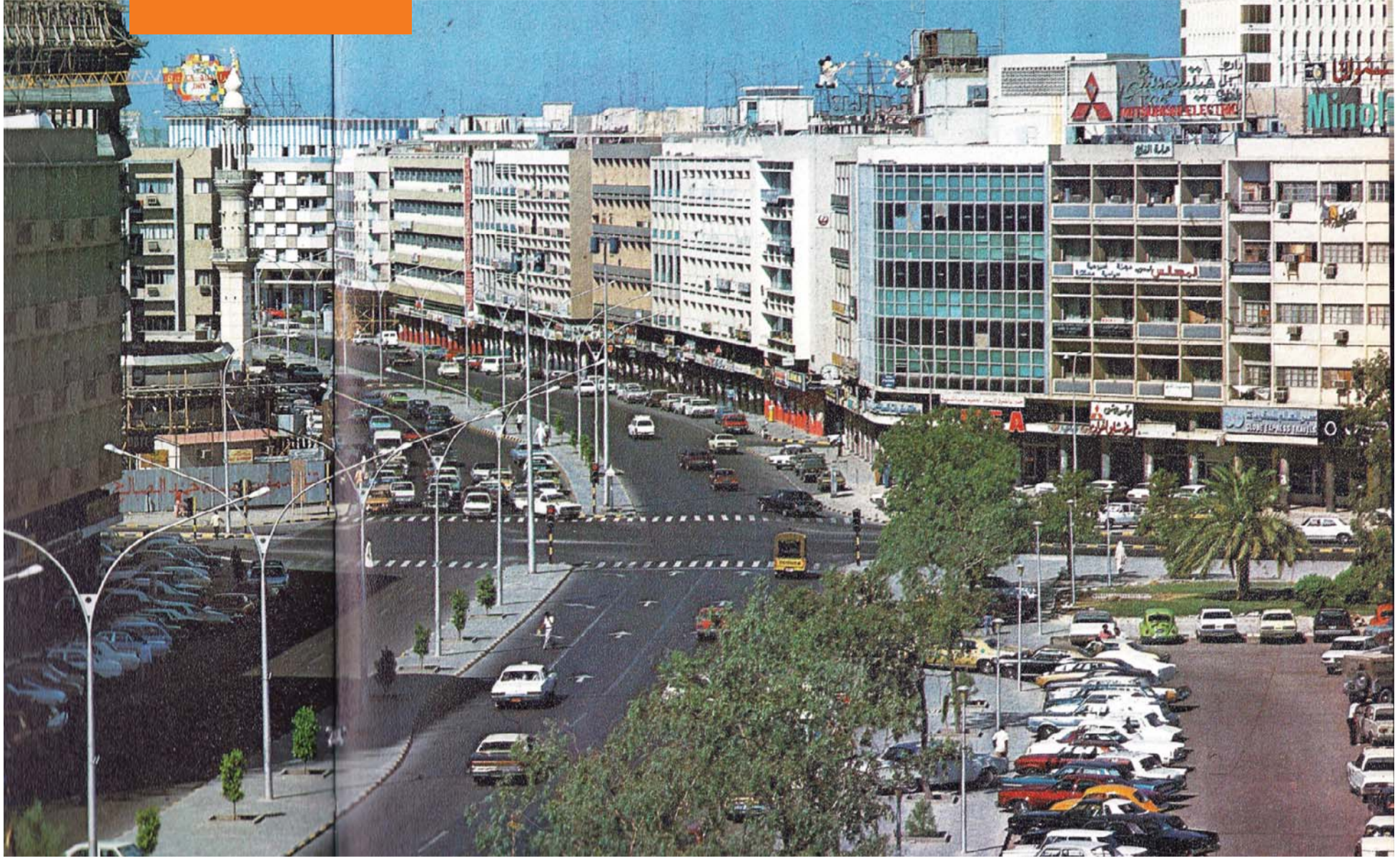
Private swimming pool in a residence in the fashionable suburbs.



Crops grown without soil on the hydroponic principle and model nurseries.



A Parisian-style fashion show in a hotel.



Wide avenues and shopping streets lined with trees.

Pioneer

Kuwait at that time was recognized as a pioneer in building the country and its people. Women were drawn to the field of employment and occupied positions that were once exclusive to men. Boulad and Mitri mentioned that education comprised the largest part of investment, wishing for the world to follow in Kuwait's steps to amend education systems. By the same token, healthcare was also at its peak. "The problems arising in so-called developed countries in connection with social security, medical treatment and education in general are entirely unknown here," they emphasized.

In addition, the duo provided useful information for tourists, although tourism was new to the country. They highly encouraged tourists to visit Kuwait during the national holidays or

Islamic festivals to enjoy traditional celebrations. "Hotels, there are a score of them in Kuwait. And whether they are called Hilton or Sheraton, Mr Smith will still feel at home in them like the residences of California!" they wrote.

The book, simply titled KUWAIT, has 110 color photographs as historical evidence of the country's social, financial, political and ethnic affairs. It's written in three languages - English, French and Arabic. Kuwait Times found another version of the book that appears to contain additional photographs of Kuwait by author/photographer Mitri.

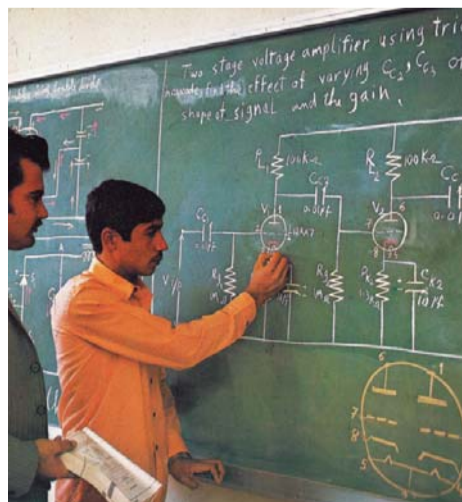
Photos from the KUWAIT BOOK
(Description from the book authors)



An ordinary session of the National Assembly.



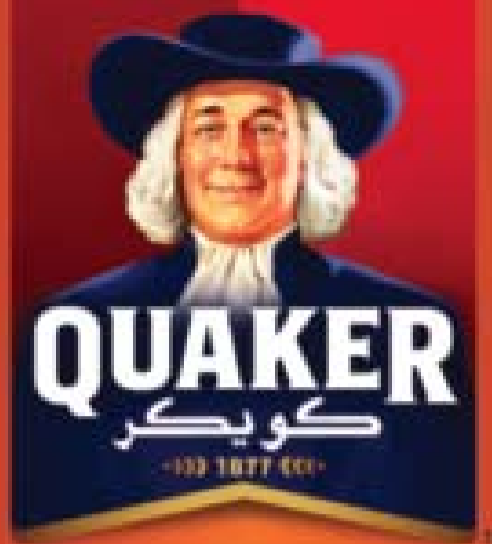
At the primary school, Kuwaiti children get to know about animal life by watching white ducks - also imported and well looked after - sporting in little ponds.



"Studious young people are being trained by a teaching staff of the highest competence".



First aid given to the victim of an accident by a group of qualified nurses.



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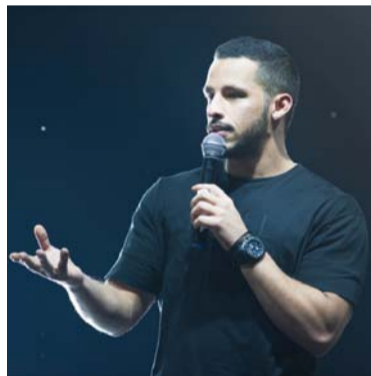
The man behind the sleight of hand

'Illusionist uses science to educate and entertain'

By Faten Omar

Kuwaiti illusionist Abdulateef Al-Saleh knows the secrets of a successful magic show in Kuwait. Hidden in each of his effects are fascinating science and engineering techniques, as his tricks are powered by concealed chemistry, physics paradoxes, baffling biology, mysterious mathematics and enchanting engineering.

Kuwait Times discovered the tricks that amaze, amuse and entertain people by getting into Saleh's magical world. Saleh, 28, is not only an illusionist, but a comedian too. He is an oil and gas engineer and has a fulltime job. He also works at an international hotel, has his own TV show on Kuwait



An illusionist's craft is implicitly dependent on mystery. "Every magician has his own way to do his tricks to make them special," Al-Saleh explains.

TV and is the founder, writer and performer in Imagine, a team of two performers and a huge number of workers. They present a comedy illusion show, which is the only show of its kind in the Middle East, and are the only Arabs that do this, Saleh told Kuwait Times.

Saleh said he only recently got enamored by magic. "It is never too late, especially when you have a pas-



sion for something. I believe age is just a number. I was a writer who used his ability to talk in a funny way to deliver a message and say what he writes on a stage as a standup comedian and on TV as a monologist. After meeting my partner Abdulwahab Al-Failakawi, we decide to create a new idea and new concept in February 2015 - the comedy illusion show - where I write and present the show with AbdulWahab, who designs, distributes and presents the illusions," he explained.

Hard Work

"I have a very supportive family - no matter what I do, as long as I'm respecting people and presenting things in a nice way, they will support me. Nothing in the world is perfect, but hard work can make our show look as perfect as we want it to be. Errors are possible, but as good illusionists and presenters, we prepare a Plan B for

everything," he said.

An illusionist's craft is implicitly dependent on mystery, and Saleh explained the margin of error he operates with. "Every magician has his own way to do his tricks to make them special. When people search on the Internet or buy a trick set to know the secrets, that makes them realize how good we are in presenting a trick, because if it's not good, than it won't make them wonder to a point that they go home without forgetting to Google or buy it. In addition, the revelation of a secret makes us work harder and create better new tricks," said Saleh.

In his show, Saleh found that the Kuwaiti people are hard to entertain and convince, but he believes that what they are doing is good enough to make them satisfied. He confirmed that he has a successful show because all his five shows were fully booked and the tickets all sold out. Revealing the secret of a good show, he said: "We practice our script and illusions almost every day, but separately and not as a team. What makes us good is our friendship - we hang out together often, so we get new ideas and discuss them while we meet away from the work atmosphere and pressure."

Rewarding

Magic is as much about illusion as it is the art of distraction, and like any vocation, the better the performer, the easier it's made to look. And the greatest payoff for an entertainer is generally not financial. To Saleh, the most rewarding aspect of this is the surprised faces he sees after every trick.

"The yells and the screams that we get from the crowd when we enter the stage, the love we feel after the show and the effects our show has in our country and abroad - we can't ask for more. But people usually ask us to make them disappear," he quipped.

Saleh never imagined that he would one day be on stage, either as a comedian or illusionist, but after his first show, he started to receive offers from many companies. He then started to

deal with it professionally and that's how he started making a living out of it.

"One of my mentors, Abdulmehsen Al-Mugatea, once told me 'respect the people to earn their respect', and this is how I became famous," Saleh said. He gives the same advice to every standup comedian he meets in the field - in order to be successful, you should be yourself first, and then be professional in what you want to do.



ABDULATEEF ALSALEH
ABDULWAHAB ALFAILAKAWI

KUWAIT SPORTS INDEPENDENT: INFO MIN

KUWAIT: Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs, Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Hmoud Al-Sabah yesterday asserted that Kuwaiti laws are in full compliance with the independence of the sports movement, the Olympic Charter and the laws of international sports.

The Minister called, in a letter of thanks to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), for convening a meeting between the official authorities and representatives of the (IOC) and the Kuwaiti Olympic Committee (KOC) in Kuwait to discuss the reservations raised by the KOC and the IOC during the meet-

ing in Lausanne regarding the lack of compliance of some Kuwaiti legislation with the Olympic Charter.

The minister commended in his letter of thanks the IOC for the meeting that was arranged between the Kuwaiti parliamentary and government delegations and representatives of the KOC and the IOC in Lausanne, Switzerland, on October 12th.

The letter included an explanation of the concept of the independence of the sports movement in accordance with the provisions of the Olympic Charter and a comparison of the Kuwaiti laws adopted in neighboring countries and the

world, confirming Kuwait's respect for international sports legislation and its commitment to the adoption of advanced laws in the area of respect for the independence of the sports movement.

Meanwhile, in a pre-departure statement ahead of his visit to Lausanne, the Minister reaffirmed Kuwait's "unequivocal respect" for the Olympic Charter and the international sports regulations. "The Kuwaiti legislation are more advanced than those of other countries in the region; they are on par with the international standards. He voiced hope that everybody will work for the interests of Kuwait and

refrain from any measures that could have negative impacts on the progress of the sports movement in the country. On the other hand, the majority of the local sports clubs renewed commitment to the regulations, approved by the sovereign legislative authorities of the state, and respect for the guidelines set forth in the Olympic Charter. In a joint statement after their meeting at Al-Salmiya SC on Thursday night, representatives of nine, out of the 15, sports clubs said the legislative authorities are always keen on non-interference in the technical and administrative affairs of the clubs. —KUNA



Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Hmoud Al-Sabah



HISTORY OF AL-SHAMIYA AREA

KUWAIT: Since the olden days, Al-Shamiya area was known as a desert oasis where merchants and travelers rested at before making their way to the Middle East's Al-Sham (Levant). Nowadays, Al-Shamiya area continues this role, but in a different capacity by being one of Kuwait's model areas which houses several cultural centers and other important facilities. In his book (The State of Kuwait .. Places and Monuments), Dr. Yaqoob Al-Ghunaim said that Al-Shamiya, situated 2.5

kilometers from the capital city Kuwait, was an open field land where fresh water was available for travelers on their way to Al-Sham region. He said that Al-Shamiya did not become a residential area till the 1930s when the first clay buildings were built.

The old Shamiya area consisted of Abdullah Al-Salem suburb and Al-Shamiya area which then were divided into two with the continued urbanization in Kuwait beyond the old city, said Al-Ghunaim. He noted that

Al-Shamiya area is currently situated between the first and second ring roads, consisting of 10 residential blocks.

One of the first major buildings constructed there was the palace of late Sheikh Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah which was built in the 1930s. It was then leased to an independent US oil company until the 1960s when the building was transformed into a headquarters of the Kuwaiti female teachers association and eventually ended up as the female

branch for the college of basic education, said Al-Ghunaim in his book.

Al-Shamiya also is home for one of the best cooperative societies in the country which was built in 1962, said Al-Ghunaim, adding that theaters, schools, research centers, and other public facilities could be found there. Several well-known Kuwaiti families such as Al-Nafisi, Al-Ghanim, Al-Othman, and others have chosen Al-Shamiya area to be their home, said Al-Ghunaim.—KUNA

Crime Report

MALL HARASSER SENT TO PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL

KUWAIT: Policemen were able to bring a mentally disturbed man under control after he was found harassing and attacking women in a Fahaheel mall. A security source said a call came from several shoppers saying that a scary looking man was harassing women there. A police patrol was dispatched to the scene and arrested the suspect only to find out he was mentally disturbed and was sent to the psychiatric hospital for evaluation and treatment. In another incident, patrons of a popular store were shocked when an elderly man removed his clothes while shoppers looked on. Several present covered the man,

thought to be disturbed, with his clothes. Police arrested the man and sent him to concerned authorities.

Drug arrest in Farwaniya

Farwaniya police arrested a man in Andalus area with illicit pills in addition to a hashish joint. The arrest took place when a patrol on a routine tour noticed a car in Andalus area, and when approached they found a man sleeping inside with a rolled joint next to him. When he woke up he asked the patrol men to switch off the flasher lights and not disturb him because

he did not sleep for two days.

Thieves steal welding machine

Unknown persons on a 4WD vehicle without license plates stole a welding machine at gun point. The lawyer of a welding company filed a report at the Jahra police station. He informed the police that a supervisor who was at the site attempted to prevent the theft but the culprits pulled a gun on him, took the machine and drove off.

Student harassed

A university student told Mubarak Al-

Kabeer police that someone misused the telephone by sending a WhatsApp message claiming to be a woman and wanted to meet him. Detectives are working on the case.

26-year-old man arrested

Policemen found a 26-year-old Indian in Nugra area in an abnormal condition, laying on the ground. The man was making obnoxious statements, laughing and crying and acting in an unusual and inebriated way. When approached, he asked policemen for a hammer. The police told him it is at the police station and took him there.

DISCOVER AMERICA WEEK LAUNCHED

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The US Embassy in Kuwait announced the launch of 'Discover America Week' (DAW) yesterday during a press conference at the embassy grounds in Bayan. Ongoing from October 20-31, the Discover America Week is a social, cultural, and entertainment event that aims to invite and introduce people in Kuwait to the variety of life in America, including culture, fashion, dining, music and more.

"Through this event we aim to encourage Kuwaiti people to travel to the US whether as students or tourists and learn about our culture. The event also demonstrates the strong ties between the two countries. We believe that each of the Discover America Week's events will be well attended by the Kuwaiti people," said Charles G. Cole, Counselor for Public Affairs at the US Embassy in Kuwait.

This marks the third year of the US Embassy's Discover America Week initiative.

"After the success in the previous two years, we decided to extend this event to Oman, Bahrain, and the UAE for the first time this year. Different retail outlets selling various American brands will offer discounts and other promotions in their stores during the period of this event. Also Chevrolet will be unveiling three new models of their vehicles that are special edition. In addition the Sultan Center will also offer specials on 4,000 American products sold at their stores," explained Jeff Hamilton, Senior Commercial Officer at the US Embassy in Kuwait.

Discover America Week will also include a range of cultural and information events.

"As part of DAW, the Full Spectrum US Air Force Heritage of America Band will be performing today (Friday) at the Avenues Mall, Grand Avenue in front of the Cheesecake Factory restaurant at 5:30pm, and on Saturday at the Amricani Cultural Center at 6:00pm. Furthermore an education fair will also be held, and will be focusing on boarding schools in the United States in addition to promoting graduate study in American universities," added Hamilton.

The value of the bilateral trade relation between Kuwait and America is \$15 billion yearly. "It's about \$11 billion from Kuwait, mostly petroleum, and the rest from US to Kuwait. With the drop of oil price in the last year, the figure may be smaller in the future, thus the US export is still growing, as it witnessed 87 percent growth for the past 5 years, and we expect it to increase in the future," he pointed out.

Activities and events will be organized across Kuwait and those interested can visit the website for a schedule of event: www.DAW-Kuwait.com

Brief

Report

Ex MP must pay fine for insult

KUWAIT: The Criminal Court fined former lawmaker Safa Al-Hashim and Al-Watan TV KD 20,000 in civil compensations for insulting Parliament Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanim. In other news, Mubarak Al-Kabeer Governorate asked the Kuwait municipality to allocate an area of 10,000 meters squared in the northern part of Qurain markets to carry out celebrations during the next National Day as well as public events.

Raids in Jleeb

Public security officers launched a wide ranging campaign in Jleeb Al-Shuyoukh area in cooperation with Kuwait Municipality, to remove violations by expatriates. More than 18 expats of various nationalities were arrested.

- Contributed by Hanan Al-Sadoun and Meshal Al-Enezi



KUWAIT: His Highness the Premier arrives after his official visit in France. — KUNA

PREMIER ARRIVES AFTER OFFICIAL VISIT

KUWAIT: His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and his accompanying delegation, arrived in the country yesterday after being in France for

an official visit. His Highness the Premier was received at Kuwait International Airport by Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-

Sabah, a number of ministers and senior officials from the army, police and national guards. He was also received by HH the Premier's diwan and the French charge d'affaires. —KUNA

PANEL RECOMMENDS DOW ISSUE BE REFERRED TO PROSECUTION

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The national assembly public funds committee yesterday decided to recommend to refer an investigation into the payment of the large penalty to US Dow Chemical to the public prosecution.

Head of the committee MP Abdullah Al-Turaiji said the report on the issue includes recommendations to convict a number of officials at the state-owned Petrochemical Industries Co. (PIC).

The committee had been asked to investigate why Kuwait allegedly rushed the payment of the huge \$2.2 billion penalty to Dow for unilaterally scrapping a multi-billion-dollar joint venture in late 2008. The International Chamber of Commerce had ruled in favor of Dow and ordered Kuwait to pay the hefty fine. A number of MPs had called on authorities to challenge the decision and delay the payment until the challenge had been heard. But those MPs said that authorities rushed the payment and called for a probe into the whole affair.

The recommendation must be accepted by the national assembly in order to be effective. The assembly is due to open its new term on October 27. Turaiji said the voting on the report was unanimous. He also said that the committee voted to refer another issue related to state investments in a private company to the public prosecution for legal investiga-

tion. The lawmaker said the committee, however, delayed its decision on the suspicious sale of buildings held by Kuwait investments in London.

In the meantime, MP Turaiji yesterday called on Oil Minister Ali Al-Omair to investigate reports about 70 Kuwaiti employees being laid off from the Kuwait Gulf Oil Co. which is responsible for the oil operations at the neutral zone with Saudi Arabia.

Turaiji said the dismissal of the Kuwait employees is unacceptable and unjustified even if the oil operations in the neutral zone had been halted over a row with Saudi Arabia, adding that the employees are not responsible for the stoppage and they

should not be penalized. The lawmaker said that the oil minister is supposed to resolve the problem and the sufferings of the employees who have been laid off and others who are waiting their turn. He also said the oil minister must explain the issue and should take measures to prevent harm to dozens of Kuwaiti families.

In other news, the public prosecution yesterday released former Islamist MP Khaled Al-Sultan on a KD 2,000 bail after interrogating him over remarks he made regarding judges. Sultan had criticized a decision by the criminal court to hold the hearings of the Iran-linked cell behind closed doors.

EQUATE TO BUY ME GLOBAL FROM DOW, PIC FOR \$3.2 BN

DUBAI: Kuwait's Boubyan Petrochemical Co said yesterday its affiliate Equate had signed a \$3.2 billion deal to buy ME Global from Dow Chemical of the United States and a subsidiary of state-run Kuwait Petroleum Corp. Under the non-binding agreement, about \$200 million of the total value would go towards paying down loans and commitments of ME Global, Boubyan said in a statement to the Kuwaiti bourse.

ME Global is a 50-50 ethylene

glycol producing joint venture between Dow and Petrochemical Industries Co, a unit of Kuwait Petroleum. Boubyan owns 9 percent of Equate. Once the deal is finalized, Boubyan is not expected to provide any financing to or inject any funds into Equate, the statement said. Last November, Dow said that as part of a \$7-8.5 billion divestment plan, it would reduce its equity positions in all of its Kuwaiti ventures in order to release capital for other strategic purposes. —Reuters

International

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2015

Stakes high for Clinton, in Benghazi talks

15



Major road in polluted capital briefly car-free

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Myanmar's children help support economy

18



TROLLHATTAN: Swedish police officers give information to people they secured the area outside a primary and middle school. — AFP

MASKED STABBING ATTACK IN SWEDISH SCHOOL

SWORDSMAN KILLS TWO INCLUDING TEACHER AND CHILD

TROLLHATTAN: A masked man brandishing a sword broke into a school in Sweden yesterday, killing two people and seriously wounding two others before being shot by police. The attack took place in the southwestern town of Trollhattan at a school for children aged between six and 15, shocking a nation where such violence is rare.

Media reports said the assailant was wearing a Star Wars mask, and school children initially thought it was a prank or a Halloween costume. One teacher was found dead at the school, while a second victim died in hospital several hours later. Swedish media reported the second victim was a young boy.

"We cannot confirm the second victim's identity yet as the family is in the process of being informed," hospital spokesman Nicklas Claesson told AFP. Hospital staff had previously confirmed that two boys, aged 11 and 15, were in critical condition with stab wounds, while another teacher who was seriously

wounded in the attack was also being operated on. The assailant, a 21-year-old man from Trollhattan who was shot by police at the scene, was also in critical condition, they said.

Police were alerted about the incident at 10:10 am and have already identified the attacker. However they have not disclosed any information about him and the motive for the attack remains unclear. "When we first saw him, we thought it was a joke. He was wearing a mask and black clothes and (carrying) a long sword. Some students wanted to take their picture with him and feel the sword," one unidentified student told news agency TT.

When the man started attacking people, he quickly realized it wasn't a joke and fled as the assailant went from classroom to classroom looking for victims. TT said several knives were used in the attack. Police said there was "a lot of confusion" at the school, saying there were still pupils and teachers inside more than two hours after the attack.

According to its website, the Kronan school has around 400 pupils, including many newly-arrived immigrants. Swedish media described it as a "problem school". It had been criticized by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate for its lax security and on account of a number of disruptions which prevented the pupils from learning. Teachers had complained to the inspectorate about the school library and cafe being open to the public and creating an insecure environment for the children, TT reported. Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven was expected to visit the town later on Thursday, parliament's Twitter account said.

"This is a black day for Sweden," Lofven said in a statement. "My thoughts go to the victims and their families, the students and staff, and the entire community. No words can describe what they're going through right now." Crisis teams were at the school assisting parents and students. But some parents outside were unhappy at the way the school handled the attack.

'Lock the door'

"No one from the school called me. I found out what happened from a neighbor when I was carrying out the trash. I got into my car and came here," one father told TT after being reunited with his young daughter. The girl, who was not identified, said the head teacher had come into her classroom and told them to stay inside and lock the door. "We didn't know what was happening," she said.

Trollhattan is an industrial town of 57,000 and home to the former Swedish carmaker Saab which filed for bankruptcy in 2012. School attacks are rare in normally-tranquil Sweden. A 1961 school shooting in Kungälv, in southwestern Sweden, left one person dead and six others injured. No other mass shootings have occurred since then, though at least one attack has been foiled, in the southern city of Malmö in 2004. Other threats have been issued but not followed through. —AFP

70 HOSTAGES FREED IN IRAQ OPERATION

ONE US SERVICEMAN KILLED, FIVE IS MILITANTS CAPTURED

WASHINGTON: A US-backed rescue operation freed 70 hostages from an Islamic State prison in Iraq and captured five militants, the Pentagon said yesterday, confirming that a US service member was killed. "This operation was deliberately planned and launched after receiving information that the hostages faced imminent mass execution. It was authorized consistent with our counter-ISIL effort to train, advise, and assist Iraqi forces," Pentagon spokesman Peter Cook said, using an alternate acronym for IS.

The US military freed a number of Kurdish captives in a rescue mission in northern Iraq yesterday, and one American was killed in the operation, two US defense officials said. Details were sketchy in advance of an expected US public announcement.

One official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because the operation had not yet been made public, said the US-led rescue effort was carried out overnight in the vicinity of Hawija, an Islamic State stronghold west of Kirkuk. The circumstances in which one US

military member was killed were unclear, but one US official said the soldier was killed in a firefight at the scene. The relative of one of the Kurdish hostages said he's been informed of their rescue in a US-led raid.

Irfan Sadraadeen, the uncle of Kurdish peshmerga fighter Meriwan Mawlud, said he was contacted by a peshmerga official who informed him about the raid on the Islamic State group near Hawija. Irfan said he was told that paratroopers landed at a poultry farm, close to the home of the main sharia judge of Hawija, where they launched their rescue. "We are waiting for more information. A peshmerga official called us today confirming the news of the raid," he said, adding that he was told 15 IS fighters were killed in the raid. "None of them arrived to this area yet but we are waiting for them," he said.

US special operations forces were assisting Iraqi Kurdish peshmerga forces in rescuing hostages held at an Islamic State prison near Hawija, in northern Iraq, in a mission

requested by the Kurdistan Regional Government, Cook said. "Dozens" of US troops were involved in the mission, a US defense official said, declining to give further specifics on the number involved.

"It was a deliberately planned operation but it was also done with the knowledge that imminent action was needed to save the lives of these people," the US defense official said.

Serviceman shot

The US serviceman was shot during the mission and taken back to Erbil, where he died, the US defense official said. He was the first US serviceman killed in ground combat operations against Islamic State, which has been the target of daily air strikes in Iraq and Syria by a US-led coalition for more than a year. Five US helicopters launched from Erbil were involved in the mission, and the United States was providing helicopter lift, intelligence support, air strike support, and advisory support to the peshmerga, the US defense

official said. Air strikes were launched both before and after the mission to block approaches to the prison and destroy it afterward, the US defense official said.

Those rescued included 20 members of Iraqi security forces, Cook said in his statement. Five Islamic State members were detained and are in Kurdish custody, and more than 10 were killed, the US defense official said.

A Reuters source in the Hawija area said the special forces raided a house where Islamic State commanders were gathering, triggering gun battles and blasts that lasted several hours. Sheikh Jaafar Mustafa, a senior commander of the Kurdish peshmerga forces, confirmed an operation had taken place but said he had no further information about it. In May, American special operations forces killed senior Islamic State leader Abu Sayyaf from Tunisia in a raid in Syria.

Hawija is a stronghold of Islamic State militants who have captured Kurdish peshmerga fighters in battles. — Agencies

ISRAELI SHOT DEAD AFTER BEING MISTAKEN FOR 'TERRORIST'

JERUSALEM: A Jewish man was shot and killed in a scuffle with Israeli soldiers who suspected he was a Palestinian attacker, police said yesterday, in a reflection of the jittery mood that has gripped Israelis amid a spate of near-daily stabbings. The shooting came as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was in Germany for talks with US Secretary of State John Kerry on how to restore calm. Kerry is set to meet with the Palestinians this weekend.

Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said soldiers deployed in Jerusalem demanded late Wednesday that the man show them his ID. The man refused, scuffled with the soldiers and then attempted to seize one of their weapons. A private security guard nearby shot the man, and one soldier also opened fire. The man later died of his wounds. Police said the soldiers claimed the man had asked to see their IDs and proclaimed, "I am ISIS," referring to the Islamic State militant group.

"The soldiers had high suspicions that he was a terrorist," Rosenfeld said. Police later said the man was a 28-year-old Jewish resident of Jerusalem, without providing further details. The Palestinian attacks have Israelis on edge. Several politicians have urged licensed gun owners to carry their weapons with them, and there have been several bloody accidents. In one case, an Israeli man stabbed a fellow Jew, thinking his victim was an Arab because of his dark skin. And earlier this week, a private security guard shot an Eritrean migrant he thought was an attacker during a bus station shooting.

As the Eritrean lay on the ground, a mob of people cursed him, kicked him and hit him with objects. He later died of his wounds. Police said the autopsy showed the man died from gunshot wounds and that four suspects arrested for their role in the beating were released on bail following a court appearance.

Opposition legislator Tzipi Livni accused hard-line politicians of fomenting a climate of fear and danger with their calls for people to arm themselves. "This is not the Wild West," she told Israeli Army Radio. "The suspicion there is now, the fear and the hate lead to brutal and very difficult results."

Israelis have scrambled to purchase pepper spray for self-defense, and stores and restaurants are empty. Israel has beefed up security, deploying hundreds of soldiers to back up thousands of police officers. Police have erected concrete barriers and checkpoints at the entrances to Arab areas of east Jerusalem, where many of the attackers are from.

Many Palestinian residents of Jerusalem have been afraid to leave their homes for fear of getting mixed up with vigilante mobs or being mistaken for an attacker.

In new violence yesterday, police said two Palestinians stabbed an Israeli at a bus stop after they tried to board a bus ferrying children to school. Police shot the two men, one of whom later died while the other was seriously wounded. Police said the Israeli man was moderately wounded. Israel's Shin Bet internal security agency said the men, both about 20 years old, have records of militant activity. One is a member of the Islamic militant Hamas group while the other was jailed for two years after he was caught carrying a knife at a sensitive West Bank holy site. — AP



Journalists film Su-30 jets parked at Hemeimeem airbase yesterday as Mi 24 helicopter gunship flies overhead. Since early morning, Russian combat jets have been taking off from this base in western Syria, heading for missions. — AP

RUSSIA PUTS ITS SYRIAN OPERATIONS ON DISPLAY

LAVROV, KERRY TO MEET IN VIENNA TODAY

HEMEIMEEM AIR BASE, SYRIA: Russian combat jets streak into the sky from this base in western Syria for yet another day of the heavy bombing runs that have allowed Moscow to again portray itself as a major global player, projecting military power far from its borders. While support crews attached a missile to an Su-30 jet for a sortie, helicopter gunships buzzed around the base to make sure there was no threat of a ground attack.

