



17 children die
as refugees brave
stormy seas



89 killed in
attacks on Syria
rebel strongholds



Sirbb Circuit
honors Qatari
champion Attiyah



150 Files

US SENDING COMMANDOS TO SYRIA IN ABOUT-TURN

WORLD POWERS MEET IN VIENNA



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INDIA PROPERTY FAIR OPENS



KUWAIT: Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Sunil Jain and Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan cut the ribbon to open the India Property Mela 2015 at Crowne Plaza Hotel yesterday. — Photos by Joseph Shagra (See Page 2)

SUPER CYCLONE HEADING TOWARDS YEMEN, OMAN

GENEVA: The UN's weather agency warned yesterday a "super cyclonic storm" was heading towards Oman and war-ravaged Yemen, where it could strike with hurricane force and dump torrential rain that may trigger landslides. Named Chapala, the storm is brewing in the Arabian Sea and is expected to make landfall in northern Yemen and the adjoining Oman coast around midnight Monday, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said. "Tropical cyclones are extremely rare over the Arabian peninsula," WMO spokeswoman Clare Nullis told reporters, adding that the storm might well be the first of its kind to hit Yemen.

It is set to hit at a time when Yemen remains wracked by a conflict that has claimed nearly 5,000 lives since March. "We hope the humanitarian impact (of Chapala) on Yemen will be limited," Nullis said. The WMO described Chapala as "an extremely severe cyclonic storm." Chapala is poised to strengthen to become a "super cyclonic storm" within the next 24 hours, packing wind speeds of between 220 and 230 km per hour in the next 24 hours, it added. That is the equivalent of a category four hurricane.

"Because of the dry air from the Arabian desert and lower ocean

thermal energy, we do expect it will weaken before it makes landfall," Nullis said, saying the storm would likely hit land as the equivalent as a category one hurricane, with winds of up to 160 kph. "But even so there will still be very high gale-force winds in an area which is just not used to seeing this," she warned.

The storm is forecast to make landfall in an area of Yemen that is sparsely populated, but it could have a big impact in Oman, where it is expected to hit the port city Salalah, which has some 200,000 inhabitants. In both countries, WMO expects "the most serious impacts to be from the very, very, very heavy anticipated rainfall," Nullis said, citing reports that the area might get the equivalent of more than a year's worth of rainfall in a matter of days.

This could have serious consequences in the very arid area, where the infrastructure is not designed to cope with so much water. "There is a risk of quite serious damage to the infrastructure, there's a risk of landslides, mudslides," Nullis said. The Oman meteorological department had warned of flash-flooding in some areas starting as early as today evening, as well as wave heights along the coast of between five and seven metres. — AFP

VIENNA: The United States yesterday announced its first sustained deployment of ground troops to Syria, saying a small special forces team would assist the anti-jihadist fight, as major powers met in Vienna seeking a political solution to the war. The deployment marks an escalation in Washington's efforts to defeat the Islamic State (IS) group, which has tightened its grip on swathes of Syria despite more than a year of US-led air strikes.

Officials said President Barack Obama had authorized an initial deployment of "fewer than 50" special forces to northern Syria - parts of which are controlled by Syrian Kurdish forces fighting IS - easing his long-standing refusal to put boots on the ground. "They will help coordinate local ground forces and coalition efforts to counter ISIL," said a senior administration official, using an acronym for the jihadist group. Washington will also deploy A-10 ground-attack planes and F-15 tactical fighter jets to the Incirlik base in southern Turkey, as part of the ramped up effort.

The announcement came as key backers of Syria's rival sides sought to overcome deep divisions over the conflict, with regime allies Russia and Iran resisting Western and Saudi pressure to force President Bashar Al-Assad from power. Top diplomats from 17 countries, as well as the United Nations and the European Union, gathered in Vienna for talks bringing together all the main outside players in the four-year-old Syrian crisis for the first time. The West and Gulf monarchies led by Saudi Arabia want Assad to step down, but Moscow and Tehran insist he has a right to play a role in an eventual transition towards a mooted unity government and later elections.

France announced late yesterday afternoon that the talks had ended, with major powers to meet again on the crisis in two weeks' time. Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov had said earlier that the talks were not about whether Assad should go. "It is not the fate of Bashar Al-Assad that is being discussed," he told reporters in Russia. "Any political settlement is hard to achieve before the forces of terrorism and extremism sustain a significant blow." — Agencies

EVENT STRIPPED OF OLYMPIC STATUS OVER ISRAELI BAN

LAUSANNE: The Asian Shooting Championship lost its Olympics qualifying status on Thursday after tournament hosts Kuwait banned an Israeli official from taking part. The International Olympic Committee executive board said it had revoked the qualification status of the November 1-12 event following a request from the International Sports Shooting Federation (ISSF).

Kuwait had denied a visa to Israeli Yair Davidovich who was due to supervise the event. "The denial of a visa is against the non-discrimination principle of the Olympic Charter," said an IOC statement. Another reason for Thursday's decision is the fact that the Kuwait National Olympic Committee is currently suspended by the IOC due to government interference. — AFP



Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Sunil Jain and Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan are welcomed with flowers.



PROPERTY MELA SHOWCASES INDIA LUCRATIVE REAL ESTATE

By Faten Omar

Kuwait Times, in association with Aashiaana, a leading property portal in Kuwait, inaugurated the 'India Property Mela 2015' yesterday at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. The two-day real estate fair is an ideal opportunity for NRIs who are looking for investment in Indian real estate, as they have access to first-hand information on upcoming and current real estate projects as well as a range of property options, from residential apartments, plots and bungalows to commercial properties.

The exhibition facilitates visitors to meet and interact with some of the top Indian builders and real estate developers, giving them an opportunity to view hundreds of projects, ranging from affordable apartments to luxury villas from some of India's top developers including Lodha, Kanakia, Mahindra Lifespaces, Hubtown, Vaishnavi, Propshell, KoltePatil, Nahar's and Supertech. Developers will highlight real estate in cities across India and will present special offers on limited properties during the two-day show.

Indian Ambassador to Kuwait Sunil Jain, who opened the exhibition with Kuwait Times Editor-in-Chief Abd Al-Rahman Al-Alyan, told Kuwait Times that this is the best time to buy property in India. "I'm highly impressed by this exhibition that has brought together Indian property companies offering the best properties in the Indian market. I think now is a good time to invest in the Indian real estate market given the strength of the Kuwaiti dinar and the fact that properties in India are consistently gaining in value. I believe all Indians should have at least one property back home," added Jain.



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MUSLIM WORLD TO IMPROVE 'HALAL TOURISM'

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysian Minister of Tourism and Culture Mohamad Nazari Abdulaziz has called on Muslim nations to improve ties with non-Muslim nations, especially the Western ones, to better promote for the touristic and cultural products in the Islamic World. He said during the opening of World Islamic Tourism Conference Expo 2015, which is part of the activities of the 6th Muslim World Biz 2015 by International

Business Centre (OIC) International Business Centre that the OIC's countries have a number of privileges that qualify them to become important touristic countries in the world.

Abdulaziz added that a number of amazing natural touristic sites are located within the framework of OIC, saying that 'Halal tourism' has attracted a number of non-Muslim countries to apply such developed form of tourism to meet the needs of Muslim tourists. "Success

in invading the international market depends on the level of mutual respect between people of various countries, especially the non-Muslim ones" he said. Malaysia has lately organized a campaign themed "Malaysia, a Year Of Festivals 2015", which is one of the Malaysian Ministry's initiatives, working to achieve the aim of the government to reach 36 million tourists with a financial profit of MYR 178 billion (\$42 million) by 2010.

Meanwhile, chief executive officer of OIC International Business Centre Muhammad Raja Talib stressed the importance of elevating the level of cultural understanding between countries, especially the non-Muslim ones, in order to present the bright image of Islam through best utilization of history, culture and Islamic heritage in order to improve the tourism industry. —KUNA

KUWAIT RANKED 32ND IN GOVT COMPETITIVENESS

SEOUL: Kuwait has won the 32nd ranking in the Government Competitiveness that measures the performance in seven fields; economy, environment, food, agriculture, health and welfare, education and governance.

The Center for Government Competitiveness (CGC) at Seoul National University revealed the results that included 89 countries, which are not member of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in a forum held Thursday in the presence of Kuwait's Ambassador to Korea Jassim Mohammad Al-Bedaiwi and a number of foreign ambassadors, academics and economists.

Kuwait came first in food and agriculture, and won the tenth place in economy, 26th place in information technology, 36th place in environment and 39th place in health and welfare, 43rd place in governance and 63rd place in education, Ho-Young Kim, a Professor at the university, said. On his part, the ambassador showed the points of strength in Kuwait, saying it has the fifth place in the non-member of the OECD based on the results of GDP, inflation rate, foreign reserves and government activities.

He added that Kuwait has a positive credit rating by Fitch, Moody's, Standard Poor's, which are major companies that publish financial research and analysis. He explained the government efforts in addressing points of weakness in economy and education, and combating corruption, noting that it pays much attention to diversify economy instead of depending only on oil through the 2035 Vision which includes five-year economic plans. The State established an Anti-Corruption Authority, he stated. He points out that Kuwait adopts education policy seeking to provide opportunities to all children. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Photo shows Kuwait sky as appears from Al-Salmy desert —KUNA

ILLEGAL ARMS TRADE POSES A SERIOUS THREAT: KUWAIT

NEW YORK: Kuwait has warned that illegal trade in small and light arms poses an extraordinary threat to international security and peace. This came in a speech read out by Second Secretary of Kuwait Permanent Delegate to the UN Abdulaziz Al-Ajmi at the meeting of the UN First Committee (Disarmament and International Security). Kuwait urged UN members, particularly small and light

arms producing and exporting countries, to spare no effort to put an end to the illicit trade in such category of conventional weapons, Al-Ajmi said.

In this regard, Al-Ajmi pointed out that Kuwait has recently passed a law for the collection of unlicensed firearms and ammunition. He noted that the awareness campaign that followed the law passage have encouraged many people to hand in

their weapons voluntarily to the authorities.

He added that Kuwait welcomed the entry into force of the UN Arms Trade Treaty, which regulates the international trade in conventional arms. Kuwait also reiterated the treaty enforcement should go in with the UN Charter, which respects the nations' legitimate self-defense right and the right of self-determination for people under foreign occupation. —KUNA

News

i n b r i e f

Final draft of GCC's joint water project discussed

RIYADH: The final draft of the GCC joint water project was discussed by its designated team before it was submitted to the GCC Electricity and Water Committee, member of the team announced yesterday. The joint water project has been under study for the past two years by King Abdullah University of Science and Technology and US Environmental Protection Agency, Assistant Undersecretary at the Kuwaiti Ministry of Electricity and Water Khalifa Al-Feraj told KUNA after the meeting. The meeting tackled challenges that have been facing the project; most importantly: Increasing population which will reach to 86 million by 2035, distillation water plants drainage of energy natural resources which stands at 30 percent, and finding means of preserving sustainable water resources. The aim of the project is to allow each Gulf country to wisely use its water resources without exhausting their finances.

Group raises alarm over imitation of trademarks

KUWAIT: Kuwait Intellectual Property Rights Society Chairman Sheikh Salman Al-Dawood Al-Sabah said it is necessary to prevent the imitation of international trademarks so as to protect consumers. "The protection of world trademarks at the local market is the sole way to safeguard the level of food and medicine quality and safety which matter so much to consumers' health," he said in a statement to KUNA. Sounding the alarm about the imitation of trademarks, Sheikh Salman Al-Dawood said his society has recently monitored that this phenomenon has been widespread at the local market, making it very difficult for consumers to spot the difference between real and fake commodities. Therefore, the society's chairman called for launching a public awareness campaign purposed to caution consumers against the adverse impacts of fake commodities. Citing fake auto spare parts in particular as a serious example for the imitation of international trademarks, he stressed the significance of overhauling intellectual property rights laws with a view to reining in this grave phenomenon.

Foreign ministers to hold extra-ordinary meeting

CAIRO: The Arab League has announced an extra-ordinary meeting for Arab foreign ministers on November 9th in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to discuss Israeli continued attacks against the Palestinian people in Jerusalem and Al-Aqsa Mosque. The emergency meeting will be held upon the UAE's request, which currently presides League's Council, to review Israeli violations and aggression against Palestinians and religious sanctities in the occupied lands, Arab League Deputy Secretary General Ahmad bin Hilli said in a statement. Holding the meeting was a result of the talks held by League's Secretary General with UAE, Saudi Arabia, and South American countries to discuss development of the situations in Palestine, Israeli continued systematic assaults against Palestinians and sanctities, and recent Israeli attack on a local hospital in Jerusalem.

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Kuwaiti Ambassador to Chile Reem Al-Khaled

KUWAITI DIPLOMAT HONORED IN CHILE

WASHINGTON: Chile honored Kuwaiti Ambassador to the country Reem Al-Khaled late Thursday with a medal in recognition of her efforts in boosting ties between the two countries. A statement by the Kuwaiti Embassy in Santiago, said that Chilean Foreign Ministry held a celebration at its headquarters to honor the Kuwaiti diplomat. Chilean Foreign Minister Heraldo Munoz lauded the Kuwaiti diplomat for her efforts in bolstering relations, wishing Al-Khaled more success in the future. On her part, Ambassador Al-Khaled thanked the Chilean Foreign Ministry for this honoring, affirming that she would do her best to promote ties with Chile. Ambassador Al-Khaled was honored with a first degree medal for her efforts. The medal had been awarded to personnel with extraordinary services to Chile since 1817. —KUNA

News

in brief

Kuwait committed to ensuring labor rights

KUALA LUMPUR: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Affairs Hind Al-Subaih has underlined Kuwait's commitment to ensuring foreign laborers' financial, legal and human rights and relevant international labor rights conventions. Kuwait has taken a number of measures to safeguard the rights of foreign laborers, Al-Subaih told KUNA via phone during her participation in the third meeting of the labor ministers in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states. She welcomed the skilled Arab and Muslim laborers contribution to the development projects in Kuwait. The minister said that the three-day conference, themed "Mainstreaming Youth Employment and Occupational Safety in OIC Member States", will tackle a number of key issues such as the framework of OIC Occupational Safety and Health Network (OIC-OSHNET), OIC Public Employment Services Network (OIC-PESNET), and Youth Employment Support (YES) Program. In addition, the conference will finalize and adopt the constituent instrument of the OIC Labor Center, which is expected to be a new specialized institution of the OIC dealing with labor, employment and social protection issues.

ARAB PARLIAMENTARY UNION OVERHAULS SCOUTING SECTOR

CAIRO: Chairman of the Arab Scout Parliamentary Union Abdullah Al-Traiji has called on Arab parliaments to enact legislations intended to promote the Arab scouting sector. Addressing "the international 42nd conference on training and development," held late on Thursday, Al-Traiji (who is also a member of the Kuwaiti National Assembly) called for the implementation of resolutions of the Arab Scout Organization, issued in August, and enacting new laws and rules to overhaul the sector. Al-Traiji conveyed to the conferees greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, sponsor of the convention.

The conferees representing 27 states discussed during their six-day meeting a host of issues such as management of the youth talents and resolving problems suffered by the young generation. Kuwait has a long history in scouting. The Kuwait Boy Scouts Association is the national Scouting organization of Kuwait. Scouting in the country started in 1935; the KBSA was founded in 1952 and became a member of the World Organization of the Scout Movement in



CAIRO: Chairman of the Arab Scout Parliamentary Union Abdullah Al-Traiji participates in the international conference on training and development. —KUNA

1955. The movement aims at encouraging the youth get in engaged in out-of-schools educational and skill-enhancement activities.

The Arab Scout Organization (of Region) is the divisional office of the World Scout Bureau of the World Organization of the Scout Movement, headquartered in Cairo. IN 1954,

Scouting had become so popular in Arab countries that WOSM established the Arab Scout Region in Damascus, Syria. The Region comprises 18 members of Scouting in Western Asia and North Africa, including Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria. —KUNA

Iraq appreciates Kuwait aid to displaced Iraqis

BAGHDAD: The Iraqi government has expressed gratitude for the Kuwaiti relief effort for the internally-displaced people in several parts of Iraq. Chief of staff of the office of Iraqi Prime Minister Mahdi Al-Allaq received Kuwait Ambassador to Iraq Ghassan Al-Zawawi to discuss the two stages of the humanitarian aid offered by sisterly Kuwait, according to a press release issued by the Iraqi government. The first stage of the Kuwaiti assistance included the delivery of 38,000 food parcels to more than 200,000 homeless people and over 40 tons of medical supplies; Kuwait Red Crescent Society oversaw the process in 22 camps in the northern region of Kurdistan and other parts of Iraq. It also included the launching and rehabilitation of several social care centers such as the retirement homes and orphanages, and distribution of winter clothes to needy families in Baghdad and seven other governorates. In the second stage, Kuwait undertook to implement the national project of portable clinics, the caravan schools' project, and a camp for the displaced persons in Ameriyat Al-Fallujah area, according to the statement.