Russia has been conducting daily airstrikes in Syria since Sept. 30 to back a Syrian government offensive. Moscow says it is targeting militants, especially from the Islamic State group and other extremists. The United States and others have criticized the strikes, which they say are aimed primarily at groups fighting Assad's forces and likely only to fan the violence.

The Russian Defense Ministry flew Moscow-based reporters to the air base early yesterday, giving a few international news organizations their first inside look at its operations here.

The tour was organized Wednesday, the same day the Kremlin announced that Syrian President Bashar Assad had met in Moscow with President Vladimir Putin. Assad's visit Tuesday was his first known trip abroad since war broke out in 2011 and raised intense speculation about the two leaders' motives.

In a sign that a diplomatic push was underway, Russia also announced that Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State John Kerry would meet today in Vienna. They will be joined by their counterparts from Saudi Arabia and Turkey, both of which are staunch critics of Assad.

Lavrov said Russia will brief its counterparts on its military and political efforts in Syria. "I think other parties will be interested to get firsthand information from the Russian delegation about the steps that we take to fight the IS in Syria. We should also talk about the political process," he said. Lavrov also said in televised remarks that Moscow is eager to invite other countries from the region to the talks, especially Iran - another supporter of Assad.

Although Lavrov said that Russia had agreed to meet with the US, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, he reiterated that Moscow "remained convinced" that a settlement of the Syrian crisis had no future without the involvement of Iran. "It's vitally important in current conditions to include Egypt, Qatar, the Emirates and Jordan in the group," he said. — AP

KERRY CAUTIOUSLY OPTIMISTIC AFTER NETANYAHU TALKS

BERLIN: US Secretary of State John Kerry yesterday expressed a "cautious measure of optimism" following a four-hour meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about proposals that could help defuse the deadly wave of recent violence in Israel.

Kerry, his voice hoarse after an overnight flight and the lengthy talks, told reporters that he planned to raise the proposals with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and Jordan's King Abdullah in meeting Saturday in Jordan's capital, Amman.

"I come directly from several hours of conversation with Prime Minister Netanyahu and I would characterize that conversation as one that gave me a cautious measure of optimism that there may be some things that may be in the next couple of days put on the table which

would have an impact - I hope," Kerry said. "I don't want to be excessive in stating that, but I am cautiously encouraged."

Before their talks, both Kerry and Netanyahu condemned the wave of Palestinian attacks on Israelis. Kerry urged an end to all incitement and violence. Netanyahu repeated earlier accusations that Abbas was to blame, saying the Palestinian leader was "spreading lies" about Israel and the status of the holy site at the center of the tensions. "There is no question this wave of attacks is driven directly by incitement, incitement by Hamas, incitement from the Islamist movement in Israel and incitement, I am sorry to say, from President Abbas and the Palestinian Authority," Netanyahu told Kerry.

"I think it is time for the international com-

munity to say clearly to President Abbas to stop spreading lies about Israel," he said. "Lies that Israel wants to change the status quo at the Temple

Mount, lies that Israel wants to tear down the Al-Aqsa Mosque, lies that Israel is executing Palestinians. All of that is false."

Netanyahu, however, has himself infuriated Palestinians by comments about a former Palestinian leader inspiring Hitler's Holocaust. Netanyahu said Israel was committed to keeping the status quo at the Jerusalem site, known to Jews as the Temple Mount, the holiest site in Judaism and home to the biblical temples. For Muslims, it is the Noble Sanctuary, home to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, the third-holiest site in Islam and a national symbol for the Palestinians. The site, captured by Israel from

Jordan in the 1967 Mideast war, is a frequent flashpoint of violence. The Palestinians accuse Israel of trying to change the status quo at the site, which allows Jews to visit but not to pray. They point to a growing number of Jewish visitors who seek an expanded Jewish presence and prayer rights at the site. Netanyahu rejected those claims and said ending incitement was the only way to ease tensions. "To generate hope, we have to stop the terrorism," he said. "To stop the terrorism, we have to stop the incitement and I think it's time the international community told President Abbas to stop the incitement and hold him accountable for his words and his deeds." Kerry was more circumspect and did not single out Abbas for blame. But he also did not address Netanyahu's Holocaust comments.—AP

SEVEN OF LEBANESE FAMILY KILLED TRYING TO REACH GREECE BURIED

BEIRUT: Seven members of a Lebanese family who died trying to reach Greece by boat were buried yesterday in Beirut and survivors described watching their loved ones perish before their eyes. Members of the Safwan family said the dead, who included a pregnant woman and two children, had left poor living conditions in Lebanon to seek a better life in Europe, like hundreds of thousands of refugees fleeing war in Syria.

Their leaking boat sank in the Mediterranean last week after setting out from Turkey for Greece. The bodies of the dead arrived in coffins late on Wednesday at Beirut airport. "We left the country and told ourselves we could have a better future. We saw the future of Lebanon being slowly destroyed," said 24-year-old survivor Moussa Safwan, whose heavily pregnant wife died at sea after the boat sank.

"She died in my arms because of the extreme cold," he said, as relatives gathered to mourn. When he saw his wife's coffin arrive for burial, he briefly fainted. Family members dressed in black threw rice at the coffins, a Lebanese tradition, and fired guns in the air. Women wailed at the gathering in a poor district of Beirut.

More than half a million refugees and migrants have arrived in Greece this year by sea, including many fleeing violence in Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan. Lebanon, which hosts more than one million refugees from the Syrian conflict, is at peace but has struggled to rebuild after its own 1975-1990 civil war. More than a quarter of Lebanese live below the poverty line and youth unemployment is high.

"There is not a Lebanese citizen who does not know the circumstances that led to this," said Yousef Safwan, a cousin of the eldest victim Mayez Safwan. "The country has driven people to risk their lives and migrate, as happened with the Safwan family."

The seven victims flew out of Lebanon to Turkey with five other family members before attempting the crossing to Greece. Three survived while two are still missing.

The family paid \$10,000 to a Turkish smuggler for the boat crossing. He is believed to have survived, family members said. "Less than two hours after leaving, water started to leak into the boat," said another survivor, Maher Safwan, 16. The family threw waterlogged bags overboard and the smuggler tried to increase the boat's speed, crashing into the waves, he said. The family had aimed to reach Germany, he added. Before leaving Lebanon, the Safwan family had already moved once from their home in the Bekaa Valley, close to the Syrian border, to a suburb of Beirut. On Wednesday the Lebanese army said its naval forces had returned to shore a boat carrying 53 people trying to leave illegally from the coastal city of Tripoli.

More than half the people returned were Palestinians, as well as 14 Syrians and eight Lebanese, it said. — Reuters



SPIELFELD: An Austrian soldier tries to maintain order as migrants wait in a crowd to get on buses at a camp at a border with Slovenia in Spielfeld yesterday. Thousands of people are trying to reach central and northern Europe via the Balkans but often have to wait for days in mud and rain at the Serbian, Croatian and Slovenian borders. —AP

AUSTRIA OPENS BARRIERS AT REFUGEE RECEPTION CENTER

MIGRANTS TRADE PUNCHES WITH POLICE

VIENNA: Migrants traded punches and scuffled with police at a Serbian border crossing with Croatia yesterday as pent-up pressures on their trek toward hoped-for safe haven in the European Union boiled over.

The unrest at Berkasovo village subsided after several minutes but reflected frustrations of the tens of thousands of people facing long waits and other hardships as they make their way north over the Balkans each day in search of better lives in prosperous EU countries.

Further along that route, Austrian police moved to relieve pent-up pressure which they feared could lead to violence, removing barriers at an overcrowded collection point at border crossing with Slovenia. A day earlier, thousands of migrants broke through police obstacles at the same collection center at the Spielfeld border point.

Many of the migrants spilled out of the facility yesterday but then gathered nearby, following police instructions. But many others walked away from the border. On

the Slovene side, more than 1,000 migrants were waiting for entry, either to apply for asylum to Austria or to transit to other EU nations.

The flow of people over the so-called west Balkans route that begins in Greece has shifted. Migrants still cross first into Macedonia and then Serbia but now enter Croatia instead of Hungary, which erected a fence along its border to Serbia. From Croatia, they move to Slovenia, which has struggled to deal with the increasing numbers. In Serbia, groups of migrants huddled around fires lit to combat the chill at Berkasovo village. Niklas Stoerup Agerup of the UN refugee agency, said the number of migrant families with children under the age of 5 transiting into Croatia has been increasing over the past several weeks.

Overnight and early yesterday "we've had a continuous flow of people coming in and also a continuous flow of people managing to cross the border," he said.

Fadl Abdul, a Palestinian from Lebanon, was among those warning him-

self at one of the fires. He said children were particularly vulnerable to the hardships faced by the migrants.

"We can sit here, one day, two days without eat ... water, OK, no problem," said the 43-year-old. "But what about the kids? They need milk, they need to change clothes, everything."

Croatian Interior Ministry spokesman Domagoj Dzigulovic said 1,277 people arrived in Croatia from midnight until late yesterday morning. Further north, authorities in Slovenia counted 12,616 migrants entering the country on Wednesday.

Slovenian authorities say they can handle no more than 2,500 entries per day, and have accused Croatia of sending too many migrants through. In Madrid, an EU People's Party congress urged swift action. "The right to seek asylum must be respected for those in need of protection, while swift and effective return and readmission measures for those not qualifying must be put in place," said an "emergency resolution" adopted by the congress grouping Europe's centrist parties. —AP

GERMANY WARNS OF RACIST ATTACKS ON POLITICIANS

STABBED COLOGNE POLITICIAN MAKING FULL RECOVERY

BERLIN: German police warned yesterday of a growing risk of racially motivated attacks on politicians by right-wing radicals angry about an influx of migrants and said crimes directed at refugee shelters were rising dramatically.

The warning came five days after the stabbing of Henriette Reker, a mayoral candidate in the western city of Cologne. She was stabbed in the neck and seriously wounded on the eve

of Sunday's election, which she won. Media say she has been woken from an artificially induced coma and will make a full recovery. Germany is struggling to cope with the arrival of an expected 800,000 to 1 million migrants this year, many from war zones in the Middle East, and politicians are openly worrying about a potential rise in right-wing radicalism.

That concern has been accompanied by a

drop in support for conservative Chancellor Angela Merkel, who has opened the door to Syrian refugees, and a rise in the popularity of the anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD). The BKA federal police said that in the third quarter alone, 285 offences against asylum-seekers' shelters had been reported, compared with 198 for the whole of last year. The crimes included arson, criminal damage and incitement.

This year, 576 crimes involving refugee housing were reported, including 46 actual or attempted arson attacks, up from six last year. The BKA said that, although it was unaware of any concrete plans for an attack, a picture had emerged of rabble-rousing propaganda which created a climate conducive to such violence. "It is feared that people with political responsibility and those who make property available to asylum seekers will become the focus of perpetrators," said a BKA spokesman.

Cologne's new mayor Reker is known to have helped refugees and media said her attacker has links to right-wing radicals. Reker ran in the election as an independent with the support of Merkel's conservatives, liberal Free Democrats and Greens.

GALLOWS

There has been a spate of hate tirades against politicians. Earlier this week, suspected right-wing radicals painted gallows on a container in Leipzig targeting Social Democrat mayor, Burkhard Jung, with the slogan: "We will get you, mayor Jung".

That followed an anti-Islam PEGIDA rally earlier this month in which a demonstrator held up a mock gallows with nooses marked for Merkel and her deputy.— Reuters

GUNMEN STAGE NEW ASSAULT ON MIGRANTS AT SEA: HRW

ATHENS: Unidentified gunmen have staged a series of new sabotage attacks on boats carrying migrants cross the Aegean Sea, Human Rights Watch said yesterday. Quoting witnesses, the New York-based rights group said there had been eight incidents in which gunmen "intercepted and disabled the boats carrying asylum seekers and migrants from Turkey toward the Greek islands".

The most recent incidents were on October 7 and 9. According to a 17-year-old Afghan called Ali, a speedboat with five men armed with handguns had rammed their rubber dinghy on October 9. "At first when they approached, we thought they had come to help us," he told HRW. "But by the way they acted, we realised they hadn't come to help. They were so aggressive. They didn't come on board our boat, but they took our boat's engine and then sped away," he said.

He said the men attacked three other boats in quick succession before speeding off toward the Greek coast. "They spoke a language we didn't know, but it definitely was not Turkish, as we Afghans can understand a bit of Turkish," he said. Similar allegations were made by both migrants and rights groups during the summer. The latest attacks took place near the island of Lesbos, HRW said. A Greek coastguard source said the claims were under investigation but despite searches, they had not been able to locate the alleged perpetrators.—AFP



MADRID: Spanish Prime Minister and leader of the right-wing PP (Popular's Party) Mariano Rajoy (left) embraces German Chancellor and CDU federal chairwoman Angela Merkel during the European People's Party Statuary Congress in Madrid yesterday.—AFP

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BUENOS AIRES: Argentina's new Chief of Cabinet Sergio Massa talks to Argentina's President Cristina Fernandez at the government house in Buenos Aires, Argentina. — AP

CRISTINA KIRCHNER: END OF AN ERA IN ARGENTINA

BUENOS AIRES: Cristina Kirchner, the fiery, unbending president who has dominated Argentine politics for 12 years along with her late husband Nestor, leaves a divisive legacy as the country elects her successor Sunday. To her working-class base, Kirchner and her husband are the saviors who salvaged the economy after Argentina's 2001 crisis and stood up for the little guy against bullies both foreign and domestic.

To her generally better-off detractors, she is an overbearing interventionist who steered the economy back toward ruin and embarrassed the country with her acrimonious attacks on her favorite foes—from old Falklands War enemy Britain, to the big media conglomerates whose empires she has sought to dismantle, to the "vulture" fund capitalists suing Argentina over defaulted debt. "She's an arrogant liar. I can't wait for her to go. I hate her, plain and simple," said Monica Gurfinkel, a 48-year-old medical secretary who called Kirchner's government the worst she's ever seen. "The greatest thing that ever happened to Argentina is Cristina," said Juan Bertone, a 32-year-old bank employee from the opposite side of the Kirchner divide.

"She's a courageous woman who improved our standard of living with the 'paritarias' (mandatory pay raises to keep pace with inflation) and defended the nation's interests against the 'vulture' funds. You have to love her."

Kirchner, 62, took office in 2007, vowing to continue the work started by her husband and predecessor. Nestor Kirchner (2003-2007) had inherited an economy in shambles after what was then the largest sovereign debt default in history. But he turned it around thanks to booming demand for Argentine agricultural exports and his tough negotiations to restructure most of the country's \$100 billion in privately held debt.

He and his wife were widely expected to continue their term-for-term tango, but he died of a heart attack in 2010. Cristina Kirchner, a former senator and experienced politician in her own right, defended his legacy all the more combatively and won reelection in 2011. Term limits now bar her from running again. But she leaves office with an approval rating of more than 50 percent. She has vowed her chosen successor, Buenos Aires Governor Daniel Scioli, will continue the work of "kirchnerism," as her and her husband's movement has become known. —AFP

FBI AGENTS SET TRAPS TO HOOK US TERROR RECRUITS

ARE THEY TERRORISTS OR JUST LOSERS?

WASHINGTON: In April, John Booker was arrested for allegedly planning to carry out a suicide bombing at a military base in Kansas on behalf of the Islamic State group. It turns out that undercover FBI operatives had been manipulating him make a "martyrdom" video, providing him with a list of bomb-making materials and even building an explosive device for him, albeit an inert one.

Critics say the Federal Bureau of Investigation's growing army of undercover agents tasked with hunting down terror recruits on US soil sometimes unduly pressures young, impressionable people to plan and move forward with acts they may otherwise not have conceived on their own.

The FBI "may have created terrorists out of law-abiding citizens," Human Rights Watch has alleged.

In total, the FBI employs at least 15,000 undercover informants who are spread out over a wide span of probes, ranging from pedophilia to drugs to terror. Often well paid and operating with immunity, an informant can sometimes go so far as to suggest targets or provide weapons to convince a suspected recruit he or she is for real.

"They need to be convinced that you are just like them," said Mubin Shaikh, a former Canadian counterterrorism operative who has worked undercover, including in an operation that saw the so-called Toronto 18 prosecuted. "You have to play along, you have to do what they tell you to do. Otherwise your whole operation is compromised."

Shaikh, who recounted his experiences in the memoir "Underground Jihadi: Inside the Toronto 18," said there are a number of tactics to find out whether someone is an extremist or potential extremist.

In one approach, Shaikh would ask the suspect whether he would be interested in attending a "(terror) training camp," with the phrasing kept vague. "If I say the exact same thing to somebody else and he says 'yeah, I do

wanna go and train them,' that's your getting caught, that's not entrapment," Shaikh said. "If that suggestion is well within the operational doctrine of that group, that's not entrapment, it's like a dangle. You're hooking somebody—it's like fishing."

Focus on Islamic State

Undercover agents are now heavily focused on identifying sympathizers of the self-proclaimed Islamic State group that has overtaken large swathes of Syria and Iraq. Earlier this month, FBI Director James Comey said counterterrorism investigators had followed "dozens and dozens" of suspected militants around the United States this summer and disrupted "many" of them.

Shaikh, a Muslim himself, acknowledged that with the high visibility of violent extremists who claim they are acting in the name of Islam today, "the Muslim community is completely under siege."

"Now the trust is really ruined," he added. The problem is that in some operations, undercover agents set traps that, at times, appear to force the hand of suspects in their sights.

The topic is the focus of "(T)ERROR," a documentary that debuted at this year's Sundance independent film festival. The film, which scored a Break Out First Feature award at the festival, provides an unprecedented behind-the-scenes view of a counterterrorism sting over a two-year period.

These cases are not without controversy. In one, the so-called Fort Dix Five group of alleged extremist men were said to have plotted to stage an attack on the US military base of the same name in New Jersey.

Five of the original group of six were found guilty of conspiracy to commit murder and four got sentenced to life in prison, including three Albanian brothers. Before their 2007 arrest, they were placed under surveillance for a year and half after they had recorded vacation video footage of themselves shooting

weapons in the countryside while shouting "Allahu Akbar." Critics accuse the FBI of entrapment, saying FBI informants pushed the men to action. Mahmoud Omar, an Egyptian-born informant in the case, maintains that the Dukas brothers are innocent.

"I still don't know why the Dukas are in jail," he told The Intercept in June. The FBI acknowledges that using informants in investigations "may involve an element of deception, intrusion into the privacy of individuals, or cooperation with persons whose reliability and motivation may be open to question."

However, the bureau is quick to add, the courts have recognized that the use of informants is "lawful and often essential." In addition, the FBI says, "special care is taken to carefully evaluate and closely supervise their use so the rights of individuals under investigation are not infringed."

Terrorists or just losers?

More often than not, these allegedly radicalized Americans are just youths with low self-esteem who, online, find a reason to exist, observers say. Take the example of Joshua Ryne Goldberg, a 20-year-old Jewish man living with his parents in Florida who had invented a second life on the Internet where he presented himself as living in Australia and flooded social networks with pro-jihad messages.

He was arrested last month after allegedly distributing information about bomb-making techniques. He faces 20 years in prison. In Virginia, teenager Ali Amin was sentenced to 11 years in prison for using social media to support the Islamic State. Amin, 17, is the first minor to be prosecuted by the United States in a terrorism support case. Shaikh called his case "tragic."

But "when you have those guys online, preaching the ISIS message, trying to indoctrinate people, trying to recruit people, getting them themselves to do something, shouldn't we do something about that?" — AFP

VIRTUAL CURRENCY GROUPS ALIGN WITH US LAW ENFORCEMENT

WASHINGTON: The Obama administration is joining with private companies to train US law enforcement officials about the virtual currency Bitcoin and how to fight crime arising from its use.

The partnership, called the Blockchain Alliance, has two main goals, according to those involved in the project: educate investigators on how the technology works and enhance the reputation of a digital currency that's been associated with high-profile crime even as it has slowly gained mainstream acceptance. The alliance announced yesterday includes the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security and representatives of private companies such as BitFury, BitPay and Coinbase that are involved in virtual currency. The name comes from the term

"blockchain," which refers to the digital ledger on which Bitcoin transactions are recorded. Supporters see Bitcoin, a decentralized form of money that offers users a degree of privacy for their transactions, as a fast and easy payment system that is gaining legitimacy among regulators and businesses.

New York state regulators last month approved their first license for a company dealing in virtual currency. Online retailer Overstock.com this year installed a bitcoin ATM at its corporate headquarters in Salt Lake City.

But Bitcoin also has been exploited by criminals in Ponzi schemes and as the primary currency for Silk Road, the Internet drug bazaar whose founder was sentenced to life in prison this year. Two agents from

the Secret Service and Drug Enforcement Administration who were assigned to a Silk Road task force pleaded guilty this year to siphoning off Bitcoin proceeds during their investigation. "Far too many people think of Bitcoin as the currency of criminals," said Jason Weinstein, the alliance's director and a former Justice Department deputy assistant attorney general. "We think that changing that misperception, that image problem, will be good for the growth of the industry as a whole," he said.

He said he envisioned the alliance as a "one-stop shopping resource" for law enforcement, with training sessions and conference calls to answer questions about Bitcoin. Industry participation is intended to signal a commitment to helping law enforcement weed out criminal activity

associated with it.

"The more law enforcement understands how this technology works, the more they can understand what they can ask for, how they can ask for it," said Jerry Brito, executive director of Coin Center, a Bitcoin advocacy group.

He said the public perception of the virtual currency is reminiscent of the Internet's early days, when many saw the World Wide Web as a hub for illegal activity. Just as that association has changed over time, so too might the perception of Bitcoin, he said.

"We should get to a point where we don't think badly of Bitcoin because criminals use Bitcoin," and part of the way to get there is to draw attention to its legitimate uses, he added. — AP

BIDEN SAYS NO TO 2016 WHITE HOUSE RUN

STAGE SET FOR CLINTON AS SHE CALLS HIM 'A GREAT MAN'

WASHINGTON: Vice President Joe Biden said Wednesday he will not run for the White House in 2016, ending months of speculation that has stalked Hillary Clinton's campaign and threatened Democratic party unity. Pointing to the tyranny of America's electoral calendar, the two-time presidential hopeful reluctantly relinquished a long-held political dream and in doing so removed a potentially sizable obstacle to Clinton's nomination.

"I believe we're out of time, the time necessary to mount a winning campaign for the nomination," Biden said in an emotion-tinged statement at the White House, flanked by his wife Jill and the man he had hoped to replace, President Barack Obama.

Biden's months of soul searching and deliberation have coincided with mourning for his late son Beau, who succumbed to brain cancer in May. In 1972, weeks after being elected a lawmaker, Biden lost his wife and baby daughter in a car crash that also left his two young sons badly injured.

Biden took his Senate oath of office at Beau and Hunter's hospital bedside. Today-standing in the sun-bleached Rose Garden, within touching distance of the Oval Office and the Resolute Desk-Biden said that thoughts of Beau now brought a smile to the lips before a tear to the eye, but it was too late.

With just over two months until voters in Iowa cast the first ballots of the 2016 primary campaign, the 72-year-old may have struggled to garner enough cash, endorsements and the campaign team to rival the Clinton juggernaut.

The effort to draft Biden had been fueled by disillusionment with Clinton, who has struggled to gain traction among voters and remains a deeply polarizing figure. Responding to the news, Clinton in a statement described Biden as "a good friend and a great man."



SPRINGFIELD: Then-Democratic presidential candidate Sen Barack Obama and his vice presidential running mate then-Sen Joe Biden D appear together at a campaign stop in Springfield. — AP

"Today and always, inspired by his optimism and commitment to change the world for the better," she said on Twitter. While he may not be running, Biden made clear that he intends to play the party elder.

"While I am not going to be a candidate, I will speak out clearly and forcefully as to where we stand as a party and where we need to go as a nation," he said.

But with obvious strains of regret, Biden sketched out what a working-class kid from Pennsylvania would have done as the occupant of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. First, he said, was a "moon shot" to cure cancer. "I would have wanted to have been the president that ended cancer."

"It is personal," he said, adding: "I know we can do this... because there are so many breakthroughs just

on the horizon in science and medicine."

Warning shots

But there were also words of warning for those who have opposed key parts of Obama's legacy and reveled in arm-wrestling with Republicans—comments likely to be seen as targeted at Clinton.

Biden implored Democrats and Republicans to "end the divisive partisan politics that is ripping this country apart." "It is mean-spirited and petty and it has gone on for much too long," he said.

"I don't think that we should look at Republicans as our enemies. They are opposition. They are not our enemies. And for the sake of the country, we have to work together."

Where Obama has been criticized for remaining aloof from the backroom dealing of Washington politics, his deputy has relished getting his hands dirty, flashing his pearly whites, and forging unlikely alliances. He cultivated personal relationships with Republicans during his decades in the US Senate.

Addressing Democrats, Biden added that "our nation will be making a tragic mistake if we walk away or attempt to undo the Obama legacy. "Democrats should not only defend and protect this record, but they should run on the record," he said.

Clinton recently announced her opposition to a Pacific free-trade deal she supported while serving as Obama's secretary of state. The man who is currently Clinton's nearest rival, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, also took to Twitter to praise Biden.

"I thank @VP for his continued service to the nation and his support of the middle class," he said.

The Republican National Committee's chairman, Reince Priebus, meanwhile called Biden "the most formidable general election candidate the Democratic Party could have fielded." — AFP

US TREASURY PUTS OFF DEBT AUCTION

WASHINGTON: A grinding political battle in Congress over America's national debt led the US Treasury yesterday to postpone a regular auction of government debt, a reminder that the country once again is just weeks away from a potential default.

The Obama administration warned last week the federal government would have to stop borrowing money no later than Nov. 3 if the country's politicians do not raise the legal limit on the federal debt. On Thursday, the Treasury Department said in a statement it would not hold an auction of 2-year notes originally scheduled for Oct 27 because it might not be legally authorized to borrow money by the time the auction settles on Nov 2.

It also called on lawmakers to stop treating the debt ceiling as a political issue and to raise the borrowing limit "as soon as possible." "The creditworthiness of the United States is not a bargaining chip, and Congress should address this matter without controversy," the department said.

The federal government has been able to fund its operations and keep the debt just under its \$18 trillion cap for several months. The Treasury said it will still hold auctions for 5-year and 7-year notes next week even though they are also scheduled to settle on Nov 2.

"Treasury believes that postponing the auction for the 2-year note poses less risk for market functioning than postponing the 5-year or 7-year note offering," the department said. — Reuters

STAKES HIGH FOR CLINTON, GOP AS BENGHAZI TAKES CENTER STAGE

WASHINGTON: After months of buildup, Hillary Rodham Clinton finally takes center stage as the star witness in the Republican-led investigation into the deadly 2012 attacks in Benghazi, Libya.

Clinton, the Democratic front-runner for president, testifies from a position of political strength as her potential rival for the nomination, Vice President Joe Biden, announced Wednesday that he will not jump into the presidential race and she rides the momentum of a solid debate performance. Meanwhile, the Benghazi committee is on the defensive as the panel's GOP chairman scrambles to deflect comments by fellow Republicans that the inquiry is aimed at hurting Clinton's presidential bid.

Even so, Clinton faces a formidable challenge as she tries to explain security lapses at the US diplomatic compound in Benghazi, the slow military response to the violence and the Obama administration's changing narrative about who was responsible for the attacks that killed four Americans, including US ambassador Chris Stevens, and why the attacks were launched.

In a high-stakes, day-long appearance that could solidify her hole on the Democratic nomination or raise doubts about her candidacy, Clinton also is certain to face questions about her use of a private email account and server while serving as secretary of state.

The committee also faces a make-or-break moment. The panel's chairman, Rep. Trey Gowdy of South Carolina, and other Republican investigators know their questioning of Clinton could revive the beleaguered panel's credibility or undermine it even further.



WASHINGTON: Democratic presidential candidate, former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton arrives on Capitol Hill in Washington, yesterday to testify before the House Benghazi Committee. — AP

A new Associated Press-Gfk poll offers solace to both sides. While the investigation into the attacks is not a burning issue for the public - except among Republicans - Americans are more likely to view the investigation as justified rather than as a political attack on Clinton, the poll finds.

Many Americans don't have an opinion about Clinton's handling of the investigation. Four in 10 say they neither approve nor disapprove of how she has answered questions about the attack, while 20 percent approve and 37 percent disapprove.

Americans also are divided on Clinton's emails. More than half of those polled view her use of a private server as a minor problem or no problem at all, compared with 1 in 3 who think it is a major problem. Nearly two-thirds of Republicans call it a major problem. Gowdy pledged in a recent interview that the hearing will be "Benghazi-centric," focused on security before and during the attacks. Some questions on Clinton's emails are likely, Gowdy said, but he maintains that his approach may "shock you with fairness." — AP



KABUL: Afghan burqa-clad Shiite women walks past religious flags ahead of Ashura. — AFP

OBAMA TURNS TO THE POLITICAL DIMENSIONS OF AFGHAN WAR

MAJOR BREAKTHROUGHS ARE SEEN AS UNLIKELY

WASHINGTON: One week after reversing his pledge to pull American troops out of Afghanistan before he leaves office, President Barack Obama is turning to two core political dimensions of the war: obstacles to a negotiated peace, and Pakistan as a Taliban sanctuary.

Obama is welcoming Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to the White House yesterday for talks also expected to touch on US financial assistance to Islamabad and the prospects for Pakistani acceptance of limits on the scope of its nuclear weapons arsenal. Major breakthroughs are seen as unlikely.

The visit highlights the complexities of a 14-year-old Afghan war that Obama inherited in 2009, escalated a year later with a surge of American troops designed in part to force the Taliban to the negotiating table, and then vowed to end before he hands off to a new president in January 2017. Instead, Obama announced last week that he plans to retain 5,500 US troops there beyond 2016 to continue training and advising Afghan forces and to hunt al-Qaida terrorists.

Obama's decision was an acknowledgment that the war's end game is not going according to plan. The US-Pakistan relationship has been rocky over the years, not least because of US concerns about the growth of Pakistan's secretive nuclear arsenal. The US is interested in moving Pakistan toward an arrangement limiting the scope of its nuclear stockpile, but there are few signs that any breakthrough is in sight.

Nuclear weapons

In a new report released yesterday, two authoritative nuclear analysts estimated that Pakistan's nuclear weapons stockpile has increased to between 110 and 130 warheads from an estimated 90 to 110 in 2011. The analysts, Hans M Kristensen and Robert S. Norris, foresee it possibly expanding further to 220 to 250 warheads in another 10 years. That would make Pakistan the world's fifth largest nuclear weapons state behind the United

States, Russia, China and France.

In a report being published by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Kristensen and Norris said Pakistan appears to have six nuclear-capable ballistic missiles in its arsenal, three more than in 2011. At least two other nuclear-capable ballistic missiles and two new cruise missiles are in development, they said, adding that they see signs that Pakistan also is developing a nuclear weapon—possibly a cruise missile—for deployment on submarines.