EPA launches Kuwaiti-South Korean environment forum

KUWAIT: Director General of the Environment Public Authority (EPA) Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad Al-Sabah has launched the Kuwaiti-South Korean Cooperation Forum with the attendance of South Korean Assistant Minister Environment, and South Korean Ambassador to Kuwait Kim Kyung Sik. EPA's Director General said in a speech that Kuwait has significantly contributed to the protection of local and regional environment, upon the instructions of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, and with direct follow-up by His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. EPA is responsible for settling and applying the general policy of protecting the environment, besides the sustainable development strategies, besides supporting environmental researches and studies, as well as settling the framework for environmental educating program, as well as spreading environmental awareness, he said. The strategic cooperation between both nations in protecting the environment and sustainable development is the theme of the joint seminar, reflecting the deep-rooted bilateral ties between Kuwait and South Korea, he affirmed.

AL-KANDARI STRESSES THE NEED TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

RIYADH: Deputy Director General for Applied Education and Research in the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), Dr Fatimah Al-Kandari has stressed the importance of improving education in universities and higher education institutions in the GCC countries to cope with their counterparts in the developed countries. Al-Kandari said in a statement after the conclusion of the 21st meeting of the committee of universities' presidents called to promote the exchange of experiences and expertise among the GCC members in the fields of research and training to prepare qualified generations in various scientific fields.

Asked about the meeting's outcome, Al-Kandari explained that the topics discussed aimed at developing higher education institutions in the GCC and increase coordination of scientific and research among universities and higher education institutions. —KUNA

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International

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2015

**Last UK resident jailed
in Gitmo returns home**

10

**Uruguay: Heaven for meat
eaters, hell for vegetarians**

12

**Imran Khan to divorce
after just 10 months**

14



Refugees and migrants call for help as their boat sinks off the Greek island of Lesbos after crossing the Aegean sea from Turkey yesterday. —AFP

17 CHILDREN DIE AS BOATS SINK

REFUGEES BRAVE STORMY SEAS TO REACH EUROPE

ATHENS: At least 17 children drowned when three boats sank en route from Turkey to Greece, officials said yesterday, the latest tragedy to strike migrants braving wintry seas to seek asylum in Europe. Nine adults also lost their lives when the boats went down, with the drownings once again highlighting the human cost as Europe struggles with its worst migrant crisis since World War II. Although rescue officials in Greece and Turkey managed to pull another 157 people from the water, such drownings have become an almost daily occurrence as thousands of people brave high seas and wintry weather to make the crossing on flimsy, overloaded boats.

Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras expressed "shame" over Europe's failure to prevent yet another "humanitarian tragedy", and said it was crucial to prevent the Aegean Sea from becoming a graveyard for people fleeing war and misery. Most of the deaths occurred off the Greek islands of Kalymnos and Rhodes, where 22 people drowned, among them 13 children, when two boats went down overnight, port officials said yes-

terday. In total, 138 people were rescued from the two boats, with the coastguard continuing its search for survivors.

To the north, an AFP correspondent witnessed another boat foundering off the island of Lesbos, with a group of desperate people perched on the roof screaming for help. Another four young children, all of them Syrian, drowned when their flimsy boat heading for Lesbos capsized in bad weather, although the Turkish coastguard rescued 19 other people, the Dogan news agency reported. The latest deaths came after 17 people drowned off Lesbos and Samos on Wednesday, 11 of them children.

'Deaths Almost Daily'

Despite worsening weather at the onset of winter that has made the already hazardous sea voyage even more dangerous, a record 48,000 refugees and migrants arrived last week in Greece, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said. "As a European leader, I feel shame over Europe's inability to defend its values," Tsipras told the Greek parliament as news of the latest

deaths emerged. "Our first duty is to save lives and not to allow the Aegean to become a cemetery."

The Greek leader also underlined the urgent need for Turkey to "respect its commitments" to halting the flow of people leaving its territory by boat and stressing Athens' willingness to be "a link between the EU and Turkey" on the matter. With winter gales whipping up at sea, the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) said there was an "urgent need" to strengthen search and rescue capacity in the area.

"We have warned for weeks that an already bad situation could get even worse if desperate refugees and migrants must continue to resort to smugglers who send them out to sea despite the worsening weather," the UNHCR's Alessandra Morelli said in a statement Thursday. "Our fears are now being realised. Nearly every day now we are seeing children, parents, the elderly and the young dying as they try to reach Europe."

In Spain, rescuers were searching for at least 35 people who had been on board a boat which ran into trouble after setting sail from northern Morocco on Wednesday. Fifteen

people had been rescued from the troubled vessel on Thursday.

Merkel's Unexpected Ally

Since the start of the year, 560,000 migrants and refugees have arrived in Greece by sea, out of over 700,000 who have reached Europe via the Mediterranean, according to the International Organization for Migration. More than 3,200 have died during the perilous crossings, the vast majority on the longer sea route from Libya to Italy. Most are heading for Germany, which is expecting up to a million asylum requests this year, prompting a backlash against German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

But yesterday, Merkel found an unexpected source of support from former nemesis Yanis Varoufakis, Greece's ex-finance minister. Varoufakis, an outspoken critic of Merkel's austerity-for-aid response to the Greek debt crisis, said her actions regarding refugees had been exemplary. "As a European, it fills me with great pride how Chancellor Angela Merkel is reacting," he said. "I wish everyone in Europe would do the same." —AFP

BOND SHAKEN AND STIRRED BY MIGRANTS' FATE

PARIS: James Bond actor Daniel Craig yesterday urged European governments to "step forward and sort out" the migrant crisis tormenting the continent. "There is a human tragedy going on. It is up to European governments to step forward and get this sorted," the British actor told AFP in an interview to promote 007's latest adventure, "Spectre". The movie is already breaking box office records in Britain, but the success has not quelled Craig's well-publicised doubts over continuing in the role - the 47-year-old admitted he "did not know" how much longer he would keep playing the suave secret agent.

"Spectre" sees Bond flit back and forth across borders in the blink of an eye despite being grounded by British intelligence and having his passport removed. But in reality entering Britain illegally has become ever more difficult, with thousands of migrants marooned in the French port of Calais resorting to desperate measures to cross the English Channel. Some have tried to climb onto or underneath high-speed Eurostar trains and two Iranians managed to walk the 50-km length of the tunnel earlier this month before being arrested by British police. At least 15 have died trying to reach England since June. Craig, who has been an advocate for humanitarian issues, urged governments to act to resolve the crisis. "Some fictional spy is not going to fix this," he said. "People are not thinking about James Bond as they



Daniel Craig

struggle with their families across the Mediterranean, it is the furthest thing from their minds." Ironically, Craig has also become the face of a drive by tourism chiefs to attract more visitors to Britain. An international billboard campaign proclaiming "Bond is Great Britain" is being rolled out to coincide with the release of the film, the 24th in the spy

series that began six years before Craig was even born.

"Spectre" has taken \$24.5 million in its first three days in Britain - but it is still unclear whether Craig will reprise the role that he has given a harder, more brutal edge. Having claimed that he would rather "slash my wrists" than play the brooding MI6 agent again, Craig - who earned a reported \$17 million from the last Bond film "Skyfall" - has since tried to row back on his comments to Time Out magazine. "I don't know, honestly, that is a straight answer," he told AFP. "I have spent two years of my life doing this now... That's enough for the time being. "I am not in crisis. In fact, I've never been happier making these films. The creative process has been better than it has ever been... why would you walk away from that? There is a lot of shit in the press about this at the moment, but the simple answer is I don't know."

Strong Women

In Spectre, Bond battles the eponymous shadowy criminal network - the Special Executive for Counter-intelligence, Terrorism, Revenge and Extortion. Yet 007 also faces unexpectedly stiff resistance from his principal love interest Madeleine Swann, played by French star Lea Seydoux, even if the actress' feminist credentials took a knock when she told reporters at the film's London premiere that "I don't know if I'm a Bond girl, I'm just a blonde girl." — AFP

EX-GITMO DETAINEE EYES 'PEACEFUL LIFE'

NOUAKCHOTT: Just-released Guantanamo Bay detainee, Mauritania's Ahmed Ould Abdel Aziz, appeared in public at home yesterday for the first time and said he now hoped for "a peaceful life, without problems". Repatriated Wednesday after 13 years behind bars, the heavily-bearded man, looking healthy but tired, gave an impromptu press conference at the family home in a residential neighbourhood, with government members on hand as well as relatives and supporters.

"What happened to me in Guantanamo belongs to the past. Now I hope to be able to lead a peaceful life, without problems, in my country," he said without offering details on his detention, arrest or release. But he did thank the Mauritanian authorities for working for his release from the US military facility, as well as all those who supported him during his "ordeal".

The 45-year-old detainee, an alleged Al-Qaeda cell member who later fled to Afghanistan and was accused of fighting there, was captured in June 2002 in the southern Pakistani port city of Karachi. He was first held at the US detention centre at Bagram north of the Afghan capital Kabul, then transferred to Guantanamo in October that year, according to Defense Department documents published by WikiLeaks.

He is alleged to have sworn an oath of loyalty to Osama bin Laden in 1999, and was accused of fighting on the front lines in Afghanistan against the US-backed anti-Taliban Northern Alliance. According to his 2008 file, he "possibly" fought against US and coalition forces. Abdel Aziz told the US military that he had seen bin Laden at the Islamic Institute in Kandahar on three occasions, and attended the wedding of bin Laden's son in early 2000.

On Thursday, the Mauritanian communications ministry said his release came after "diplomatic efforts" by the government. A government official speaking on condition of anonymity told AFP that Abdel Aziz faced no charges in his home country. The communication ministry also said Mauritania would press on with efforts to secure the release of the last of its citizens at Guantanamo, Mohamedou Ould Slahi, held for 13 years. — AFP



ISTANBUL: Supporters of the Republican People's Party hold pictures of the founder of the Turkish republic Mustafa Kemal Atatürk during a march yesterday to mark the 92nd anniversary of the country's founding. — AFP

TENSE TURKEY READIES FOR CRUCIAL ELECTIONS

AKP NOT EXPECTED TO GET PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY

ISTANBUL: Turkey goes to the polls tomorrow after five turbulent months without a government, bracing for further instability after devastating jihadist bomb attacks, renewed Kurdish violence and an alarming new crackdown on the media. The country's most important vote in years will also determine the political future of "the big master" President Recep Tayyip Erdogan - even though his name is not even on the ballot paper.

Opinion polls predict Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP) will again win the most votes but is unlikely to claw back the parliamentary majority it lost in a shock setback in June, paving the way for a shaky coalition - or even another election. Erdogan, who critics say is becoming more autocratic as he pushes for

greater presidential powers, said Thursday that only a single-party government could ensure stability in the strategic nation of 75 million. "If our nation makes its choice for a single-party government, then I believe it would lay the ground for the resumption of an environment of stability that we experienced for 12 to 13 years," said Erdogan, the dominant force for 13 years as prime minister and AKP leader and now president.

Security the Major Concern

Another inconclusive result could trigger further turmoil in the Muslim majority country, already more polarised on ethnic and sectarian lines than at any time in its modern history. Security is of paramount concern, after the dead-

ly flare-up of violence in July between Turkish security forces and rebels from the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) shattered a delicate 2013 truce and revived a three-decade-old conflict. The country is also struggling to come to terms with the twin suicide bombings on a peace rally in Ankara this month that killed 102 people in the worst attack in its history. The atrocity, blamed on the Islamic State group, followed another bomb attack in a town on the Syrian border in July that thrust the NATO ally into a "war on terrorism" against both IS extremists and Kurdish rebels. Ankara has found itself drawn into the conflict across the border as it struggles to cope with more than two million Syrian refugees, while its policy of helping rebels opposed to the Damascus regime backfired disastrously. — AFP

MISSILES KILL 89 IN SYRIA MARKET

BEIRUT: At least 89 people, including 17 children, were killed when Syrian government forces fired missiles into a marketplace

in a town near Damascus, a conflict monitor and a local rescue group said yesterday. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which



DOUMA, Syria: Bodies lie on the ground after government forces fired more than 11 missiles at a market in this suburb of Damascus. — AFP

monitors the war through a network of sources on the ground, said government forces fired 12 missiles at Douma, 15 km northeast of Damascus. Douma has suffered intense bombardment in recent months in a wave of strikes the Syrian army has said targets insurgents that have launched attacks on government-held areas.

Syrian Civil Defence, a local humanitarian rescue group that operates in rebel-held areas, posted a picture on its Facebook page of about a dozen bloodied bodies laid on the ground on plastic sheeting. It said the attack had used guided missiles. A volunteer from the group in the wider area told Reuters that local rescue services were completely stretched. "We are treating (wounded) only as much as we are able," he said, asking not to be named for security reasons. "Everyone in the civil defence in Eastern Ghouta is deployed and totally stretched, and rockets are still hitting residential areas."

On its twitter feed the Civil Defence linked to a video showing people tending to survivors in a chaotic scene of blackened rubble and fire. Footage showed bodies on the ground of the market place, where stalls had been blown to pieces. Reuters was unable to independently verify the events shown. "Utterly heinous that while world leaders meet for peace in Vienna, attack(s) against civilians continue in Syria," the group said in a tweet. Many of Douma's residents have fled the 4-year-old conflict, moving to nearby rural areas. Medics say they have struggled to cope with large numbers of wounded in the intensified strikes. Syria's civil war has killed more than 250,000 people and driven more than 10 million from their homes. International diplomats were meeting yesterday at a peace conference in Vienna, the first to be attended by President Bashar Al-Assad's main ally Iran. — Reuters

IRANIAN-AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN DETAINED IN IRAN

WASHINGTON: A prominent Iranian-American businessman has been detained by authorities in Iran, potentially throwing up another obstacle to closer US-Iran ties in the wake of the nuclear deal between the countries. Siamak Namazi was detained by Iranian authorities in mid-October, according to a source briefed on the matter who requested anonymity. He had been traveling in Iran, where his parents live, to visit family and was barred from leaving the country in July, the source said. The source said Namazi had not been in Iran on business.

Namazi was detained by the intelligence service of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and is currently being held in solitary confinement in Evin prison, the source told Reuters. Namazi had been regularly called in for interrogation between July and the time he was detained, the source also disclosed. "We're aware of recent reports of the possible arrest in Iran of a US citizen," a senior Obama administration official said. "We're looking into these reports and don't have anything further to provide at this time." Namazi lives in Dubai and works as the head of strategic planning for Crescent Petroleum, an oil and gas company in the United Arab Emirates. He previously was chief executive of Atieh Bahar Consulting, a private marketing and strategic consulting firm in Iran. Namazi, well known among Iran policy experts, attended university in the United States and the United Kingdom and previously worked at think tanks and institutions in Washington, DC. In 2007, he was chosen as a "Young Global Leader" by the World Economic Forum.

Namazi's career has revolved to a great extent around the changing business and diplomatic ties between the United States and Iran. In 2013, he wrote an editorial in the New York Times criticizing US and European sanctions for blocking the import of critical medicines into Iran. His arrest makes him the fourth Iranian-American currently detained in Iran. A reporter for the Washington Post, Jason Rezaian, was convicted this month after being arrested in July 2014 and accused of espionage. Amir Hekmati, a former US Marine, was jailed by Iran on spying charges in 2011. And Saeed Abedini, an Iranian-American Christian pastor, was sentenced to eight years in jail in 2013.

The detentions have been an obstacle to thawing US-Iran relations, which improved during the negotiation of a historic July nuclear deal. Iran agreed with world powers to limit its nuclear program in return for the lifting of sanctions. The Wall Street Journal, which earlier reported the news of Namazi's arrest, said that in recent weeks Iranian business officials with ties to foreign companies had been held, interrogated and warned against wading into economic monopolies controlled by the Revolutionary Guard. Friends of Namazi told the Journal that Iranian intelligence agents had ransacked his family home, seized his computer and then conducted cyber attacks on some of his email contacts. Earlier this month, Secretary of State John Kerry defended the US decision not to make the release of Iranian-Americans a condition for the nuclear agreement with Iran, but he called on Iran to release the men and drop all charges against them. — Reuters



AL-BIREH: An Israeli military jeep catches on fire after Palestinian protesters hurled Molotov cocktails towards the vehicle during clashes at the entrance of this Palestinian town on the outskirts of Ramallah in the Israeli-occupied West Bank yesterday. — AFP

ATTACK IN JERUSALEM AS CLASHES ERUPT IN W BANK

ISRAELI FORCES KILL PALESTINIAN YOUTH

JERUSALEM: Jerusalem was shaken by its first stabbing in two weeks yesterday as violence intensified in the occupied West Bank with fresh clashes and knife attacks in a surge of Palestinian unrest. A Palestinian stabbed and lightly wounded an American tourist in Jerusalem, where the wave of violence first erupted a month ago over the Al-Aqsa mosque compound, a highly sensitive site sacred to both Muslims and Jews. The 23-year-old Palestinian assailant was shot dead, while a bystander was injured when security forces opened fire on the assailant, police said.