In making his troop announcement last Thursday, Obama noted that Pakistani forces have squeezed remnants of al-Qaida into neighboring Afghanistan.

"Pressure from Pakistan has resulted in more al-Qaida coming into Afghanistan," Obama said. Evidence of that was a little noticed statement last week by the US military in Kabul about a large-scale US-Afghan air and ground raid against what it called a well-established al-Qaida training camp in the southern province of Kandahar. The US called it one of the largest such counterterrorism operations ever undertaken in Afghanistan.

In noting his coming meeting with Sharif, Obama also said sanctuaries for the Taliban and "other terrorists" must end. "I will continue to urge all parties in the region to press the Taliban to return to peace talks and to do their part in pursuit of the peace that Afghans deserve," he said. The Associated Press reported last week that some US analysts believed a Pakistani intelligence operative was running a command center for the Taliban out of the hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan, that was hit by an American gunship.

Afghan-owned peace

Sharif met Wednesday with Secretary of State John Kerry. State Department spokesman John Kirby said they discussed Obama's troop announcement, "noting that

an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process is the surest way to end violence and ensure lasting stability in Afghanistan and in the region."

Sharif said Oct 10 that his government was trying to revive stalled peace talks between representatives of the Afghan government and the Taliban. He said Islamabad was once again prepared to play mediator to end the Taliban's battle to regain power in Kabul. The Taliban ruled the country until US forces invaded in October 2001. Kabul accuses Pakistan of playing a double game by cooperating with Washington but also sheltering Taliban leaders.

Pakistan hosted a landmark set of preliminary meetings between Afghan officials and the Taliban in July. But a second round of scheduled talks was postponed after the Afghan government revealed that Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar had died in a Pakistani hospital two years ago. Pakistan denies that it sponsors the Taliban or other terrorist groups such as the Pakistan-based Haqqani network.

The Obama administration has long urged Pakistan to dismantle the Haqqani network. Moeed Yusuf, a South Asia specialist at the US Institute of Peace think tank, said Wednesday the Haqqani problem is important. "Pakistan wants, I think, to support a peace process, but it only wants to support a peace process in which it does not have to go after the Haqqani network and its assorted groups and the Taliban through military force," Yusuf said in an interview. "I don't think they are going to do that at any point."

"And so the question then is, is there a way to move forward on the peace process despite Pakistan not doing that," he added. "If the answer is yes, then I think that is the conversation that needs to happen during this (Sharif) trip and afterward. If the answer is no, then both sides need to own up to the fact that their goals and interests in Afghanistan will remain divergent." — AP

PAKISTAN'S UNFINISHED WAR AGAINST EXTREMISM

ISLAMABAD: A palpable sense of security is returning to Pakistan as a crackdown on militancy bears fruit, but critics warn the government has not taken long-term steps to tackle the underlying scourge of extremist Islam. Peace in Pakistan and Afghanistan will be top of the agenda in Washington yesterday when Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif meets US President Barack Obama.

At home, an army offensive against extremists and a grand "National Action Plan" (NAP) to rein in militancy have seen a drop in attacks this year, while recent Supreme Court rulings on blasphemy have encouraged moderates that the establishment is willing to take a stand against religious intolerance.

Emboldened Pakistanis are once again attending public gatherings, culminating in this year's Independence Day in August, which saw thousands attending celebrations in Karachi—where Taliban "no-go" areas have recently been liberated by police.

"It is extremely peaceful now," Mohammad Ameen, a 30-year-old mechanic from Karachi told AFP. "Before, everyone was worried, fearful... but now things have changed." Things began in earnest in June of last year when the army launched a long-awaited offensive against militants in the tribal areas of North Waziristan. And in December Islamabad unleashed the NAP amid a wave of outrage after Taliban militants massacred 154 people at a Peshawar school, most of them children.

Viral hastags

A six-year moratorium on the death penalty was lifted and the constitution was amended to allow military courts to try those accused of carrying out attacks. The combined results, so far, are persuasive: in 2013 there were 170 reported attacks killing 1,202 people, while in 2014 the figures stood at 110 reported attacks killing 644, according to an AFP tally.

The total number of blasts so far this year, however, has dropped to 36 with 211 dead. Gratitude towards the army has even spawned a viral hashtag lauding the powerful military chief, #ThankYouRaheelSharif. The crackdown has seemingly prompted several institutions to confront extremist elements openly—judicially and otherwise. Earlier this month, Pakistan's Supreme Court upheld the death sentence for Mumtaz Qadri, feted by Islamists after he murdered a politician who sought blasphemy law reform, in a judgement moderates hailed as a blow against religious extremism.

Blasphemy is a hugely sensitive issue in Pakistan, and courts previously judged such cases "in fear", said Zohra Yusuf, chairwoman of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. "Now they will decide these matters without any fear," she commented.

Prepared to die

Perhaps the most high-profile change under the NAP has been the resumption of executions, which has seen the state go on a hangings spree. Though official figures are not available, rights groups and an AFP tally estimate that more than 250 people have been executed since December. However critics question the efficacy of the hangings, with Amir Rana, a leading security analyst and columnist, estimating just 25 of those executed had actually been convicted of terror charges.

At any rate, recent research by the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS) suggests that death is no deterrent for militants. "Many of the extremist terrorists that the executions have seemingly been revived for are individuals who... are committed to dying for their cause," wrote the paper's author Najam U Din. Analysts have cited one area listed under the NAP's 20-point agenda where government action could have more impact: Pakistan's Islamic seminaries, or madrassas.

With little oversight of what was being taught to the children enrolled in them and accusations of foreign funding, fears grew after Peshawar that some were breeding grounds for intolerance—or even extremism. But, said security analyst Rana, little has been done. "The government lacks the courage to formulate a permanent strategy to bring religious seminaries under complete control," he said. "They fear that the religious groups will come out in streets and resist." In Peshawar, where the school massacre was Pakistan's worst ever terror attack, citizens are enjoying the effects of the crackdown, but remain cautious.

"I had stopped going to the mosque for prayers... as so many bombings were taking place. Now I feel safe and take family and kids to the park and picnic places on weekends," said marble stone dealer Javed Ali. "Since around 2014 the security situation has improved—but I cannot say it is ideal." — AFP

PM CALLS FOR WORLD-CLASS CITY IN SOUTHERN INDIA

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged authorities yesterday to build a modern, tech-savvy city, as he laid the foundation stone for the new capital of a state in southern India. Hundreds of thousands of locals and dignitaries attended the elaborate ceremony to kickstart the building of Amaravati, the new capital of Andhra Pradesh, on former farmland on the banks of a river.

The city is needed after Andhra Pradesh was last year carved in two, forming the new state of Telangana, after an

emotional campaign by locals stretching almost six decades. Hyderabad, an IT hub home to giants Google and Microsoft, will serve as the capital of both states for the next decade until Amaravati is completed.

Modi praised the state government for seeking outside help to design the city, after Singapore government agencies developed master plans. "Very few new cities have been formed in India since after our independence, so, sadly this idea still isn't discussed as much," Modi

said at the ceremony broadcast on national television.

"We should take urbanization as an opportunity and not a challenge for us. I hope that Amaravati becomes the leader in all aspects of smart, modern cities across India," he said as the crowd chanted the city's name. After coming to power in May 2014, Modi's government announced ambitious plans to develop 100 so-called "smart cities" in a country where rapid urbanization has left infrastructure struggling to cope.

Yesterday, soil and water collected from holy rivers, temples and mosques throughout India and from other countries was scattered on the site as prayers and other rituals were performed. Campaigners argued for years that Telangana was needed because the Telugu-speaking region in Andhra Pradesh had long been neglected by successive state governments. But other sections of Andhra Pradesh fiercely opposed the split, fearing it would trigger economic upheaval. — AFP

'WORST HAZE IN A DECADE' BLANKETS SOUTH THAILAND

BANGKOK: Dense haze from Indonesian forest fires has caused some of the worst pollution in southern Thailand for a decade, officials said yesterday, cancelling flights in an area popular with tourists. For nearly two months, thousands of fires caused by slash-and-burn farming have choked vast expanses of Southeast Asia, causing rates of respiratory illnesses to soar, schools to close and scores of flights and some international events to be cancelled.

Thailand usually avoids the worst effects of Indonesia's fires, which annually blight Malaysia and Singapore. But in recent weeks prevailing winds have brought the smog further north, stoking tensions and creating a headache for the country's vital tourism industry.

Thai officials yesterday said air quality had dipped to unhealthy levels in seven southern provinces, with particularly high readings in the southwestern province of Songkhla where some flights have been delayed or turned back. "It's considered a crisis. It's the worst in 10 years," Halem Jemarian, head of the Environment Office in Songkhla, told AFP by phone. "The key factor is the wind. It's strong at the hot spot origins but when it reaches Thailand the winds weaken so the haze stays around for longer," he added.

Cancelled flights

Late yesterday an official at Samui airport, who withheld her name, told AFP that "all flights had been cancelled since 10 am because of the haze". Earlier, transport officials said two flights from Bangkok to the tourist island had returned to base yesterday while a flight there from Singapore was diverted to Phuket. A flight to Songkhla's Hat Yai airport was also diverted on Wednesday evening. Southern Thailand boasts many pristine tropical beaches and is an especially popular tourism destination.

Earlier this month several planes packed with beach-bound tourists to Phuket and Koh Samui were forced to turn back because of haze levels. Thailand's Public Health Ministry said it had distributed 55,700 face-masks in the south with a further 40,000 on the way. In a statement the country's Pollution Control Department said it had "called for Indonesia to implement measures to reduce burning in order to mitigate haze".

Land is illegally cleared by burning in Indonesian tropical peatlands, which are rich in carbon but are being drained and cleared at a rapid rate to make way for agriculture—particularly fast-expanding palm oil plantations. While the loudest complaints have come from leaders in relatively affluent Singapore and Kuala Lumpur, it is poor Indonesian villagers who are suffering most. Pictures this week revealed a thick yellow haze smothering Palangkaraya in central Indonesia, with locals forced to go about their daily life regardless of the extreme health hazards. Experts warn the current outbreak of pollution is on track to become the worst ever, exacerbated by bone-dry conditions caused by the El Nino weather phenomenon. — AFP



SUMATRA: Indonesian men put out a fire in Ogan Ilir, southern Sumatra. — AFP



NEW DELHI: Indian policemen stand and wait for cyclists during a car-free day covered only a six-kilometer stretch. — AP

MAJOR ROAD IN POLLUTED CAPITAL BRIEFLY CAR-FREE GIVING CITIZENS A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

NEW DELHI: One of the world's most polluted capitals, New Delhi, closed a major stretch of a road to private cars for a few hours yesterday, hoping to give its citizens a brief breath of fresh air by observing a car-free day. Only public transport was allowed on the road from Old Delhi to the doorstep of Parliament.

The city's top elected official, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his cabinet colleagues, led hundreds of cyclists as they pedaled the route to encourage people to use public transport. "All of us have to do our bit to decongest the roads and to reduce pollution. People should leave their cars and start using public transport and bicycles," Kejriwal said as he prepared to lead the cyclists.

Although the event covered only a six-kilometer (4-mile) stretch, many people hailed the government's effort as a first step to clean the city's heavily polluted air.

"Even though it's only for a few hours, it's a very good start. We have to get people thinking about the harm air pollution is doing to our health," said Sunil Kumar, an environmental activist who cycled to the event.

Encourage people

Others said closing just one road for five hours would not make a dent in the heavy, particulate-ridden air in the capital. Delhi's Transport Minister Gopal Rai said the idea was change peoples' mindsets about using public transport. "We want to encourage people to use buses, the metro, rickshaws and other public transport so that pollution levels can be brought down in Delhi," Rai told reporters.

The sources of New Delhi's air pollution are numerous - from the burning of agricultural fields of neighboring farmland

states to the smoking factories and brick kilns on the city's outskirts. Another major cause is blamed on crude cooking stoves fueled by burning biomass, kerosene or cow dung in villages around Delhi. And car ownership is climbing rapidly in the country of 1.2 billion, up from 20 million in 1991 to 140 million in 2011. It is expected to reach 400 million by 2030.

There has been increasing evidence that the city's dirty air is also affecting health, making Indians more susceptible to heart disease and cancer that are caused or exacerbated by air pollution, with the World Health Organization saying air pollution kills more than 627,000 in India each year. Traffic was sparse in the rest of the city Thursday on account of the Hindu festival of Dussehra. Schools, colleges, businesses and government offices were closed and most people stayed home. — AP

ALL WORK, NO PLAY: MYANMAR'S CHILDREN SUPPORT ECONOMY WORST RECORDS FOR CHILD LABOR IN THE WORLD

YANGON: Twelve-year-old Myat Noe dashes between tables taking orders and sweeping up cigarette butts, working for around a dollar a day in Myanmar, which has one of the worst records for child labor in the world.

There are millions like Myat Noe—child workers are widely accepted in the former junta-ruled nation—who prop up everything from tea rooms to factories. But pressure is building for a change of attitude and law. Weeks away from the landmark November 8 election a coalition of campaign groups are seizing the opportunity for debate and urging lawmakers to provide universal, compulsory and free education within five years. Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy, is expected to make major gains in the election, and has identified education as the cornerstone in reducing poverty, but so far hasn't committed to this demand. A quick glance along Yangon's streets reveals there is some way to go. Street side tea shops—the busy jumbles of plastic tables and chairs usually patronized by chain-smoking men—are mostly staffed by children, some as young as seven-years-old.

"I come from the countryside and I have to help my parents, because they don't have enough money," Myat Noe—whose name has been changed to protect her identity—told AFP. Like many of the child workers in Yangon she comes from one of Myanmar's poor ethnic minority groups and has worked for around a dollar a day since she was nine.

Child workers often toil 14 hours a day, seven days a week, sleeping in large dormitories with other children or on makeshift beds made from the plastic tables which they wait on by day. There is no time for school let alone play, condemning most child workers to a lifetime of manual labor and poverty.

Poverty trap

According to data from the 2014 census, Myat Noe is one of an estimated 4.4 million under-18s who do not attend school in Myanmar. The impoverished country is the world's seventh worst for child labor, according to risk analysts Verisk Maplecroft, just ahead of India and Liberia. The rates look set to rise as the economy booms four years after opening up to the world, with new hotels, cafes and factories providing jobs to willing workers, irrespective of age.

A tangle of labor laws do not ban children from work, says Piyamal Pichaiwongse of the International Labor Organization (ILO) in Yangon. "There's nothing clear on the age at which you can start work and the laws are not applied," she says.

In 2013, Myanmar joined an ILO convention which outlaws the worst forms of child labor such as forced work, including in the army or sex industry. The government says it wants to address the situation but until a binding law is crafted, children will remain ever-present in the workforce. "As parents are poor, they send their kids to tea shops to make money," Win Shein, of Myanmar's labor ministry, told AFP.

Desperate to learn

In an attempt to reach working children, several organizations provide free schooling on the job. Three nights a week for the last six months, 15-year-old Naing Lin Aung has attended class after a full day working the teashop tables. "I don't know what will happen to me in the future so I want to learn some English, some computer skills, some knowledge of health in case I get sick," he said, his eyes red with fatigue.

The Myanmar Mobile Education project (myME), teaches 600 children in Yangon and Mandalay, holding classes inside teashops after closing time. For youngsters working at 24-hour establishments they run an improvised classroom in a converted minibus parked up outside. Some attend for basic literacy and mathematics while those with a bit of schooling under their belt want to improve their English and computer skills. Teaching over-worked youngsters is no easy task. "Most of the children work all day long so sometimes they can't focus on the lessons. It's a challenge," teacher Thaw Wai Htoo told AFP. — AFP



YANGON: In this picture taken on October 21, 2015, Saw Paing Htway, 11, works in a teashop on the outskirts of Yangon. —AFP

TRAUMATIC FAREWELL FOR KOREAN FAMILIES

SEOUL: North and South Korean families were forced to say a final, traumatic farewell yesterday after meeting for the first time in more than 60 years, as the joy of temporary reunion gave way to the pain of permanent separation. On the third and last day of their all-too brief, emotionally charged reunion in a North Korean mountain resort, the families were given two hours in the morning to say their last goodbyes. It was perhaps the most fraught part of the entire event, with relatives on both sides—especially those in their 70s, 80s or even 90s—all too aware that this was likely the last time they would ever see each other.

"Be healthy. Live long," 85-year-old Lee Soon-Kyu told the North Korean husband she had met for the first time since they were separated at the outbreak of 1950-53 Korean War when she was just 19 years old. "Let's meet again in the next life," he replied. Some spent their last minutes together simply clinging to each other, while others sought to put on a brave face, holding hands and wiping away tears as they sat at numbered tables in the resort's main banquet area.

Tears 'keep coming'

"My eyes are all puffy because I cried so much last night," said Ri Hong-Jong, 88, as he said goodbye to his South Korean daughter. "Even this morning... the tears just keep coming," he said. TV footage from the resort showed one elderly North Korean woman trying to keep the mood on her table upbeat, challenging everyone to an arm wrestle to show off her physical health.

But then the North Koreans boarded buses to take them home, prompting desperate final scenes as they pressed their hands and faces to the windows, trying to maintain eye contact with their weeping South Korean relatives outside as the vehicles moved away. It was only the second reunion to be held in the past five years, and interaction was tightly controlled—limited to six, two-hour sessions, including meetings in a communal hall and private one-on-one time without TV cameras.

For the nearly 400 South Koreans and their 140 relatives taking part, the 12 hours of total face time was heartbreakingly short after more

than six decades of separation caused by the 1950-53 Korean War. "It would have been wonderful if we could have talked and slept in the same room, instead of just meeting on and off," said 70-year-old Han Sun-Kyu who was meeting his North Korean aunt.

The lucky few

For all the restrictions, the participants were the lucky ones, chosen from among the tens of thousands on waiting lists for a rare reunion spot. Millions of people were displaced by the sweep of the Korean conflict, which separated brothers and sisters, parents and children, husbands and wives. Among the South Korean generation that actually experienced the division, the vast majority died without ever having any contact with their relatives in the North—and, in many cases, without knowing if they were even alive.

With the mortality rate of reunion candidates increasing with every passing year, many accept they may never be selected and have resorted

instead to taping video messages—and providing DNA samples—that might allow for some posthumous contact in the future. The reunion program began in earnest after a historic North-South summit in 2000, and the demographic profile of those taking part has shifted significantly in the intervening 15 years. This time around there were only five families in which spouses or parents and children were reunited—compared to 23 back in 2010.

At a communal dinner on Wednesday evening, Lee Jeong-Sook, 68, asked her North Korean father, 88-year-old Ri Hong-Jong, to sing a song so that she would remember his voice. He responded with a popular song about the river close to his hometown in the South, prompting everyone else at their table to burst into tears. Details of the meetings came from pool reports provided by travelling South Korean media. The departure from the resort marked the end of the first stage of the six-day reunion with another group of families from both sides scheduled to meet from Saturday to Tuesday. — AFP

KILLINGS HAVE DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY: PHILIPPINES

MANILA: Two Chinese diplomats being held over a gun attack in the Philippines that killed two colleagues have diplomatic immunity and will be sent back to China, the Philippine government said yesterday.

China's consul general in the central city of Cebu survived after being shot in the neck, but two of his staff members died during the lunchtime attack in a private room of a restaurant on Wednesday, police said. Police detained a husband and wife who were at the lunch and foreign ministry spokesman Charles Jose said yesterday they were both accredited Chinese diplomats.

"Custody will be given to the Chinese side and they will undergo legal process in China," Jose told reporters. Jose said

China had already invoked diplomatic immunity, as its right under the United Nations' Vienna Convention.

However the positions held by the two suspects at the consulate remained unclear. In a statement released before briefing reporters, Jose said those involved in the shooting were "all members" of the Chinese consulate in Cebu. But the statement then said: "The shooting was an extreme act of a relative of a staff of the consulate general."

Police had earlier said the woman arrested was a consular officer and the man was her husband. But in his comments to reporters, Jose did not clarify their positions or identities, and said authorities still did not know why the shootings took place.—AFP

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Lifestyle

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Nigeria's Nollywood: Seeking worldwide appeal

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Lebanese born Spanish violinist Ara Malikian plays for the press in Madrid yesterday during a promotional event following his Latin Grammy Awards nomination. AFP





Kunle Afolayan (third right), Nigerian director of the movie 'The CEO', watches on a screen a scene shot in a studio nearby in Lagos. — AFP photos



Nigerian actress Hilda Dokubo (second right) and Nigerian actor Wole Ojo (third right) talk with the chief operator on the shooting of the movie 'The CEO'.

Nigeria's Nollywood: Seeking worldwide appeal

The camera rolls from left to right on a dolly as the actors, all African, go through their lines, a sound operator holding a boom steady over their heads under bright studio lights. It could be a scene from any film set but Kunle Afolayan hopes "The CEO" could drive change in Nigeria's hugely popular and prolific movie industry, Nollywood. "CEO represents Africa as a continent," said the 41-year-old during a break from filming at a luxury resort outside the financial capital, Lagos. "By virtue of the kind of story, the actors, the team and every element of the film to a large extent, embraces who we are as Africans," he told AFP.

The film's plot is about a telecoms firm looking to replace its boss. Five members of the company's management are dispatched across Africa to find the best candidate. Cast members include Benin's Grammy award-winning singer Angelique Kidjo, as well as actors from South Africa, Kenya, Ivory Coast and Morocco. "It's a fairly great mix and I think it's a mix that's like Kunle himself," said Moroccan television and film actress Fatym Layachi. "(He's) a totally Nigerian director in the sense he's proud of being Nigerian and proud of his culture... and at the same time he's part of something completely universal."

Corporate backing

With a budget of more than \$1 million (880,000 euros), "The CEO" is a far cry from the shoestring productions that characterize the bulk of Nollywood's output. Some cost as little as \$25,000 to make a fraction of the \$250 million average in Hollywood-and can be turned around within a month from filming to sale. Afolayan has secured financial backing from Air France in a first for the French carrier, which is banking on his reputation to drive up its brand

in Nigeria. The company has provided tickets for shooting to take place in Kenya, South Africa and even at Paris' main airport, Charles De Gaulle.

Better financing, it is hoped, will change Nollywood's image of poorly made films with wobbly cameras, poor sound and often rudimentary editing. His ambition fits into a wider context of a greater role for Nollywood in Nigeria's economy and recognition of its value for the country. In April last year, Nollywood was included in Nigeria's economic data for the first time-a sign of its growing power and influence. The film industry was estimated to be worth 859.9 billion naira (\$4.3 billion, 3.8 billion euros) or 1.2 percent of GDP. With an average of 2,000 films produced every year, Nollywood, which developed out of the digital boom of the 1990s, is one of the biggest cinema industries in the world. That puts it in the same bracket as movie-mad India, although revenues-thought to be about \$590 million a year-are considerably less.

Production values

In 2013, the United Nations estimated that Nollywood, which releases about 50 films a week, employed some one million people and could create one million more jobs if properly run. Many of the movies tackle social and cultural problems-corruption, drugs, love triangles-and rely heavily on melodrama. Most are sold as DVDs at the roadside, either at market stalls, from wheelbarrows or by hawkers at traffic lights. Online distribution has started through Internet platforms such as iROKOtv and via cable and satellite television, expanding their audience and appeal across Africa.—AFP



Kunle Afolayan (center), Nigerian director of the movie 'The CEO', talks with technicians at the set of the film.



Nigerian actor Wole Ojo and Moroccan actress Fatym Layachi play during the shooting of the movie "The CEO".

Filipino director **Mendoza** honored at Tokyo film festival



Director Brillante Mendoza

Filipino director Brillante Mendoza, taking center stage at the Tokyo International Film Festival, is pursuing a collaboration with other Asian filmmakers - a cultural connection that might be as simple as rice. The festival, which opened Thursday with red carpet ceremonies, features five films directed by Mendoza, including his latest "Taklub," shown earlier this year at Cannes. Two Filipino films he has produced are also being shown. Mendoza has already started preliminary discussions with Isao Yukisada of Japan and Cambodian Sotho Kulikar for a film to be shown at next year's Tokyo festival.

The prevalence and deeper meaning of cooking and family meals in Asian life - and in Asian

films - has already come up as one commonality, he said. "We would like to maximize the connection," Mendoza said in an interview at a Tokyo hotel. The festival's opening film is "The Walk," about French tightrope daredevil Philippe Petit, directed by Robert Zemeckis, who is among the 400 people attending the opening. Hillary Swank, who portrays a woman with a fatal illness in "You're Not You," and Helen Mirren, of "Woman in Gold," also walked the red carpet for the festival, which closes Oct. 31.

Mendoza, who has won awards at Cannes, Berlin and Venice, is a rare but powerful voice of independent cinema in a region dominated by sappy melodrama and Hollywood. His films are

poetically dark, following prostitutes, midwives and poor mothers in back alleys of a slum, spiraling staircases and typhoon-torn beaches. The sometimes shaky hand of his camera gives it a voyeur feel, disguising the certainty of his storytelling. His characters endure hardships - a devastating typhoon in one, the heartbreaking death of a child in another - often shot in the gorgeous landscapes of the Philippines. The plot is never a simplistic pitting of good versus bad, as in many Hollywood action films.—AP



Robert Kyncl, YouTube Chief Business Officer, speaks as YouTube unveils 'YouTube Red,' a new subscription service, at YouTube Space LA Wednesday in Los Angeles. — AP

YouTube to launch \$10-a-month ad-free video, music plan Red

YouTube on Wednesday unveiled a new \$10-a-month subscription plan in the US called Red that combines ad-free videos, new original series, movies from top YouTubers, and on-demand unlimited streaming music. Red builds on Google's existing music streaming service by providing ad-free access to YouTube programming, along with features such as the ability to download videos to mobile devices and have music playing in the background while using other mobile apps. Current subscribers to the Google Play Music service, which also costs \$10 a month, will also get access to Red.

"It's a major, major evolution of our platform," YouTube's chief business officer, Robert Kyncl, told journalists at an event at its studio space in Los Angeles. Red targets YouTube fans who want to skip ads, while giving them a chance to pass along some cash to their favorite video creators, who'll share in the new revenues. It comes as streaming services like Hulu, Pandora, Spotify and Tunes offer ad-free as a paid option. The plan, which launches Oct. 28, includes exclusive access to new videos launching next year as well as the YouTube Music Key service - to be called YouTube Music after it launches later this year - for music videos and songs.

New service

The original videos will range in length from a few minutes to feature-length movies and

come from established YouTube stars such as the Fine Brothers, who are creating a scripted 10-episode series about a singing competition show called "Sing It" and a reality series co-created by the makers of "The Walking Dead" called "Scare PewDiePie." A subscription will eliminate ads from all YouTube services across devices and platforms except for the YouTube Kids app, which is operated separately. Performer and comedian Lilly Singh said that while YouTube helped pay for the creation of a documentary of her world tour called "A Trip to Unicorn Island," the new service won't drastically change how she serves her fans.

"Is YouTube Red going to be the extreme make of my financial career? No," she said. "But that's not why I'm doing it. I'm doing it to give my viewers choice." YouTube still intends for advertising revenue to remain its core business, and executives say they believe it could take a while for paid subscribers to grow significantly. Some original content will also be made available to non-subscribers later with ads. Kyncl said the subscription will bolster YouTube's revenues and that of artists. He said YouTube's advertising revenues will not be hurt, given that the number of users switching to the new service won't likely make a dent in YouTube's billion-plus users.—AP

Bieber to perform at MTV European Music Awards

Justin Bieber will perform at the 2015 MTV European Music Awards on Sunday, MTV has announced. Bieber's performance from his highly-anticipated new album, "Purpose," will be part of the November 13 worldwide release of his highly-anticipated new album, "Purpose." "I'm excited to share this performance and this new material with my fans around the world. The EMAs are always a blast. I'm glad to be back and it's going to be fun," Bieber enthused on his Facebook page. Pop star Charli XCX, UK rapper Tinie Tempah and model Hailey Baldwin will present the awards while Ed Sheeran and Ruby Rose will be co-hosting.

Voting for all award categories is open on mtvema.com through 24 October at 11:59pm CET. The top notch talent list includes Pharrell Williams, Ed Sheeran & Rudimental, Ellie Goulding, Jason Derulo, twenty one pilots, Martin Garrix, Afrojack, Tori Kelly, James Bay, Jess Glynne, Macklemore & Ryan Lewis and Andrea Bocelli as performers. — Reuters



Justin Bieber

Adele reflects on adulthood with new album '25'

Adele, whose separation ballad "Someone Like You" was an international blockbuster, has announced that her next album will be entitled "25" and examine life on the cusp of adulthood. Revealing details of the long-awaited follow-up, the English singer said that her 25th birthday marked a turning point.

"My last record was a break-up record and if I had to label this one, I would call it a make-up record," she wrote in a letter to fans posted on her social media accounts yesterday.

"I'm making up with myself. Making up for lost time. Making up for everything I ever did and never did," she wrote. Adele—who is now 27 — said that turning 25 was "about getting to know who I've become without realizing." "Teetering on the edge of being an old adolescent and a fully-fledged adult, I made the decision to go into becoming who I'm going to be forever without a removal van full of my old junk," Adele wrote. Referring to the wait since her last album in 2011, she wrote: "I'm sorry it took so long, but you know, life happened." Adele did not reveal a release date for "25," amid industry speculation she will put it out in time for holiday shoppers at the end of the year.—AFP



This file photo shows singer Adele as she arrives on the red carpet for the 55th Grammy Awards in Los Angeles, California. — AFP

Underwood has 'mom guilt' about work-life balance



Photo shows Carrie Underwood poses for a portrait at Sony Music Nashville in Nashville, Tenn to promote her latest album.—AP

Carrie Underwood is pure poise on the red carpet, on stage and on TV - but she's finding it hard to strike a balance these days, she says. "I think mom guilt is rampant in my life," said Underwood, whose son Isaiah was born in February. "I am sure it is in any mom's... I still constantly wonder, 'Is this fair to him? Is my life fair to him?'" Underwood, whose new album, "Storyteller," is out on Oct 23, knows the exhaustion that comes after being up with a fussy baby all night during album launch week, or the remorse in bidding him goodbye in the morning and knowing she'll be working long after his bedtime.

As she sings in "Smoke Break," an ode to the working class that is now in the Top 5 on Billboard's Hot Country Songs chart, it's hard to be a good wife, a good mom and a

Christian. "He's my No. 1 priority," Underwood said. "But it's just a question of how am I going to do this?... I'll probably never find the answers to those questions." When she was pregnant and writing songs for "Storyteller," she initially wasn't ready to sing about the joys of motherhood.

"I would have writing dates with people and they would come in and push me in that direction," Underwood said. "And I was like, 'Eh, no.' I do not want to write an album of mushy baby songs. Or mommy songs. That is not me." But she did co-write "What I Never Knew I Always Wanted," a reflection on the realization that motherhood filled a hole she never knew she had. "I think it had to be my doing to come in with the idea, or I would have resisted forever," Underwood said. "But it ended up being very personal

and I think perfect for the album." That's just one way that Underwood avoided doing what was expected for her fifth studio album. She worked with a new producer, Jay Joyce, along with her regular producers Mark Bright and Zach Crowell. Joyce, who won a CMA Award for producing Eric Church's album "Chief" and is nominated this year for Little Big Town's "Painkiller," brought a dark, rock edge to the album. "There's definitely some twang on the album," Underwood said. "That almost makes it super fresh compared to a lot of what is out there right now. It's not old, not old country, but it's more traditional."—AP



The hat from worn by actor Sylvester Stallone in the film 'Cop Land' is displayed during a press preview of Heritage Auctions upcoming auction of memorabilia from Stallon's films, at the Fletcher-Sinclair Mansion in New York. — AFP photos



Boxing robes from the Sylvester Stallone film 'Rocky IV'.