Jerusalem had been calm in recent days as Israel clamped down on weeks of unrest with a massive boost of security forces and increased checkpoints, but violence has shifted to the occupied West Bank with daily clashes and stabbings. Many fear the surge of unrest heralds a new intifada, or uprising,

against Israel by a generation gripped by despair and anger over decades of occupation and stalled peace efforts. In the city of Nablus, two Palestinians allegedly tried to stab members of Israeli forces guarding a major checkpoint, and were shot, police said. One died and the other was wounded and arrested. Elsewhere in the West Bank, in the volatile city of Hebron, hundreds of youths lobbed stones, firebombs and burning tyres at Israeli soldiers who hit back with tear gas and rubber bullets, according to an AFP journalist.

13-year-old Charged

Violent clashes also erupted in Ramallah where an AFP journalist reported an Israeli army jeep hit a crowd of protesters, injuring a young man. Soldiers sprayed tear gas at medics attempting to reach him, before arresting the youth. The Palestinian health ministry

reported eight youths were wounded by gunfire, and another was hit with a rubber bullet in Ramallah. In the blockaded Gaza Strip, where 17 Palestinians have died in clashes in recent weeks, protesters clashed with Israeli forces along the northern and eastern borders.

Knife attacks, shootings and protests have become near daily occurrences since simmering tensions over the status of the Al-Aqsa mosque compound boiled over. The violence has left nine Israelis dead. The deaths of the latest attackers took the number of Palestinians killed in the recent unrest to 64, including many shot in anti-Israeli protests. One Israeli Arab attacker has also been shot dead. One of the alleged attackers, a 13-year-old Palestinian, appeared in court yesterday where he was charged with attempted murder for a knife attack against two Israeli schoolboys. — AFP

POLISH COURT REJECTS POLANSKI EXTRADITION

KRAKOW, Poland: A Polish court yesterday quashed a US bid to extradite Oscar-winning director Roman Polanski, who pleaded guilty in 1977 to raping a 13-year-old girl but left the country before sentencing. The court ruled "inadmissibility in extraditing Polish-French citizen Roman Polanski to the US," presiding judge Dariusz Mazur said at the court in the southern city of Krakow. In a two-and-a-half-hour ruling, Mazur criticised the original US investigation, saying the judges and prosecutors there "seriously broke the rules of a fair trial".

"Had Poland accepted the US extradition request, it would have violated the rights of Mr. Polanski and at the same time the European Convention on Human Rights," the judge decided. The decision in favour of the 82-year-old director of "The Pianist", "Chinatown" and "Rosemary's Baby" can still be appealed, court spokeswoman Beata Gorszczyk said earlier yesterday. "The case would then be sent to a higher court, which could uphold the regional court's decision, overturn it or send it back for retrial," she told AFP.

Polanski was in Krakow but did not

attend the open court hearing "because of emotional reasons", his lawyer Jan Olszewski said earlier. Local media reported that Polanski - who has been married to French actress Emmanuelle Seigner since 1989 - had been waiting for the verdict from aboard a plane at Krakow airport. If the Polish prosecutor's office, which is representing the US side, decides to appeal and the extradition is ultimately cleared at the court level, then Poland's justice ministry would still have the final say.

A former justice minister and close ally of Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the leader of

the conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party that won Sunday's general election, said he backed extraditing Polanski. "Paedophilia is an evil that must be pursued," said Zbigniew Ziobro, justice minister in the 2005-2007 PiS government. "We should allow Polanski's extradition. We can't shield anyone from taking responsibility for an act as despicable as abusing a minor." Kaczynski himself said earlier this month that he "rejected the idea of pardoning someone simply because he is an eminent, world-renowned director." —AFP

LAST UK RESIDENT JAILED IN GITMO RETURNS HOME

FAMILY RELIEVED AFTER AAMER FREED

LONDON: The last British resident detained in Guantanamo Bay landed back in London yesterday having been released after spending over 13 years at the US military jail in Cuba, officials said. "We can confirm that Shaker Aamer has been released from Guantanamo Bay and has returned to the UK," the Foreign Office said in a statement. Aamer arrived at Biggin Hill airport south of London on a direct flight from Guantanamo Bay aboard a Gulfstream jet. The plane taxied into a hangar and an ambulance was seen arriving and leaving the terminal building. The United States accused the 46-year-old Saudi national of acting as a recruiter, financier and fighter for Al-Qaeda, as well as being a close associate of Osama Bin Laden, but never charged him. Prime Minister David Cameron's office said Thursday there were no plans to detain him. "As soon as he is returned to the UK he is no longer in detention. He is free to be reunited with his family," said Cameron's official spokeswoman. "It is a case that he has personally raised with the president. He also wanted to support the president's efforts to close Guantanamo Bay," she said, referring to US President Barack Obama.

Following the release of Mauritanian detainee Ahmed Ould Abdel Aziz from Guantanamo this week, the US defence ministry said 113 detainees were left. The father of four, who was twice cleared for release from the

camp in 2007 and 2009, has always denied the allegations against him and said he was in Afghanistan working for a charity. Aamer's father-in-law Saeed Siddique called it "a delightful day for all of us". "It's really a miracle," he told the BBC. "Everybody is looking forward to seeing him, especially after all this time. But it won't be necessarily today."

Aamer's US lawyer Clive Stafford Smith his



This 2013 photo provided by the International Committee of the Red Cross shows Shaker Aamer. —AP

client's first act would be "to see a doctor and have a full medical check-up". "It's going to be really hard for him," he told Sky News. "He would say to him that he's only ever responded to his prison number 239 all these years." The lawyer said Aamer was planning to set up a

charitable foundation "to help get the truth so in the future we don't repeat the same mistakes of history".

'Terrible Travesty'

Aamer was born in Saudi Arabia in Dec 1968, and lived in the United States before settling in Britain, where he married a British woman and, in 1996, became a resident. In 2001, he took his family to Afghanistan, but sent them to Pakistan after the Sept 11 attacks. He said he was about to join them when he was detained. Aamer claims to have suffered sleep deprivation, beatings and humiliation at the hands of American troops while being held at the notorious Bagram Prison north of Kabul.

He was transferred to Guantanamo Bay on Feb 14, 2002 - the day his youngest child was born - where he said the maltreatment continued, leading him to become an advocate for prisoners' rights and an organizer of hunger strikes. He remained on hunger strike as Obama's administration announced last month that he was to be freed, leading his family to fear they would not see him again. A medical examination ordered by his lawyers in Dec 2013 found Aamer was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and depression, as well as migraine headaches, asthma and kidney pain. —AFP

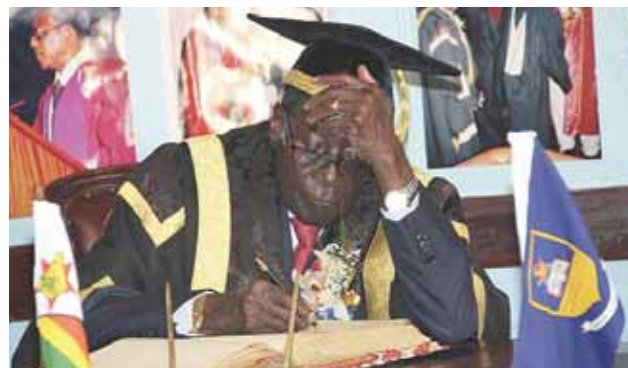
STAFFER SUSPENDED IN MUGABE CAP MISHAP

HARARE: For Zimbabwean leader Robert Mugabe, one size does not fit all. A senior staffer at the University of Zimbabwe has been suspended for allegedly procuring academic caps for Mugabe that were too small for his head, according to court papers filed this week. The longtime leader ended up wearing a mortarboard that was rejected as too small last year while officiating at an Oct 2 graduation ceremony in his role as chancellor of Zimbabwe's dozen-plus state universities, the papers said.

Ngaatendwe Takawira, an assistant registrar at the University of Zimbabwe, has approached the labor court to try to stop disciplinary hearings against her over the cap mishap. The university alleges that the graduation ceremony had to be delayed by 45 minutes while authorities scrounged around for a cap that fit Mugabe. Takawira, however, has argued that, after efforts to get a replacement failed, the 91-year-old leader wore a cap that was just the right size.

"It fit the Chancellor perfectly well," Takawira said in the papers, which were filed by her lawyer, Thabani Mpofu. "The cap sizes were obtained from the Chancellor's office and also, when he was asked to fit the caps, his office indicated that he was busy," she said. Takawira, who said she has been in charge of the university's graduation ceremonies since 1996, wants the labor court to stop what she calls

"biased" disciplinary hearings against her and allow an independent committee to conduct the proceedings. The university has said there is no evidence of bias on the disciplinary committee handling Takawira's case. —AP



HARARE: In this Oct 2, 2015 photo, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe writes his comments in a visitors' book at the University of Zimbabwe. —AP



LUCKENWALDE, Germany: German police officers stand in a garden of the Eckbusch garden allotment in this town south of Berlin yesterday. —AFP

GERMAN KILLER OF REFUGEE BOY ADMITS SECOND KID MURDER

BERLIN: A German man suspected of kidnapping and killing a four-year-old Bosnian refugee has admitted to murdering another child, police said yesterday. "The man confessed overnight that he had also killed Elias," said Berlin police spokesman Stefan Redlich, referring to a six-year-old German boy who has been missing since July. Following the confession, Elias' body was found in a garden allotment, sources said. Both children were victims of sex crimes, German news agency DPA said without citing its sources.

The man was arrested Thursday after his mother told police that he may have been involved in the kidnapping of the Bosnian boy, Mohamed. Police also found in the suspect's car the body of a child which was packed in cat litter and which appeared to have been dead for some time. Prosecutors had on Thursday said the body, which was undergoing an autopsy, was likely to be that of Mohamed.

The boy had been missing since Oct 1, when his mother took him and his sisters to Berlin's main refugee registration centre known as Lageso which receives hundreds of asylum seekers daily. The family has been living in Germany for more than a year and the mother had gone to the registration centre that day to obtain her social allowances, according to local media. Police subsequently issued CCTV footage of a bearded man leading a child away who was holding a stuffed toy. "Mohamed was already dead on October 2, the day after his kidnapping," police spokesman Redlich said, adding that the suspect had admitted to that during interrogation.

As Germany gears up to receive up to one million asylum seekers this year, Berlin's Lageso has seen lengthy queues of migrants waiting to be registered and often chaotic scenes. Fights have broken out at the centre among migrants frustrated by the long waits and a lack of information filtering down from authorities. —AFP

IMMIGRANTS BELIEVE FAMILIES CAN STAY IN US

WASHINGTON: Hundreds of immigrant families caught illegally crossing the Mexican border told US immigration agents they made the dangerous journey in part because they believed they would be permitted to stay in the United States and collect public benefits, according to internal intelligence files from the Homeland Security Department.

The interviews with immigrants by federal agents were intended to help the Obama administration understand what might be driving a puzzling surge in the numbers of border crossings that started over the summer. The explanations suggest the US government's efforts to discourage illegal crossings may have been unsuccessful. Its efforts have included public service campaigns in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala to highlight the dangers and consequences of making the trek across Mexico to cross illegally into the United States.

The AP obtained copies of the interview summaries, which were compiled in reports by the US Customs and Border Protection's

Office of Intelligence. They said hundreds of people traveling as part of families consistently cited opportunities to obtain permission to stay in the US, claim asylum and receive unspecified benefits. Immigrants spoke of "permisos," or a pass to come into the United States. The report "is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis of the situation," said department spokeswoman Marsha Catron, adding that troubles in the immigrants' home countries likely contributed to their flight as well. Although the Obama administration has explained that immigrants who cross the US border illegally can be deported, lengthy backlogs of more than 456,000 cases mean that immigrants can effectively remain in the US for years before a judge decides whether they should leave the country. Also, recent court rulings have complicated the government's plans to hold families in immigration jails pending deportation proceedings. Immigrants living in the US illegally generally are not eligible for public benefits, except that children may receive free or reduced meals in public schools.—AP



MCALLEN, Texas: In this June 20, 2014, file photo, immigrants who entered the US illegally stand in line for tickets at the bus station after they were released from a US Customs and Border Protection processing facility. —AP



FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida: The Caracas, Venezuela-bound Dynamic International Airways Boeing 767 that caught fire sits on the runway at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport on Thursday. — AFP

JET CATCHES FIRE ON TAKEOFF AT FLORIDA AIRPORT

FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida: An engine on a passenger jet bound for Caracas, Venezuela, burst into flames while taxiing for takeoff at a Florida airport on Thursday, forcing frightened passengers to exit the plane using inflatable emergency slides. Fifteen people were injured, one seriously, as 101 passengers and crew evacuated the Dynamic International Airways' Boeing 767-200ER within minutes of the pilots realizing there was a problem.

Television images showed the plane surrounded by white foam and firefighters' trucks in Fort Lauderdale, its left engine badly charred. The 29-year-old aircraft was leaking fuel before departure, the Federal Aviation Administration said, and its crew was warned about the leak by a jet taxiing behind it. In video shot by a passenger on another plane, towering clouds of thick gray smoke could be seen billowing from the Dynamic flight before the blaze was extinguished. Most of the injuries were bumps and bruises, Michael Jachles, a spokesman for the Broward Sheriff's Office, told reporters. One child was among those being treated at Broward Health Medical Center, a hospital spokeswoman said.

Luis Campana, a 71-year-old rancher, was traveling to Venezuela's Guarico state with his wife and sister. "It was a real scare," Campana told Reuters at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport. He said he had been sitting near the front of the plane as the pilot put the thrust on to taxi up the runway. "The engine exploded. As we were getting out of the plane down the chute, the smoke was beginning to enter and the engine was in flames," he said.

The accident could have been catastrophic had the jet taken off with a fuel leak, Greg Feith, a former crash investigator for the National Transportation Safety Board, told Reuters. "Once the aircraft is airborne, it becomes a flying blowtorch," Feith said. "The fire intensifies and you don't know what system or structure it's going to burn through." Fire could damage a wing and fuselage, or cripple hydraulic and electronic control systems, Feith said, potentially making an emergency landing impossible. It could also ignite fuel tanks in the wings, especially if fuel vapor were present, he said.—Reuters

OBAMA AND RYAN: POLITICAL FOILS, OCCASIONAL PARTNERS

TWO MEN FACE UNCERTAIN 14-MONTH STRETCH

WASHINGTON: For years, US President Barack Obama and newly-elected House Speaker Paul Ryan have been political foes and occasional policy allies. Obama has long admired Ryan's seriousness on fiscal issues, but pilloried the Wisconsin lawmaker and GOP vice presidential nominee during the 2012 campaign as the architect of "radical" budget proposals. Ryan helped champion Obama's trade agenda this year, but also has been among the sharpest critics of the president's healthcare law. Now, with Ryan at the helm of the fractious House Republican caucus, the two men face an uncertain 14-month stretch before the end of Obama's presidency. Ryan is eager to unify his party, but even if he can, there's no guarantee the House would make progress on Obama's priorities, including infrastructure spending and tax reform. "While it is certainly our hope that we can work together on areas of agreement, right now it's an unknown," White House communications director Jennifer Psaki said. "That has less to do with the individual and everything to do with the politics in the Republican caucus." Still, there's no doubt that Ryan was the White House's favored choice for speaker after John Boehner resigned and No. 2 Republican Kevin McCarthy withdrew from the race to succeed him. Aides say the president views Ryan as a policy wonk driven more by legislative results than appeasing GOP hardliners. As Ryan addressed Congress Thursday, he said, "Let's be frank: The House is broken. We are not solving problems. We are adding to them."

Obama and Ryan enter this new phase of their relationship with few personal ties. They're close in age (Obama is 54, Ryan is 45), are fathers to school age children (two for Obama and three for Ryan), and are avid sports fans (though Obama's Chicago Bears and Ryan's Green Bay Packers are archrivals). But aides to both men say they've never spent much one-on-one time together. Obama and Ryan have spoken by phone occasionally, including during a key trade vote in Congress earlier this year. The president called Ryan Wednesday to wish him well in his new post, but the White House said they did not make plans to get together for a more extensive conversation.