Stallone puts 'Rocky' and 'Rambo' props up for sale

Costumes and props worn by Hollywood star Sylvester Stallone in the box-office smash hit "Rocky" and Rambo" movies went on public view in New York Tuesday before being offered for auction. Die-hard fans with deep pockets can snap up more than a thousand pieces of Stallone memorabilia at auction in Los Angeles in December, which will help benefit veterans charities. The top valued items are Rocky Balboa's boxing gloves and championship belt from "Rocky II," and could each fetch a whopping \$500,000, according to Heritage Auctions.

Other highlights are the character's leather jacket from "Rocky"—the 1976 film that won three Oscars and propelled Stallone to international stardom and his white robe from "Rocky IV." Also on sale is Stallone's handwritten script for "Rocky," his character John Rambo's army jacket from "First Blood" and a "Judge Dredd" costume including helmet, boots and shoulder armor. Top lots from the sale will remain on view in New York until Wednesday, before being offered for sale from December 18-20 in Los Angeles, Heritage Auctions announced.

The New York-born Stallone is an Academy-award nominated actor best known for his tough guy roles in the "Rocky" and "Rambo" franchises. The 69-year-old is also a director and screenwriter. "I thought other people would really appreciate them. So, rather than keep them in the dark (in storage) and just forget about them, I thought, let me just pass them on," he told Heritage. Fans can also bid on Rocky's "Eye of the Tiger" jacket worn in "Rocky II," the motorcycle he rode in "Rocky III" and "Rocky V" and items from his more recent "The Expendables" movies. Greg Rohan, president of Heritage Auctions, said Stallone was an "international superstar." "These items include some of the iconic, cultural symbols of clothing and props from his most famous and loved action films," he said.—AFP



The black leather jacket worn by actor Sylvester Stallone in 'Rocky II'.



The Championship Belt and gloves from the Sylvester Stallone films 'Rocky II & Rocky III'.



The knife used by actor Sylvester Stallone in the film 'Rambo the Mission'.



A hat worn by Sylvester Stallone in the film 'Rocky IV'.



A pair of boxing trunks from the Sylvester Stallone movie 'Rocky 3'.



The iconic hat and costume worn by actor Carl Weathers in the film 'Rocky IV'.



A pair of shoes and sweat suit worn by actor Sylvester Stallone in the film 'Rocky VI'.



A picture shows the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana (Great House of Italian Civilization) also named 'Square Colosseum' where Fashion house Fendi has inaugurated its new headquarters which house 500 employees and a free art exhibition on the ground floor yesterday in the EUR area in Rome. — AFP photos



A picture shows mannequins dressed with Fendi fur coats at the Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana (Great House of Italian Civilisation).

Fashion firm puts Rome's 'Square Colosseum' to work

A boxy monument to Italy's Fascist era is filling with workers for the first time in its 70-year history as fashion brand Fendi opens its new headquarters at the restored "Square Colosseum". The travertine structure, formally known as the "Great House of Italian Civilisation" or the "Great House of the Civilisation of Work", was built by dictator Benito Mussolini for a planned world's fair in 1942 that was cancelled due to the outbreak of World War Two.

Abandoned and little used since then, the rationalist imitation of the ancient Colosseum amphitheatre now houses 500 Fendi

employees and a free art exhibition on the ground floor. "We are opening the doors of a building that for 72 years has been closed to the world and hiding its beauty," Fendi chief Pietro Beccari said at a preview of the exhibition. In a hushed, white-walled workshop on the lowest of seven storeys that loom over the so-called EUR business district south of Rome that was Mussolini's great project, Fendi's employees measure and trim pieces of fur.

The company has agreed a 15-year lease, after speculation that it could buy the building outright from the cash-strapped state-controlled owner of the district. Beccari said he thought the Italian

government would be happy to have as its tenant a company that has already paid to restore the Trevi Fountain and the Four Fountains monument in central Rome. Fendi has not said how much it cost to convert the fascist-era building into office space, or the price of leasing it, but Italian media have reported the annual rent to be around 3 million euros (\$3.36 million). — Reuters

Sao Paulo Fashion Week



Models present creations by Samuel Cirnansck during the 2016 Winter collection of the Sao Paulo Fashion Week in Sao Paulo, Brazil. — AP/AFP photos



Lighten up with *Brussel sprouts*

By Melissa D'arabian

When did Brussels sprouts go from healthy food our moms couldn't get us to choke down to trendy gastropub fare? Answer - the instant someone realized that the tender little sprouts could be fried in grease. While the Brussels sprout is incredibly nutritious - as one might expect from the world's cutest little cabbage. I've created a lightened version of the favorite that got my kids (and husband) excited about the vegetable in the first place. And they loved it. And I'm calling this one a true victory, because they are not an easy Brussels sprouts crowd.

The secret is three-fold. First, to get a crispy texture without frying, I roast the sprouts at high heat. I also heat the baking sheet before putting the sprouts on it so they sizzle when they touch it. That's where the great texture is coming from. Finally, I use a hefty dose of smoked paprika.

LIGHTENED UP BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Ingredients

Start to finish: 30 minutes

Servings: 6

1 pound Brussels sprouts

2 teaspoons olive oil

1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika, divided

Salt and ground black pepper

2 large shallots, thinly sliced

1 Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored and cut into 1/2-inch cubes

3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

Preparation

Heat the oven to 425 F. Set a rimmed baking sheet in the oven to heat. Cut the sprouts into quarters, then place them in a medi-

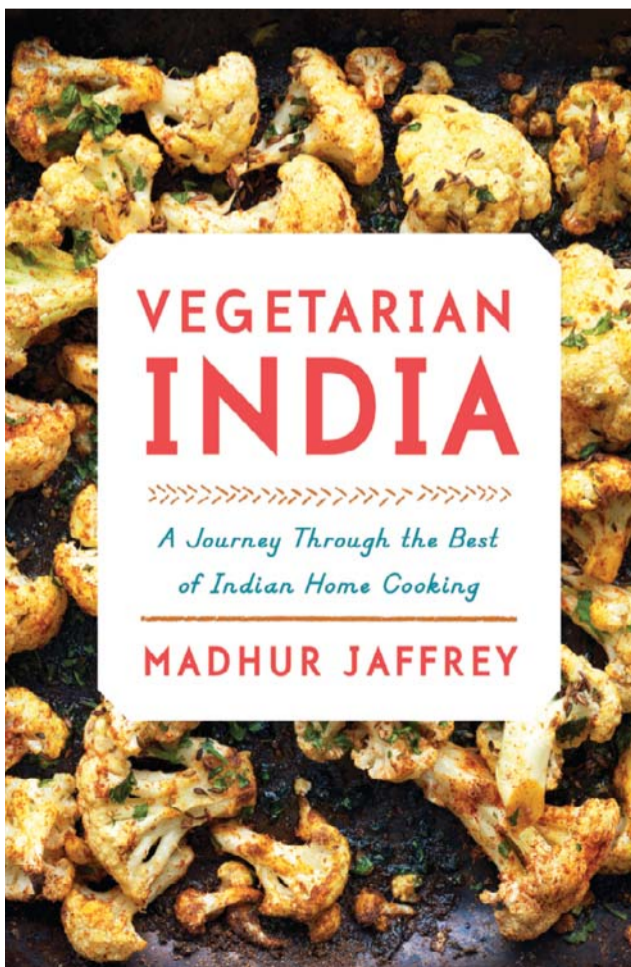
um bowl. Toss with the oil, half of the smoked paprika, and generous pinches of salt and pepper. Remove the hot baking sheet from oven and line with kitchen parchment (be careful!). Scatter the sprouts on hot pan, then roast until tender on the inside and crispy dark golden brown on the outside, 13 to 15 minutes, turning halfway through.

Meanwhile, in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the shallots, apple and remaining smoked paprika, then cook for another 5 minutes, or until soft. Increase the heat to high, then add the vinegar and 1 tablespoon of water. Stir to deglaze the pan (don't have your face too close to the pan or you will inhale quite an intense whiff of vinegar). Add the roasted Brussels sprouts to the skillet and stir to coat. Transfer to a serving dish.





Madhur Jaffrey's Berry Pilaf



Madhur Jaffrey is known to Americans - when she is known at all - as an author of Indian cookbooks. And with good reason: she has written more than two dozen of them.

But that's just the start. The woman often called "the Julia Child of Indian cookery" was born in Delhi, India, and came to the United States in the late 1950s, eventually landing among the New York glitterati. She started her career as an actress - something she continues to do - but soon found herself deeply rooted in the world of food. She has hosted cooking shows both here and in Britain, and helped launch the renowned New York Indian restaurant Dawat. Now 82, her newest book, "Vegetarian India: A Journey Through the Best of Indian Home Cooking," will be released late October.

BERRY PILAF

"The restaurant where this pilaf is served has been in existence since 1923. It is a Bombay landmark," Madhur Jaffrey writes in her new cookbook, "Vegetarian India." "The berry used here is the tiny Iranian barberry, or zareshk, sold by Indian and Persian grocers. If you cannot find it, use dried cranberries. The final flavors are sweet and sour."

Ingredients

Start to finish: 4 hours (30 minutes active)
 Servings: 6
 2 cups basmati rice
 1 teaspoon saffron threads
 3 tablespoons sugar, divided
 3 tablespoons very hot milk
 About 1/2 cup barberries or dried cranberries
 3 tablespoons olive or peanut oil
 1 large yellow onion, peeled and halved lengthwise, then sliced into fine half rings
 1 1/2 tablespoons kosher salt
 5 cardamom pods
 2 1/2-inch cinnamon stick

1 bay leaf
 3 cloves
 3 tablespoons butter, melted

Preparation

Wash the rice in several changes of water. Put in a bowl, cover generously with water, then set aside to soak for 3 hours. Meanwhile, in a mortar and pestle, combine the saffron and 1 tablespoon of the sugar. Pound together to create a fine powder. Transfer to a small bowl, then stir in the hot milk. Set aside for 3 hours. Toward the end of the 3 hours, rinse the berries several times, then leave to soak in water for 20 minutes. Drain and pat dry.

In a medium skillet over medium-high, heat the oil. When the oil is hot, add the onion and cook for 5 minutes, or until they start to brown. Reduce the heat to medium-low and continue to cook until they are reddish brown. Add the drained berries and the remaining 2 tablespoons sugar. Stir once or twice, then remove from the heat.

Heat the oven to 325 F. Bring about 10 cups of water to a boil. Add the salt, cardamom pods, cinnamon stick, bay leaf and cloves. Stir once, then add the rice. Let it cook in the boiling water for about 5 minutes, or until it is three-quarters cooked but still has a thin, hard core. Drain in a colander.

Working quickly now, spread 1 tablespoon of the melted butter in a medium baking dish. Spread half the rice over it. Spread another tablespoon of the butter, plus half the saffron mixture and half the onion-berry mixture and some of its oil on top of the rice. Spread the remaining rice on top of the first layer. Pour the remaining tablespoon of butter over it, followed by the remaining saffron mixture and onion-berry mixture. Cover tightly with foil and a lid and bake in the oven for 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and let sit undisturbed for 10 minutes. Toss the rice gently to mix before serving.

(Recipe adapted from Madhur Jaffrey's "Vegetarian India," Knopf, 2015)

Movies

A small taste of Japan

By Aakash Bakaya

One of my favourite characteristics about film as an art form is the ability to completely engross you into another world. When the lights go dim in a cinema, and the only thing you see is the massive screen in front of you - it's difficult not to feel completely engulfed sensually for the next few hours. And like all great cinema experiences, the recent Japan Film Festival in Kuwait transported the audience into a culture and the lives of its people that is wholly unique.

The Japan Film Festival was organized by



Ambassador Toshihoro Tsujihara

the Embassy of Japan with the cooperation of Kuwait National Cinema Company and was the seventh edition of the festival. It was held at Laila Tower in Salmiya and the small single screen theatre (quite rare in Kuwait nowadays) really enhanced the intimate feel of the event. The outgoing Ambassador to Japan, Toshihoro Tsujihara opened proceedings with a short speech. He was humble in his appreciation for the sizable crowd that showed up and detailed the themes for the festival which revolved around the various inter-relationships between Japanese parents and their children and loved ones as well as the power of memories and their ability to affect our actions in the future.

Even though they were extremely small-time independent movies, the opening two films summed up these themes almost perfectly. The opening pair of films were 'My Pretend Girlfriend' by Saiji Yakumo and 'Be Sure To Share' by Sion Sono. Both films captured such an intimate look at these every-

day characters, you felt almost ashamed at invading their privacy. If the goal of the organizers was to showcase films that captured the very soul of the everyday Japanese person or family, they succeeded tremendously.

A look at the films

'My Pretend Girlfriend' is a quirky, simple and sometimes dramatic romantic comedy that like the description itself, is not easy to pin down. The story, told as a flashback, revolves around high school student Aihara, a strange loner type and his popular friend Shun Miyazaki. After meeting two girls Momose and Tetsuko, Miyazaki plans out a scheme that will help keep his deceptions hidden from both his girlfriends. The plan - convince Aihara to pretend to date Momose, a small town girl from school while he continues to date Tetsuko, the high school sweet heart in the open.

The romance is there but like the title alludes to - is all pretend. The characters are seemingly funny and nonchalant but all of them seem to be hiding a vulnerable and hurt person that is crying to come out. The characters were surprisingly complex and deep, and this made them all the more human. The story captures the dramatic,



world-encompassing feel of high school love and even though all the characters don't come across as likeable, they all seem very relatable.

The second film 'Be Sure To Share' was a little stranger and a little more ponderous but still captured a rarely seen look at Japanese life. As the earlier film dealt with high school love, this story was on a more serious subject - cancer. The film is about a son dealing with his father's cancer and how through time, grew to appreciate and understand his father's strictness and code of conduct. A deeply personal story (the director



OCTOBER 20th & 21st FILM FESTIVAL

dedicated the film to his own father who died of cancer) sprinkled with flashbacks and memories throughout, the film captures the difficult relationships parents have with their maturing children. Sadly, even though the first two-thirds of the film hold up, the last act borders on parody and seems pretty aimless by the end.

Arigato sayonara

After the screenings, I was happy to see the organizers interact with the attendees and even give out a small questionnaire for feedback. Talking to the organizers, I was curious to find out their own view points on Japanese films and how they plan to continue promoting Japanese culture in Kuwait. Dana Zibar, the cultural assistant from the Japanese Embassy and a big fan of Japanese films herself was quick to point out its wide influences.

She said "the Japan film industry is famous for its uniqueness and style.

Till today, it is highly regarded in the world of cinema, most popularly in the horror genre. Many famous horror films like 'The

Ring' and 'The Grudge' were remakes of the original Japanese versions."

I asked her to recommend some Japanese films to check out for those interested in the industry and she suggested to watch 'Rurouni Kenshin', 'High School Debut', 'Bokuragaita (We Were There)' and 'Kimitodoke (From Me To You)'. Regarding upcoming events, they are planning to host a book fair and an art gallery, so keep an eye on that.

The fact that the entry was absolutely free was amazing as it took a lot of time and trouble to not only get permission to screen these films, but to host these cultural events in the first place. The festival and most importantly the films were a thoroughly rewarding experience, one I would love to see more of them in Kuwait.

(Note: The festival screened two more movies on Wednesday night, they were 'The Place Promised In Our Early Days' by Shinkai Makoto and 'Wanko: The Story of Me, My Family and My Dog' by Isamu Nakae. Unfortunately I was unable to attend the screenings.)





Rabbit Proof Fence



Gallipoli

9 great movies

that will also make you smarter

From gaining an insight into some of the world's most influential people to learning economic theories, here are 9 movies that can broaden your horizons.

We've all heard the saying "hit the books" to learn what you need to know about history, science, mathematics and pop culture. But what about let's go to the movies? There's a lot you can learn from a great film - knowledge to bring out at a dinner party to impress friends, on a date or just make you that little bit more informed.

1. Gandhi (1982)

This biographical drama is about the life of pacifist, political leader and amazing mind Mohandas Gandhi (played by Ben Kingsley) who led his country peacefully towards independence from English rule after World War II. He also won some rights for Indians in South Africa. It's an Oscar-winning movie directed by Richard Attenborough to teach you about Gandhi's life and philosophies.

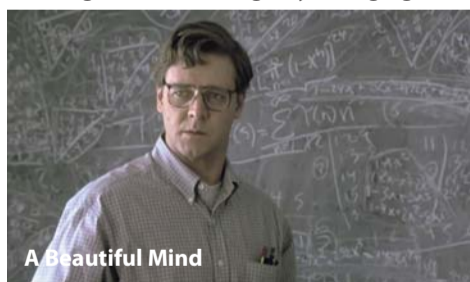


Gandhi

to face his personal demons through counseling, teaching important mathematical and life lessons.

2. A Beautiful Mind (2001)

The movie about mathematician Dr John Forbes Nash Jr's life. It focuses on his discovery the Nash Equilibrium (an economic theory involving multiple players where no one player can gain an advantage by changing their



A Beautiful Mind

strategy, if the others' strategies remain the same). Clear? No? Then you need to watch this movie! A Beautiful Mind also explores Dr Nash's struggles with, and ongoing recovery from, mental health issues (schizophrenia) and being awarded the Nobel Memorial Prize for Economics in 1994.

3. Good Will Hunting (1997)

When Will Hunting solves an impossible mathematical equation left on a blackboard at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (where he works as a janitor), a professor discovers the troubled young man's genius. Will, played by Matt Damon, and friends including Chuckie (Ben Affleck), get into trouble with the police and as a consequence Will is forced

4. Cry Freedom (1988)

Along with Nelson Mandela, Steven Biko was an extremely important figure in South Africa's anti-apartheid movement in the 1970s. This movie features the relationship between Biko and newspaper editor Donald Woods. A young Denzel Washington and



Cry Freedom

Kevin Kline play the lead characters and the movie shows the hardships and racism rife in South Africa at that time. See also Mandela:

5. The Theory of Everything (2014)

This movie covers it all - from physics to what happened to world-famous cosmologist Stephen Hawking before and after his diagnosis with motor neurone disease. You'll learn about one of the most brilliant modern minds through this inspirational movie.

6. Rabbit Proof Fence (2002)

The story of three Aboriginal girls who are forcibly taken from their families in 1931 and sent to be trained as domestic servants at a "native settlement". The movie focuses on the Australian government's policy at the time (which removed "half-caste" Aboriginals from their homes) and the girls' 2400km journey home following the rabbit proof fence. The movie deals with issues facing Australia's 'Stolen Generation' and the tragedy many children faced.

7. Dances With Wolves (1990)

Starring (and directed by) Kevin Costner, the movie was selected for preservation by

the American Library of Congress because of its "cultural, historical and/or aesthetic significance". That's because it shows the life and culture of the Sioux people and of a lone Civil War Union soldier who asks to be posted to the western frontier after surviving battle. He builds a friendship with the Sioux and the movie has a lot to teach about Native American culture.

8. Gallipoli (1981)

A classic Peter Weir movie which follows the lives of Archy Hamilton and Frank Young, competitive sprinters who (despite being too young) sign up to serve with the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps during World War I. They end up in Gallipoli using their speed as messengers for the officers. This movie shows life on the front line and teaches about a significant time in Australia (and New Zealand's) history.

9. Ex Machina (2015)

Eerily close to reality, Ex Machina explores the dilemmas surrounding the relationships between humans and machines i.e. artificial intelligence (AI). Such dilemmas face main character (and computer programmer) Caleb who wins an opportunity to stay for a week with his genius boss Nathan in his hi-tech mansion. Caleb learns that Nathan has invented an advanced AI - an artificial woman named Ava - and is asked to take part in a Turing Test. (A Turing Test determines how human-like a machine can behave). Creepy things ensue. The take-home lesson from this movie? Never trust a beautiful machine! (www.thenewdaily.com)



Ex Machina



Friday Times



Best places to travel
this November



Choose to travel in November and you're in for a treat - this penultimate month is packed with quirky festivals, sporting events and wondrous wildlife-spotting opportunities. Don your cowboy boots and indulge in a little gaucho culture in Argentina; stand in awe of nature's marvels in autumnal Japan and eastern Zambia; be dazzled by distinctive but equally colorful cultures in Rajasthan and Thessaloniki; or tackle Taiwan on two wheels. Need a little help making up your mind? Our destination experts are here to lend a hand.

Spot baby lions in South Luangwa National Park, Zambia

Bound by the Muchinga Escarpment and the Luangwa River, this 9050-sq km national park is one of Africa's finest wildlife destinations. Its floodplains teem with herds of antelopes, elephants, wild dogs, lions and other mammals, and its mopane woodlands and hardwood forests are home to a healthy population of leopards.

Most visitors flood into South Luangwa between the months of May and October, when the park is driest and the wildlife is most concentrated, but the 'Emerald Season' (November to April) offers an entirely new (and rewarding) perspective on the park. The sharp rain showers clear the dusty air - making conditions perfect for photography - and transform the parched landscape of brownish hues into a verdant world of lush greens. This is also the time when animals drop their young, so there are cute versions of Africa's largest beasts at every turn. Throw in the arrival of masses of migratory birds and price discounts at the lodges, and it is clearly a great time to visit.

Matt Phillips - Destination Editor for sub-Saharan Africa. Follow him on Twitter @Go2MattPhillips.

Go leaf peeping in Japan

Spring in Japan gets a lot of international attention, with its impossibly pretty cherry blossoms drawing admiring masses every year. While autumn in Japan is less well known, it is just as photogenic. A wave of colour advances across the country - leaving brilliant reds, oranges and yellows in its wake - and November is one of the best months to experience it.

For leaf viewing around Tokyo, head to Nikko or Kamakura, where the foliage frames ancient temples. Among Tokyo city's parks and gardens, Rikugi-en is one of the best, famous for its maple leaves. In Kyoto, don't miss the crimson views from the temple veranda of Kiyomizudera (arrive early to avoid the worst of the crowds), and the mountainside neighborhood of Arashiyama. Autumn-color highlights elsewhere in the country include the island of Miyajima, and the Japan Alps. To help perfectly time your visit, keep an eye on the local koyo (autumn leaf) forecasts

(see japan-guide.com/e/e2014_when.html for an idea of timings, and real time updates).

Laura Crawford - Destination Editor for Japan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and the Philippines. Follow her on Twitter @crawfplanet.

Indulge your inner culture culture in Thessaloniki, Greece

With the island life losing its buzz, Greece's cosmopolitan second city steals the limelight in autumn. Thessaloniki's renowned International Film Festival (film-festival.gr; 6 - 15 Nov 2015) - southeastern Europe's top silver-screen event - focuses on independent cinema ranging

from experimental and obscure to famous directors' works. But this hip metropolis has much more to lure cinemagoers.

Thessaloniki's impressive Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman and Jewish heritage will keep you immersed for days. Learn the bloody story behind the waterfront White Tower (now an interactive museum), get lost in the enchanting alleyways of Ano Poli (Upper Town), admire the ancient churches' frescoes and mosaics or take in contemporary art exhibitions in restored hammams.

Packed with tavernas and cafes, Thessaloniki builds on the souvlaki-and-seafood scene with innovative cuisine, while its Turkish legacy is evident in legendary patisseries





like the century-old Hatzis. Ladadika and Valaoritou neighborhoods are the nightlife hotspots, with plenty of wine and cocktail bars and live-music venues.

Braná Vladislavljević - Destination Editor for Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Follow her on Twitter @branaavl.

Get active in Taiwan

November is a stellar month for sporting enthusiasts to visit Taiwan. The hot summer months and typhoon season simmer down to a temperate 25°C, and the island hosts a number of outdoor events. The Taiwan Cycling Festival (30 Oct - 22 Nov) nods to the island's growing reputation as a cycling destination, with a series of bike-based events, from village tours to coastal excursions and road biking through Taipei. The first half of November sees surfers take to Taiwan's high waves for the Taiwan Open of Surfing (facebook.com/taiwanopenofsurfing), while the Sun Moon Lake Marathon (22 Nov) and the Taroko Gorge Marathon (7 Nov) allow distance runners (and their supporters) to take in the autumn air at two of Taiwan's most stunning natural landmarks.

Non-sporting types and those with aching muscles should make for Maolin Recreation Area for a dip in outdoor hot springs with views of autumn foliage. Also keep your eyes peeled for Purple Crow butterflies (one of only two species of migrating butterfly) who winter in the cozy valleys of this area starting in November.

Megan Eaves - Destination Editor, North and Central Asia. Follow her on Twitter @megoizy.

Pick a winning camel in Pushkar, India

India's Rajasthan region is famed for its vibrant colors and rich cultural heritage - and November is by far the best time to visit. Pushkar Fair or Pushkar ka Mela, the world's largest camel fair (19 - 25 Nov), will see more than 50,000 animals and 300,000 people gather on the banks of Pushkar Lake. A camel race starts off the festival, followed by a string of music performances, competitions and exhibitions.

Amidst the buzzing atmosphere, you'll also experience a spiritual side of Rajasthan. This colorful annual event concludes on Kartik Purnima, a Hindu festival day celebrated on the full moon, and honors Brahma, a Hindu god who is said to have created Pushkar Lake. Pilgrims from all over India come to swim in its sacred waters during this time and visit the nearby temple.

Nellie Huang - Blogger at wildjunket.com and LP Pathfinder. Follow her on Twitter @wildjunket.

Gauchos at barbecue in Argentina

Celebrate gaucho culture just as summer starts in Argentina. The annual El Día de Tradición (The Day of Tradition) festival starts the weekend closest to 10 November and celebrates the birth of José Hernández, a writer and poet famous for his works about the daily life of the gaucho. El Día de Tradición is celebrated all over Argentina, but San Antonio de Areco is the centre of Argentina's cowboy culture and the perfect place to get your gaucho fix.

The 10-day event kicks off with boys and men from around Argentina, clad in gaucho garb, parading perfectly groomed horses around Areco's town square. The procession continues with solo riders wielding an assembly of wild horses through the streets, followed by ornate chariots carrying girls in traditional dress and a marching band trailing behind them. Post-parade activities in Parque Criollo include horse races, games, folk dances, craft exhibitions, and delicious traditional food. Feast on asado (barbecue) - mouth-watering grilled steaks, chorizo and other Argentine delicacies are in abundance at this heritage-rich festival.

MaSovaida Morgan - South America Destination Editor. Follow her on Twitter @MaSovaida.

— www.lonelyplanet.com



WORD SEARCH

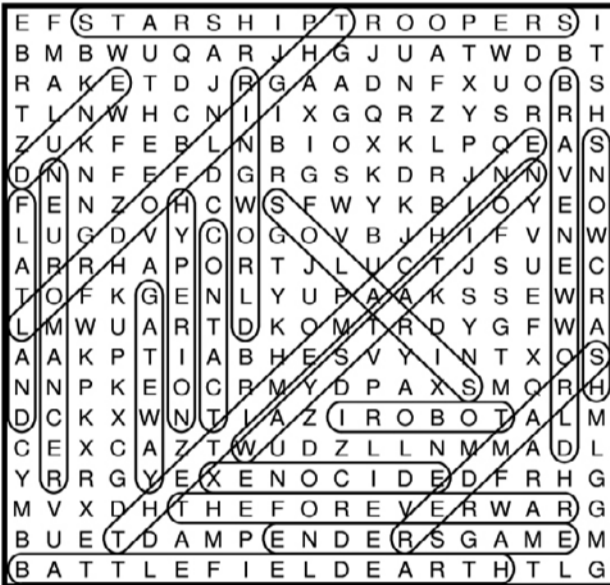
WOODWORKING WORD SEARCH PUZZLE



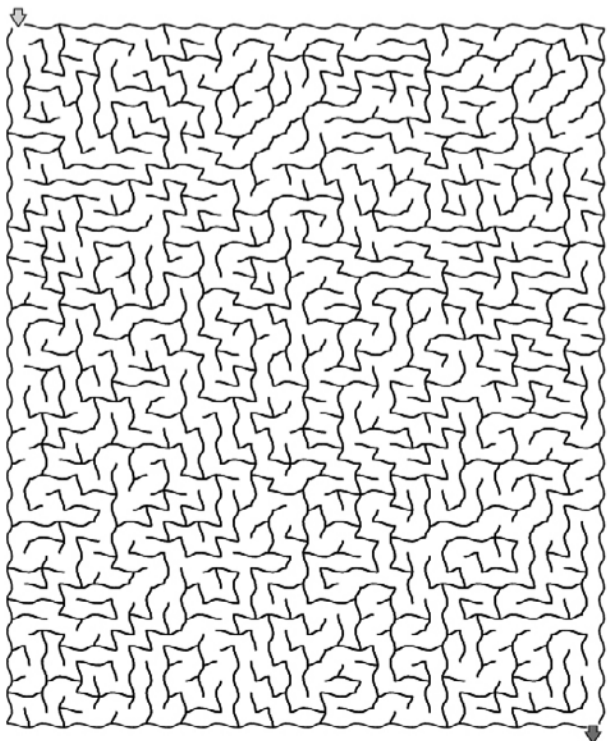
- BAND SAW
- BELT SANDER
- CLAMPS
- CROSS CUT
- DOVETAIL
- DRILL PRESS
- JIGSAW
- LACQUER
- LAP JOINT
- LUMBER
- MITER CUT
- MORTISE
- ROTARY TOOL
- ROUTER
- SANDPAPER
- SAWHORSE
- STAIN
- TENON
- WOOD GLUE
- WORKBENCH

Yesterday's Solution

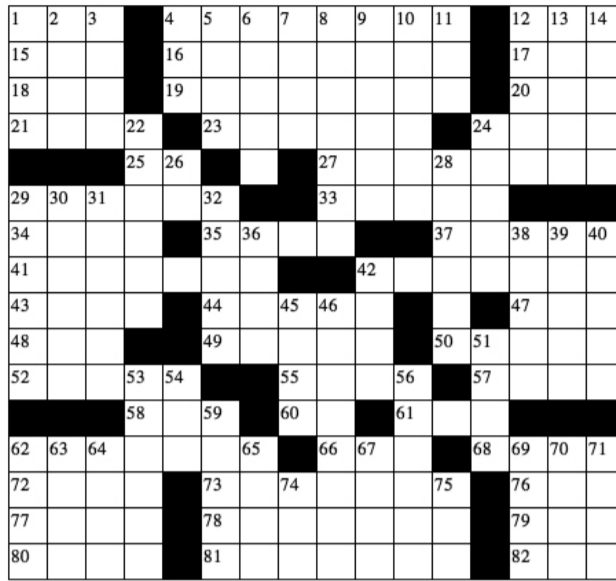
SOLUTION TO SCIENCE FICTION PUZZLE



CHALLENGING MAZE



CROSSWORD 1057



ACROSS

1. The compass point that is one point east of due south.
4. Hypothetical universal solvent once sought by alchemists.
12. A cgs unit of work or energy.
15. Someone who is morally reprehensible.
16. Genus of woody Asiatic vines.
17. The basic unit of money in Romania.
18. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
19. A mortician who treats corpses with preservatives.
20. An inflammatory complication of leprosy that results in painful skin lesions on the arms and legs and face.
21. Lacking or deprive of the sense of hearing wholly or in part.
23. Similar to absinthe but containing no wormwood.
25. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali metal group.
27. That is going in.
29. Of or belonging to an aecium.
33. A long noosed rope used to catch animals.
34. Speaking a Slavic language.
35. A member of the Siouan people inhabiting the valleys of the Platte and Missouri rivers in Nebraska.
37. A genus of Indriidae.
41. Alternatively, a member of the family Nymphaeaceae.
43. A translucent mineral consisting of hydrated silica of variable color.
44. Jordan's port.
47. Nocturnal bird of prey with hawk-like beak and claws and large head with front-facing eyes.
48. A unit of length equal to one thousandth of an inch.
49. The seventh month of the Moslem calendar.
50. Australian clover fern.
52. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
55. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
57. Knock unconscious or senseless.
58. Alsatian artist and poet who was cofounder of Dadaism in Zurich.
60. An intensely radioactive metallic element that occurs in minute amounts in uranium ores.
61. Hormone secreted by the posterior pituitary gland (trade name Pitressin) and also by nerve endings in the hypothalamus.
62. A parenteral cephalosporin (trade names Fortaz and Tazicef) used to treat moderate infections.
66. The force of workers available.
68. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
72. Using speech rather than writing.
73. Deciduous flowering trees and shrubs.
76. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
77. Costing 10 dollars.
78. East Indian cereal grass whose seed yield a somewhat bitter flour, a staple in the Orient.
79. (of securities) Not quoted on a stock exchange.
80. The sixth month of the civil year.