Personal Relationships

The president has long bristled at the notion he would have had more success dealing with Republicans had he spent more time culti-

vating personal relationships. He and Boehner were cordial, though hardly close during the Ohio lawmaker's nearly five years as speaker. They made an attempt at forging deeper ties - and a grand budget bargain - with a well-publicized golf outing in 2011, but the budget talks fell apart and the two men were never again seen on the links.

White House aides hope Ryan can figure out what Boehner never seemed able to do: Bring the small, but vocal, conservative wing of the House caucus along on major issues - or moving on without them if they hold firm. White House aides point to Ryan's work on a 2013 budget deal with Democratic Sen Patty Murray as a sign of his willingness to reach across the aisle, even when it's unpopular with a swath of House Republicans. They've also welcomed his vocal support for the president's pursuit of the Trans Pacific Partnership trade pact.

When Ryan was asked earlier this year about aligning himself with a top presidential priority, he told CNN, "It doesn't bother me that the person I ran against in 2012 is the person I'm working with on this because it's the right thing for the country." Despite these areas of common interest, the most notable exchanges between Obama and Ryan have come when they've been at odds.

During a televised health care summit in 2010, Ryan derided the president's health care legislation as rife with "gimmicks and smoke and mirrors" techniques to shade the real cost. His detail-rich, six-minute commentary was praised by Republicans as among the most effective arguments against the "Obamacare" bill. In 2011, Obama castigated Ryan's budget proposals during a fiscal policy speech - with the Wisconsin lawmaker sitting in the front row. Without mentioning Ryan by name, Obama said the budget blueprint he authored painted "a vision of our future that is deeply pessimistic."

The president again used Ryan's budget as a political tool in the 2012 election after GOP nominee Mitt Romney tapped the House member as his running mate. Romney was sitting in the House chamber Thursday as Ryan officially became speaker, a visual reminder of Republicans' loss to Obama in the last presidential election. At the White House, Obama spokesman Josh Earnest also reminded Ryan that with Democrats still in the White House, most successful legislation has to be bipartisan. The president, Earnest said, hopes Ryan leads the House "with that fact in mind." — AP



WASHINGTON: In this Feb 25, 2010 file photo, US President Barack Obama (right) shakes hands with Rep John Kline at Blair House in Washington before the healthcare summit as Rep Paul Ryan looks on. — AP



BOGOTA: A worker looks at an emerald at the workshop of Muzo Emerald Company on Oct 16, 2015. — AFP

COLOMBIA EMERALDS TO SPARKLE ANEW IN REPUTATION REVAMP

BOGOTA: Colombia is working to polish the reputation of its emeralds, which - much like Africa's blood diamonds - have lost their luster due to decades of violence surrounding the treacherous gemstone trade. "The emerald's image is linked to that of Colombia, and Colombia is traditionally seen as being connected to war, drugs, trafficking," said Corentin Quideau, a French jewelry expert. Considered the most beautiful in the world, Colombia's emeralds totaled \$146.5 million in exports in 2014. And over the years, they've accounted for 50 to 90 percent of total global production.

But they've also been linked to bloodshed - including a "green war" in the 1980s that killed 3,500 people. Colombia's emeralds were the focus of a recent international symposium in the capital Bogota, the first of its kind, that drew several hundred participants. The goal is to put the green gem back on a pedestal, said Quideau, brand strategist for Colombia's famous Muzo mine, whose past experience includes stints at big luxury labels such as Cartier, Boucheron and Louis Vuitton.

Located in the heart of Colombia, some 200 km north of Bogota, the Muzo mine was first exploited by indigenous groups, followed by Spanish conquistadors starting in the 16th century. It's here that the "Fura" was extracted - an 11,000-carat, five-pound emerald that wowed the public when it was displayed in 2011. "The color, the purity of these stones make them unique," said US expert Ronald Ringsrud, who speaks of Colombia's emeralds as if they were rare flowers. "They grow in sedimentary soil, a softer geological environment" that allows the crystal to thrive better than in granite, he said.

'Wild West'

For decades, the industry was dominated by Victor Carranza, a gun-toting peasant-turned-billionaire who gained control of the Muzo mine in the 1970s and fought off all attempts to take it from him - including by feared drug lord Pablo Escobar. The "emerald tsar" ran his operation with few scruples and alleged ties to rightwing paramilitary groups. He defied multiple attempts on his life and finally died of cancer in 2013. He passed the company to his sole confidant, American ex-diplomat Charles Burgess, who set about softening its image.

He "set a goal of bringing the Colombian emerald to the same level as Colombian coffee: To turn it into a product that all Colombians feel proud of," said Burgess. He brought out that slogan repeatedly at the recent symposium in Bogota, where industry insiders discussed putting the shine back on the country's emeralds. Proposals included launching a national brand, "Mothergem", which Gabriel Angarita, the president of the Emerald Exporters Association, said would "distinguish Colombian emeralds as a unique gift of nature."

The Colombian Emerald Federation meanwhile proposed creating an International Emerald Committee to "promote sustainable development (and) support policies that favor the growth of the industry." Individual mines are also getting on board, including the storied Muzo. In the name of modernization and greater transparency, Burgess invested more than \$100 million in Muzo and suspended production for two years to upgrade mining techniques and personnel management. "Muzo emeralds are structurally very complex, nearly perfect. But when (the miners) used dynamite, it caused fissures in the stones," said Dante Valencia, a master gem cutter at the company's state-of-the-art workshop in Bogota. "This used to be the Wild West," said Quideau, the French expert.

But things are starting to change, he said. At Muzo, the 750 miners "have gone from a barbaric and archaic pay system based on the consensual theft of emeralds... to real contracts and salaries," he said. Now mining firms need to ensure the traceability of all gems from the mine shaft to the retailer, he said, warning that some "traditional forces" in the industry are still resistant to change. — AFP

URUGUAY: HEAVEN FOR MEAT EATERS, HELL FOR VEGETARIANS

THREE COWS FOR EACH RESIDENT

MONTEVIDEO: It is not easy being a vegetarian in Uruguay - one of the largest exporters of meat in the world. "In Uruguay, they laugh at vegetarians, they think we are weird," says Laura Lacurcia, with a sigh. The South American country has a peculiar claim to fame - it has three times more cows (10 million) than people (three million) - and is proud of its reputation as a carnivore's paradise. So when the UN warned Monday that red meat "probably" poses a cancer risk, many Uruguayans merely shrugged.

"If someone wants to eat Uruguayan food and they are vegetarian, they are in trouble," joked Gustavo Laborde, an anthropologist and author of a book on the "ritual" that is the barbecue. Non-meat eaters like Lacurcia have a tough time in the capital, which has a population of 1.5 million but is almost devoid of vegetarian or vegan restaurants. Titina Nunez, of gourmet magazine "Placer," says there are a mere handful of vegetarian restaurants in the city. "It is very hard for Uruguayans to avoid pizza or barbecue and there is a long way to go for us to get to gourmet levels," she said. "When a Mexican or Japanese restaurant opens, they end up adding local meat dishes to their menu because if they don't, they close down."

Lacurcia became a vegan out of concern for animal welfare. She brushes of the incredulous reaction she invariably draws. "You have to be very tolerant and laugh it off or ignore it," she said, smiling. "People regard us as strange beasts." Her choice certainly sets her apart from the average Uruguayan, who chomps through nearly 60 kilos of beef a year - over 20 kilos more than the average French person, for example.

Baby Food and Meat Juice

The World Health Organization's International Agency for

Research on Cancer (IARC) alarmed many around the world with its findings. It released a report analyzing 800 studies from around the world, concluding that processed meats such as sausages, ham and hot dogs aggravate the risk of bowel cancer, and red meat "probably" does too. But many in Uruguay gave the findings short shrift. Without meat on the menu every day, "Uruguay would not exist," said one diner at a typical restaurant in Mercado del Puerto, in the heart of Montevideo, where the fare revolves entirely around grilled meat. Another diner feasting on meat saw a conspiracy in the findings: "Let's find out what the hidden interests are behind this information."

An unmistakable smell wafts through the capital every Sunday: That of the barbecue, which is central to family gatherings. When a Uruguayan real estate agent takes prospective buyers to an apartment, first on his list of amenities to point out is the barbecue on the terrace. Only after that will talk turn to other, secondary matters, such as the size of the place.

Nor can you mistake the smell of barbecue on the sidewalks, where workers set up improvised grills at lunch time. Even on the online dating network Tinder, having a barbecue is a personal selling point - or so it seems from the profile pictures of the many men posing with a barbecue peeking out in the background.

Back at Mercado del Puerto, Jose Fernandez remembers how until the 1970s Uruguayan mothers would add meat juice to babies' meals. "They would mix the blood of the meat with mashed potatoes," said the 66-year-old. Even local nutritionists are skeptical of the cancer claims. Rosana Viera branded the WHO findings "very alarmist". "Uruguayan meat is very different from that produced in other countries," she said. "Here, the cows are raised outdoors and this is what makes the quality - not just quantity - of their flesh different." — AFP

BRAZIL EYES 'WILD WEST' GUN OWNERSHIP LAW

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil, which has one of the highest murder tolls on the planet, could soon end most restrictions on gun ownership, risking what one critic called a "Wild West" scenario. A draft law stripping away current limits has already been approved in committee and is due to go to the lower house of Congress in November. Under the law, anyone over 21, including people accused of crimes or convicted of less than serious crimes, would be allowed to purchase up to nine firearms a year and 50 rounds of ammunition a month.

State employees and public figures, ranging from government inspectors to politicians, would be authorized to carry arms, as would private citizens often in the public eye such as taxi drivers. At present, weapons can only be bought legally by people obtaining a license on a case-by-case basis. Supporters say freeing up gun sales will allow people to protect themselves in a country plagued by violent robbery and intense confrontations between drug gangs and police, with some 40,000 gun-related deaths a year. "Our proposal is to guarantee the good citizen's right to self-defense," said the law's author Laudivio Carvalho, from the powerful centrist PMDB party. But opponents fear that Brazil's orgy of gun violence would simply spin further out of control. "It's a return to the Wild West," said Ivan Valente, a deputy from the leftist PSOL party.

Bullets and Bibles

The bid to overturn the existing 2003 law on regulations is part of a conservative agenda in Congress where Evangelists and the so-called "bullet-caucus" of right wing politicians with links to the security services are a powerful force. Related draft laws include seeking a legal definition of family that would exclude homosexual couples and criminalizing abortion for women in cases of rape. The same congressional wing is allied to the agricultural lobby and is pushing for legislation that critics say would seriously weaken indigenous tribes' control over their ancestral lands.

One of the most noted members of this right-wing caucus is Eduardo Cunha, the lower house speaker who is the key figure in an ongoing battle by opponents of leftist President Dilma Rousseff to seek her impeachment. Deputy Joao Rodrigues, from the right-wing PSD party, said the gun law is necessary because the state "does not fulfil its obligations" to defend citizens. "We need a cleansing. These criminals walk around and kill as they want. These people should be put out of business one way or another," he was quoted as saying by

O Globo newspaper. But in a society where mob justice and lynchings of suspected criminals is common, some worry that more availability of weapons will not bring peace. "A weapon is a great ally for someone on the attack, but the worst enemy of someone trying to defend himself," said Ivan Marques, director of the Instituto Sou da Paz, a think tank studying violence. "We need to disarm people, not arm them," said Jose Mariano Beltrame, the head of Rio de Janeiro state's security department.

Big Business

Marques accused the arms industry of "playing on people's fear" and said Brazilian manufacturers are producing most of the weapons used in crimes in the country. "The weapon that is used to kill and rob in Brazil is made here and in most cases was originally bought by someone for self-defense," Marques said. A study of 14,000 weapons confiscated between 2013 and 2014 showed that 86 percent had been made in Brazil, he said.



SAO PAULO: Inside view of a gun shop seen in Sao Caetano do Sul yesterday. — AFP



HONG KONG: This photograph taken on Oct 26, 2015 shows student protester Joshua Wong outside the court of justice. — AFP

HK STUDENT LEADER FACES TRIAL OVER DEMOCRACY RALLY

HONG KONG: Prominent Hong Kong student activist Joshua Wong vowed to continue his fight for democracy yesterday as a trial date was set over a protest that sparked mass rallies in the city. Wong, 19, will face trial in February for the demonstration on Sept 26 last year which saw students climb into the city's government complex as part of a campaign for free leadership elections. It triggered wider rallies that exploded two days later when police fired tear gas to disperse crowds in central Hong Kong. Wong is charged with "unlawful assembly and inciting others to take part in an unlawful assembly," relating to the Sept 26 incident.

The teenager was in court yesterday for a half-hour hearing which set the trial date for February 29. It is scheduled to last seven days. Wong could face up to five years in prison if convicted. "I really hope to use this process in court to raise global awareness for the Hong Kong issue - that we still keep fighting for democracy," Wong told AFP after the hearing. Wong, a university student, also faces two other separate cases over protests last year and said the multiple court appearances were "exhausting". He has repeatedly described the cases against him as political and has pleaded not guilty to all the charges. A number of activists are facing court cases - fellow student leaders Nathan Law and Alex Chow will also face trial in February over the Sept 26 protest. Wong recently returned from a trip to London which coincided with Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit, where Wong slammed Britain for putting business with China before democracy in Hong Kong. — AFP

HAGUE COURT TO TAKE UP SOUTH CHINA SEA ROW

LEGAL DEFEAT FOR BEIJING

THE HAGUE: An international tribunal ruled Thursday it had the power to hear a case brought by the Philippines over disputed islands in the South China Sea, in a move likely to trigger fury in Beijing. Manila has insisted the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which the Philippines and China have both ratified, should be used to resolve the bitter territorial row over isolated reefs and islets, which has triggered growing international alarm.

But China has refused to participate in the proceedings, arguing the Permanent Court of Arbitration - which is more than a century old and based in The Hague - had no jurisdiction over the case. "Reviewing the claims submitted by the Philippines, the tribunal has rejected the argument" by China that the "dispute is actually about sovereignty over the islands in the South China Sea and therefore beyond the tribunal's jurisdiction," the court said in a statement. Instead, the court ruled the case reflects "disputes between the two states concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention" - something which falls within its remit. China insists it has sovereign rights to nearly all of the South China Sea, a strategic waterway through which about a third of all the world's traded oil passes.

The disputed waters - claimed in part by Vietnam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Brunei - have also become the stage for a tussle for regional dominance between Beijing and Washington, the world's two largest economic and military powers. Following a stand-off between Chinese ships and the weak Filipino Navy in 2012, China took control of a rich fishing ground called Scarborough Shoal



HEFEI, China: Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel and Chinese Premier Li Keqiang pose with students after their visit to the German University in this city in Anhui province yesterday. — AFP

that is within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone. China has also undertaken giant reclamation activities, raising fears it will use artificial islands to build new military outposts close to the Philippines and other claimants.

Ruling in 2016

The tribunal - set up in 1899 to resolve international disputes between countries - stressed Thursday its ruling did not yet go to the heart of the merits of Manila's case, which was first filed in 2013. A new hearing will now be held behind closed doors in The Hague, and a final ruling is not expected until next year. The tribunal agreed it would take up seven of the 15

submissions made by Manila, in particular whether Scarborough Shoal and low-tide areas like Mischief Reef can be considered islands, as China contends. It will also mull whether China has interfered with Philippine fishing activities at Scarborough Shoal. But it set aside seven more pointed claims, mainly accusing Beijing of acting unlawfully, to be considered at the next hearing on the actual merits of Manila's case. In a July hearing in the Hague, Philippine Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario warned the integrity of UN maritime laws was at stake. China's behaviour had become increasingly "aggressive" and negotiations had proved futile, del Rosario said. — AFP

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TWO'S A CROWD FOR MANY CHINESE

BEIJING: Chinese citizens greeted the announcement of a "two-child" policy warily yesterday, as high costs, career aspirations and rising urbanization in an increasingly wealthy society mute expectations of a baby boom. China's "one-child" family planning regime, which Beijing announced Thursday would end after nearly four decades, has seen arbitrary and often brutal enforcement, including forced abortions and sterilizations.

But Thursday's change may have been too little, too late, as many young Chinese see more costs than benefits in having a second child. A survey on Chinese media site Sina with over 160,000 respondents found that less than 29 percent would have a second child, and social media users seemed to meet Thursday's announcement with a collective shrug. By yesterday evening the subject had dropped out of the top 10 topics on popular micro-blog site Sina Weibo.