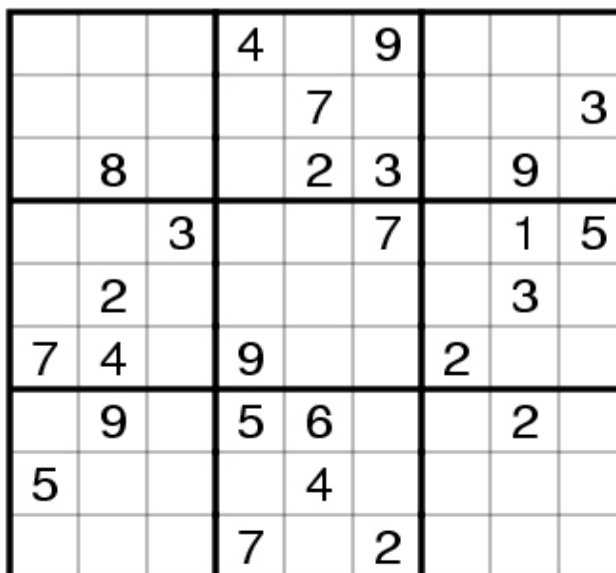
DOWN

1. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
2. A Chadic language spoken in northern Nigeria.
3. Tropical starchy tuberous root.
4. Any of various primates with short tails or no tail at all.
5. A large piece of something without definite shape.
6. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
7. A river that rises in northeastern Turkey (near the source of the Euphrates) and flows generally eastward through Armenia to the Caspian Sea.
8. Either of the club-like rudimentary hind wings of dipterous insects.
9. The expensive white fur of the ermine.
10. A nap in the early afternoon (especially in hot countries).
11. Any of various dark heavy viscid substances obtained as a residue.
12. Fragrant resin obtain from trees of the family Burseraceae and used as incense.
13. A proteolytic enzyme secreted by the kidneys.
14. A Russian prison camp for political prisoners.
22. Act frivolously.
24. An anti-TNF compound (trade name Arava) that is given orally.
26. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
28. A soft cotton or worsted fabric with an open mesh.
30. Any of numerous venomous fanged snakes of warmer parts of both hemispheres.
31. An esoteric or occult matter that is traditionally secret.
32. Of or relating to or affecting a lobe.
36. The basic unit of money in Bangladesh.
38. 100 agorot equal 1 shekel.
39. An expression of greeting.
40. An Eskimo hut.
42. A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
45. Slightly open.
46. Of or relating to or characteristic of the Bahama Islands or their inhabitants.
51. A Loloish language.
53. A worker who attaches something by nailing it.
54. Electrical conduction through a gas in an applied electric field.
56. East Indian tree that puts out aerial shoots that grow down into the soil forming additional trunks.
59. Type genus of the Percidae.
63. Lacking sufficient water or rainfall.
64. The battle in 202 BC in which Scipio decisively defeated Hannibal at the end of the second Punic War.
65. (informal terms) "gave me a cockamamie reason for not going".
67. (Sumerian) Water god and god of wisdom.
69. A correctional institution used to detain persons who are in the lawful custody of the government (either accused persons awaiting trial or convicted persons serving a sentence).
70. The emotion of hate.
71. Type genus of the family Arcidae.
74. An undergarment worn by women to support their breasts.
75. Used of a single unit or thing.

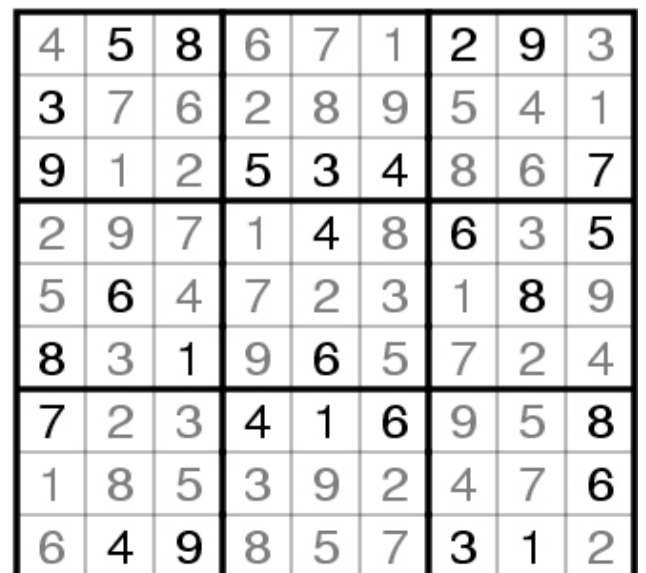
Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



BBC lifestyle

00:15 Vacation Vacation Vacation
 00:35 Vacation Vacation Vacation
 01:00 Masterchef: The Professionals
 01:50 The Roux Legacy
 02:25 Come Dine With Me
 02:50 Homes Under The Hammer
 03:40 Beat My Build
 04:25 The Roux Legacy
 05:00 Come Dine With Me
 05:25 Vacation Vacation Vacation
 05:45 Vacation Vacation Vacation
 06:05 A Taste Of Greenland
 07:00 Masterchef: The Professionals
 07:50 Come Dine With Me
 08:15 Building Dream Homes
 09:15 Michela's Classic Italian
 09:40 Vacation Vacation Vacation
 10:25 The Roux Legacy
 11:00 Homes Under The Hammer
 11:50 Beat My Build
 12:40 Masterchef: The Professionals
 13:30 Come Dine With Me
 13:55 Building Dream Homes
 14:55 Michela's Classic Italian
 15:20 Vacation Vacation Vacation
 16:05 The Roux Legacy
 16:40 Homes Under The Hammer
 17:30 Come Dine With Me
 17:55 Building Dream Homes
 18:55 Rachel Khoo's Kitchen
 Notebook: Cosmo Cook
 19:20 Vacation Vacation Vacation
 19:45 Vacation Vacation Vacation
 20:05 Masterchef: The Professionals
 20:55 The Roux Legacy
 21:30 Come Dine With Me
 21:55 Homes Under The Hammer
 22:45 Building Dream Homes
 23:15 Building Dream Homes

Discovery Channel HD

00:20 Fast N' Loud
 01:10 Treasure Quest: Snake Island
 02:00 Fast N' Loud: Demolition
Theater
 02:50 Saint Hoods
 03:40 Container Wars
 04:05 Highway To Sell
 05:00 How It's Made: Dream Cars
 05:30 How Do They Do It?
 06:00 Mythbusters
 06:50 Dynamo: Magician Impossible
 07:40 What Happened Next?
 08:05 What Happened Next?
 08:30 The Pop Illusionist
 09:20 Marooned With Ed Stafford
 10:10 Kings Of The Wild
 11:00 Treasure Quest: Snake Island
 11:50 Dual Survival
 12:40 Car Chasers
 13:30 Fast N' Loud
 14:20 Wheeler Dealers
 15:10 Street Outlaws
 16:00 Street Outlaws
 20:10 Idris Elba: No Limits
 21:00 Fast N' Loud
 21:50 Wheeler Dealers
 22:40 Cuban Chrome
 23:30 Chris Ryan's Elite Police

E!

00:00 WAGs
 00:55 The Grace Helbig Show
 01:25 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 02:20 E! News
 03:15 Giuliana & Bill
 04:10 Beyond Candid With Giuliana
 05:05 E! News
 06:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 06:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 07:50 Style Star
 08:20 E! News
 09:15 Giuliana & Bill
 10:15 Giuliana & Bill
 11:10 The Grace Helbig Show
 11:35 The Grace Helbig Show
 12:05 E! News
 13:05 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
 14:05 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 15:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
 16:00 Stewarts And Hamiltons
 17:00 Stewarts And Hamiltons
 18:00 E! News
 19:00 Hollywood Cycle
 20:00 WAGs

21:00 Fashion Bloggers
 21:30 Fashion Bloggers
 22:00 E! News
 23:00 House Of DVF

itv CHOICE

00:10 The Chase
 01:05 May The Best House Win
 02:00 Emmerdale
 02:25 Eggheads
 02:55 Coronation Street
 03:25 Lewis
 04:20 Agatha Christie's Partners In Crime
 05:15 Take On The Twisters
 06:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
 07:05 Coronation Street
 07:30 Lewis
 08:25 Agatha Christie's Partners In Crime
 09:20 Who's Doing The Dishes?
 10:15 I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here
 11:35 May The Best House Win
 12:30 Take On The Twisters
 13:25 Emmerdale
 13:50 Emmerdale
 14:20 Coronation Street
 14:45 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
 15:35 Who's Doing The Dishes?
 16:30 Doc Martin
 17:25 Keep It In The Family
 18:20 Take On The Twisters
 19:10 Coronation Street
 19:35 Who's Doing The Dishes?
 20:30 Doc Martin
 21:25 Keep It In The Family
 22:20 I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here
 23:40 Eggheads

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CHANNEL HD

01:00 China From Above
 02:00 China's Ghost Army
 02:55 The 2000s: The Decade We Saw It All
 04:45 Science Of Stupid
 05:10 Science Of Stupid
 05:40 Hard Time
 06:35 Locked Up Abroad
 07:30 World's Most Extreme
 08:25 The Miracle Of The 9/11 Surfer
 09:20 Science Of Stupid
 09:45 Science Of Stupid
 10:15 The Happenings
 11:10 Paranatural
 12:05 Hard Time
 13:00 Dead Or Alive
 14:00 World's Most Extreme

15:00 Locked Up Abroad
 16:00 The Happenings
 17:00 Paranatural
 18:00 Taboo USA
 19:00 Locked Up Abroad
 20:00 The Happenings
 20:50 Paranatural
 21:40 Taboo USA
 22:30 Locked Up Abroad
 23:20 Hard Time

OSN FIRST HD COMEDY

00:30 Last Man Standing
 01:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
 03:30 Cristela
 04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
 07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
 11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
 14:00 Cristela
 15:30 Last Man Standing
 16:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
 17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
 18:30 Cristela
 20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
 21:00 Last Man Standing
 21:30 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
 22:00 Big Time In Hollywood FI
 22:30 Big Time In Hollywood FI
 23:00 Curb Your Enthusiasm
 23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers

OSN FIRST HD

00:00 The Americans
 01:00 Blindspot
 02:00 Empire
 03:00 Mistresses
 04:00 Covert Affairs
 05:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 06:00 The Astronaut Wives Club
 08:00 Sleepy Hollow
 09:00 Covert Affairs
 10:00 The Astronaut Wives Club
 12:00 Emmerdale
 12:30 Coronation Street
 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 14:00 Sleepy Hollow
 15:00 The Astronaut Wives Club
 16:00 Emmerdale
 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 18:00 Sleepy Hollow
 19:00 C.S.I. Cyber
 20:00 Blindspot
 21:00 Grey's Anatomy
 22:00 Survivor: Second Chance
 23:00 Devious Maids

OSN FIRST MORE

00:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 01:00 Good Morning America
 03:00 The Killing
 04:00 Grimm
 05:00 Good Morning America
 07:00 Emmerdale
 08:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 09:00 Suits
 10:00 Emmerdale
 11:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
 12:00 Switched At Birth
 13:00 Supernatural
 14:00 Live Good Morning America
 16:00 Suits
 17:00 Switched At Birth
 18:00 Supernatural
 19:00 C.S.I.
 20:00 Switched At Birth
 21:00 Supernatural
 22:00 The Killing
 23:00 Grimm

OSN MOVIES ACTION

00:00 Kiss The Girls
 02:00 Bro'
 04:00 Desperate Measures
 06:00 A Stranger In Paradise
 08:00 Left Behind
 10:00 The Amazing Spider-Man 2
 12:30 A Stranger In Paradise
 14:00 Born To Race: Fast Track
 15:45 Left Behind
 17:45 Android Cop
 19:30 The Amazing Spider-Man 2
 22:00 Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief

OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

00:00 Bro'-18
 02:00 Desperate Measures-PG15
 04:00 A Stranger In Paradise-PG15
 06:00 Left Behind-PG15
 08:00 The Amazing Spider-Man 2-PG15
 10:30 A Stranger In Paradise-PG15
 12:00 Born To Race: Fast Track-PG15
 13:45 Left Behind-PG15
 15:45 Android Cop-PG15
 17:30 The Amazing Spider-Man 2-PG15
 20:00 Percy Jackson And The Lightning Thief-PG15
 22:15 Guns, Girls And Gambling-18

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

00:00 The Hot Chick
 02:00 Zoolander
 04:00 The Pretty One
 06:00 The Love Guide
 08:00 The Comebacks
 10:00 The Pretty One
 12:00 Zoolander
 14:00 You Again
 16:00 The Comebacks
 18:00 HairBrained
 20:00 That Awkward Moment
 22:00 Multiplicity

OSN MOVIES DRAMA

01:00 Kon-Tiki-PG15
 03:00 Paranoia-PG15
 05:00 Ashes-PG15
 07:00 Little Red-PG15
 09:00 Belle-PG15
 11:00 Ashes-PG15
 13:00 Yellow Rock-PG15
 15:00 The Giver-PG15
 17:00 Belle-PG15
 19:00 Hours-PG15
 21:00 Draft Day-PG15
 23:00 The Mule-18

OSN MOVIES HD FESTIVAL

01:00 August: Osage County
 03:00 Frank
 05:00 Five Thirteen
 07:00 1911
 09:00 Temptation: Confessions Of A Marriage Counselor
 11:00 Se Puder... Dirija!
 12:45 Australia
 15:30 The Secret Life Of Bees
 17:30 Temptation: Confessions Of A Marriage Counselor
 19:30 How I Live Now
 21:30 We Gotta Get Out Of This Place
 23:30 Her

OSN MOVIES HD

01:45 Penthouse North-PG15
 03:30 Safe Haven-PG15
 05:30 Still Mine-PG15
 07:15 Upside Down-PG15
 09:00 The Lego Movie-PG
 10:45 Drumline: A New Beat-PG15
 12:45 Won't Back Down-PG15

15:00 Tarzan (2013)-PG
 17:00 The Lego Movie-PG
 19:00 The Grand Budapest Hotel-PG15
 21:00 Jersey Boys-PG15
 23:15 Escape Plan-PG15

OSN MOVIES HD KIDS

01:00 Tom And Jerry: The Lost Dragon
 02:30 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure
 04:15 Saving Santa
 06:00 The Adventures Of Don Quixote
 08:00 Unstable Fables: Goldilocks & The Three Bears
 10:00 Mamma Moo And Crow
 11:30 Hatching
 13:00 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure
 14:30 JLA Adventures: Trapped In Time
 16:00 Vampire Dog
 18:00 Mamma Moo And Crow
 20:00 The Adventurer: The Curse Of The Midas Box
 22:00 JLA Adventures: Trapped In Time
 23:30 Vampire Dog

OSN MOVIES HD PREMIERE

00:00 The Skeleton Twins-18
 02:00 When The Game Stands Tall-PG15
 04:00 Bears-PG
 06:00 The Good Witch's Wedding-PG15
 08:00 Good Deeds-PG15
 10:00 Horizon-PG15
 12:00 Playing For Keeps-PG15
 14:00 Planet 51-PG
 15:45 Godzilla-PG15
 18:00 Edge Of Tomorrow-PG15
 20:00 St. Vincent-PG15
 22:00 The Prince-PG15
 23:45 Good Deeds-PG15

STAR MOVIES

01:30 Long Weekend
 03:00 The Hurricane
 05:30 Thorne: Scaredycat
 07:45 The Rock
 10:00 Wild Hogs
 11:45 Deep Rising
 13:30 Derailed
 15:30 Seabiscuit
 18:00 Jack
 20:00 I Am Number Four
 22:00 Transporter 3
 23:45 The Proposal

STAR WORLD

00:00 Desperate Housewives
 01:00 MasterChef Australia
 02:00 The Listener
 03:00 The Listener
 04:00 Castle
 05:00 Happy Endings
 05:30 Happy Endings
 06:00 The Simpsons
 06:30 The Simpsons
 07:00 Lost
 08:00 Desperate Housewives
 09:00 MasterChef Australia
 10:00 The Listener
 11:00 The Listener
 12:00 Castle
 13:00 Happy Endings
 13:30 Happy Endings
 14:00 The Simpsons
 14:30 The Simpsons
 15:00 Lost
 16:00 MasterChef Australia
 17:00 Cougar Town
 17:30 Scrubs
 18:00 Low Winter Sun
 19:00 The Bridge
 20:00 72 Hours
 21:00 Cougar Town
 21:30 Scrubs
 22:00 MasterChef Australia
 23:00 MasterChef Australia



A STRANGER IN PARADISE ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION



- 00:00 Alaska Off-Road Warriors
- 01:00 Ice Road Truckers
- 02:00 Counting Cars
- 02:30 Counting Cars
- 03:00 Alaska Off-Road Warriors
- 04:00 Ultimate Wheels
- 05:00 American Pickers
- 06:00 Ax Men
- 07:00 Swamp People
- 08:00 Mountain Men
- 09:00 Storage Wars: New York
- 09:30 Storage Wars: New York
- 10:00 American Restoration
- 10:30 American Restoration
- 11:00 Counting Cars
- 11:30 Counting Cars
- 12:00 American Pickers
- 13:00 Storage Wars
- 13:30 Storage Wars
- 14:00 Pawn Stars
- 14:30 Pawn Stars
- 15:00 Shipping Wars
- 15:30 Shipping Wars
- 16:00 Ice Road Truckers
- 17:00 Counting Cars
- 17:30 Counting Cars
- 18:00 American Pickers
- 19:00 Storage Wars
- 19:30 Storage Wars
- 20:00 Search For The Lost Giants
- 21:00 Pawn Stars
- 21:30 Pawn Stars
- 22:00 Duck Dynasty
- 22:30 Duck Dynasty
- 23:00 Storage Wars Texas
- 23:30 Pawn Stars



- 04:30 Savage Harvest
- 05:55 Prancer
- 07:35 Dr. Goldfoot And The Bikini Machine
- 09:05 Death Rides A Horse
- 11:00 Agent Cody Banks
- 12:40 Agent Cody Banks 2: Destination London
- 14:20 Big Screen
- 14:35 Apache
- 16:05 Molly
- 17:35 One More Kiss
- 19:15 True Heart
- 20:45 Big Screen
- 21:00 Pork Chop Hill
- 22:35 Hamburger Hill
- 00:25 Witchboard
- 02:00 American Psycho 2



- 03:25 Gator Boys
- 04:15 Snake Sheila
- 04:38 Snake Sheila
- 05:02 Treehouse Masters
- 05:49 Lion Battlefield
- 06:36 Call Of The Wildman
- 07:25 Dogs 101
- 08:15 Snake Sheila
- 09:10 Treehouse Masters
- 10:05 Tanked
- 11:00 Dogs 101
- 11:55 Bondi Vet
- 12:50 Hunt For The Tasmanian Tiger
- 13:45 Snake Sheila
- 14:10 Snake Sheila
- 14:40 Treehouse Masters
- 15:35 Tanked
- 16:30 Lion Battlefield
- 17:25 Man-Eating Super Squid
- 18:20 Snake Sheila
- 18:45 Snake Sheila
- 19:15 Treehouse Masters
- 20:10 Tanked
- 21:05 Queens Of The Savannah
- 22:00 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
- 22:55 Gator Boys
- 23:50 Snake Sheila
- 00:15 Snake Sheila
- 00:45 Call Of The Wildman
- 01:40 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
- 02:35 Tanked



- 03:10 Last Tango In Halifax
- 04:00 Watson & Oliver
- 04:30 Rev.
- 05:00 The Green Balloon Club



DRUMLINE: A NEW BEAT- OSN MOVIES HD

- 05:25 Nuzzle & Scratch: Frock n Roll
- 05:45 Nuzzle & Scratch: Frock n Roll
- 06:05 Jollywobblers
- 06:10 The Green Balloon Club
- 06:35 Mr Bloom's Nursery
- 06:55 Nuzzle & Scratch: Frock n Roll
- 07:15 The Weakest Link
- 08:00 Moone Boy
- 08:25 Moone Boy
- 08:45 Eastenders
- 09:15 Doctors
- 09:45 Moone Boy
- 10:10 Call The Midwife
- 11:00 Pride And Prejudice
- 11:55 The Weakest Link
- 12:40 Moone Boy
- 13:05 Moone Boy
- 13:30 Call The Midwife
- 14:20 Pride And Prejudice
- 15:15 Moone Boy
- 15:40 Moone Boy
- 16:05 Doctors
- 16:35 Eastenders
- 17:05 The Weakest Link
- 17:50 Moone Boy
- 18:15 Moone Boy
- 18:40 Doctors
- 19:10 Casualty
- 20:00 Silent Witness
- 21:40 Alan Carr: Chatty Man
- 22:25 Getting On
- 22:55 Watson & Oliver
- 23:25 The Weakest Link
- 00:10 Doctors
- 00:40 Casualty
- 01:30 Silent Witness

- 11:50 Steven Universe
- 12:02 Steven Universe
- 12:15 Uncle Grandpa
- 12:40 Regular Show
- 12:51 Regular Show
- 13:02 Regular Show
- 13:13 Regular Show
- 13:25 Adventure Time
- 13:35 Adventure Time
- 13:50 Adventure Time
- 14:10 The Amazing World Of Gumball
- 15:00 New Ben 10 Omniverse
- 15:20 Ben 10: Omniverse
- 15:45 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu
- 16:10 Matt Hatter Chronicles
- 16:30 Teen Titans Go!
- 17:20 Clarence
- 17:31 Clarence
- 17:40 The Amazing World Of Gumball
- 18:30 Adventure Time
- 18:40 Adventure Time
- 18:50 Over The Garden Wall - New
- 19:15 New Uncle Grandpa
- 19:27 Uncle Grandpa
- 19:40 Steven Universe
- 20:00 Regular Show
- 20:50 New Ben 10 Omniverse
- 21:15 Ben 10: Omniverse
- 21:40 Adventure Time
- 22:25 Johnny Test
- 23:10 Regular Show
- 23:55 Total Drama World Tour
- 00:20 Total Drama World Tour
- 00:40 Grojband
- 01:05 Grojband
- 01:25 Transformers: Robots In Disguise
- 01:50 Regular Show
- 02:35 Johnny Test



- 03:20 Grojband
- 03:42 Grojband
- 04:05 Total Drama: Revenge Of The Island
- 04:27 Total Drama: Revenge Of The Island
- 04:50 Teen Titans Go!
- 05:00 Teen Titans Go!
- 05:10 Grojband
- 05:35 Grojband
- 06:00 The Amazing World Of Gumball
- 06:25 New Uncle Grandpa
- 06:37 Uncle Grandpa
- 06:50 Adventure Time
- 07:10 Adventure Time
- 07:20 Adventure Time
- 07:35 Clarence
- 07:46 Clarence
- 08:00 Teen Titans Go!
- 08:20 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu
- 08:45 New Ben 10 Omniverse
- 09:10 Ben 10: Omniverse
- 09:30 Regular Show
- 09:41 Regular Show
- 09:55 Dreamworks Dragons: Defenders Of Berk
- 10:20 Total Drama World Tour
- 10:40 Total Drama: Pakitew Island
- 11:05 Johnny Test



- 03:00 The Injustice Files: Sundown Towns
- 03:45 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
- 04:10 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
- 04:30 The Haunted
- 05:20 Forensic Detectives
- 06:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
- 07:00 Dr G: Medical Examiner
- 07:50 On The Case With Paula Zahn
- 08:40 Fatal Encounters
- 09:30 Murder Shift
- 10:20 Forensic Detectives
- 11:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
- 12:00 The Will
- 12:50 I Almost Got Away With It
- 13:40 California Investigator
- 14:05 Dr G: Medical Examiner
- 14:55 Fatal Encounters
- 15:45 On The Case With Paula Zahn
- 16:35 Murder Shift
- 17:25 I Almost Got Away With It
- 18:15 Forensic Detectives
- 19:05 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones

- 19:55 California Investigator
- 20:20 The Will
- 21:10 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
- 21:35 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
- 22:00 Deadly Women



- 03:00 How It's Made
- 03:23 How It's Made
- 03:48 Moon Machines
- 04:36 Race To Escape
- 05:24 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 06:12 How Do They Do It?
- 06:35 How Do They Do It?
- 07:00 Mythbusters
- 07:50 Bang Goes The Theory
- 08:15 Bang Goes The Theory
- 08:40 X-Machines
- 09:30 Food Factory
- 09:55 Food Factory
- 10:20 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
- 11:10 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 12:00 Moon Machines
- 12:50 Bang Goes The Theory
- 13:15 Bang Goes The Theory
- 13:40 X-Machines
- 14:30 How It's Made
- 14:54 How It's Made
- 15:20 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
- 16:10 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 17:00 Bang Goes The Theory
- 17:25 Bang Goes The Theory
- 17:50 Mythbusters
- 18:40 Deadly Dilemmas
- 19:05 Deadly Dilemmas
- 19:30 Food Factory
- 19:55 Food Factory
- 20:20 How It's Made
- 20:45 How It's Made
- 21:10 How Do They Do It?
- 21:35 How Do They Do It?
- 22:00 Deadly Dilemmas
- 22:25 Deadly Dilemmas
- 22:50 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 23:40 Moon Machines
- 00:30 Mythbusters
- 01:20 Deadly Dilemmas
- 01:45 Deadly Dilemmas
- 02:10 Food Factory
- 02:35 Food Factory



- 03:10 Henry Hugglemonster
- 03:20 Calimero
- 03:35 Zou
- 03:45 Loopdidoo
- 04:00 Art Attack

- 04:25 Henry Hugglemonster
- 04:35 Calimero
- 04:50 Zou
- 05:00 Loopdidoo
- 05:15 Art Attack
- 05:35 Henry Hugglemonster
- 05:50 Calimero
- 06:00 Zou
- 06:20 Loopdidoo
- 06:35 Art Attack
- 07:00 Calimero
- 07:10 Zou
- 07:25 Limon And Oil
- 07:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 07:50 Sofia The First
- 08:20 Doc McStuffins
- 08:45 Loopdidoo
- 09:00 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 09:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 10:00 Sofia The First
- 10:30 Doc McStuffins
- 10:55 Miles From Tomorrow
- 11:25 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 11:55 Loopdidoo
- 12:10 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 12:35 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 13:00 Sofia The First
- 13:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 14:00 Doc McStuffins
- 14:30 Zou
- 14:45 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 15:15 Sofia The First
- 15:45 Doc McStuffins
- 16:10 Aladdin
- 16:40 Adventures Of The Gummi Bears
- 17:10 Chip n Dale Rescue Rangers
- 17:40 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
- 17:55 Cars Toons
- 18:00 Miles From Tomorrow
- 18:30 Sofia The First
- 18:55 Doc McStuffins
- 19:15 Jake And The Neverland Pirates
- 19:45 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
- 20:05 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
- 20:35 Sofia The First
- 21:00 Aladdin
- 21:30 Adventures Of The Gummi Bears
- 22:00 Chip n Dale Rescue Rangers
- 22:30 Lilo & Stitch
- 23:00 Nina Needs To Go
- 23:05 Henry Hugglemonster
- 23:20 Calimero
- 23:35 Zou
- 23:50 Loopdidoo
- 00:05 Art Attack
- 00:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 00:45 Calimero
- 01:00 Zou
- 01:15 Loopdidoo
- 01:30 Art Attack
- 01:55 Henry Hugglemonster
- 02:05 Calimero
- 02:20 Zou
- 02:30 Loopdidoo
- 02:45 Art Attack



- 06:00 The 7D
- 06:10 Boyster
- 06:35 Phineas And Ferb
- 07:00 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
- 07:25 Supa Strikas
- 07:50 Supa Strikas
- 08:15 K.C Undercover
- 08:40 Lab Rats
- 09:10 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 09:35 Kirby Buckets
- 10:00 Kickin' It
- 10:30 Phineas And Ferb
- 10:55 Rocket Monkeys
- 11:20 Boyster
- 11:45 Super Matrak
- 12:10 Super Matrak
- 12:40 Mighty Med
- 13:05 Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors
- 13:30 Supa Strikas
- 14:00 Kickin' It
- 14:25 Lab Rats
- 14:50 Phineas And Ferb
- 15:15 Rocket Monkeys
- 15:40 Boyster
- 16:10 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 16:35 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
- 17:00 Mighty Med
- 17:25 K.C Undercover
- 17:55 Supa Strikas
- 18:20 Lab Rats
- 18:45 Kirby Buckets
- 19:10 Phineas And Ferb
- 19:40 Mighty Med
- 20:05 K.C Undercover
- 20:30 Supa Strikas
- 20:55 Lab Rats
- 21:25 Kirby Buckets
- 21:50 Kickin' It
- 22:15 Mighty Med
- 23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA



- 03:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 03:30 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 03:55 Get Stuffed
- 04:20 Poh & Co.
- 04:45 Poh & Co.
- 05:10 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
- 06:00 World's Best Chefs
- 06:25 Food School
- 06:50 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 07:15 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 07:40 Dog Whisperer
- 08:30 Tripping Out
- 08:55 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 09:20 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 09:45 Get Stuffed
- 10:10 Poh & Co.
- 10:35 Poh & Co.
- 11:00 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
- 11:50 World's Best Chefs
- 12:15 Food School
- 12:40 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 13:05 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 13:35 Cesar To The Rescue
- 14:30 Eat Street
- 14:55 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 15:25 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 15:50 Get Stuffed
- 16:20 Poh & Co.
- 16:45 Poh & Co.
- 17:15 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
- 18:10 Grandma's Boy
- 18:35 Food School
- 19:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 19:30 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 20:00 Get Stuffed
- 20:25 Poh & Co.
- 20:50 Poh & Co.
- 21:15 Charlie Luxton's Homes By The Sea
- 22:05 Grandma's Boy
- 22:30 Food School
- 22:55 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 23:20 Rustic Adventure Argentina
- 23:45 Cesar To The Rescue
- 00:35 Eat Street
- 01:00 Food School
- 01:25 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
- 02:15 The Wine Quest: Spain
- 02:40 Great Escapes



Aries (March 21-April 19)

It's a wizardly day, overflowing with the potential of magic. However, you must be willing to surrender to unseen forces if you want to benefit from this cosmic collaboration. Your spells and enchantments can cook up an intense emotional feast, but it may prove impossible to control the menu once you begin. The real power is found when you set aside your original recipe and follow your intuition. Dance with the unknown and you will not fail to impress even the most cynical of your critics.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You are quite single-minded when it comes to pursuing pleasure today as sensual Venus hooks up with unrelenting Pluto. Your feelings are so intense that you might not know how to keep your cool as you try to contain your emotions. Everything seems to assume cosmic proportions now, yet you may not want to say anything at all because you believe that your words will only get you into more trouble. It's okay to remain quiet as long as you are still willing to remain in touch with your heart.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Reality can hit you hard today and you might not know whether to be ecstatic or afraid. Rest assured that both emotions are likely appropriate responses, even if they seem to be mutually exclusive. The planetary currents are pulling you into deep emotional waters and you can't use your normal intellectual tools to stay on course. In fact, you may reach a point where you simply give up trying to figure out what to do next. Once you accept that your feelings don't need to be fixed, anything is possible.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Your strong convictions empower your actions and speech as long as you express yourself authentically. You Crabs are more sensitive to the shifting emotional tides than most people realize. As the currents build now, you might be prompted to act on a primal instinct. Although a swift decision may be your best move, make sure you aren't initiating unnecessary changes based upon your fears or you could inadvertently turn them into reality. No matter what the question is, love is the only answer.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your powerful romantic desires surprise you today, because they may not be as bright and cheery as you normally entertain. The sunshine is hiding behind the clouds, blocking your natural light. You might even feel emotionally overwhelmed, which can elicit anxiety over the littlest of things. Remember, there's no need to share all of your feelings now. Consciously choose to settle your energy with a simple statement of intention. Stay calm by traveling to your internal happy place, even if you are scared. With the right motivation, you can wait this storm out and emerge stronger than ever.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Don't even bother attempting to keep up the image of a neat and tidy Virgo as your tightly-wound emotions begin to unravel today. A minor tropical depression is being upgraded into a full-blown hurricane, complete with powerful waves of passion that can overpower your analytical walls of containment. The truth is this storm could prove to be a memorable experience, stirring up enough feelings to remind you of the complexities of your heart. Put on your rain boots and don't be afraid to get wet.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

The more immersed you are in the details today, the less you seem to know. Instead of sorting through all the facts about so many people, places and things, let your feelings take over the helm. You won't get pretty images, meaningless chatter or random interactions while your key planet Venus receives her instructions from survival-oriented Pluto. Abandon intellectual restraint and act on what you desire, rather than what others expect. If you want profundity and passion in your life now, all you need to do is ask.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

You grow weary today when the cosmos just keeps handing you the same old line. Romantic Venus harmonizes with your key planet Pluto, motivating you to take a calculated risk in order to achieve the emotional satisfaction you seek. Travel to the depths; then go even deeper. Feel it all, the love and the pain. You already know that your thoughts are merely a distraction from the desires of heart. A magical metamorphosis is close at hand if you believe in yourself as much as you believe in your dreams.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Although these may be uncertain times, filled with potential hazards, you're quite hopeful about your professional trajectory today. Your determination is admirable; you're ready to knuckle down and take your work more seriously than ever. Take time out from your busy schedule to reconstruct the last few weeks in your mind and then consciously project your positive intentions forward. You're standing at a powerful threshold now, and whatever aspirations you set into motion will have a long-lasting impact.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Although you're obsessed with fulfilling your obligations today, it's smart to step back and spend time mapping out your plans for next year. But remember, reality is not what it appears to be; your attitude determines what you perceive. The current changes can be quite dramatic, especially if you are inclined to resist the inevitable. But don't be afraid of going on a spiritual journey as you explore your attractions and desires.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Maintaining a comfortable level of emotional detachment can be an uphill battle today. You long to share your feelings, but may be afraid of exposing your vulnerability for fear of rejection. This approach-avoidance conflict raises long-standing relationship issues. Be patient; you won't receive answers to all your questions right away. You are engaged in a profound emotional dance that invites reality to lead, whether you know it or not. You will end up with a great story to tell if you trust your heart and move with the music.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may not be in the mood to play around because you have more urgent relationship business to attend to now. Your heart is open wide and you don't want to miss an opportunity to engage your passions while magnetic Venus in your 7th House of Others trines powerful Pluto. Nevertheless, there's also an inescapable gnawing fear of the unknown. Don't try to talk yourself out of this journey. Fortune favors the bold.

COUNTRY CODES

Afghanistan	0093	Kuwait	00965
Albania	00355	Kyrgyzstan	00996
Algeria	00213	Laos	00856
Andorra	00376	Latvia	00371
Angola	00244	Lebanon	00961
Anguilla	001264	Liberia	00231
Antigua	001268	Libya	00218
Argentina	0054	Lithuania	00370
Armenia	00374	Luxembourg	00352
Australia	0061	Macau	00853
Austria	0043	Macedonia	00389
Bahamas	001242	Madagascar	00261
Bahrain	00973	Majorca	0034
Bangladesh	00880	Malawi	00265
Barbados	001246	Malaysia	0060
Belarus	00375	Maldives	00960
Belgium	0032	Mali	00223
Belize	00501	Malta	00356
Benin	00229	Marshall Islands	00692
Bermuda	001441	Martinique	00596
Bhutan	00975	Mauritania	00222
Bolivia	00591	Mauritius	00230
Bosnia	00387	Mayotte	00269
Botswana	00267	Mexico	0052
Brazil	0055	Micronesia	00691
Brunei	00673	Moldova	00373
Bulgaria	00359	Monaco	00377
Burkina	00226	Mongolia	00976
Burundi	00257	Montserrat	001664
Cambodia	00855	Morocco	00212
Cameroon	00237	Mozambique	00258
Canada	001	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Cape Verde	00238	Namibia	00264
Cayman Islands	001345	Nepal	00977
Central African Republic	00236	Netherlands (Holland)	0031
Chad	00235	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Chile	0056	New Caledonia	00687
China	0086	New Zealand	0064
Colombia	0057	Nicaragua	00505
Comoros	00269	Nigar	00227
Congo	00242	Nigeria	00234
Cook Islands	00682	Niue	00683
Costa Rica	00506	Norfolk Island	00672
Croatia	00385	Northern Ireland (UK)	0044
Cuba	0053	North Korea	00850
Cyprus	00357	Norway	0047
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Oman	00968
Czech Republic	00420	Pakistan	0092
Denmark	0045	Palau	00680
Diego Garcia	00246	Panama	00507
Djibouti	00253	Papua New Guinea	00675
Dominica	001767	Paraguay	00595
Dominican Republic	001809	Peru	0051
Ecuador	00593	Philippines	0063
Egypt	0020	Poland	0048
El Salvador	00503	Portugal	00351
England (UK)	0044	Puerto Rico	001787
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Qatar	00974
Eritrea	00291	Romania	0040
Estonia	00372	Russian Federation	007
Ethiopia	00251	Rwanda	00250
Falkland Islands	00500	Saint Helena	00290
Faroe Islands	00298	Saint Kitts	001869
Fiji	00679	Saint Lucia	001758
Finland	00358	Saint Pierre	00508
France	0033	Saint Vincent	001784
French Guiana	00594	Samoa US	00684
French Polynesia	00689	Samoa West	00685
Gabon	00241	San Marino	00378
Gambia	00220	Sao Tome	00239
Georgia	00995	Saudi Arabia	00966
Germany	0049	Scotland (UK)	0044
Ghana	00233	Senegal	00221
Gibraltar	00350	Seychelles	00284
Greece	0030	Sierra Leone	00232
Greenland	00299	Singapore	0065
Grenada	001473	Slovakia	00421
Guadeloupe	00590	Slovenia	00386
Guam	001671	Solomon Islands	00677
Guatemala	00502	Somalia	00252
Guinea	00224	South Africa	0027
Guyana	00592	South Korea	0082
Haiti	00509	Spain	0034
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Sri Lanka	0094
Honduras	00504	Sudan	00249
Hong Kong	00852	Suriname	00597
Hungary	0036	Swaziland	00268
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Sweden	0046
Iceland	00354	Switzerland	0041
India	0091	Syria	00963
Indian Ocean	00873	Taiwan	00886
Indonesia	0062	Tanzania	00255
Iran	0098	Thailand	0066
Iraq	00964	Toga	00228
Ireland	00353	Tonga	00676
Italy	0039	Tokelau	00690
Ivory Coast	00225	Trinidad	001868
Jamaica	001876	Tunisia	00216
Japan	0081	Turkey	0090
Jordan	00962	Tuvalu	00688
Kazakhstan	007	Uganda	00256
Kenya	00254	Ukraine	00380
Kiribati	00686	United Arab Emirates	00976

NEARLY 5,000 CHOLERA CASES, 74 DEATHS IN TANZANIA

GENEVA: Tanzania is facing a major cholera outbreak, counting nearly 5,000 cases and dozens of deaths, the World Health Organization said yesterday, calling for urgent action to stop the disease from spreading to neighboring countries. The UN health agency said that from August through Wednesday October 21, 4,922 cases of cholera had been tallied in 12 regions of Tanzania, and 74 deaths. The east African country's largest city Dar es Salaam was most affected with some 3,500 cases, said Dominique Legros, head of WHO's cholera unit.

The fact that the disease had reached the city, which is home to more than four million people, sparked great concern, he said, adding that Dar es Salaam's size and its numerous slum areas was "making things more complicated in terms of access to water and to build latrines." Cholera, which is transmitted through contaminated drinking water and causes acute diarrhoea, most recently spread to an island in the Zanzibar archipelago, which in a matter of days tallied 140 cases, Legros said. Cholera is endemic in the region, and Legros warned that the looming rainy season, with a "very bad" weather forecast, threatened to push the outbreak beyond Tanzania's borders.

"We have to really be ready for this and try to control the outbreak as soon as possible in Tanzania," Legros said. The last time there had been a massive outbreak in eastern Africa in the late 1990s, some 200,000 people had been infected across four countries, including 8,000 deaths, he said. Only a few months before the latest outbreak hit, cholera briefly spread among Burundian refugees in Tanzania, killing more than 30 people. WHO says \$2 million (1.8 million euros) are needed to urgently ramp up efforts to control the outbreak, including water trucks, chlorinating water and treatment for the sick.

But Legros insisted that efforts must go beyond the emergency response. "What we see each time (there is a cholera outbreak) is a sort of fire brigade approach, and then the outbreak is over and everybody disappears," he said. "The water trucking will stop and people will go back to the previous situation where they were taking water from the river and the wells that were contaminated," he said, insisting that this "it is that circle that we must break."—AFP



PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti: Haitian human rights and victims of Cholera protestors in Haiti rally in front of the Log Base of Minustah (United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti), in Port-au-Prince to demand justice and reparation.—AFP

PROLONGED EXPOSURE TO LOW DOSES OF RADIATION UPS CANCER RISK: STUDY

PARIS: Prolonged exposure to even low doses of radiation increases the risk of cancer, according to a new study of workers in the nuclear sector in Britain, France and the United States. The results, published Wednesday in the British Medical Journal, provides "direct evidence about cancer risks after protracted exposures to low-dose ionizing radiation," said the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the cancer agency of the World Health Organization, which coordinated the study. The findings demonstrate "a significant association between increasing radiation dose and risk of

all solid cancers," said the study's co-author IARC researcher Dr Ausrele Kesminiene. "No matter whether people are exposed to protracted low doses or to high and acute doses, the observed association between dose and solid cancer risk is similar per unit of radiation dose," he added. The International Nuclear Workers Study (INWORKS), a collaboration between international partners, evaluated the exposures of more than 300,000 nuclear workers in Britain, France and the United States between 1943 and 2005. The results showed that the risk of death from solid cancers was "modest" but that one in every hundred can-

cer deaths could be attributed to workplace radiation exposure. "The findings are important not only for the protection of workers in the nuclear industry but also for medical staff and the general population," since the level of doses received by nuclear workers is comparable with that received by patients repeatedly exposed to CT scans or other radiology procedures, said IARC researcher Dr Isabelle Thierry-Chef. "This stresses the importance of striking a balance between the risks and the benefits of such medical imaging procedures," she added. The average age of workers in the study was 58 years.—AFP

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PAGE



Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

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KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (22/10/2015 TO 28/10/2015)

SHARQIA-1		WAR PIGS	3:45 PM	JUNE	11:15 PM
AHWAK	11:45 AM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	5:45 PM	JUNE	1:15 AM
THE MARTIAN	2:00 PM	WAR PIGS	8:15 PM	AL-KOUT.1	
AHWAK	5:00 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	10:15 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	12:15 PM
AHWAK	7:30 PM	WAR PIGS	12:45 AM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	2:45 PM
JUNE	10:00 PM	MARINA-1		THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	5:15 PM
THE MARTIAN	12:05 AM	THE MARTIAN	12:15 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	7:45 PM
SHARQIA-2		AHWAK	3:15 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	10:15 PM
HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	11:30 AM	MOMENTUM	5:30 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	12:45 AM
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	1:30 PM	JUNE	7:30 PM	AL-KOUT.2	
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	3:45 PM	AHWAK	9:30 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	11:30 AM
HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	6:00 PM	MOMENTUM	12:05 AM	AHWAK	2:00 PM
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	8:00 PM	MARINA-2		HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	4:30 PM
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	10:15 PM	WAR PIGS	12:00 PM	AHWAK	6:30 PM
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	12:45 AM	WAR PIGS	2:00 PM	AHWAK	9:00 PM
SHARQIA-3		HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	4:15 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	11:30 PM
SHAANDAAR	1:00 PM	WAR PIGS	6:15 PM	AL-KOUT.3	
WAR PIGS	1:45 PM	WAR PIGS	8:15 PM	MOMENTUM	11:30 AM
FRI		WAR PIGS	10:15 PM	THE MARTIAN	1:30 PM
WAR PIGS	4:00 PM	WAR PIGS	12:15 AM	THE MARTIAN	4:30 PM
SHAANDAAR	6:00 PM	MARINA-3		MOMENTUM	7:30 PM
WAR PIGS	9:00 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	12:00 PM	THE MARTIAN	9:30 PM
WAR PIGS	11:00 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	2:30 PM	MOMENTUM	12:30 AM
WAR PIGS	1:00 AM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	5:00 PM	AL-KOUT.4	
MUHALAB-1		THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	7:30 PM	WAR PIGS	12:15 PM
WAR PIGS	11:00 AM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	10:00 PM	WAR PIGS	2:15 PM
WAR PIGS	1:30 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	12:30 AM	WAR PIGS	4:15 PM
AHWAK	3:30 PM	AVENUES-1		WAR PIGS	6:15 PM
WAR PIGS	6:00 PM	SHAANDAAR	1:00 PM	WAR PIGS	8:15 PM
AHWAK	8:00 PM	JAZBAA	4:00 PM	WAR PIGS	10:15 PM
WAR PIGS	10:30 PM	SHAANDAAR	7:00 PM	WAR PIGS	12:15 AM
WAR PIGS	12:45 AM	SHAANDAAR	10:00 PM	BAIRAQ-1	
MUHALAB-2		AMERICAN ULTRA	1:00 AM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	11:30 AM
AHWAK	11:30 AM	AVENUES-2		THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	2:00 PM
SHAANDAAR	2:00 PM	HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	12:00 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	4:30 PM
HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	2:00 PM	HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	2:15 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	7:00 PM
KANCHE	4:00 PM	HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	4:15 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	9:30 PM
HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	5:00 PM	JUNE	6:15 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	12:05 AM
SHAANDAAR	7:00 PM	JUNE	8:15 PM	BAIRAQ-2	
KANCHE	10:00 PM	JUNE	10:15 PM	WAR PIGS	11:30 AM
MOMENTUM	10:00 PM	JUNE	12:15 AM	WAR PIGS	1:30 PM
MOMENTUM	12:05 AM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER		WAR PIGS	3:30 PM
MUHALAB-3		AVENUES-3		AHWAK	5:30 PM
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	12:00 PM	HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	1:15 PM	WAR PIGS	8:00 PM
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	2:30 PM	10 ENDRATHUKULLA	3:30 PM	AHWAK	10:00 PM
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	5:00 PM	ENNU NINTE MOIDEEN	6:30 PM	WAR PIGS	12:30 AM
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	7:30 PM	10 ENDRATHUKULLA	9:45 PM	BAIRAQ-3	
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	10:00 PM	THE MARTIAN	12:45 AM	MOMENTUM	11:30 AM
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	12:30 AM	AVENUES-4		THE MARTIAN	1:30 PM
FANAR-1		SHAANDAAR	12:15 PM	MOMENTUM	4:15 PM
AMERICAN ULTRA	12:00 PM	THE MARTIAN	3:15 PM	SHAANDAAR	6:15 PM
AMERICAN ULTRA	2:00 PM	AHWAK	6:15 PM	THE MARTIAN	9:15 PM
SHAANDAAR	4:00 PM	SHAANDAAR	8:45 PM	THE MARTIAN	12:15 AM
SHAANDAAR	7:00 PM	THE MARTIAN	11:45 PM	PLAZA	
SHAANDAAR	10:00 PM	AVENUES-5		THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	4:00 PM
AMERICAN ULTRA	1:00 AM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	11:30 AM	ENNU NINTE MOIDEEN	6:30 PM
FANAR-2		THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	2:00 PM	10 ENDRATHUKULLA	9:45 PM
AHWAK	12:15 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	4:30 PM	LAILA	
JUNE	2:45 PM	NO FRI		THE MARTIAN	3:30 PM
AHWAK	4:45 PM	HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	4:30 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	6:15 PM
AHWAK	7:15 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	7:00 PM	WAR PIGS	8:45 PM
JUNE	9:45 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	9:30 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	10:45 PM
AHWAK	11:45 PM	THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	12:05 AM	AJIAL.1	
FANAR-3		360°-1		ENNU NINTE MOIDEEN	3:15 PM
HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	11:45 AM	THE MARTIAN	12:15 PM	ENNU NINTE MOIDEEN	6:30 PM
THE MARTIAN	1:45 PM	THE MARTIAN	3:15 PM	ENNU NINTE MOIDEEN	9:45 PM
HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	4:30 PM	THE MARTIAN	6:15 PM	AJIAL.2	
JAZBAA	6:30 PM	THE MARTIAN	9:15 PM	SHAANDAAR	3:30 PM
KANCHE	6:30 PM	THE MARTIAN	12:15 AM	SHAANDAAR	6:15 PM
THE MARTIAN	9:30 PM	360°-2		NAANUM ROWDYDHAAN	9:15 PM
KANCHE	9:30 PM	AMERICAN ULTRA	12:00 PM	AJIAL.3	
THE MARTIAN	12:30 AM	AMERICAN ULTRA	2:30 PM	NAANUM ROWDYDHAAN	3:45 PM
FANAR-4		AMERICAN ULTRA	4:45 PM	NO FRI	
WAR PIGS	1:00 PM	10 ENDRATHUKULLA	7:00 PM	KANCHE	3:45 PM
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	3:00 PM	10 ENDRATHUKULLA	10:00 PM	FRI	
MOMENTUM	5:30 PM	AMERICAN ULTRA	1:00 AM	KANCHE	6:45 PM
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	7:30 PM	360°-3		KANCHE	9:45 PM
WAR PIGS	10:00 PM	HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	1:15 PM	AJIAL.4	
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	12:05 AM	HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	3:15 PM	10 ENDRATHUKULLA	4:00 PM
FANAR-5		HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2	5:15 PM	10 ENDRATHUKULLA	7:00 PM
WAR PIGS	11:30 AM	JUNE	7:15 PM	10 ENDRATHUKULLA	10:00 PM
THE LAST WITCH HUNTER	1:30 PM	JUNE	9:15 PM		

ACCOMMODATION

Room for rent, Fully furnished room with fridge, satellite, air conditioner and other facilities available, family only, any citizen, near Al-Bike Hotel, Jaleeb. Contact: 97470947
(C 5060)
22-10-2015

FOR SALE

Misc. furniture for sale, sofa sets, cupboards, small dining table with six chairs. Contact: 25340757 / 97336407. **(C 5061)**

Honda Accord 2004, purchased in 2005 in top condition.

Galant 1998 super saloon in very good condition, low mileage. Call: 25340757 / 97336407. **(C 5062)**
22-10-2015

CHANGE OF NAME

I, JOY CHINONYE OZURUMBA with Passport Number A02740384 and Kuwait Civil ID Number 276011603269 do hereby change my name to

JOY CHINONYE BRAGG. Hereafter, all the documents will be known by the name **JOY CHINONYE BRAGG.**
22-10-2015

My name is Syed Mohammed Umar, S/o S. Mohammed Yousuf, holder of Indian Passport No: G9943660, D.No. 19/321, Varasmiya Street, Y.S.R. Dist. In my Passport my name mention wrong as Shaik Mohammed Umar. Correct name is Syed Mohammed Umar (New Name). **(C 5057)**
21-10-2015

TUITION

Learn Holy Quran in perfect way, private tuition available for elders & children, by Hafiz-E-Quran. Call: 66725950.
(C 5058)

EMERGENCY

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Prayer timings

Fajr:	04:35
Shorook	05:54
Duhr:	11:32
Asr:	14:45
Maghrib:	17:10
Isha:	18:28



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
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381

Friday Times BUSINESS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2015

BUDGET JITTERS HURT SAUDI; KUWAIT, DUBAI EDGE DOWN



US jobless data points to firming labor market

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VALLETTA: Mario Draghi (centre), president of the ECB, presides over the Governing Council Meeting yesterday in Malta. The European Central Bank held its key interest rate steady today, as speculation grew that it could take additional policy measures to counter chronically weak inflation in the euro area. — AFP

ECB MULLS STIMULUS AMID DEFLATION FEARS DRAGHI KEEPS RATES STEADY AT 0.05%, BUT KEEPS THE FINGER ON TRIGGER

VALLETTA: European Central Bank chief Mario Draghi yesterday held out the possibility of further economic stimulus for the euro-zone as soon as December as he fends off a deflation threat and battles the headwinds of a Chinese slowdown.

The central bank for the 19-nation euro-zone agreed after a two-day meeting in Malta to keep its powder dry, holding its key interest rate steady at a record low 0.05 percent and taking no immediate new measures. But in a news conference after the decision, Draghi gave a broad hint that the powerful bank is ready to use its ammunition if needed, sending financial markets higher as they anticipated more action to stimulate economic activity.

"The degree of monetary policy accommodation will need to be re-examined at our December meeting," Draghi told a news conference. "No decoding was required - this was an uncharacteristically clear statement

of intent," said David Lamb, head of dealing at foreign exchange specialists FEXCO.

"The ECB is still deeply concerned about the threats to the euro-zone's patchy recovery, and is planning to announce more QE before the end of the year," he said. In the euro-zone's main markets, Frankfurt's DAX 30 climbed 1.25 percent and Paris's CAC 40 gained 1.83 percent.

Draghi revealed that the ECB's decision-making governing council had discussed a possible further rate reduction on the bank's so-called deposit facility, which is already negative at minus 0.2 percent.

Global slowdown

"No decision was taken just yet. It was an open discussion," the central bank chief said. Analysts say the strong euro, falling consumer prices and fears of a global economic slowdown as China's once booming expansion cools, provide ample argument for the

ECB to ease monetary conditions still further in the 19 countries that share the euro.

Markets have begun to speculate that the ECB could soon accelerate or increase its program of so-called quantitative easing (QE), given that consumer prices declined by 0.1 percent in the euro area in September, raising fears of a dangerous downward spiral of deflation.

"Inflation rates will remain very low in the near term," Draghi said. In March, the ECB embarked on a scheme of sovereign bond purchases-more than 1.0 trillion euros in all at a rate of 60 billion euros per month-to bring inflation back up to levels that are more conducive to healthy economic growth.

While falling prices might appear to be good for consumers, they can be poisonous to the economy. The fear is that deflation could become entrenched if consumers delay purchases in the hope of lower prices

later, which in turn prompts companies to hold off investment, creating a vicious circle of falling demand and fewer jobs.

Historically low rates

Some analysts believe the ECB could extend the QE program beyond its original timeframe of September 2016 or accelerate or increase in the total amount of bonds purchased.

ECB executive board member Benoit Coeure recently pointed out, however, that only a third of the QE program had been executed so far. And with the beneficial effects of a range of other policy measures-unprecedented amounts of liquidity and historically low interest rates-still only gradually making themselves felt, it was "premature to discuss" a new QE program, Coeure said.

Nevertheless, "it is certainly our duty to be prepared to cope with all kinds of contingencies," he added. — AFP

KUWAIT FINANCE HOUSE Q3 NET PROFIT UP 21.6%

DUBAI: Kuwait Finance House (KFH), the country's biggest Islamic lender, reported a 21.6 percent rise in third-quarter net profit yesterday. Profit climbed to KD 43.4 million (\$143.78 million) in the three months to the end of September from 35.7 million dinars in the same period a year ago, Reuters calculated. The bank did not provide a quarterly results breakdown in a nine-month earnings statement. Two analysts polled by Reuters had forecast the firm would make a quarterly profit of KD33.5-41.0 million.

KFH made a net profit of KD 105.7 million in the first nine months of 2015, up 17.3 percent on the corresponding period of last year, it said. The lender has ruled out a sale or merger for its Malaysian unit, chief executive Mazin Al-Nahedh told Reuters in September. Instead, the bank will begin restructuring the unit with immediate effect, he said.

However, in August the bank said it planned to shed its stake in education investment company Nafais Holding. Both moves are part of a restructuring by the bank ahead of a planned divestment by its largest shareholder, the Kuwait Investment Authority. —Reuters

MAJID AL-FUTTAIM PICKS BANKS TO DOLLAR SUKUK

DUBAI: Dubai-based retail and leisure developer Majid Al Futtaim (MAF) has picked banks to arrange a potential dollar-denominated sukuk, two sources familiar with the matter told Reuters yesterday.

The firm, which owns and operates the Carrefour franchise in the Middle East, is planning to issue the sukuk before end of the year, one of the sources said on condition of anonymity as the deal is private. MAF has picked banks including Standard Chartered, HSBC, Dubai Islamic Bank and Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank to arrange the sukuk issue, the sources said, adding that more banks may be added to the list of arrangers. The issue will be of benchmark size, the sources said. Benchmark size is traditionally understood to mean upwards of \$500 million.

The sukuk will be issued under its \$1.5 billion issuance program through an entity named MAF Sukuk Ltd, based in the Cayman Islands. In the first half of the year, MAF earned 52 percent of its group's revenue and 69 percent of its EBITDA (earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization) from its operations in the United Arab Emirates, it said in an updated prospectus for the sukuk offering released in October. As at June 2015, the Group had short-term borrowings of 175 million dirhams, with around 30 percent of its existing long-term borrowings due to be repaid within one year, according to the document. — Reuters

MOBILY TO AGREE NEW LOAN COVENANTS BY YEAR-END

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's Etihad Etisalat (Mobily) will reach agreement with lenders to set new covenants for some outstanding loans by the end of 2015, its chief executive said in a television interview yesterday.

The telecoms company, part-owned by Abu Dhabi-listed Etisalat, revealed in February that it was in breach of the terms of loans from various lenders after issuing a drastically reduced restatement of previously announced profit. This was because long-term financing facilities with various lenders required it to achieve a minimum earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) and its reduced earnings brought EBITDA below the agreed level.

Mobily, Saudi's No.2 operator, predicted in February that it would reach a deal with lenders by the end of June, but an agreement has proved elusive.

"I think the subject will be completed at the end of the year," Mobily CEO Ahmad Farroukh told Al Arabiya, adding that Ramadan and the month of holidays in August had contributed to delays. A total of 2.4 billion riyals (\$639.98 million) of financing facilities will fall due in 2015 and 2.1 billion riyals in 2016, with the rest of the company's debt spread across the period until 2024, Mobily said in March. — Reuters



YANGON: Pedestrians walk outside Pizza Hut's first restaurant in Yangon yesterday. Pizza Hut is to open its first restaurant in Yangon, the latest major western fast food chain to enter the emerging nation where consumer habits are changing fast. —AFP

BUDGET JITTERS HURT SAUDI; KUWAIT, DUBAI EDGE DOWN

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Worries that Saudi Arabia may cut subsidies and state spending and raise taxes to cover its budget deficits in an era of cheap oil once again hurt its stock market yesterday, with a negative effect on neighboring markets. Kuwait stocks edged down 0.2 percent to 5,781 points.

The International Monetary Fund said on Wednesday that Riyadh was considering a wide range of fiscal reforms - many of which could hurt corporate profits, at least initially - to cope with a budget gap that would total well over \$100 billion this year.

That pushed the Saudi stock index down 2.7 percent on Wednesday and it slid a further 1.3 percent yesterday. Petrochemical blue chip Saudi Basic Industries dropped 1.2 percent; the government could raise money by lifting subsidized, ultra-low gas feedstock prices for the industry.

Banks were also weak with Alinma, the most heavily traded stock, down 2.1 percent. After dropping back in late August and September, five-year Saudi credit default swaps, used to insure against the risk of a sovereign debt default, have resumed rising and are around three-year highs

above 130 points.

That level implies a probability of default of less than 10 percent, but it still indicates Saudi Arabia is more likely to default than the Philippines, whose CDS are at 106 points. Telecommunications firm Etihad Etisalat (Mobily) plunged 10.1 percent after reporting a surprise third-quarter loss that it attributed to rising expenses, even though it slashed its capital spending.

Rival Zain Saudi tumbled 4.0 percent after reporting a narrower third-quarter loss that matched analysts' forecasts. There were several gainers among the 10 most active stocks, however. Miner Maaden added 2.1 percent while Atheeb Telecom climbed 1.9 percent after reporting a 3.6 million riyal (\$960,000) net profit for the third quarter, which was only its second quarterly profit since the start of 2012.

GULF, EGYPT

The United Arab Emirates and Qatar have stronger finances and are much more able to cope with cheap oil than Saudi Arabia, but a Saudi economic slump could hurt investor

and consumer sentiment across the region. Dubai's stock index dropped 1.0 percent yesterday. Construction firm Drake and Scull, which has considerable business in Saudi Arabia, fell 1.6 percent. Abu Dhabi slid 1.0 percent as real estate developer Aldar Properties sank 3.3 percent. Qatar's index lost 0.7 percent as Barwa Real Estate dropped 1.7 percent. But Qatar Gas Transport Co (Nakilat) rose 1.5 percent after posting a 7.6 percent rise in third-quarter net profit to 266.1 million riyals (\$73.1 million); QNB Financial Services had forecast 274.8 million riyals.

Egypt's index dropped 0.8 percent as liquidity migrated from other stocks to property developer Amer Group, which resumed trading after a three-day suspension as it split into two firms.

Amer itself swung widely before closing down 7.1 percent in its heaviest trade since February 2014. The new firm, Porto Group, was by far the market's most active stock and last traded at 0.42 Egyptian pounds after fluctuating between 0.36 and 0.43. —Reuters

TURKISH CONSUMER CONFIDENCE SOARS

ISTANBUL: Turkey's limp consumer confidence picked up from a six-year low in October, data showed yesterday, but ratings agencies highlighted risks to economic growth from a Nov. 1 election that may produce no outright winner. Opinion polls suggest the AK Party founded by President Tayyip Erdogan, which has dominated politics for 13 years but lost its parliament majority in June, will again fail to secure enough votes to govern alone and have to form a coalition. Political uncertainty generated by the inconclusive June vote pushed the consumer confidence index down to 58.52 points in September. The Turkish Statistics Institute said it has rebounded to 62.78 in October.