Users questioned whether one was truly the loneliest number and said that even if they wanted a child, they could not afford

one. "The country doesn't give any financial support," said one post among many that lamented the costs of having two children. "Apartments are so expensive, now. Who can afford to give birth?" Making more children clearly is not the solution to China's economic problems, another comment said, adding that instead "maybe we should be working hard to make more money".

'Bring up the Population'

The policy is said to have prevented an estimated 400 million births in the world's most populous country, where 1.37 billion people live today. Most families were restricted to only one offspring, but various exemptions applied, and violators who could afford to pay the fines were able to have a second child, or even more. Renowned film director Zhang Yimou paid a \$1.2 million fine for having three extra children. The plan was supposed to save China from a looming population explosion, but now it contributes to a greying of society that will exacerbate labor



BEIJING: Parents and their child play with remote-controlled toy cars at a shopping mall yesterday. — AP

shortages as the world's second-largest economy fights to maintain growth. Under the new policy 90 million couples will be

have the right to a second child, family planning officials said yesterday, without specifying how many were newly eligible. — AFP



YANGON: Myanmar's opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi greets patients in a ward at Yangon General Hospital yesterday. — AP

DESPITE CRITICS, SUPPORT FOR SUU KYI STRONG BEFORE POLLS

NLD EXPECTED TO WIN

KAWHMU, MYANMAR: Aung San Suu Kyi's star power has fallen among fellow Myanmar politicians critical of her management style and decision-making, and among fans abroad disenchanted with the Nobel Peace laureate's relative silence on human-rights abuses. But she's as popular as ever amid the muddy roads and ramshackle huts of her constituency and across much of the country.

In big cities and remote rural corners, the red flag of Suu Kyi's opposition National League for Democracy is much more common than signs of support for the ruling party. She's expected to carry the NLD to victory in parliamentary elections Nov 8, even though the 70-year-old is barred by the constitution from becoming president and it's unclear who will take the job if her party wins.

"Mother Suu is our hero. We want her to be our leader," said Myint Thein, a 54-year-old rice farmer in a village of Kawhmu township, Suu

Kyi's impoverished constituency south of Yangon. People here shrug their shoulders when asked what Suu Kyi has done for them since they elected her to Parliament in 2012. The tiny village of Wartheinkha, where Myint Thein lives, has no running water or electricity. Most residents are uneducated farmers living in shacks built of bamboo and palm leaves. Yet the people here, like many in Myanmar, see Suu Kyi's rise in politics as part of a national narrative. Suu Kyi is the daughter of the country's independence hero, Gen Aung San, who was assassinated by rivals in 1947, when she was just 2. After many years abroad, she returned in 1988 to Myanmar, previously known as Burma, just as an uprising erupted against the military regime. She was thrust into the forefront of the pro-democracy movement, which was brutally crushed by the junta. The military kept her under house arrest for 15 of the next 23 years, which ultimately may

have only enhanced her popularity.

"I love her because she is the daughter of our beloved Gen. Aung San, and she sacrificed a lot for this country," said another villager, 32-year-old Mya Thandar. "We know that when Mother Suu is in a position of power, she will improve our lives." She is called "Mother Suu" by many who see her as having mothered Myanmar through dark, difficult times at the expense of her own family: A husband, now deceased, and two sons left behind in Britain. She is also known respectfully as "The Lady." The junta held her under house arrest for the last two national elections, in 1990 and 2010. The NLD won the first of those, but the military annulled the results and refused to hand over power. Suu Kyi's party boycotted the 2010 election as neither free nor fair, but after the country began a series of political reforms, the NLD took part in the 2012 by-election in which Suu Kyi won a parliamentary seat. — AP

IMRAN KHAN TO DIVORCE AFTER JUST 10 MONTHS

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani opposition leader and former playboy cricketer Imran Khan is to divorce for a second time, ending his marriage to a TV journalist just ten months after they wed. Imran Khan, 62, married 42-year-old Reham Khan, a former BBC weather host and a divorced mother of three, in January this year in a simple ceremony at his Islamabad home. "We have decided to part ways and file for divorce," Reham Khan said in a brief statement on her Twitter account Friday. Imran Khan tweeted that it was a "painful time" and that he has "the greatest respect for Reham's moral character & her passion to work for & help the underprivileged".

Naeem ul Haque, Imran Khan's spokesman told AFP the decision to divorce was mutual. "It's a painful and personal matter, so I won't be able to comment more or state any reason for it," he said. Loved by millions across the cricket-obsessed nation for winning Pakistan its only World Cup in 1992, Khan's sporting prowess and rugged good looks also brought him international celebrity in a country lacking glamour. He was considered his country's most eligible man until he suddenly announced his plans to marry shortly after launching a movement to topple the government in Aug 2014, which he called off in December after a Taliban attack on a school that killed 150 people. Reham Khan, host of a local TV talk show, was widely criticized after she appeared at public meetings of Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) party, with opponents accusing her of seeking to boost her own profile through her husband's fame. She found particularly harsh reception in north-west Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, governed by PTI. She also sparked controversy after it emerged that she had not actually attended a college where she claimed to be a student on her website. There had been reports Imran Khan's family was unhappy with his choice of bride. — AFP



ISLAMABAD: Pakistani opposition leader Imran Khan and his new wife Reham Khan pose for a photograph during their wedding ceremony at his house in this Jan 8, 2015 file photo. — AFP

BoJ holds off on stimulus
despite stalling inflation

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Oil market is experiencing
volatility and flash events

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US consumer spending gain
smallest in eight months

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India govt unveils plan to
'take flying to the masses'

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NASIRIYAH: Iraqi labourers work at an oil refinery in the southern town Nasiriyah yesterday. South Oil Company (SOC) has raised production at Nasiriyah oil field from 40,000 barrels per day to between 65,000 and 70,000 barrels as it aims to reach 100,000 barrels by the end of next month. —AFP

OPEC-FUELED OIL GLUT TO OFFSET US OUTPUT CARTEL'S OCTOBER OUTPUT FALLS LED BY SAUDI, IRAQ

NEW YORK: Slowing US production is unlikely to offer much respite to low oil prices into next year as high OPEC output feeds a persistent supply glut, a Reuters survey showed yesterday. Benchmark North Sea Brent crude is expected to average \$58.52 a barrel in 2016, marginally down from last month's poll and above \$55.94 seen so far this year, the survey of 32 analysts showed.

This is the lowest average 2016 forecast in the polls conducted this year. US crude is projected to average \$54.44 a barrel next year, up slightly from last month's forecast of \$54.10. Production in the United States will continue to decline in response to cheaper oil, but this is not likely to translate into higher prices, the analysts said. "We think prices will grind slowly higher over the next few years, which should help to ease the falls in production but we don't expect a sharp rally in prices or a surge in output," Thomas Pugh of Capital Economics said. The oversupply scenario could also be aggravated by an emerging trend of build-ups in refined products. Influential Wall Street bank Goldman Sachs said crude prices could drop sharply as storage sites for refined products come close to maximum capacity.

Goldman's head of commodities research, Jeff Currie, said in October he did not expect oil to break above \$50 a barrel next year and saw the chances of a drop to \$20 at below 50 percent.

The bearish mood in the market was aggravated by a drop in refining profitability while demand growth slowed, analysts at Jefferies said in a note. Most analysts expect the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries to stick to its stance of maintaining record-high production when it meets on Dec. 4, a year after it chose to defend market share rather than prices.

The exporter group is "about to reap the fruit of last November's tough decision not to cut production", Giorgos Beleris, senior analyst with Thomson Reuters GFMS, said. OPEC

would want US oil production to decline further so the supply glut is reduced without any decline in its share, said Rahul Prithiani, director at CRISIL Research. Bernstein had the highest 2016 forecast for Brent at \$86 a barrel, while Natixis had the lowest at \$48.50.

Output drops

OPEC oil output has fallen in October from the previous month, a Reuters survey found yesterday, as declines in top producers Saudi Arabia and Iraq outweighed higher supply from African members. The drops are not indicative of deliberate supply cuts to prop up prices, sources in the survey said, and the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries is still pumping close to a record high as major producers focus on defending market share.

OPEC supply has fallen in October to 31.64 million barrels per day (bpd) from a revised 31.76 million in September, according to the survey, based on shipping data and information from sources at oil companies, OPEC and consultants. With one day left in October, the final figures could be revised. Even so, OPEC has boosted production by almost 1.5 million bpd since the November 2014 switch to defending market share. Despite the decline this month, output is not far below July's 31.88 million bpd, the highest since Reuters records began in 1997.

The OPEC increase has added to ample supplies, which have helped cut prices by more than half from June 2014 to below \$50 a barrel. Still, with reductions in capital spending by oil companies expected to curb future supply, analysts see signs that OPEC's strategy will deliver. "Clearly, OPEC's long-game strategy is working," said Harry Tchilinguirian, global head of commodity strategy at BNP Paribas. "In the end, OPEC's strategy is creating the conditions for higher prices for longer in a couple of years' time."

The biggest supply drop in October has come from Saudi Arabia, which trimmed output due to reduced use of crude in domestic power plants and refineries, sources in the survey said, despite higher exports. "Supply to the market is down," said a source who tracks Saudi output. "Exports are up but this has been more than offset by lower refinery runs due to maintenance and lower direct burn."

Direct burn - the use of crude in Saudi power plants - usually drops in cooler months due to reduced air-conditioning needs. Maintenance was being carried out at the Saudi Yasref refinery, reducing crude consumption.

Saudi output, at 10.10 million bpd, remains not far below the record high of 10.56 million bpd it pumped in June. Exports from Iraq's main outlet, its southern terminals, were higher for much of October - reaching a record 3.1 million bpd in the first 27 days of the month - but have slowed since as poor weather delayed cargoes, shipping data showed.

Shipments from Iraq's north by the Kurdistan Regional Government via Ceyhan in Turkey have edged lower, while those by Iraq's State Oil Marketing Organization have fallen to zero from about 20,000 bpd in September, the survey found. Smaller increases have come from OPEC's two west African producers, Nigeria and Angola, and from Libya.

Angola and Nigeria exported more crude this month, but a force majeure on shipments of Nigeria's Forcados limited the increase from that country. Libyan output rose slightly, the survey found, but remains a fraction of the pre-conflict rate. Output in Iran, OPEC's second-largest producer until sanctions forced a cut in exports in 2012, continues to edge up, the survey found. A lifting of sanctions on Iran has the potential to boost OPEC output further in 2016. — Reuters

CRUDE OIL SET FOR WEEKLY GAIN DESPITE SURPLUS

LONDON: Brent crude held close to \$49 a barrel yesterday, poised to post the first weekly gain in three weeks despite a supply glut that has tested storage capacity and hammered oil company results.

The potential gain, driven by smaller-than-expected builds in US oil stocks, was widely viewed as a temporary boost in a market that is awash with oil and staring down sluggish economic growth in key markets such as the United States and China. Brent crude was trading 35 cents higher at \$49.15 a barrel at 1220 GMT, set for a more than 2 percent weekly rise.

US crude was trading 15 cents higher at

\$46.21 a barrel, on track to post a gain of nearly 4 percent on the week. "Looking at the bigger picture, there is still lots of oil in the United States," PVM Oil Associates analyst Tamas Varga said. "We should see a softer market in the coming days."

Traders said a 3.4 million barrel crude build reported by the US Energy Information Administration provided the primary support for the weekly increase. The build fell short of some analysts' expectations and sparked a nearly \$3 rally in US crude. A Reuters survey showed October OPEC oil output falling from the previous month, as declines from Saudi

Arabia and Iraq outweighed increases from African members.

Also, China's Ministry of Commerce announced a doubling in the country's crude oil import quota for 2016. But OPEC production remained close to record highs as major producers focus on defending market share, and widespread concerns persisted over China's shaky economic growth.

Bearish data from the United States also tempered gains. US economic growth braked sharply in the third quarter as businesses cut back on restocking warehouses to work off an inventory glut. Analysts said

prices were effectively flat. "We are treading water," said Gareth Lewis-Davies, director of energy commodity strategy at BNP Paribas. "Prices are trading in a very narrow range."

China's closely watched Purchasing Manager Index (PMI), which will be released next week, could give more direction. Lewis-Davies also said the sharp cuts in oil company spending, and the pain of US shale oil producers, could spark a more balanced market in 2016. "These price levels are sufficiently low enough to cut into the cost curve of US shale oil producers," he said. — Reuters



NEW DELHI: An aircraft belonging to the Indian carrier Air India rolls past the main terminal of the Indira Gandhi International airport prior to take-off in New Delhi. New Delhi yesterday announced a plan to make air travel affordable for millions more Indians, with schemes to revive ailing airports and connect rural areas that it said would "take flying to the masses". — AFP

INDIA GOVT UNVEILS PLAN TO 'TAKE FLYING TO THE MASSES'

AILING AIRPORTS TO BE REVIVED TO CONNECT RURAL AREAS

NEW DELHI: New Delhi yesterday announced a plan to make air travel affordable for millions more Indians, with schemes to revive ailing airports and connect rural areas that it said would "take flying to the masses". The long-awaited draft policy aims to bring down airfares to 2,500 rupees (\$40) per hour of flying on many regional routes through a slew of tax incentives, subsidies and a two percent levy on international and some domestic routes.

It outlines plans to revive India's dilapidated airports and airstrips, of which only about 75 out of 476 are in regular use, and setting up a fund to improve access to rural areas. Air travel in India is mostly confined to the third of the population that lives in cities, putting it out of the reach of hundreds of millions. "The prime minister has said... it should be a policy which takes flying to masses, it should no longer confine flying only to the elite," Secretary for Civil Aviation Rajiv Nayan Choubey told reporters.

"We should promote regional connectivity in a manner which makes it possible for the ordinary middle-class Indian to start flying," Choubey said, adding the scheme

would start in April 2016. "We will be giving several incentives in order to bring down the cost of flying as much as we can."

Only 70 million of India's 1.2 billion citizens flew domestically in 2014-15, according to the Sydney-based Centre for Asia-Pacific Aviation (CAPA), making it one of the world's most under-penetrated markets. The government said it aims to increase domestic ticket sales to 300 million by 2022 and 500 million by 2027. The draft National Civil Aviation Policy, which looks to overhaul rules dating back to the 1930s, has been submitted to stakeholders for review.

Easing regulations

India's aviation industry has criticized the government in the past for failing to reform the heavily regulated market. With the exception of budget carrier IndiGo, most domestic airlines are suffering losses and are mired in debt.

"There are a number of rules and regulations that restrict airlines, or force airlines to operate in ways that might not be very commercially viable," Binit Somaia, South Asia director at CAPA told AFP last week. The draft policy contains steps to reduce red

tape, including a plan to deregulate charter flights-which do not follow a fixed schedule-into and within India.

And it moots allowing "completely liberalised" code-sharing, where an airline sells seats on a flight run by another carrier. The government is also considering scrapping or amending the "5-20 rule", which requires local airlines to operate for five years and have a fleet of at least 20 planes before they can fly internationally.

However, some Indian airlines are opposed to scrapping the 2004 rule, saying it would favour cash-rich international airlines coming into the domestic market.

The move to increase flights-which are far more carbon-intensive than trains-may clash with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's environmental commitments, including a plan to cut emissions intensity by 35 percent by 2030. The draft policy said the government would work with industry to make airports carbon neutral in 15 years' time and pursue limits on emissions from aeroplanes.

India's aviation sector has undergone rapid transformation since a liberalization drive began in 2003, but it still ranks tenth in the world. — AFP

INDIA EYES BANKRUPTCY REFORM TO EASE GRIDLOCK

MUMBAI: A group of government-appointed advisors has recommended sweeping changes to India's outdated and overburdened bankruptcy system, aiming to modernize a process that takes several years and costs investors and taxpayers billions. The changes would be the most ambitious overhaul to date of rules governing the liquidation or revival of companies in India, a country with no single bankruptcy code and where competing laws, unclear jurisdictions and inadequate resources can leave cases languishing for decades.

The proposals, to be handed to the Finance Ministry as early as Monday, will impose deadlines for the first time and establish a network of insolvency professionals to lighten courts' workload and tackle delays, TK Viswanathan, chairman of the Bankruptcy Law Reform Committee, told Reuters. Under current rules, even deciding whether to save or liquidate an ailing company can take years, leaving it in the hands of managers who can - and do - strip assets with impunity. Under the proposed changes, a decision would have to be reached in 180 days - even 90 days for fast-track applications, Viswanathan said.