With economic growth flagging and government reform efforts stagnating in the current political impasse, Fitch Ratings yesterday noted the importance of next month's vote. "If November's election led to the formation of a stable government, structural reform and growth could benefit," it said, while noting opinion polls pointed to a similarly inconclusive outcome.

However it said that despite the "heightened political uncertainty", commitment to fiscal discipline appeared to command broad political support, with the major parties making only "modest" pre-election spending commitments. Rival ratings agency Moody's also touched upon the issue of political uncertainty in a report on Wednesday evening on emerging market sovereigns.

"Turkey stands out as most vulnerable to external risks because of its high reliance on external capital and large stock of external debt due annually, combined with heightened political risks," it said.

GROWTH SLOWDOWN

The AKP's solid record on economic growth, key to its political success, has been dented by a slowdown in the last three years. Growth is expected to come in at around 3 percent next year, below the government's official 4 percent target, and 3.5 percent in 2017, Fitch senior director Paul Gamble told a conference in Istanbul.

Turkey's central bank left interest rates unchanged on Wednesday but signalled a tighter policy ahead, with economists expecting higher rates at some point to bolster the weak lira and fight high inflation. The bank's latest survey pointed to year-end headline inflation of 8.25 percent, sharply above its 5 percent target.

Fitch's Gamble said he expected inflation to fall to 6.4 percent in 2016 and 6 percent in 2017. Fitch last month affirmed its 'BBB-' rating on Turkey with a stable outlook. It said on Thursday its credit profile combined high exposure to global market conditions with strong public finances and a record of resilience to recent external shocks. — Reuters

CHINA FOOTWEAR RETAILER TO BUY ICONIC BRITISH TOY SHOP HAMLEYS

HONG KONG: Hong Kong-listed women's footwear retailer C.banner International Holdings will buy 255-year-old British toy shop Hamleys for around 100 million pounds (\$154.32 million), a source with direct knowledge of the deal said yesterday.

The deal for the iconic British retailer, known as the oldest toy shop in the world, comes a day after Chinese President Xi Jinping hailed close ties with Britain at the start of a pomp-laden visit that should seal more than \$46 billion of deals. Some of London's most famous shops have been snapped up by non-British investors. Qatar Holdings owns Harrods; Hong Kong-based Dickson Concepts owns Harvey Nichols; House of Fraser, a nationwide department store chain, is owned by China's Sanpower Group; and Royal tailor Gieves & Hawkes is part of Hong Kong-listed Trinity Ltd.

C.banner will announce the deal shortly, the source said, declining to be identified because the deal is not yet public. A spokesman for C.banner declined to comment.

Founded in 1760, Hamleys is best known for its landmark shop on London's Regent Street but has branched out abroad in recent years, opening in Moscow this April despite an economic crisis in Russia. The British toy shop, where Queen Elizabeth bought toys for her children, has been in foreign ownership since 2003 when it was acquired by Icelandic investment firm Baugur after a bidding war with a British-based buyer.

C.banner describes itself as the second largest retailer of middle-to-high-end women's formal and leisure footwear in China. The company counts Nobel prizewinner for economics, Myron Scholes, among its shareholders, it said in a press release in August. — Reuters

APPLE CHIEF COOK SHRUGS OFF CHINA'S SLOWDOWN

US GIANT FACES STIFF COMPETITION FROM DOMESTIC PLAYERS

SHANGHAI: US technology giant Apple will keep investing in China despite slowing growth in the world's second-largest economy, chief executive Tim Cook said, as the company prepares to open its newest store in the mainland. "I know some people are worried about the economy. We'll continue to invest," Cook told the official Xinhua news agency, according to a report late Wednesday.

"China is a superb place to be. Nothing has changed that," Cook said while on a visit to the country.

China's economy logged its worst performance in the third quarter since the global financial crisis six years ago, with gross domestic product growing just 6.9 percent, the government said Monday.

Cook has previously said that he expects China one day to surpass the United States

to become Apple's largest market. The launch of the company's large-screen iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus last year boosted its sales in China, though it faces sharp competition from domestic competitors such as Xiaomi and Huawei. On his Chinese Sina Weibo-or microblog-account, Cook on Wednesday posted a photo of himself climbing the Great Wall and said he was "Happy to be back" in China.

The US company will open its 21st mainland China store in the northeastern city of Dalian on Saturday, according to its website. Apple has in the past been criticized for having only a limited number of stores in China despite demand for its products, which encourages smuggling, especially from neighboring Hong Kong.

Apple is due to report quarterly earnings next week. It recently began offering

Apple Music and other digital content in the world's most populous country and is reportedly planning to launch online payment service Apple Pay. As part of Cook's visit, Apple yesterday announced programs aimed at reducing the carbon footprint of its manufacturing partners in China.

They include building solar projects able to produce 200 megawatts of power and helping manufacturers, including major supplier Taiwan's Foxconn, to become more efficient and reliant on clean energy, it said in a statement. Apple suppliers in China have faced criticism over treatment of their workers. New York-based workers' rights group China Labor Watch yesterday urged Apple to improve factory conditions following an investigation into the facilities of Pegatron Corp in Shanghai. — AFP



NEW YORK: A woman makes her way past the One World Trade Center building in New York on Wednesday. — AFP

CHINA: OUTFLOWS NORMAL, NO PANIC CAPITAL FLIGHT

BEIJING: Recent outflows of money from China are "normal" and not a sign of panic capital flight, a senior official at the foreign exchange regulator said yesterday, downplaying fears over growing outflows as the economy slows. China is confident in keeping international payments and receipts balanced in the future thanks to a positive economic outlook, Wang Xiaoyi, deputy head of the State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE) told a news conference.

"Current changes (in capital flows) are normal, which should not be regarded as capital flight," Wang said. The main reasons for recent outflows were a greater willingness by companies and individuals to hold foreign exchange, and moves by firms which were adjusting their foreign debt structures and increasing investment abroad, Wang said. China's foreign

exchange reserves posted their biggest quarterly decline on record in July-September, as the central bank stepped up intervention to stabilize the yuan and calm sentiment after it unexpectedly devalued the currency on Aug. 11, shocking global markets.

China's commercial banks sold a net 729.6 billion yuan of foreign exchange on behalf of clients in September, cooling from August's 807 billion yuan but still showing signs of capital outflows, data released by SAFE earlier yesterday showed.

Some investors had already been withdrawing funds from China and other emerging markets well before its devaluation on concerns about the extent of China's economic slowdown and possible interest rate rises by the US Federal Reserve. The recent decline in foreign

exchange reserves was within a controllable range and government activity in the foreign exchange market in the third quarter was normal conduct, rather than large-scale intervention, Wang said.

China's central bank has intervened heavily to keep the yuan steady after it devalued the yuan by nearly 2 percent. Wang said reforms in the exchange rate system would have positive effects on stabilising cross-border capital flows in the future, and said no direct connection can be seen between the currency reforms and capital outflows. The SAFE said it would step up monitoring of cross-border capital flows while studying measures including foreign exchange transaction fees, tobin tax to curb short-term, large cross-boarder capital flows. — Reuters

JAPAN OFFERS INDIA SOFT LOAN FOR \$15 BILLION BULLET TRAIN 505-KM PROJECT WILL LINK MUMBAI WITH AHMEDABAD

NEW DELHI: Japan has offered to finance India's first bullet train, estimated to cost \$15 billion, at an interest rate of less than 1 percent, officials said, stealing a march on China, which is bidding for other projects on the world's fourth-largest network.

Tokyo was picked to assess the feasibility of building the 505-kilometre corridor linking Mumbai with Ahmedabad, the commercial capital of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state, and concluded it would be technically and financially viable.

The project to build and supply the route will be put out to tender, but offering finance makes Japan the clear frontrunner. Last month China won the contract to assess the feasibility of a high-speed train between Delhi and Mumbai, a 1,200-km route estimated to cost twice as much. No loan has yet been offered.

Japan's decision to give virtually free finance for Modi's pet program is part of its broader push back against China's involvement in infrastructure development in South Asia over the past several years. "There are several (players) offering the high-speed technology. But technology and funding together, we only have one offer. That is the Japanese," said A K Mital, the chairman of the Indian Railway Board, which manages the network.

The two projects are part of a 'Diamond Quadrilateral' of high speed trains over 10,000 km of track that India wants to set up connecting Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata. Japan has offered to meet 80 percent of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad project cost, on condition that India buys 30 percent of equipment including the coaches and locomotives from Japanese firms, officials said.

Japan's International Cooperation Agency, which led the feasibility survey, said the journey time between Mumbai and Ahmedabad would be cut to two hours from seven. The route will require 11 new tunnels including one undersea near Mumbai.

"What complicates the process is Japanese linking funding to use of their technology. There must be tech transfer," said Mital.

RICKETY RAIL

JICA declined to comment on the details of its offer. "The report has already been handed over to India, and the Indian government is now in the process of making a consideration," a spokeswoman said. Toshihiro Yamakoshi, counsellor in the economic section of the Japanese embassy, said Japanese companies were keen to collaborate with their Indian counterparts on the rail project as part of Modi's Make-in-India program. He said it was too early to provide details of the cooperation.

Tokyo's push in India comes just weeks after it lost out to China on the contract to build Indonesia's first fast-train link. Beijing offered \$5 billion in loans without asking for guarantees, an Indonesian official said, ending a months-long battle to build the line linking Jakarta with the textile hub of Bandung. Japan's NHK broadcaster quoted Transport Minister Keiichi Ishii as saying that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had instructed him to step up exports of transport systems to India and Southeast Asia. "It is very regrettable that a high-speed railway project in Indonesia was awarded to China," he said.

China won the Delhi-Mumbai survey after securing clearance from Indian security agencies long worried about China's involvement in Indian infrastructure. The two neighbors fought a war in 1962 over a border dispute that remains unresolved, though trade between them is booming.

India's cabinet will take a decision on the Japanese proposal over the next few weeks, an Indian railway official said. He said there were lingering concerns about whether the billions of dollars required for high-speed rail might be more usefully spent in modernizing the railway system.

"There is a lot of money involved in this. The different departments are weighing the implications. Should we be committing all our resources to a single high-speed line," the railway official said on condition of anonymity. "The railways have not attempted anything as big as this before in terms of costs," the official said. India's rickety state-controlled rail system, which moves 23 million people a day, has a poor safety record and is in desperate need of funds to modernise it.

The average speed of trains is 54km/hour, and rail experts have argued that the priority ought to be to improve the speed and safety on existing trains and routes. —Reuters



NEW DELHI: Advertising for the Third India-Africa Forum Summit at the Indira Gandhi stadium entrance ahead of the event in New Delhi. India will host an unprecedented gathering of Africa's leaders next week as it ramps up the race for resources on the continent, where its rival China already has a major head start. —AFP

INDIA REACHES OUT TO AFRICA IN RESOURCES RACE WITH CHINA

NEW DELHI: India will host an unprecedented gathering of Africa's leaders next week as it ramps up the race for resources on the continent, where its rival China already has a major head start. Postponed since December over the Ebola crisis, the India-Africa Forum Summit from October 26-29 will be the first under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the biggest gathering of foreign dignitaries in India since 1983.

Hotels have been block-booked and intense security is expected to add to the chaos on Delhi's congested streets. More than 40 leaders have confirmed their attendance, with controversy looming over the possible appearance of Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir, who is wanted by the International Criminal Court.

India's presence in Africa is dwarfed by China, whose bilateral trade topped \$200 billion last year—more than the GDP of the 30 smallest African economies combined. Yet economic winds blowing across the Indian Ocean have warmed considerably, with trade swelling twenty-fold from about \$3 billion in 2000 to \$70 billion in 2014, according to government data.

From Punjabi farmers leasing Ethiopian fields to a telecoms magnate running a Malawi mobile network, Indian entrepreneurs have led the charge in Africa as politicians scramble to follow.

Keen to be seen as friend not predator, Delhi plays up a shared history that China lacks, citing 16th century maritime merchants who plied Africa's coastline and the joint fight against colonialism.

Politicians point to a 2.7 million-strong Indian diaspora, including many in South Africa, where independence hero Mahatma Gandhi began his freedom struggle. "Throughout the period of struggle for African independence against neo-

colonialism, against apartheid, against discrimination... we've been brothers in arms," said Navtej Singh Sarna, an Africa specialist at India's foreign ministry.

'Late to the party'

Despite the shared history, the first India-Africa summit was just seven years ago—long after China, the European Union and Japan held similar get-togethers. India's Africa-bound investment is about \$30 billion, the government says, a sixth of China's. And African nations account for only 11 percent of India's exports, with business body Assocham describing the relationship as "grossly under-utilised".

While successive Chinese leaders have paid frequent visits to Africa, India's have been more distant. An otherwise extensive traveller, Modi has yet to visit mainland Africa, although he has stopped off in Mauritius and the Seychelles. "India does come a little bit late to the party," said Sanusha Naidu of the Pretoria-based Institute for Global Dialogue. "Political engagement didn't correspond with economic engagement."

As with China, Africa's abundant natural resources are a draw for India, which imports 80 percent of its oil needs. Major African exports to India include minerals, metals, gemstones and chemicals.

By far the greatest share of Indian investments are in energy, as it looks to Nigeria and Angola to help reduce reliance on the Middle East.

A few big-ticket investments have made news, like Bharti Airtel's \$10.7 billion purchase of Kuwaiti company Zain—one of Africa's largest mobile operators. The Indian government has also loaned \$300 million to build a rail link between Ethiopia and Djibouti. But the broad pic-

ture is of scattershot small to medium investments led by the private sector, contrasting sharply with China's highly structured, state-sponsored mining and manufacturing mission.

"Our governments have not done enough," Indian businessman Ramesh Awtaney, founder of ISON Group, which runs call centres and IT projects in countries including Burkina Faso, Tanzania and Chad, told AFP. "China has been pushing its agenda in Africa so hard, India has been left behind. I would like to see more bilateral talks."

Soft power

Modi's government has been tight-lipped on what the summit will yield, aside from vagaries over enhancing trade. But it will be an opportunity to capitalize on disillusionment with China, whose demand for resources has plummeted as growth decelerates. Deep-pocketed Beijing has for decades sprinkled stadiums, hospitals, highways and dams across Africa in exchange for deals.

Yet critics say it has left countries heavily indebted and Chinese firms rather than locals have been the main beneficiaries of development projects. While India cannot match its Asian rival's financial heft it has worked hard to share skills and technology, and in 2011 extended \$5.4 billion in credit for development. India has set up a diamond-cutting facility in Botswana, a markets training centre in Uganda, and a female peacekeeping force in Liberia. Since 2008 it has granted 40,000 scholarships to African students to pursue higher education. Facing the future, the pair will share similar development challenges, with young, growing populations and hundreds of millions stuck in poverty.—AFP

IVORY COAST HEADS TO POLL RIDING ECONOMIC BOOM

ABIDJAN: From cocoa bean exports to nuts and bananas, Ivory Coast heads to the polls Sunday riding an economic boom that outgoing President Alassane Ouattara hopes will fetch him a second term. Crippled by a decade-long conflict that began in 2000, the world's top cocoa producer has made a spectacular comeback since Ouattara took office in 2011 after months of deadly unrest.

Growth in gross domestic product hit 10.7 percent in 2012 after peace returned to Ivory Coast, ran at 9.2 percent in 2013, 8.5 percent in 2014 and is to reach 9.5 percent this year—though critics say the country's newfound prosperity is unfairly spread and that Ouattara had little hand in it.

"GDP per person increased more than 20 percent in three years," said Economy Minister Niale Kaba. Ouattara's launch of large-scale infrastructure projects as well as the transition from war to peace saw business begin to reinvest and the

economy go into overdrive. If the October 25 election of a new president remains trouble-free, Ivory Coast looks set to regain its reputation as west Africa's beacon of prosperity and stability.

Cocoa warms economy

Cocoa production is at a record high — 1.7 million tons in 2014, 35 percent of the global cocoa harvest—while the country's agricultural sector is also back in business. Exports of cashew nuts have resumed along with pineapples, cotton, palm-oil, bananas and mangoes. With global cocoa prices on the up and up, the beans currently account for 22 percent of GDP, more than 50 percent of its export revenues and two-thirds of jobs and general revenue, according to the World Bank. Highlighting growing international awareness of Ivory Coast's "economic miracle", the African Development Bank returned to Abidjan in 2014 after an 11-year exile in Tunisia.

And in an even stronger signal early this

month, the International Cocoa Organization (ICCO) announced it was transferring its London headquarters to Abidjan in March 2016.

"More and more companies are setting up in Ivory Coast because there is potential," said Yolande Canon of the Working Planet recruitment firm. "If we continue to have peace and stability and continue to consolidate the business environment, banks will continue to finance the Ivorian economy," said Souleymane Diarrassouba, who heads the nation's Professional Association of Banks and Financial Institutions.

But critics claim many of the country's 23 million people have been left out of the boom. The official unemployment rate is 9.5 percent.

'Living on credit'

"We may be building lots of infrastructure projects, but what's the impact on the real economy?" said Ouattara's leading rival, Pascal Affi

N'Guessan, accusing the head of state of merely increasing the country's debt. "We've failed to develop our own economy to produce our own wealth, we just borrow to invest."

"We're living on credit," he said. The pre-election campaign has also brought up a barrage of charges of shoddy workmanship and corruption. Seraphin Prao of the Audace Afrique think-tank pointed out that unusually heavy rains last year washed out the country's just-built roads, underlining poor construction work.

"As for restoration work at the universities, nothing works, neither the ventilators, the electric sockets nor the microphones," he said. "Given their state of ill-repair, it's difficult to imagine the universities were restored." And after the High Authority for Good Governance charged that "corruption has become the norm, hitting every single sector," Ouattara pledged to make the fight against corrupt practices a central plank of his policies. — AFP

SOUTHWEST BEATS WALL STREET Q3 FORECASTS

DALLAS: Cheaper fuel and higher revenue boosted Southwest Airlines to a record third quarter profit of \$584 million. Passengers paid lower average fares in the third quarter than a year ago, but that could be about to change. Southwest said that a key revenue per mile figure will rise in the fourth quarter, likely indicating that it expects higher fares. Southwest said Thursday that net income rose 78 percent from a year ago, helped by fuel-pump savings of \$450 million, or 32 percent.

Excluding non-repeating items, Southwest said it earned 94 cents per share. That topped Wall Street expectations, as nine analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research predicted 92 cents per share. Revenue rose 11 percent, to \$5.32 billion, which also topped the analysts' forecast. Three analysts surveyed by Zacks expected \$5.1 billion. Southwest has been growing rapidly in its hometown of Dallas since federal restrictions on flights at Love Field expired a year ago. That helped Southwest increase traffic by 9 percent and fill 85.4 percent of its seats, an increase of 1 percentage point from a year ago.

The average fare on Southwest fell 4 percent, to \$154.33 for a one-way ticket despite longer flights. Southwest said, however, that revenue for every seat flown one mile will rise 1 percent in the fourth quarter. That's a closely watched number in the airline business, and it rises when airlines fill more seats or charge higher average prices. Southwest also said the benefits from a new credit card contract with Chase. Airlines have been posting record profits this year thanks to jet fuel prices, which began to plummet in summer 2014. Southwest's fuel bill dropped to \$936 million, making labor costs by far the airline's biggest expense. Salaries, wages and benefits rose 25 percent to \$1.7 billion. This month, Southwest opened a new international terminal in Houston and began flights to several destinations in Mexico and the Caribbean. Shares of Southwest Airlines Co (LUV) shares have dropped 3 percent since the beginning of the year, while the Standard & Poor's 500 index has declined almost 2 percent. The stock has risen 19 percent in the last 12 months. — AP



DALLAS: A Southwest Airlines plane with a new paint job flies over Love Field in Dallas. Southwest reported quarterly financial results yesterday.—AP



MIAMI: Job applicants fill out and turn in forms during a job fair at Dolphin Mall in Miami. The US Labor Department yesterday reported on the number of people who applied for unemployment benefits during the week ending Oct 17.—AP

US JOBLESS DATA POINTS TO FIRING LABOR MARKET

WEEKLY CLAIMS RISE 3,000, LESS THAN EXPECTED

WASHINGTON: The number of Americans filing new applications for unemployment benefits rose less than expected last week, remaining at levels consistent with a fairly healthy labor market.

Initial claims for state unemployment benefits increased 3,000 to a seasonally adjusted 259,000 for the week ended Oct. 17, the Labor Department said yesterday. They remained not too far from levels last seen in late 1973. It was the 33rd straight week that claims were below the 300,000 threshold, which is normally associated with a firming jobs market. At current levels, there is not much scope for claims to fall further and the very low level of layoffs suggests the labor market remains in good shape, despite a recent abrupt slowdown in job

growth. Signs that employers are holding on to their workers even as global demand is slowing implies strong domestic economic fundamentals that could keep the door open to an interest rate increase from the Federal Reserve this year. The dollar trimmed losses against the yen after the data, while prices for US government debt rose.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast claims rising to 265,000 last week. A Labor Department analyst said there were no special factors influencing the data. The four-week moving average of claims, considered a better measure of labor market trends as it strips out week-to-week volatility, slipped 2,000 to 263,250 last week, the lowest level since December 1973.

The claims report covered the period during which the government surveyed employers for the payrolls portion of October's unemployment report. The four-week moving average of claims fell 9,250 between the September and October survey periods. That suggested a pick-up in job gains this month.

Nonfarm payroll gains in August and September averaged 139,000, the weakest two-month rise since January last year. The claims report showed the number of people still receiving benefits after an initial week of aid rose 6,000 to 2.17 million in the week ended Oct. 10.

The four-week moving average of continuing claims was the lowest since late 2000, suggesting further declines in the unemployment rate. — Reuters

Motor racing

TEXAS 2-STEP MEANS PARTY TIME FOR PEREZ

AUSTIN: For the past few seasons, the US Formula One Grand Prix at the Circuit of the Americas has been the closest thing to a home race for Mexican Sergio Perez and his many fans. But not any more. This time 'Checo' arrives in Texas knowing that Sunday, for all the support he is sure to enjoy, is more like a warm-up for the following weekend's big party—the thrill of Mexico's first grand prix since 1992.

That will be a first in more ways than one for the Force India driver because the 25-year-old, Mexico's only current Formula One driver, has no experience of motor racing at home on asphalt. The man who leaped excitedly onto the podium in Russia two weeks ago, when he finished third for his fifth career top three finish, has only ever raced go-karts in Mexico. "As a Mexican we didn't have much history in our sport. The last Mexican in Formula One was 30 years ago. So basically to come all the way to Formula One I had to leave home at the age of 14," he told Reuters in an interview.

"I basically did my whole career in Europe, I raced just a couple of years in karting in Mexico." If racing in Mexico will be a highlight of his career so far, and another podium cannot be ruled out even if points are more likely, he is quick to qualify that by saying he hopes for greater things to come. "Don't get me wrong. I'm here to win championships and races," he said. "It's not that I am very comfortable with what I have achieved, but it's something very special for me as a racing driver to race in my home country. "No matter what result I get on Sunday, because on Sundays you never know what can happen, it will be just a very special moment in my career." It is also not something Perez ever expected when he left home in Guadalajara as a boy to move to Germany and follow his dream of racing cars in Europe. In those days, when talk of Mexico returning to the calendar sounded fanciful, he was in no hurry to come back. "I thought this is my last race in Mexico and I hope I never come back to race in my country," he said. "I wanted to race out of Mexico."

A toddler when Britain's Nigel Mansell won in 1992 at the Mexico City circuit named after the country's greatest drivers, the late brothers Pedro and Ricardo Rodriguez, Perez said a return home to race as a teenager would have signaled only failure. It would have been the end of a dream-one that could have ended equally abruptly in 2013 when he lost his seat at McLaren before Force India threw him a lifeline. He returns home regularly enough now, this month driving Pedro Rodriguez's old BRM at the formal opening of a revamped high-speed circuit that he expects to provide plenty of excitement.

"My target was always Formula One, although we had many drivers in Indy Car, I wanted to make it big time," said Perez, who has benefited from strong backing from an early age by Mexican telecoms giant Telmex. "I wanted to race against the best drivers in the world because I feel I am one of them. —Reuters



VANCOUVER: Edmonton Oilers' Taylor Hall (4) skates with the puck during the second period of an NHL hockey game in Vancouver, British Columbia. — AP

OILERS DOWN RED WINGS

EDMONTON: Connor McDavid scored his fourth goal of the season to help the Edmonton Oilers beat the Detroit Red Wings 3-1 on Wednesday night. The No 1 overall pick in the June draft, the 18-year-old McDavid beat Petr Mrazek with a deke on a breakaway to give the Oilers a 2-0 lead at 6:34 of the second period. He also has two assists in his first seven NHL games. Edmonton has won three straight after losing its first four games. The Oilers also snapped an eight-game losing streak against Detroit. Teddy Purcell scored 30 seconds after McDavid's goal. Mark Letestu scored his first goal for Edmonton on a first-period power play. Cam Talbot made 28 saves, allowing only Tomas Tatar's third period goal. The Red Wings have lost three straight after winning their first three games.

FLYERS 5, BRUINS 4, OT

Claude Giroux scored his second power-play goal of the game at 2:09 of overtime to left Philadelphia past Boston. Giroux one-timed a shot past Tuukka Rask from the left circle with Ryan Spooner off for hooking. Philadelphia overcame a two-goal deficit in the third period. Giroux cut it to 4-3 at 7:48, and Wayne Simmonds tied it at 9:36. Pierre-Edouard Bellemare and Sam Gagner also scored for the Flyers. Chris Kelly, Jimmy Hayes, Brett Connolly and Patrice Bergeron scored for Boston. The Bruins have lost their first four home games this season.

SABRES 2, MAPLE LEAFS 1, SO

Evander Kane tied it with 4:29 left with his first goal for Buffalo, and Matt Moulson and Tyler Ennis scored in the shootout to beat Toronto. Kane pushed a

wrister past goalie Jonathan Bernier. Buffalo acquired Kane from Winnipeg in February, but he was unable to play until this season after having shoulder surgery. Chad Johnson made 23 saves to help Buffalo improve to 2-4. PA Parenteau scored for Toronto, and Bernier made 34 saves.

HURRICANES 1, AVALANCHE 0, OT

Victor Rask scored 1:49 into overtime to end Carolina's 10-game losing streak in Colorado. Cam Ward made 26 saves in his first shutout of the season and 23rd of his career. Colorado's second group in the extra period got caught on the ice, leading to the goal. Ryan Murphy fed Rask in the slot, and Rask took the puck to the front of the net and beat Semyon Varlamov with a backhand. Varlamov finished with 18 saves. — AP

MOTORCYCLING - ROSSI SEEKS TO HOLD OFF LORENZO IN MALAYSIA

KUALA LUMPUR: Valentino Rossi and Jorge Lorenzo bring their two-man battle for the MotoGP title to Malaysia's tricky track this weekend for the penultimate race in a season streaking toward a nail-biting finish. The contest between the Yamaha teammates tightened at last weekend's spectacular Australian Grand Prix, where Lorenzo shaved Rossi's season point lead down to just 11. Rossi, 36, is a legend in the sport who has won seven world championships in the premier class over the course of his glittering career, but the Italian hasn't taken home the crown since 2009.

"There are only two races for the championship left and it will be important not to make any mistakes," said Rossi, whose slip to a

fourth-place finish at Phillip Island opened a crack for Lorenzo. "In Australia we had a good race but it could have been much better. Now we need just two good races to finish this successful season off." Rossi is comfortable on Malaysia's muggy, slippery Sepang circuit, winning six times in the top-tier class.

There is a chance he could clinch the title on Sunday if he tops the podium and Lorenzo falters to finish lower down in the pack. But that looks unlikely, with Lorenzo a fixture on the podium all season, and the championship could go down to the wire next month at Valencia. Lorenzo, 28, who won the world championship in 2010 and 2012, is yet to win in the premier race at Sepang. He may need victories in the final two contests for a

shot at his third MotoGP world title. "The main goal is to cut some more points from Valentino's margin and I will try to arrive to Valencia with a smaller disadvantage. I feel strong and look forward to racing in Malaysia," said the Spaniard.

Rossi's lead would have been even slimmer had Lorenzo been able to close out a victory at Phillip Island. But defending champion Marc Marquez swept beneath Lorenzo on the final go-around to win a thrilling race that saw 52 overtakes between the top four finishers. Rossi has 296 points, followed by Lorenzo's 285.

Despite his stirring victory in Australia, Marquez is well back in third on 222 points. His chances of repeating as champion were



KUALA LUMPUR: Movistar Yamaha MotoGP rider Valentino Rossi of Italy (right), teammate Jorge Lorenzo of Spain (center) and Ducati team rider Andrea Dovizioso of Italy share a light moment during the press conference ahead of the MotoGP Malaysian Grand Prix at Sepang International Circuit yesterday. — AFP

dashed by a broken left hand suffered last month while training on his mountain bike at home in Spain. Rossi was the runner-up at

Sepang last year in a race that was meaningless for the world title, as Marquez had already secured it with a dominant season. — AFP

MIYAHARA, GOLD HEADLINE SEASON-OPENING SKATE AMERICA

PARIS: Japan's Satoko Miyahara opens her bid for a first gold at the season-opening ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating event Skate America in Milwaukee today in a field that includes US hope Gracie Gold and Russia's Julia Lipnitskaya. With former three-time world champion Mao Asada making her return to competition this season, the 17-year-old Miyahara will be looking to set herself up as a challenger to the 25-year-old Japanese superstar.

Asada, who took a year out after winning a third world title, will begin her Grand Prix campaign at the Cup of China from November 6-8 and will also compete in the NHK Trophy in Nagano from November 27-29. In her absence, Miyahara took silver in the world championships in Shanghai in

March behind Russia's Elizaveta Tuktamysheva and has been assigned Skate America and the NHK Trophy as her two events in the six-leg Grand Prix series.

Miyahara, who finished runner-up behind Asada in the Japan Open earlier this month, will be among three Japanese women competing in Wisconsin along with Haruka Imai, 22, and Miyu Nakashio, 19. With the world championships taking place in her native Boston from March 28 to April 3, Gold will be determined to get the season back on track after stumbling to last in the six-skater Japan Open. Lipnitskaya, 17, will be looking to recapture her form of the Olympic season which saw her win the European title and team gold in Sochi in 2014 but struggle to ninth at nationals last season. Young

Kazakh skater Elizabet Tursynbaeva could also challenge after winning gold in this month's Autumn Classic in Canada.

In the men's field, Kazakhstan's Olympic bronze medalist Denis Ten is the top-ranked skater, although his coach Frank Carroll has said he is struggling with groin and hip problems. "Of course, he is doing the best he can, but at the moment he's not up to snuff," said Carroll. US champion Jason Brown will square off against Japan's world junior champion Shoma Uno, 17, who defeated Spain's world champion Javier Fernandez to win the Japan Open. China's Han Yan, Russia's Konstantin Menshov and Max Aaron, the 2013 US champion, are also among the challengers. Russia's Ksenia Stolbova and Fedor Klimov, the 2014

Olympic and world pairs silver medallists, will compete this weekend along with world silver medallists Sui Wenjing and Han Cong of China.

Returning

Olympic champion Yuzuru Hanyu of Japan gets his season underway at Skate Canada from October 30 to November 1, and will also compete in the NHK Trophy as Sochi silver medalist Patrick Chan of Canada returns after skipping the post-Olympic season along with Olympic women's champion Adelina Sotnikova. Chan will compete at Skate Canada and the Trophee Bompard in France, two events which will also see women's world champion Tuktamysheva, with Sotnikova at the Cup of Russia. — AFP

LI DREAMING OF BECOMING CHINA'S FIRST MAJOR WINNER

HONG KONG: Highly tipped young Chinese golfer Li Hao-tong is aiming to become the first player from his country to join the PGA Tour as he chases his ultimate dream of winning a major. The mainland's number three player, who turned 20 in August, said it would take three years to become comfortable with the field after gaining his PGA Tour card and was under no illusion of the challenges that await him at the highest level. But the ambition of the Hunan-born six-footer is unmistakable. "If you can stay there (on the PGA Tour) forever, you will win," Li said as he practiced his drives at the Hong Kong Golf Club, ahead of the Hong Kong Open, which got under way yesterday. "It's my dream to one day win a major."

The trophy he most covets is the Masters and despite the daunting scale of the challenge, he has already made impressive strides since turning pro in 2011. Last year he became the first Chinese player to join the Web.com Tour and he is currently based at the Bishops Gate Golf Academy in Florida. Li has been hailed as the successor to Chinese golfing pioneers such as Zhang Lian-wei and Liang Wen-chong, but he has already achieved more than his compatriots had by his age. In just 10 weeks, from September to November last year, he won a US\$1 million OneAsia tournament and three PGA Tour China events to break into the world's top 200.

Li has also come to symbolize the growing popularity of golf in mainland China but he cautioned that obstacles to the game's growth remained. He singled out the anti-corruption drive of President Xi Jinping, which he blamed for the closure of dozens of courses. In March Beijing ordered the closure of 66 illegal golf courses in a crackdown on a violation of rules protecting arable land and conserving water. But some commentators have suggested the move is an extension of Xi's high-profile campaign against extravagance on the part of public officials in a country where golf is regarded as an elite past-time. "Last year it felt like golf was getting more popular but now it's getting a little trouble," he said.

Yet despite being based in the United States, Li said he remains proudly Chinese and excited to play at the Fanling course in the New Territories, from where the skyscrapers of Shenzhen, just over the border, sparkle in the sunshine. "I always have China in my heart and Hong Kong is part of China, and it's the first time I have played golf here," he said. "This week will be more enjoyable for me. I am not a European Tour player, I am not an Asian Tour player, I just want to play with some good players." In the past he has singled out world number four Bubba Watson as someone he'd like to emulate but at the Hong Kong Open he held up England's world number seven Justin Rose, who won the 2013 US Open, as someone he admired. "He's a really nice guy-and he's won a major," Li added with a grin — AFP



MEXICO CITY: Tiger Woods gives golf tips to a young girl during a promotional golf clinic for the Bridgestone America's Golf Cup in Mexico City. Woods withdrew from the Bridgestone America's Golf Cup and two other events he had planned to play this year following back surgery. He isn't expected to return to the tour until January at the earliest. — AP

BIG GUNS OPEN UP ON FIRST DAY OF HONG KONG OPEN

HONG KONG: The big guns in the Hong Kong Open started to show their class after the first round yesterday with Justin Rose setting himself up for the tournament by hitting five under to sit in joint second after a "solid" performance. The two joint leaders were Taiwan's Lu Wei-chih and Italy's Andrea Pavan who shot six under par rounds at the par 70 course. Lu's journey to the top of the leaderboard was even more remarkable given he had a brain tumor removed just three years ago. Another surprise package was Ian Poulter—who only arrived in Hong Kong Wednesday evening after the European Tour found him a last-minute place in a bid to save his season. Graeme McDowell, who by his own admission has had a disappointing year, said he got his confidence back after hitting four under.

McDowell, who won the 2010 US Open, said yesterday he was carrying his newly rediscovered form onto the Hong Kong course. "The two weapons in my bag which have misfired this year are my driver and my putter—those are

the two things that have hurt me the most," he said. "But today I felt loose on the greens and I putted nicely." Rose, whose previous visit to the Fanling course resulted in a long weekend on the town after he failed to make the cut, said he was happy with his performance. "I began to build some confidence today and I played a really good, solid, patient round of golf," he said. One of Rose's highlights was a birdie on the 10th - the first of four in the back nine which saw a strong finish from England's world number seven.

The USA's Dustin Johnson, ranked number eight, recovered from two bogeys on the first two holes, hitting an eagle on the third and a birdie on the 15th to end the day at one under par. Unexpected entrant Poulter took the place of American Rich Beem so he could complete the minimum 13 events necessary to retain his European Tour membership and keep alive his hopes of playing in the Ryder Cup next year. The Englishman, who has seen his world ranking plummet and now sits outside the top 50,

appeared relieved after shooting three under. "Overall, I've played pretty nicely, on a course which I've had to get to know again pretty quickly," said the former Hong Kong Open champion. "I left a few putts short but I have to be happy with that landing last night." The 39-year-old revealed he had since thanked Beem in person. "I saw him in the hotel, so I went over and said, that's awfully kind of him to do that," he said. Taiwan's Lu, whose six under was not beaten all day, said he had a difficult start before he birdied the fourth, fifth and sixth holes and ended feeling "very comfortable". Jeev Milkha Singh from India, sitting in joint second on five under, said he was recovering well from a shoulder injury and welcomed the atmosphere on a day when spectators were let in for free. "For sure, there were a lot of people out here today, and I think it's great to see the crowds come out," he said. "It's good for the game, and especially for the Asian players and also the top players who have come to play from Europe and the US." — AFP

CUBS FANS CRINGE; CURSE STRIKES AGAIN, SERIES HOPES SMASHED

CHICAGO: If a neighborhood could sink under the weight of decades and decades of crushed baseball dreams, it happened in Chicago Wednesday night as the Cubs were again knocked out of World Series contention. This was supposed to be the year that baseball's 'loveable losers' ended the longest title drought in North American sports history: a whopping 107 years. They'd already beaten baseball's statistically 'best' team—the St. Louis Cardinals—in the first round of the playoffs, after a wildcard game victory over the Pittsburgh Pirates sealed their first post-season win in 12 years.

That is not to mention the fact that the movie "Back to the Future" predicted the Cubs would win in 2015. And Thursday-October 21 — was the day that Marty McFly's DeLorean landed him in front of that implausible holographic billboard "Cubs Win World." But the Cubs failed. Their loss Wednesday night made it 4-0 for the New York Mets in the best of seven series in the National League Championship.

If Hollywood had been writing the script, the Cubs would have dug in after losing the first three games against the Mets, pulled off an underdog, come-from-behind win on Wednesday night and then swept to a glorious, curse-breaking World Series victory.

It happened to the Boston Red Sox in 2004: a team also weighed down by a curse, and a weightier one at that. The Red Sox were saddled with the "curse of the Bambino" after selling Babe Ruth to arch-rivals the New York Yankees a year after he helped them win the 1918 series. And it only took them 84 years to win another. The Cub's "curse of the Billy Goat" is much less deserved: it was lobbed by an irate tavern owner after he tried to bring a pet goat into Wrigley Field during Game Four of the 1945 World Series.

Go Cubs! Go!

"107 years we've been waiting. Figured maybe this was going to be the year," David Dakota said as he held his 22 month-old son Blake in front of a gate that offers a view of the play at Wrigley Field. "Hoping for a victory here, but it's not looking so good," Dakota said during the bottom of the third inning. Blake hadn't picked up on his father's disappointment yet as he piped out adorably lispy "Go-Cubs-Go" chants. His wide eyes drank in the excitement of bright lights and busy streets outside one of the last stadiums in the United States still nestled in a neighborhood, rather than surrounded by a sea of concrete parking lots. He didn't know that the bars across the street were usually a lot more packed. Or notice that many of the people left inside had already stopped paying attention to the big screen TVs. Some of the team's most faithful fans kept believing they had a shot long after the Cubs gave up four runs in the first inning and two more in the second.

'There's always next year'

Bartender Diane Harder, 63, grew up just a few blocks from the team's storied stadium and loves the Cubs so much she tattooed their logo on her shoulder. "They're down, but we've got a lot of time, we can do it, absolutely," Harder told AFP after slipping away from her costly playoff seat for a smoke break during the sixth inning when the Cubs were down 6-1. Cheers and chants of 'Go Cubs Go' poured out of Wrigley as she smoked, but so did plenty more fans who weren't heading back in. Soon, that trickle of dejection turned into a flood. — AFP



CHICAGO: The New York Mets celebrate after defeating the Chicago Cubs in game four of the 2015 MLB National League Championship Series at Wrigley Field on October 21, 2015. The Mets defeated the Cubs with a score of 8 to 3 to sweep the Championship Series. — AFP

METS COMPLETE SWEEP OF CUBS, REACH WORLD SERIES

CHICAGO: The New York Mets completed a four-game sweep of the Chicago Cubs in the National League Championship Series with an 8-3 rout on Wednesday that put them into the World Series for the first time since 2000. Daniel Murphy added to his spectacular postseason by belting a home run for a Major League Baseball record sixth game in a row, while first baseman Lucas Duda came out of a slump to drive in five runs in the first two innings to lift the Mets.

Murphy, who hit four home runs and drove in six during the series, was named Most Valuable Player of the league championship. Mets captain David Wright said he and his team mates were besides themselves with excitement about having a chance to win the team's first MLB title in 29 years. "When you grow up as a kid and you think about playing in the World Series, you're in your backyard with your Whiffle Ball bat saying, 'Game Seven, full count and bases loaded,'" Wright said, admiring his new World Series cap with a huge grin. "And now we get to experience it! Are you kidding me? It just feels too good to be true."

New York will play the winner of the American League Championship Series

between the Kansas City Royals and Toronto Blue Jays in the best-of-seven World Series starting next Tuesday. The loss meant the young, hard-hitting Cubs would have to wait at least one more season to carry the frustrated franchise back to the Fall Classic, which they last played 70 years ago. Chicago swept all seven of the regular season contests between the teams, but the Mets had the last laugh and never trailed the Cubs during any game of the series. "It's not so much to be disappointed in our performance," Cubs manager Joe Maddon said. "They were just that good for four games. They smothered us early."

Fast start

The Mets jumped out to a 6-0 lead after two innings, scoring four runs in the first inning off starter Jason Hammel and two more in the second with first baseman Duda supplying a three-run homer in the first and a two-run double in the second. Murphy collected three hits before topping off his series with a flourish, belting a two-run homer in the eighth. After three wins that featured young, dominant starting pitching by New York's Matt Harvey, Noah Syndergaard and Jacob deGrom, the Mets completed the

series sweep by committee. Rookie starter Steven Matz held the Cubs without a hit through three innings but faced threats in the fourth and fifth. The Cubs appeared to have Matz on the ropes in the fourth when they loaded the bases with none out. Jorge Soler led off with a single for the Cubs' first hit, Kris Bryant walked and Anthony Rizzo singled to fill the bases. Starlin Castro then ripped a bullet line drive that looked headed for leftfield and some runs but third baseman Wright made a leaping catch.

Kyle Schwarber, who hit five post-season homers, bounced out to first and scored Soler, but Javier Baez hit a foul pop down the third base line that Mets shortstop Wilmer Flores caught on the run near the stands to end the threat. Two more singles in the fifth led Mets manager Terry Collins to replace Matz with 42-year-old Bartolo Colon. Colon, who registered the win, pitched out of the jam and was followed to the mound by Addison Reed, Tyler Clippard and closer Jeury Familia. Clippard gave up a long two-run homer to Bryant in the eighth that made it 8-3, before Familia shut the door in the ninth to set off a Mets celebration in the middle of Wrigley Field. — Reuters

AS MLB POSTSEASON LENGTHENS, OUTFIELDERS OUTFITTED AS SKIERS

NEW YORK: Joe Maddon walked to the mound in a ski cap. Yoenis Cespedes wore a balaclava. As baseball's postseason keeps getting longer, the Boys of Summer are starting to resemble skiers on a Steamboat Springs lift line. "This weather is not for me," Cubs infielder Javier Baez said.

"I'm from Puerto Rico, and you know how the weather is in the island - it's hot all year long." Players wish there was only 6 degrees of separation between the dog days of summer and the coolest venues in baseball they all try to reach - the postseason. It was 48 degrees when the NL Championship Series opener began at New York's Citi Field last weekend and

45 for the start of Game 2. The teams did get a break with a 72 degree night at Chicago's Wrigley Field for Game 4 on Wednesday.

"Baseball is a warm weather sport. Guys like to sweat," Toronto manager John Gibbons said. "The pitchers tend to have the advantage and dominate a little bit more because guys get sawed off and guys' hands are hurting. You're just not as loose and relaxed." Before the start of the League Championship Series in 1969, the World Series ended by Oct 16 each year except for 1910, when the NL attempted to expand the regular season from 154 to 168 games before backing off, and 1911, when there were six days off between Games 3 and 4 because of rain.

Expanded playoffs and television have extended the schedule, with the Division Series round starting in 1995 and a one-game wildcard matchup added for 2012. Game 7 this year is scheduled for Nov 4, which would match 2009 for the latest date a World Series game has been played.

All World Series games were played in the daytime until 1971, when the lure of television money started the night owl transformation. There hasn't been a Series day game since 1987 - and no outdoor day games since 1984.

When Bud Selig presided over his final All-Star Game as commissioner in 2014, a fan asked whether the wild-card round could expand to

best-of-three. "We start running into November and you are asking for trouble," Selig said. Even the second half of October has been problematic. When Bowie Kuhn was commissioner, he sat in the stands without a coat on cold nights during the 1976 World Series, trying to make it appear he was not impacted by the weather. When Cleveland hosted the Florida Marlins for Game 4 of the 1997 World Series, the game-time temperature was 38 degrees, the coldest at the start of a Series game since its records began in 1990, according to STATS. "It was the coldest I've pitched in," said Cleveland pitcher Jaret Wright, who got the win that night. "It was tough to get a grip on the ball." — AP

BRAZIL'S WOMEN GET THEIR KICKS IN MMA FIGHTING

SAO PAULO: The black eyes, scrapes and sweat get a little in the way of Poliana Botelho's smile but her euphoria after winning a Mixed Martial Arts title fight in Sao Paulo is unmistakable. Although the Brazilian gets battered in the September 19 clash in Brazil's biggest city, she wins the MMA's Xtreme Fighting Championships franchise belt and her opponent is left semi-conscious and receiving medical attention.

Botelho's compatriot Bethe Correia had less luck just a few weeks earlier when she was knocked out within 34 seconds by the world's top female MMA fighter, the United States' Ronda Rousey, holder of the most prestigious UFC belt. But whatever the ups and down, Brazilian women are rising in the world of MMA, a supremely gladiatorial discipline that has become a global pay-per-view success, often staged in cage-like rings where fighters combine facets of different martial arts, ranging from karate to wrestling to boxing.

With their long history of jiu-jitsu fighting and an MMA-precursor called "vale tudo," or "anything goes," Brazilians seem to have taken naturally to the sport. Subscriptions to Combate television, which specializes in showing MMA, have gone up 500 percent since 2010, the channel said. Like other fighting sports, MMA has long been male-dominated, but the female version is especially strong in Brazil. A survey by research group Ibope found that 45 percent of the most ardent fans here are women. And on Combate, the main website for MMA enthusiasts here, 20 of the 25 most popular articles in August were about female fights.

Beauty with attitude

Three years ago Botelho, then 23, took up Thai boxing as a way to lose weight. But her competitive attitude caught the trainer's eye and she learned quickly. Just a few months later she was taking part in her first MMA bout. Despite this quick progress, she didn't fit what most people would consider the standard image of a fulltime fighter. "When I turned professional, a friend said to me, 'But Poliana, you wouldn't hurt a fly!' I explained that this is just a sport. People imagine that it's all about blood and blows, but that's not the case."

From the start, Botelho got family support, even if one aunt said that with her good looks she shouldn't be going in the ring. Taking hits and kicks isn't the only physical challenge of being a profes-



SAO PAULO: Brazilian Poliana Botelho (right) and Argentina's Silvana Gomez Juarez aka "La Malvada" fight for the MMA World Flyweight Championship belt in Sao Paulo, Brazil as part of the Xtreme Fighting Championships (XFC). — AFP

sional fighter. Severe weight controls mean that even drinking a glass of water can be an issue before a fight, when she must measure in below her weight category's limit of 56.7 kilograms. Botelho says MMA has a special intensity between women. "Men spend a lot of time studying their opponent, but women attack from the very start because there's more rivalry between us. We have a need to be the best, the most beautiful, and that's something we all share," Botelho said.

Extreme sacrifice

The combate.com website had an audience of about five million Brazilians during the weekend of the Correia-Rousey fight in August in Rio de Janeiro. Globo TV doubled its usual audience with

the late-night bout. Rousey is not just the best female MMA fighter in the world and last year the eighth highest paid sportswoman, but a Hollywood star whose good looks have helped her cross marketing boundaries, earning \$6.5 million between June 2014 and June 2015, according to Forbes magazine.

Correia has made huge sacrifices in her quest to displace Rousey as queen of the Ultimate Fighting Championship franchise, which gets some 800 million viewers from 129 countries for big fights. She gave up her marriage and stable job as an accountant in exchange for the adrenalin of the ring four years ago. "When my family found out I was going to turn professional they panicked. They thought I'd gone mad," said Correia, who at 32 has moved

base to California, where she can get better training.

The image of the fighter is hard to square with the soft voice during a telephone interview with AFP, or Correia's appearance in make-up and flashy clothing along with Rousey before their bout. But Correia says MMA is always about more than pure violence. "We train a lot to learn to defend ourselves, to take blows without getting hurt. It is a very technical and professional sport," she said. "It is not street brawling. We confront someone of our weight and there are rules, referees and doctors." Not that MMA's women will shirk pain and violence in their quest for glory. "What I want now is to be the best in the world," Botelho said. "I want to be capable of overcoming anyone." — AFP

CARLI LLOYD SCORES IN 85TH MINUTE; US, BRAZIL DRAW

SEATTLE: Carli Lloyd scored in the 85th minute and the World Cup champion United States women pulled out a 1-1 tie with Brazil on Wednesday night after trailing since the opening moments. Lloyd got her foot to a cross from defender Meghan Klingenberg and the shot got past goalkeeper Luciana, deflected off the underside of the crossbar and into the net. The US was on the verge of suffering its first home loss in more than a decade. Brazilian defender Monica scored on a header off a corner kick in the third minute. The header beat goalkeeper Hope Solo and was the earliest goal allowed by the US in more than two years. The Americans extended their home unbeaten streak to 101 matches, their last loss coming on Nov 6, 2004, against Denmark in Philadelphia during a post-Olympic victory tour after the 2004 Athens Games. Lloyd was the Golden Ball winner at the Women's World Cup as the most outstanding player and capped the championship with the fastest hat trick in tournament history in the final against Japan.

Lloyd has a career-high 17 goals this season. The Americans had opportunities before Lloyd's late goal. Alex Morgan missed wide on a header minutes after the opening goal and later had a left-footed volley in the first half saved by Luciana. Megan Rapinoe had a

scoring chance in the 69th minute off a counterattack but directed her left-footed shot off a counterattack directly at Luciana and it was easily saved. The match against Brazil was the fifth game of the US victory tour after winning the Women's World Cup this summer just a couple hours north in Vancouver, British Columbia. The two sides will play Sunday in Orlando, Florida.

It was also the next stage of evaluation for the US as coach Jill Ellis begins to look at options for the January training camp from which the roster for Olympic qualifying will be selected. Ellis got a look at a few new faces to the national team pool with NWSL MVP Crystal Dunn starting and playing 72 minutes, and Jaelene Hinkle and Samantha Mewis checking in as subs in the second half. It was the final game for midfielder Shannon Boxx, who retired after 195 appearances for the national team. Boxx started and was the team captain, checking out in the 41st minute. Boxx received a standing ovation from the crowd and her teammates on the US bench. Solo ran up 60 yards to give Boxx a hug as she jogged off for the final time in her career. Boxx was a three-time Olympic champion and returned from a knee injury and the birth of her daughter in February 2014 to make the World Cup roster and add a final title to her resume. — AP

PARALYMPICS: BRITAIN'S GREAT FIRST DAY SEES GOLD, RECORDS

DOHA: British athletes dominated the opening morning of the IPC 2015 World Championships in Qatar yesterday, winning the first gold medal and setting its first new world record. Shot putter Aled Davies took gold after posting a championship best 14.95 meters in the F42 event (competitors with amputations). Davies was trailing Iran's Sajad Mohammadian, 14.54m, until the penultimate throw. The 24-year-old, who has only just recovered from a hernia operation, held the previous championship best of 14.71m. He is also world record holder with a distance of 15.93m.

Mohammadian took silver with Germany's Frank Tinnemeier winning bronze with a throw of 14.33. "It's probably not the performance I wanted, but I came here and won a major title and that's what matters at the end of the day," said Davies. "I know I didn't perform as well as I could have, but I got the gold medal and that's what it's all about." Meanwhile, Davies' compatriot Kadeena Cox, set the championships' first world record with a 13.59 seconds run in a T37 (cerebral palsy) 100m heat.

Cox, 24, beat the existing record of 13.68, which was held by France's Mandy Francois-Elie. "I cannot believe I have done that, I didn't realize I was running so quick," said Cox. "I was in chill mode before the race and was feeling pretty confident. I shut down in the closing stages so I hope there is a lot more to come." The Frenchwoman was also running yesterday morning and won her heat in a time of 13.87. But that was only the third best time of qualifying with another Briton, Georgina Hermitage clocking 13.79.

Four other golds were decided on the first morning. Germany's Sebastian Dietz won in the men's F36 (balance problems) shot put, again with a championship record, of 14.87m. China picked up their first gold thanks to Lijuan Zou who won the women's shot put F34 (athletes with ataxia, ataxia and/or hypertonion) with a first round throw of 8.37m. Cuba's Leonardo Diaz retained gold in the men's discus throw F56 (wheelchair competitors) with a season's best throw of 45.10m. And Sweden's Per Jonsson won the men's long jump T13 (visual impairment) with a leap of 7.15m. — AFP

GERMAN LEAGUE PREVIEW

SCHUBERT HITTING ALL THE RIGHT NOTES WITH GLADBACH

BERLIN: Borussia Moenchengladbach reserve team coach Andre Schubert was only supposed to be a stop-gap solution when he took over from Lucien Favre at the Bundesliga strugglers last month but after four straight league wins and a Champions League draw, the players may be dancing to his tune a while longer. The 44-year-old was put in charge after Favre resigned in September following a miserable start to the season that saw Gladbach lose five straight.

Schubert has steadied the ship, leading them to four consecutive league victories and saw them earn their first point in the Champions League with a goalless draw at Juventus on Wednesday despite the absence of several players, including winger Patrick Herrmann, through injury. Victory over Schalke 04 on Sunday would further improve his chances of earning a long-term contract and club bosses are eager to ride the new-found success under the little-known coach for as long as it lasts.

"I have often said that Andre is doing a great job. But we want to find a new coach in our own time and we are currently orientating ourselves," said Gladbach sports director Max Eberl following their draw in Turin. "The new coach could also be Andre Schubert. I never ruled

that out." Only days earlier, Eberl had hinted Schubert was their only candidate, saying: "Andre's work is outstanding and argument enough. We are currently not negotiating with other coaches."

Gladbach finished third last season under Favre but lost their way at the start of the current campaign following the departure of Germany internationals Max Kruse and Christoph Kramer in the close season. Schubert has quickly applied his exciting brand of attacking football and despite missing the injured Herrmann, Nico Schulz and Martin Stranzl, has led his team from last place to 10th in the space of a month. New arrival Lars Stindl is finally hitting top form and midfielder Granit Xhaka has taken more of a lead role, while teenager Mahmoud Dahoud, a whirlwind in midfield, is the season's early revelation.

"I am just enjoying it at the moment," said the soft-spoken Schubert, a former Germany national youth team coach and who also coached Paderborn and St Pauli in the lower divisions. "It is just a joy to work with the team." Schalke will be no pushovers though, with coach Andre Breitenreiter, also a Paderborn alumnus, having made a fine start in his first season in charge. — Reuters



TURIN: Moenchengladbach's coach Andre Schubert from Germany takes part in a training session at the 'Juventus Stadium' in Turin. — AFP



PARIS: Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo (right) vies with Paris Saint-Germain's Ivorian defender Serge Aurier during the UEFA Champions League football match Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) vs Real Madrid on October 21, 2015. —AFP

SPANISH LEAGUE PREVIEW

REAL AND CELTA VIGO PLAY FOR SPANISH LEAGUE LEAD

MADRID: Celta Vigo will be under the spotlight again tomorrow when it hosts Real Madrid with a chance to move into the Spanish league lead. Celta is tied with Madrid with 18 points from eight matches and a home victory can leave the surprising team from the Galicia region in sole possession of first place. Third-place Barcelona, which hosts Eibar on Sunday, also has 18 points entering the weekend, but trails Madrid and Celta on goal difference. Celta and Madrid are the only teams still unbeaten in the Spanish league, and tomorrow's matchup has attracted a lot of attention across Spain. Tickets for the match at the Balaidos Stadium in Vigo sold out on Monday, five days in advance.

The crowd of nearly 30,000 will be hoping to see the hosts beat a Spanish powerhouse for the second time this season. Celta shocked Barcelona with a 4-1 win last month, when the defending champions still had Lionel Messi in

the squad before his injury. "It's great to know that our fans are optimistic," Celta goalkeeper Sergio Alvarez said. "It shows that we are doing things the right way. Hopefully they will leave the stadium celebrating another big victory, which will be very important for us." Celta played five straight years in the second division before returning to the top flight in 2013, and since then it has twice finished in the top 10 in the standings.

Coaches and players began the season admitting that Celta's main goal was to remain in the first division, but another victory against a top opponent could help change everyone's expectations. "We realize that it's going to be a very difficult game. We will be playing against one of the best teams in the world," Alvarez said. "We will need to be focused from the start. We know the importance of a victory like this in front of our fans." Celta is led by striker Manuel "Nolito" Agudo, who is one of the

league's top scorers with six goals and was named the tournament's player of the month in September. Here are other things to look for in the Spanish league this weekend:

Short turnaround

Real Madrid travels to Vigo not long after a Champions League trip to Paris, where it drew Paris Saint-Germain 0-0 at the Parc des Princes on Wednesday. Rafa Benitez's team is depleted because of injuries and many of its top players won't be available for the game at Celta. Gareth Bale picked up a left-leg muscle injury in Madrid's 3-0 league win over Levante on Saturday, while striker Karim Benzema returned from international duty with France with a hamstring problem. Pepe, James Rodriguez and Dani Carvajal are also likely to miss the match at the Balaidos. The win over Levante last week was Madrid's first since a two game winless streak in the league. — AP

ENGLISH LEAGUE PREVIEW

CITY STILL MANCHESTER'S DOMINANT FORCE AHEAD OF THE 161ST DERBY

MANCHESTER: Louis van Gaal was careful to downplay talk of a permanent power shift in Manchester after United's 4-2 victory over City in the most recent derby game. Old Trafford was rocking that evening in April. After four straight losses to its neighbor, United finally owned local bragging rights. City was on a downward spiral - behind its neighbor in the standings, its title defense in tatters and with manager Manuel Pellegrini's job under serious pressure. But Van Gaal wasn't getting carried away, and he was right. Since that painful loss six months ago, the blue half of Manchester has recovered to remain the dominant force in the city - as they have been since the end of Alex Ferguson's 26-year tenure at United in 2013.

City won six straight games after that derby to finish the Premier League nine points above United and in second place. After two months of this season, City is in first place, the top scorer in the division and the favorite to capture the title for the third time in five years. The derby mauling in April seems a distant memory now as City heads back to Old Trafford on Sunday for the 161st Manchester derby, the headline game in the 10th round of Premier League fixtures. The momentum seems to be with Pellegrini's men, who have won their last two league games 6-1 and 5-1. City also had the advantage of playing at home in the Champions League on Wednesday - beating Sevilla 2-1 - while United had to travel back from a game in Moscow on the same night. However, United is at home - where it is unbeaten this season and has won seven of eight games - and has the incentive of potentially going top of the league with a win. United is third, tied for points with second-place Arsenal but behind on goal difference. Arsenal is at home to Everton tomorrow. Here are some things to know ahead of this weekend's games:

'Perfect' De Bruyne

The absence of striker Sergio Aguero and playmaker David Silva, who were injured during the recent international break, has robbed City of its two most influential attacking players for the derby. But in Kevin Bruyne, City has one of the most in-form players in the league, proving so far that he's worth the 55 million pounds (\$85 million) the club spent to make him its record signing. Pellegrini even called him the "perfect" signing after De Bruyne scored an injury-time winner against Sevilla on Wednesday. De Bruyne has been rotating, with great effect, with Raheem Sterling for central or left-wing roles in City's attack in recent games. He is hard to pick up and his eye for a pass is arguably as good as Silva's. Pellegrini's biggest call this weekend is whether to recall captain Vincent Kompany, or retain the center-back partnership of Nicolas Otamendi and Eliaquim Mangala. — AP



13TH GULF SHOOTING TOURNAMENT KICKS OFF



Qatar's Trap Coach Roberto Scaltzroni

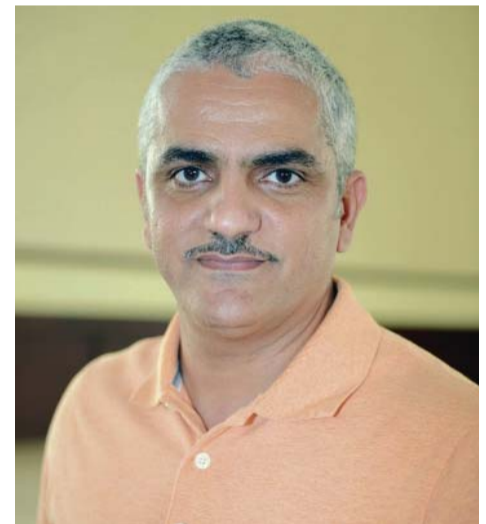
By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: HH The Crown Prince Shooting event and the 13th Gulf Shooting Tournament continues with increasing intensity in the competitions as shooters moved to the final stages at Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting complex. 200 shooters from all six GCC countries are participating. Several gold medals will be distributed today - particularly in the 10m Pistol for women, 50m Prone Rifle. Trap and Skeet competitions (75 shots) for men and women will take place early, while official training on the 50m Pistol for men will take place at noon.

Qualifications for the Olympic archery will also take place today. Meanwhile Qatar's Trap Coach Roberto Scaltzroni said Qatar shooters have a strong chance to win medals tomorrow, adding that this competition is serious and a preparation for the Asian

Championship which qualifies for Brazil 2016 Olympics. He said they are here to compete and win medals, while at the same time "we aim at the Asian Championship which will start here in Kuwait in few days, and we have strong opportunity to win". Qatar's team has three experienced shooters. There are also new shooters who are being prepared for world championships.

Meanwhile, Bahrain's shooting team manager Ibrahim bin Ali said Bahrain's Federation is keen to always participate in the Gulf tournament and all events organized by Kuwait, due to the professionalism, and continued follow-up by Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salam Al-Sabah who supports the sport of shooting in Bahrain. Bin Ali said the Gulf participation is very important for Bahraini team. Bin Ali thanked Kuwait Shooting Sports Club officials for their distinguished care and for providing requirements for all delegations.



Bahrain's Ibrahim bin Ali



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SAO PAULO:
Brazilian Poliana Botelho (left) and Argentina's Silvana Gomez Juarez aka 'La Malvada' fight for the MMA World Flyweight Championship belt in Sao Paulo, Brazil as part of the Xtreme Fighting Championships (XFC). —AFP

Brazil women get their kicks in MMA fighting