"The whole essence of our exercise is that everything is done within time," he said. Foreign and domestic investors say the difficulty in exiting ventures can deter them from entering. Cases such as the protracted collapse of liquor tycoon Vijay Mallya's Kingfisher Airline empire have burnt investors. The airline was grounded in 2012 with some \$1.5 billion in debt and its shares are now worthless, but creditor banks seized his former Mumbai headquarters only this year. The fate of his Goan villa is stuck in a prolonged court tussle. India ranks 130 out of 189 in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business report, below Lesotho and Cameroon, not least because of its poor performance in resolving insolvency. The World Bank says it takes 4.3 years on average, more than twice as long as in China, with an average recovery of 25.7 cents on the dollar, one of the worst among similar size economies.

"DEAD HORSES"

Troubled companies in India, or their creditors, largely turn to the Official Liquidator, a government-appointed officer attached to the country's high courts, who administers assets and oversees liquidation. Banks can also turn to separate Debts Recovery Tribunals (DRT), partly staffed by officials on assignment from the banks themselves and overseen by the Ministry of Finance. Both are overstretched; on visits to their offices in India's financial capital, Mumbai, computers were often off and always outnumbered by teetering pillars of files.

In the cramped Mumbai office of the DRT, a tribunal considered far speedier than the courts, a Ministry of Finance letter on the notice board urged officials to move faster, as cases were "in many cases taking more than four years". Inside, officials complained they had little power to draw a line under languishing cases. "They are all dead horses," said one, gesturing to the day's case list. "They are never going to run any races, but you have to keep the dead stock." Chief among the problems is that for a single troubled company, creditors and owners can all initiate competing proceedings in different courts, tribunals and states. Current legislation - especially the Sick Industrial Companies Act of 1985 - is geared towards reviving companies, so appeals frequently follow a wind-up order, resulting in virtual paralysis.

"The Official Liquidator system is a disaster. It takes a minimum of five years and can take 10 years, by which point there is virtually no value left in the asset," said Bahram Vakil, partner with law firm AZB & Partners in Mumbai and a member of the reform committee. "There is a crying need (for change). That system has completely broken down." Another committee member, M R Umarji, a consultant at the Indian Banks' Association and former central bank official, said staffing constraints meant it could take 15 to 20 years to wind up a company: "There are very limited numbers of persons available and there are hundreds, thousands of companies to be wound up." — Reuters

OBAMA WELCOMES BUDGET AND DEBT DEAL TO KEEP GOVT OPEN

WASHINGTON: President Barack Obama said he's eager to sign the two-year budget deal passed by the Senate in the pre-dawn hours yesterday in hopes of breaking a "cycle of shutdowns and manufactured crises" that have hurt the US economy.

Senators voted 64-35 for the measure that will spare the nation the specter of a catastrophic default and a partial government shutdown. Democrats teamed with Republican defense hawks to overcome opposition from conservatives who included two senators running for president - Rand Paul of Kentucky and Ted Cruz of Texas. Obama had negotiated the accord, passed by the House earlier this week, with congressional leaders who were intent on avoiding the brinkmanship and shutdown threats that have haunted the institution for the past several years. The deal allows members of both parties to look ahead toward next year's presidential and congressional elections. Republican leaders were particularly concerned that failure to resolve this vexing issue could reflect poorly on their ability to govern.

Departing House Speaker Rep. John Boehner made the budget deal his top priority in his final days before making way for Rep. Paul Ryan, who took over the leadership Thursday as House Republicans tried to move past deep internal divisions.

In a statement issued by the White House early yesterday, Obama said the deal shows Congress can "help, not hinder" the nation's progress. He urged lawmakers to work on other needed spending measures in the future "without getting sidetracked by ideological provisions that have no place in America's budget process." There was significant opposition in the Senate, nevertheless, as Paul and Cruz made it a point to be on the floor to register their concerns.

In an hour-long speech that delayed the final vote to around 3 a.m., Paul said Congress is "bad with money." He railed against increases in defense dollars supported by Republicans and domestic programs supported by Democrats.

"These are the two parties getting together in an unholy alliance and spending us into oblivion," he said. Cruz said the Republican majorities in both the House and Senate had given Obama a "diamond-encrusted, glow-in-the-dark Amex card" for government spending. — AP

GASSLED PARTNERS TO APPEAL RULING IN \$1.8BN TARIFF ROW

OSLO: A group of international investors will appeal against a ruling by an Oslo court regarding Norway's decision to cut natural gas pipeline tariffs, a decision the investors said would cost them 15 billion crowns (\$1.8 billion) in lost earnings by 2028. Challenging Norway's reputation as a predictable place to do business, four firms owned by funds including Allianz, UBS, the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority and the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board, argued that Norway illegally cut fees on the 8,000-km (5,000-mile) Gassled gas pipeline network.

Solveig Gas, Njord Gas Infrastructure, Silex Gas and Infragas, which hold a combined 45 percent stake in Gassled, were appealing, Solveig Gas said in a statement to the London Stock Exchange.

Infragas and Njord Gas Infrastructure would continue to invest in Gassled in accordance with contractual commitments, but could shy away from new investments, their chief executives said after the companies publicised their decision to appeal. Njord Gas Infrastructure said that had the tariffs not been cut, it would probably have bought a stake in the 480-km Polarled pipeline, whose construction was completed last month. The pipeline connects Statoil's Aasta Hansteen gas field to the Nyhamna onshore processing plant.

"There are other projects which typically would have been interesting before (the cut in tariffs), for example Polarled," Njord Gas Infrastructure CEO Birte Norheim told Reuters.

Infragas CEO Knud Noerve said: "When it comes to investments outside of Gassled, it is not something we're looking at for the moment ... That's because of the uncertainty created."

The four firms bought their stakes in 2010 and 2011 from ExxonMobil, Total, Statoil and Royal Dutch Shell. In September the Oslo district court ruled in favour of Norway, but said the Oil and Energy Ministry had not provided full information to the buyers and sellers regarding how the tariffs could be changed. The court added that the ministry's officials at the time had been unaware of how easily this could be done. — AP



TOKYO: Residents look at items for sale in a commercial district in northern Tokyo yesterday. Japanese consumer prices fell 0.1 percent in September year-on-year, official data showed yesterday, keeping open the possibility of more stimulus by the central bank. — AFP

BOJ HOLDS OFF ON STIMULUS DESPITE STALLING INFLATION BUT FUTURE ACTION TO WARD OFF SLOWDOWN LIKELY

TOKYO: Japan's central bank kept its monetary policy unchanged yesterday, but hinted it could expand its already expansive stimulus in the future to counter slowing exports and other threats to growth.

The decision came despite fresh evidence that the Bank of Japan is making little headway in its unprecedented effort to spur inflation in the world's third largest economy. Data for September showed the core inflation rate, which excludes volatile food prices, was minus 0.1 percent while household incomes and spending also fell.

In a statement, the Bank of Japan cited slowing growth in China and other emerging markets as a factor behind weakening exports and industrial production. Hinting it may consider further action later, the BOJ said it would study risks to economic activity and prices "and make adjustments as appropriate." Central bank asset purchases are injecting tens of billions of dollars of cash into the economy each month. But with inflation still near zero, many economists had expected a "surprise" move by BOJ Gov. Haruhiko Kuroda.

The U.S. Federal Reserve is moving toward raising interest rates and winding down central bank asset purchases, but Japan remains firmly in loosening mode along with the European Central Bank.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's economic policies are aimed at getting consumers and businesses to spend more, both by keeping interest rates at record low levels and by fostering expectations that inflation will erode future purchasing power.

But the economy contracted at a 1.2 percent annual rate in the April-June quarter and many economists expect it to have again lost ground in July-September.

Earlier Friday, the BOJ issued a short statement saying it was keeping its policies as is. As usual, economist Takahide Kiuchi was the policy board's lone dissenter, advocating a sharp cutback in asset purchases. Data released earlier this week showed stronger-than-expected manufacturing



TOKYO: Governor of the Bank of Japan (BoJ) Haruhiko Kuroda speaks during a press conference at the BoJ headquarters in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

output in September. That may have alleviated pressure on the BOJ to take further action to spur growth.

But Kuroda, while repeatedly insisting the economy is in the midst of a "moderate recovery," has contended all along that the BOJ has done everything it can to boost growth.

The latest data are typical of the mixed signals that have obscured the actual state of Japan's recovery.

Overall inflation was flat from a year earlier. Household spending fell 0.4 percent in September from a year earlier, while incomes slipped 1.5 percent.

Unemployment remained at 3.4 percent, and there were 1.24 jobs available for each job seeker, the data showed. Tight labor conditions are expected to force companies to raise wages, in turn causing infla-

tion to rise. But companies have expanded overtime and hired more part-time workers, to avoid significant increases in labor costs.

That has hindered efforts to boost inflation, the central bank said in its analysis, noting that "given that firms have been seeing record profits and the unemployment rate has declined to the range of 3.0 percent to 3.5 percent, the pace of improvement in wages has been somewhat slow."

The plunge in oil prices over the past two years has also sapped any inflationary pressure, further diluting any impact from monetary easing, said Richard Katz of the Oriental Economist.

"In an era of near-zero interest rates, monetary ease loses its normal punch," he wrote in a commentary. — AP

EURO-ZONE EXITS DEFLATION BUT PRESSURE FOR ECB BOOST PERSISTS

BRUSSELS: Eurozone inflation rose to zero percent and out of negative territory in October, official data showed yesterday, but the level is still low and will press the European Central Bank to pump up its stimulus. ECB head Mario Draghi hinted heavily this month that the central bank will boost its contested bond-buying program given low inflation levels across the 19 countries that share the euro.

The step up to zero percent from negative 0.1 percent a month earlier will do little to reverse Draghi's course, analysts said. The EU's Eurostat statistics agency also said euro-zone unemployment dropped to 10.8 percent in September, the lowest level since January 2012. Across the EU's 28 members, the rate stood at 9.3 percent, it said.

"Although today's inflation and unemployment data for the euro-zone revealed small improvements, they are still very weak by past standards, suggesting that the ECB cannot afford to delay increasing its policy support much longer," said Jessica Hinds, European economist at Capital Economics.

In March, the ECB launched a more than one-trillion-euro stimulus plan running through to September next year in order to get inflation closer to its 2.0 percent target.

'No taboos'

Despite that, the ECB's chief economist this week told AFP that there is a growing risk that inflation in the euro-



FRANKFURT: President of European Central Bank (ECB) Mario Draghi speaks during a press conference of the ECB in Frankfurt, Germany. — AP

zone will not return to levels conducive to healthy economic growth, thus opening the door to more central bank action.

"There are no taboos," Peter Praet said, on the measures needed to push inflation back to more suitable levels. The exit from deflation came as the steep fall in energy prices, led by oil, slowed in October to 8.7 percent annually instead of 8.9 percent the previous month, the data

showed. ING analyst Teunis Brosens said the inflation data made the "inflation anxieties" expressed by the ECB last week seem "odd".

"It is hard to escape the notion that inflation was merely an excuse to talk down the euro exchange rate last week," Brosens said, referring to the euro's strong trading against the US dollar that hurts Europe's exporters.

Unemployment in the euro-zone has fallen steadily from the 12.1 percent peak reached in 2013, but divergences across the monetary bloc remain wide. Crisis-hit Greece again posted the highest rate of unemployment in the euro-zone at 25.0 percent in July, the latest data available. Just weeks ahead of elections, Spain posted a still high 21.6 percent, though this was down from 24.0 percent a year ago. Youth unemployment in Spain stood at 46.7 percent, but steeply lower than 53.7 percent a year earlier.

In Italy, the rate was 11.8 percent last month, down from 11.9 percent in August. Even with the signs of improvement in Italy, "the path toward levels of employment close to the rest of Europe seems to be an extremely long and difficult one," Riccardo Padovani, head of research institute Svimez told Bloomberg. French unemployment crept lower to 10.7 percent from a month earlier but was still up from 10.4 percent a year ago. In Germany, unemployment remained at historically low level of 4.5 percent, as measured by Eurostat, down from 5.0 percent a year earlier. — AFP

WALL ST FLAT; INDEXES SET FOR BEST MONTH IN 4 YEARS

NEW YORK: US stocks were little changed yesterday as investors paused on the last trading day of what could be the best month for the three major indexes in four years. Energy majors Exxon and Chevron reported better-than-expected results, helped by strong refining margins. Exxon shares were down 1 percent, while Chevron rose 1.9 percent. The consumer staples sector was down 0.64 percent, leading the three decliners among the 10 major S&P sectors, after data showed US consumer spending barely rose in September.

Investors will get more clues on consumer spending when the University of Michigan's final index on consumer sentiment, which is expected to rise to 92.5 in October from 92.1 in September, is released at 10:00 am. As the earning season winds down, investors will be looking at data over the next several weeks to assess the state of the economy before the Federal Reserve's policy meeting in December. The Fed made it clear on Wednesday that a rate hike in December was still possible if there was sufficient evidence that the economy could withstand an increase.

At 9:42 a.m. ET the Dow Jones industrial average was up 5.88 points, or 0.03 percent, at 17,761.68, the S&P 500 was up 0.77 points, or 0.04 percent, at 2,090.18 and the Nasdaq composite index was up 7.19 points, or 0.14 percent, at 5,081.47.

Abbvie was up 8.6 percent at \$58.75, giving the biggest boost to the S&P 500, while CVS Health fell 6.9 percent to \$96.64 after results.

Keycorp fell 5.6 percent to \$12.63 after it said it would buy First Niagara Financial for \$4.1 billion. First Niagara rose less than a percent. Valeant Pharmaceuticals was down 6.1 percent at \$104.69 after it said it was cutting all ties with specialty pharmacy Philidor. LinkedIn shot up 9.6 percent to \$237.76 while Expedia jumped 7.5 percent to \$136.59 after their quarterly results beat estimates.

Baidu's U.S.-listed shares were up 7.2 percent at \$181.12 after strong results and provided the biggest boost to the Nasdaq Composite.

Strong results from blue-chips have helped improve analyst sentiment, with profits at S&P 500 companies now expected to fall 1.7 percent, far less than the 4.9 percent drop forecast at the start of earnings season, according to Thomson Reuters data.

The Fed's Board of Governors will hold an open meeting in Washington on policies regarding large banking organizations. San Francisco Fed President John Williams is slated to take part in a discussion on interest rates.

Declining issues outnumbered advancers on the NYSE by 1,417 to 1,250. On the Nasdaq, 1,281 issues fell and 985 advanced. The S&P 500 index showed 10 new 52-week highs and one new low, while the Nasdaq recorded 20 new highs and 31 new lows. — Reuters

OIL MARKET IS EXPERIENCING VOLATILITY AND FLASH EVENTS
CFTC CHIEF WARNS OF DETERIORATION IN LIQUIDITY

LONDON: Crude oil prices have been more volatile this year than at any time since the financial crisis of 2008/09 and before that 1991, according to standard measures of price variability.

Some of the increase in volatility is more apparent than real, however, as every \$1 per barrel move translates into a larger shift in percentage terms now that prices have halved from \$100 per barrel to less than \$50.

The chief of the US Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) warned a conference last week the oil market had already experienced 35 "flash events" since the start of the year. CFTC Chairman Timothy Massad defined flash events as occasions on which prices moved by at least 200 basis points within an hour but returned to within 75 basis points of the starting position within the same hour ("Evolving structure of the US Treasury market" Oct. 21).

The definition, which Massad acknowledged was "somewhat arbitrary", was derived from the significant round-trip move in the price of US Treasury notes and bonds in October 2014. The large move and retracement in Treasury prices between 0933 ET and 0945 ET on Oct. 15, 2014, had only been exceeded on three times since 1998 ("Joint Staff Report on the US Treasury Market," July 2015).

On previous occasions, big moves in bond prices coincided with significant policy announcements, but this time there was no obvious cause for the surge in volatility and deterioration in liquidity.

Sudden and unexplained flash crashes have been observed in other markets including the US stock market (May 6, 2010) and crude oil (May 5, 2011 and Sept. 17, 2012). Flash events can occur on any scale from seconds and minutes to hours, days or even weeks with many of the same forces at work.

Flash crashes are simply a very compressed version of the wider phenomenon of financial

market bubbles and crashes which includes the stock market crashes of 1929, 1987 and 2007.

But the definition must be handled with care and should be adjusted to scale with the different levels of volatility ordinarily present in different asset markets.

COMPLEX SYSTEMS

The possibility of extreme events in complex systems has been extensively explored by researchers in fields as diverse as behavioural economics, finance, electrical engineering, chaos theory and population biology. Perhaps the best treatment of extreme events in financial markets is Didier Sornette's book on "Why stock markets crash: Critical events in complex financial systems" published in 2003.

Flash crashes in financial markets share many similarities with the cascading blackouts that periodically cause electricity grids to collapse, most famously in the United States and Canada in August 2003.

Contacts between a handful of power lines and overgrown trees one afternoon in Ohio led to a chain of events that cut power to 60 million people across the United States and Ontario in less than five minutes. In complex systems characterized by non-linear relationships and positive feedback, small changes to the initial condition of the system can result in very large shifts in outcomes.

The idea that small causes can produce large effects offends the human mind's sense of orderliness (which wants cause and effect to be roughly proportional) but is actually quite common.

It helps explain why commodities and other financial markets exhibit far more very large price movements than would be expected if price moves followed a Gaussian or normal distribution.

The non-normal behaviour of commodity prices was identified by Benoit Mandelbrot in the 1960s following a study of more than 100

years of cotton markets ("The variation of certain speculative prices" 1963).

DEFINITION STRETCH

The CFTC was correct to identify the events of Oct. 15, 2014 in the US Treasury market as a "flash event" and to note that other markets have experienced flash crashes. But it was wrong to stretch the flash event label to cover 35 events in the US crude oil futures market since the start of 2015.

Applying a threshold for identifying flash events from one market (Treasury bonds) to another market (WTI) fails to account for the important differences between them. Commodity prices are much more volatile than bonds. Price moves that are highly unusual in the US Treasury bond market are actually commonplace in oil and other commodities.

The standard deviation of daily price moves in the oil futures market for WTI has been around 2.4 percent since 1990. Very large price moves have been surprisingly frequent over the last 25 years.

By applying a definition of "flash event" derived from US Treasuries to the oil market, the CFTC hugely overstated the number of true flash events in the oil market. The CFTC defined volatility in terms of a percentage move in WTI prices, which is the common method of measuring volatility in financial and commodity markets. But since the price of WTI has halved since the middle of 2014, a 200 basis point move is less than \$1 per barrel, a fairly normal intra-day move in prices. Trading ranges of \$1, often reversed, are just part of the normal ebb and flow of the oil futures market.

Traders are well aware of the regular occurrence of volatility at all timescales since it is part of their everyday life and what makes trading so challenging. It is misleading to label these normal trading conditions as flash events and draw conclusions about market functioning. — Reuters

EXXON Q3 PROFIT FALLS AMID LOW OIL PRICES

DALLAS: Exxon Mobil Corp. posted its worst third quarter in 12 years due to low oil prices but still earned \$4.24 billion, beating Wall Street expectations. Exxon's earnings from exploration and production continued to slide, especially in the United States. However, profit doubled in the refining end of its business on stronger margins, and the chemicals segment was steady.

Exxon Mobil is dealing with oil prices that have dropped by half since June 2014 and have remained lower for

longer than most industry experts expected. With production outstripped modest demand growth, it's unclear when prices will start rising. CEO Rex Tillerson pledged a "relentless focus" on controlling costs. The company slashed capital and exploration spending by about one-fifth from a year ago, but it spent more on shareholder dividends.

The oil giant reported Friday that third-quarter profit slid 47 percent from the same period last year and was the smallest third-quarter gain since 2003,

when oil prices were around \$30 a barrel.

The earnings worked out to \$1.10 per share. That beat the average estimates of analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research and FactSet, who predicted 89 cents per share.

Revenue dropped 37 percent to \$67.34 billion. The FactSet analysts had expected \$61.71 billion.

Exxon's profit from exploration and production dropped from \$6.5 billion to \$1.4 billion, including a loss of \$442 mil-

lion in the US. Production rose due to new projects in the US, Canada and elsewhere.

So-called downstream earnings from refining and selling petroleum products jumped from \$1 billion to \$2 billion on higher refining margins. In trading less than an hour before yesterday's opening bell, shares of the Irving, Texas-based company were up 77 cents to \$83. They ended Thursday down 11 percent this year while the Standard & Poor's 500 index had climbed 1.5 percent. — AP

CHEVRON TO LAY OFF 6-7,000 AS OIL PRICE PLUNGE HITS

NEW YORK: US oil giant Chevron said yesterday it was going to cut between 6,000 and 7,000 jobs and continue with asset sales as the company retrenches amid sharply lower oil prices.

The layoffs equate to about 10 percent of its workforce, and come after the company already announced in July cuts of 1,500 jobs. Chevron also said it would pursue further asset sales, expecting to raise \$5-10 billion through 2017 after bringing in \$11 billion from sales over the past two years.

The company is slicing capital expenditures next year by 25 percent to \$28 billion at most.

"We expect further reductions in spending for 2017 and 2018, to the \$20 to \$24 billion range, depending on business conditions at the time," chairman and chief executive John Watson said in a statement. "With the lower investment, we anticipate reducing our employee workforce by 6-7,000."

The US oil major reported a 63.6 percent fall in earnings to \$2.04 billion in the quarter to September 30 compared to a year ago.

Upstream earnings—the exploration and production part of the business—barely cleared a profit, with just \$59 million, against \$4.65 billion a year ago. Holding up profits were downstream operations, which earned \$2.21 billion. — AFP



BEIJING: A man passes his child to his mother as they shop for baby stroller at a shopping mall in Beijing yesterday. China's decision to abolish its one-child policy is a boon to couples and to sellers of goods from formula to diapers to toys. — AP

OIL GROUPS SLASH COSTS, BUT INVESTORS SPARED

COSTLIER OIL EXPLORATION PLANS ON HOLD

PARIS: Oil titans are slashing costs and investments as a plunge in oil prices batters profits but there is still one area they dare not touch: Dividend payouts to investors. Crude oil prices have more than halved since mid-2014 in a global glut, squeezing the financial results at major oil groups and forcing them to rethink the viability of some of their costlier oil exploration plans.

British energy giant BP, ravaged by the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill, said profit plunged 64 percent in the third quarter of this year. BP has axed its 2015 investment budget by \$4 billion (3.6 billion euros) compared to last year. "We are now in action to rebalance our financial framework in this new price environment," BP chief executive Bob Dudley said.

At Royal Dutch Shell, the pain was more intense as it took losses of \$7.4 billion in the third quarter on huge write-downs after scrapping expensive projects in Alaska and Canada, vowing to become a "more focused and competitive company". Likewise France's Total, which reported a 69-percent

fall in net profits for the same period and trimmed its investment budget for this year by 10 percent, or Italy's Eni which made a loss of 952 million euros and Norway's Statoil which reported losses of 299 million euros.

In an all-out battle to cut costs, however, dividend payouts to shareholders remain intact. "The big oil companies are all slashing capital expenditure to enable breakeven operations at around \$60 per barrel," said Jasper Lawler, analyst at European financial trading specialists CMC markets.

"The idea is that in the medium term oil prices will average \$60 per barrel. This allows big oil to keep dividends intact by using low interest rates to run up debt levels in the short term," Lawler said. Oil groups will do anything to avoid lowering payouts to their shareholders, said Alexandre Andlauer, analyst at French equity research group AlphaValue.

'No strategic plan'

"They preferred to cut capital expenditure again by two or three billion rather than

touch the dividend," Andlauer said. "The majors want to respond to market expectations, in this case investment funds," he said. "If they cut the dividend there will be an outward flow of those actors."

Total, for example, aims to pay for its dividend through its own finances in 2017. Failing that, it would keep open the option of paying the dividend in shares instead of cash.

In Europe, only Eni has so far dared to cut the dividend, announcing a lower payout in March. But there is a longer term price to pay for the strategy, Andlauer cautioned. "Instead of cutting the dividend they are cutting investments. So they are cutting financial results, profitability from 2020. From an industry view, it is a shame to act in such a way." It is unclear how long the oil companies can maintain dividend payouts in any case, said Christopher Dembik, economist at the Danish investment bank Saxo Bank. "They are in a streamlining phase, trying to save the furniture, above all to satisfy shareholders. But there is no strategic development plan," he said. — AFP



MIAMI: Chevron sign in Miami. Chevron Corp is cutting up to 7,000 jobs as it deals with lower oil prices that are cutting deeply into profit. — AP



BOSTON: Shoppers are offered bags as they enter a Primark retail store in the Downtown Crossing neighborhood of Boston. The University of Michigan issues its monthly index of consumer sentiment for September yesterday. — AP

US CONSUMER SPENDING GAIN SMALLEST IN EIGHT MONTHS

EMPLOYMENT COST INDEX RISES 0.6% IN Q3

WASHINGTON: US consumer spending in September recorded its smallest gain in eight months as personal income barely rose, suggesting some cooling in domestic demand after recent hefty increases. The Commerce Department data and another report from the Labor Department yesterday also showed weak inflationary pressures, which would argue against the Federal Reserve raising interest rates at the end of the year. US central bank policymakers this week put a rate hike in December on the table with a direct reference to their final meeting of the year. The Fed has kept benchmark overnight interest rates near zero since December 2008.

"Today's batch of data releases aren't going to convince the doves to vote for a December rate hike," said Paul Ashworth, chief US economist at Capital Economics in Toronto. Consumer spending, which accounts for more than two-thirds of US economic activity, edged up 0.1 percent last month after rising 0.4 percent in August. September's consumer spending data was

included in Thursday's third-quarter gross domestic product report. Consumer spending rose at a brisk 3.2 percent annual pace in the third quarter, helping to lift GDP growth to a 1.5 percent rate. Spending has increased at a rate of more than 3 percent in each of the last two quarters.

Growth in the third quarter was constrained by business efforts to whittle down an inventory bloat, a strong dollar and ongoing spending cuts by energy companies.

US stock index futures rose after the data, while prices of longer-dated US Treasuries edged up. The US dollar gained against a basket of currencies. When adjusted for inflation, consumer spending rose 0.2 percent in September after increasing 0.4 percent in August, suggesting consumption will continue to support the economy through the rest of the year.

Personal income ticked up 0.1 percent in September, the smallest rise since March, after increasing 0.4 percent in the prior month. With spending sluggish, inflation

remained benign last month. A price index for consumer spending slipped 0.1 percent, the first decline since January, after being flat in August. In the 12 months through September, the personal consumption expenditures (PCE) price index rose 0.2 percent, the smallest increase since April. It increased 0.3 percent in August. Excluding food and energy, prices rose 0.1 percent for a fifth straight month. The so-called core PCE price index rose 1.3 percent in the 12 months through September after a similar gain in August.

Inflation has persistently run below the Fed's 2 percent target. A separate report from the Labor Department showed the Employment Cost Index, the broadest measure of labor costs, increased 0.6 percent after a 0.2 percent gain in the second quarter.

In the 12 months through September, labor costs held steady at 2.0 percent, below the 3 percent threshold that economists say is needed to bring inflation closer to the Fed's target. — Agencies

RBS WARNS OF HIGHER MISCONDUCT CHARGES

LONDON: Royal Bank of Scotland said costs relating to alleged past misconduct could be substantially higher than expected, potentially hampering plans by the British government to sell more shares in the bank soon. RBS is facing a number of probes into alleged wrongdoing, disrupting Chief Executive Ross McEwan's efforts to turn around the lender that was rescued by a 46 billion pound (\$70.5 billion) government bailout during the 2007-09 financial crisis.

They include an investigation by authorities in the United States into claims it misled investors in mortgage-backed securities and a review of its treatment of struggling small firms by Britain's financial regulator. The bank yesterday reported a third-quarter operating loss due to restructuring costs and said it expected further charges relating to misconduct and litigation which could be substantially greater than the provisions it has already made.

RBS, which is now 73 percent owned by the government, has given similar warnings in the past given the uncertainty surrounding ongoing investigations. The bank has so far set aside 4.5 billion pounds to cover regulatory and legal actions, including 2.4 billion for litigation.

"Since 2008, RBS has gone through a very difficult period and there are still quite a few obstacles to be overcome before we're back to full health," new Chairman Howard Davies, who took up his position in September, told reporters.

The ongoing investigations threaten to derail the British government's plans to sell three-quarters of its stake in the bank over the next five years.

Britain's finance ministry sold a 5.4 percent stake in August, taking a loss of 1.1 billion pounds, and is keen to sell more shares as early as December, according to sources with knowledge of government thinking. Court documents filed in the United States in June suggested the bank could have to pay \$13 billion to settle the mortgage-backed securities claims. The bank is being investigated by the U.S. Federal Housing Finance Agency and Department of Justice.

Senior RBS executives have said the most damaging issue for the bank's reputation is the investigation by Britain's Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) into the activities of the bank's Global Restructuring Group (GRG) turnaround unit.

RBS was accused of pushing viable businesses into GRG so it could seize their assets and charge higher fees. The FCA has hired Promontory to investigate the claims and the consultancy is due to report back its findings by the end of the year.

Reuters reported in September that RBS executives were bracing themselves for a multi-billion pound compensation scheme after McEwan left a meeting with the regulator in May convinced the bank would face punitive action.

"We're waiting to see what comes out of their results so that we can have the dialogue with them," McEwan told reporters yesterday. "It's one of those issues that I did say we wanted to tidy up this year. It certainly has some impact on us in terms of the feel around the organization but I'm not going to give any view on the outcome, we'll wait and see what comes through from the FCA," he said.

Shares in RBS were down 1.7 percent by 1220 GMT. RBS, which is drastically shrinking its investment bank and international operations, reported a third-quarter operating loss of 134 million pounds (\$206 million), down from a profit of 1.1 billion the year before, hit by restructuring costs. RBS also said it had raised \$2.6 billion through the sale of its remaining stake in US business Citizens. The sale will increase the bank's core tier 1 capital, a measure of its financial strength, to 16.2 percent, the best of any UK bank. — Reuters

REPORT IT COULD REPAY IRELAND UP TO 2BN EUROS SENSIBLE: AIB

DUBLIN: Allied Irish Banks said a media report it could repay 1.5-2.0 billion euros (\$1.7-2.2 billion) of government bailout funds seemed "sensible," and hoped talks would conclude in the coming weeks.

State-owned AIB is in discussions with European regulators about reorganising its capital structure, including how much it can repay the government from the 3.5 billion euros of preference shares it owns in the bank. Dublin has pumped 21 billion euros into AIB since the 2008-9 financial crisis, the biggest bailout given to any Irish bank still trading, and has said it will recoup all of the money, starting with its preference shares.

"It is obviously subject to an agreement with the SSM (the EU's Single Supervisory Mechanism), people are talking in a range that seems sensible but I'm not going to comment on an actual number at this stage," AIB CEO Bernard Byrne told reporters when asked about a media report the bank could redeem 1.5-2.0 billion euros of Dublin's preference shares.

"Hopefully in the next number of weeks we should be able to get to a conclusion."

Ireland's finance minister said last month the government would recover 3-4 billion euros from AIB in the next 12 months through redemption of the preference shares, the maturing of 1.6 billion

euros worth of state-owned contingent capital notes (CoCos) next July, and through dividends on its shares.

The remainder of the preference shares will convert to equity and the 99-percent state-owned bank has said it will seek to raise Lower Tier 2 (LT2) and Additional Tier 1 bonds (AT1) - types of debt - to maintain its capital levels. Byrne said he could not give a range regarding the amount of debt the bank would raise, but reiterated it was "likely that there will be an LT2 and AT1 element to it."

Analysts at Cantor Fitzgerald estimated AIB could eventually raise up to 900 million euros of AT1, 1.2 billion in LT2 and that

there would be "strong and long pent-up demand" for the paper.

If re-elected early next year, the government plans to sell a 25 percent stake in AIB on the stock market. Byrne said investors the bank has met over the past 12-18 months see the country's second largest lender by assets as a good play on an economy that is set to be the fastest growing in Europe for a second successive year.

"The investment community is positive on Ireland and they can see very clearly the role that a bank like AIB with its market share plays in that economic recovery," Byrne said. — Reuters

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2015

Kuwait Times Weekender

www.kuwaittimes.net



*No tricks: Halloween
all the rage in Japan*

SEE PAGE 27

A male sea lion named Pucchi balances a ball and a jack-o-lantern for visitors to the Aqua Park aquarium in Tokyo yesterday. The aquarium offered special Halloween promotions to attract visitors through October 31. — AFP



Usher's son wants to be a scientist

The 'U Got it Bad' hitmaker, 37, has revealed six-year-old Naviyd is keen to carve out a career in the laboratory when he's older because he wants to discover a long-term cure for his seven-year-old brother Usher Raymond V's diabetes. Speaking to the New York Post newspaper's Page Six column, he said: "I have two sons. Usher Raymond V, we call him Cinco, has Type 1 diabetes." He added: "My youngest son knows I worry about Cinco and recently told me, 'Do not worry! One day, I'm going to be a scientist and cure this for my brother.'?" Cinco was diagnosed with the lifelong condition last year and the handsome singer has admitted it has been a tough 12 months understanding the condition and adjusting to it. He explained: "A child that every day has to prick himself

[with an insulin needle] and has to be cautious of what he eats and also to carry this disorder around — that really is the type of bravery that we all aspire to have." He added: "There's been some difficult moments but having dealt with it on a daily basis, I have a great deal of understanding of what people have to deal with." Meanwhile, the star has certainly had a busy few months as he recently tied the knot in a low-key wedding with his long-time girlfriend Grace Miguel following six years of dating. A source said previously the pair secretly eloped and got hitched over Labor Day weekend in the US in September.

Caitlyn named one of Glamour magazine's Women of the Year

The 'I Am Cait' star, 66, who was formerly known as Bruce Jenner prior to her gender transition surgery earlier this year, has secured a place on the annual list alongside Victoria Beckham, 41, and Reese Witherspoon, 39. The former Olympian - who has been married three times, including to Kardashian matriarch Kris Jenner, and has six children - said after securing a spot on the list: "I am just excited about the future for the first time in a long, long time. "And that is a nice feeling to have.... To be honest with you, if the worst thing in the world that happens to you is you are trans, you've got it made." Caitlyn, Victoria and Reese will join Misty Copeland, Elizabeth Holmes, Cecile Richards, the Women of Charleston, and the US women's national soccer team as they are honored at 25th Anniversary Women of the Year Awards, which will be held in New York, on November 9. The glamorous ceremony, which will take place at the Carnegie Hall, will be opened by comedienne Amy Schumer, and the gongs will be handed out on the night by Glamour Editor-in-Chief, Cindi Leive. Meanwhile, this isn't the first time Caitlyn has received an award since her surgery as she also became a national advocate for transgender awareness and took home the Arthur Ashe Courage Award in July this year.



Sam Smith is a millionaire

Accounts filed for his company Sam Smith World Ltd. reveals that the 'Money On My Mind' hitmaker raked in £1,049,277 in 2014. Official documents show Sam was owed £865,577 and had cash assets of £183,700. After bills were paid, the company totaled £22,908 in profit. The company - of which Sam is the sole shareholder and director - was set up in December 2013, The Sun newspaper reports. And the 23-year-old singer is expecting his income to rocket this year as he celebrates the successes of his debut album 'In The Lonely Hour' - which has sold over nine million copies worldwide - as well as a fruitful world tour. However, Sam is prepared to put the money behind him - at least for now - as he recently revealed he is planning to take a hiatus from music. He said: "I've been playing now for three years nonstop. And it feels right for me to just go home and live my life - just be a 23-year-old. It'd be good to actually spend some time dating I think." Despite his break, Sam is still working on a new album but admits the record is a long way off yet. He added: "I've been inspired the whole year - my love life, and the downs and ups have never stopped - so I'm always inspired by stuff like that. "I have been writing a little bit, and already I've found direction on what I want to say and how I want things to sound. But there's a long way to go."

Connelly says working with husband was 'miserable' for her kids

The 44-year-old actress - who has 18-year-old son Kai from a past relationship, and Stellan, 12, and Agnes, four, with her husband - admits filming was quite intense as it took place in such a short space of time, so their preparations also spilled over into their homelife. She said: "Because it was low-budget with only a few days to shoot, we really couldn't leave it all behind at the end of the day. "We had to prep each night for the next morning. Although it was probably somewhat miserable for the kids, it actually helped that the film was being made on such a short schedule. If it had been longer, it would have been more miserable." Jennifer and Paul met on the set of 'A Beautiful Mind' in 2001 and also starred opposite one another in 2009's 'Creation', but 'Shelter' marks the 44-year-old actor's first venture behind the camera. And though the brunette beauty thought it would be "strange" taking direction from her spouse, she had a wonderful experience because she felt so "free". She told Net-a-Porter's The Edit: "I thought it would be stranger than it was. "In a way, it felt very familiar. We met at work. We've been on the same set; we've been on each other's sets. "And it was really great to have that much trust, to have that degree of intimacy with your director, especially when the subject matter is so intense. It's an amazing feeling of freedom and safety."





Victoria believes her fashion helped 'find herself'

The 41-year-old fashion designer admits she had to "find herself" when embarking on her new career and her primary desire when creating new garments is to make women feel "the best version of themselves", just as her former group wanted to do. She said: "I did have to find myself and my confidence. And I want to make other women feel like the best version of themselves. That's the same message as the Spice Girls. It's still Girl Power." Victoria - who has children Brooklyn, 16, Romeo, 13, Cruz, 10, and Harper, four, with husband David - admits she has "never [been] best at anything" but believes anything can be achieved with hard work. Speaking to America's Glamour magazine - which named her one of their Women of the Year - she said: "Work hard, stay focused, be appreciative, and really, really go for it. I was told I couldn't do lots of things, so if I can do it, you can. "Nothing ever came naturally to me. "I was never the cleverest, never best at anything. But we always tell our children that if you work hard and believe in yourself, you can do what you want." Away from her design career and raising her family, Victoria is also an international goodwill ambassador for UNAIDS and admits being a mother created a "real pull" for her to help others. She said: "Motherhood puts us all on one level. I just felt this real pull to help."



Bullock says being a parent has given her another childhood

The 'Our Brand is Crisis' actress admits welcoming her adopted son Louis, now five, into her life has been a "game changer" and things have taken on a new importance. She said: "I see life from his perspective and you have a childhood. You have a childhood, no matter what kind you had, you have a child and I go guess what? This is the chance to have a childhood and remember it and be conscious in it and just enjoy it. "He makes me do stuff I wouldn't normally do and life becomes very important on a different level. My choices, what I do, I could fool around before but not now. It's a game changer." And the 50-year-old star admitted raising Louis has made her more conscious of the passing of time. Speaking on the 'Today' show, she added: "And life goes so fast! I see the ticking clock and I'm like, 'It's so fast!' " Sandra also admitted she finds it hard being away from her little boy. She said: "He's at home and not here and it's really hard. He's a beautiful soul." While she was happy to speak about her son, the 'Minions' star remained coy about the other male in her life, new boyfriend Bryan Randall. Asked about the hunk she had been spotted with, she laughed and said: "I don't know what you're talking about."



Nicole Richie to host her first women's conference

The 'Simple Life' star - who will be joined by 'GOOP' founder Gwyneth Paltrow for the first event of her recently launched Pearl xChange series next month - says the theme of the conference is inspired by how she is "building" her life. She shared: "I'm 34 and the past four years have been really interesting. It's been a time for me to kind of quiet down and listen to the world around me. "I have a husband, we have two kids and I'm really building my life. That's what my 30s have been about. That's been the theme; focusing on what I want to do and who I want to be and really taking

that seriously." The conference, which will take place at Sheraton Universal, Los Angeles on November 8, will feature talks from the likes of astronaut Dr Jeanette Epps, life coach Dougall Fraser as well as a special appearance from the 'Mortdecai' actress. Speaking in a video for Oprah.com, Nicole continued: "We will talk about everything from conscious living to science to building your business; friendship and how to deal with fear. We're really covering all aspects of life between the six different speakers." — BANGSHOWBIZ

Little Mix used to live in a haunted house

The 'Black Magic' singers used to get freaked out by a spooky "presence" in a flat which bandmembers Jade Thirlwall and Perrie Edwards used to share. Speaking on an episode of UK TV show 'Celebrity Juice', Jade said: "Perrie's room was always nice and warm and my room was always freezing and during the night the telly would turn on by itself "I felt a presence and didn't you [Jesy Nelson] see my speaker turn on and blast the music?" Jesy replied: "Yeah." Jesy recently revealed she and her bandmates - which also

include Leigh-Anne Pinnoch - are "addicted" to one another and never tire of being together. She said: "To be honest, we're just loving what we're doing and we get to experience all of this together, which is amazing. There aren't many people who can say they see different things every day. "We genuinely get on so well, and even though we're in each other's pockets, we never argue - and no one believes us, but even when we get done with work for the day, we still want to have sleepovers. It's like we're addicted to each other."





In this handout photograph released by Karuna Pictures taken on October 7, 2015, Indian filmmaker Hansal Mehta (center) walks on set during the production of 'Aligarh' at Bareilly in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. — AFP photos



Hansal Mehta speaks with Rajkummar Rao on set.



Indian filmmaker Hansal Mehta (right) speaks with actor Manoj Bajpayee on set during the production of 'Aligarh'.

Indian movie 'Aligarh' shines rare light on homophobia

A rare Bollywood movie tackling homophobia gets its Indian premiere yesterday, with the filmmakers hoping it will help change attitudes in the conservative country where homosexuality is illegal. "Aligarh" is based on a true story about a university professor who was suspended from his post after a television news crew filmed him having sex with a rickshaw puller in an undercover sting operation. "The film deals with a human story about a man isolated by his peers for a choice that should have been his own," the film's director, Hansal Mehta, explained to AFP. "I hope 'Aligarh' will poke people's conscience and make them look at their own prejudices," he added. Shrinivas Ramchandra Siras, then 64, was teaching at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) in the northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh in February 2010 when his private life made headline news.

Siras, who was also an award-winning poet, was suspended and briefly fought to be reinstated, but was found dead in his apartment in suspicious circumstances two months later. Traces of poison were discovered in his body and police initially suspected suicide, but they later made several arrests, although no one was convicted and the case was ultimately dropped. Media reports at the time alleged the university had ordered the sting to hound Siras out. AMU denied it was involved. "Aligarh", which stars Manoj Bajpayee as Siras and Rajkummar Rao as a journalist who befriends him, opens the 17th edition of the Mumbai Film Festival after showings in London and South Korea's Busan.

Censor hurdle to come

The Hindi-language movie is unusual in that it shines a spotlight on attitudes towards homosexuals in socially-conservative India where Bollywood movies often ridicule gay characters and portray them as being extremely camp.

"Very few films tackle the subject head on," the writer and editor of "Aligarh", Apurva Asrani, told AFP. "Either they pussyfoot around it, insinuating a character's sexuality but never quite confronting it, or make a mockery of it," he added. The film is due for general release in India early next year, but before it hits screens nationwide the film must pass India's notoriously strict censor board.

The hounding of Siras came during a brief period in Indian history when homosexuality was actually legal. The Delhi High Court had decriminalized the colonial-era ban on homosexuality in 2009, only for the Supreme Court to restore it in 2013, stunning rights campaigners and the gay and lesbian community. "The law was actually in favor of same sex. In spite of this, a 64-year-old scholar was harassed and shamed till his death," said Asrani.

"Can you imagine the state of Siras in today's context? Where does a man go for justice? And what of all those people who came out in 2009? Can they go back into hiding now?" he added. Anyone found guilty of same-sex activity can face life imprisonment or up to ten years in jail and a fine under the controversial Section 377 of India's penal code.

Right to privacy

Although prosecutions have been rare, the gay community says it faces significant discrimination as well as harassment and blackmail from the police in India. Surveys show broad disapproval of homosexuality in India, forcing many gay men and women to live double lives.

"The law and society's attitudes reinforce each other in a negative way," Nitin Karani, a Mumbai-based gay rights activist, told AFP. "If you live in a small town you have few choices to escape from the brunt of being harassed by the police, or society, or even your own family members." "Hopefully the film will put a spotlight on Section 377," he added.

Asrani said "Aligarh" was as much about an individual's right to privacy as it is about treating everybody the same. "A man who wishes to keep his sexual identity concealed has every right to do so," he said. "We must understand that the brave activists and gay men who have come out have done so based on their own internal reserves of courage, of their support structures, environment, etc."

"Aligarh" must still pass India's censor board before its general release. Earlier this year the Central Board of Film Certification muted the word "lesbian" from a Hindi language film and blocked the release of "Fifty Shades of Grey". But Asrani remains unperturbed. "Aligarh" is an honest film. There is no effort to titillate or provoke," he said. — AFP



Director Quentin Tarantino, center, participates in a rally to protest against police brutality. — AP photos



Kimberly Griffin holds hands with film director Quentin Tarantino after she recalled memories of her son Kimoni Davis, during a public reading of the names of people who have died at the hands of police nationwide.

Tarantino, condemned by police, gets support from protesters

Organizers of a rally against police brutality spoke up Thursday in support of filmmaker Quentin Tarantino, who has been condemned by the New York Police Department's commissioner and police associations over his remarks at the weekend event. The Academy Award-winning filmmaker behind "Pulp Fiction" and "Django Unchained" had joined demonstrators in the city speaking out on Saturday against the deaths of people at the hands of police.

"I'm a human being with a conscience," Tarantino said at the rally. "And if you believe there's murder going on then you need to rise up and stand up against it. I'm here to say I'm on the side of the murdered."

Those words have brought out the ire of police associations in New York, Los Angeles, Philadelphia and New Jersey, which have urged boycotts of his movies. He also got a scathing response from NYPD Commissioner William Bratton. Speaking on a radio show on Monday, Bratton said, "Shame on him. Shame on him particularly at this time where we're grieving the murder of a New York City police officer. There are no words to describe the contempt I have for him and his comments at this particular time."

'Cop-hater'

Bratton was referring to the fatal shooting of Officer Randolph Holder, who was killed Oct 20 while responding to a report of shots fired and a bicycle stolen at gunpoint. Authorities have charged the man accused of stealing the bicycle with shooting Holder, whose funeral was on Wednesday. The police associations slammed Tarantino as

being "a cop-hater" and "anti-police."

"It's no surprise that someone who makes a living glorifying crime and violence is a cop-hater, too," said Pat Lynch, president of New York's Patrolmen's Benevolent Association. "The police officers that Quentin Tarantino calls murderers aren't living in one of his depraved big-screen fantasies - they're risking and sometimes sacrificing their lives to protect communities from real crime and mayhem. New Yorkers need to send a message to this purveyor of degeneracy that he has no business coming to our city to peddle his slanderous 'Cop Fiction.' It's time for a boycott of Quentin Tarantino's films."

The Los Angeles Police Protective League voted to support a boycott, as did the union representing police officers in Philadelphia and the New Jersey State Policemen's Benevolent Association. Carl Dix, a co-organizer of the RiseUpOctober rally at which Tarantino spoke, said the criticism was "outrageous."

"It really is an attempt to squelch any discussion by people in the arts or prominent people in other fields of taking up and discussing controversial social issues," he said. RiseUpOctober posted a series of statements on its website supporting Tarantino, from other organizers as well as relatives of those killed by police.

Messages left for the filmmaker's representatives haven't been returned. Tarantino also is the director of movies including "Kill Bill" and "Reservoir Dogs." His next film, "The Hateful Eight," is scheduled for release in late December. — AP



This photo provided by Sony Pictures Entertainment shows Charlotte Le Bon, left, as Annie and Joseph Gordon-Levitt as Philippe Petit in a scene from TriStar Pictures' "The Walk."



(From left) Christopher Waltz, Lea Seydoux, Daniel Craig and Monica Bellucci pose for the media as they arrive for the French premiere of the James Bond movie 'Spectre' in Paris. — AP photos

After a boffo summer, an autumn of tumult at box office



This photo provided by Universal Pictures shows Molly Ringwald as Aunt Bailey in a scene from the film, "Jem and the Holograms."

Hollywood came into its fall season buoyed by a near-record summer, the comfort of having three aces up its sleeve (James Bond, "Star Wars" and the final "Hunger Games" film), plus a string of studio spectacles geared more for adults than teenagers.

The results, though, have been mixed for most films not named "The Martian." Last weekend, in particular, drove home the point, when five new wide releases - most strikingly the \$30 million awards season heavy-weight "Steve Jobs," with a paltry \$7.1 million launch in wide release - all failed to click.

The streak appears likely to continue through Halloween weekend, when Warner Bros.' "Our Brand Is Crisis," a political satire starring Sandra Bullock, is unlikely to add much firepower to the box office. Salvation won't arrive until the following weekend with the opening of Sony's "Spectre," the 24th James Bond film and a certain blockbuster.

It's been a humbling few weeks for some of Hollywood's best efforts to enliven multiplexes with ambitious films, most notably with the 3-D spectacle of Robert Zemeckis' "The Walk" and the starry stature of the Aaron Sorkin-scripted "Steve Jobs."

The box-office downturn, too, comes at the same time new inroads are being made into the traditional theatrical release window - developments that could signal coming change for the industry, particularly if it continues to struggle to launch such movies.

Premium experience

In an interview ahead of the release for "The Walk," Sony chief Tom Rothman called making broad-audience movies that aren't sequels or based on a comic book "the dominant issue in our business." The last several weeks have proven that Hollywood, despite a year sure to rank as among the highest grossing, isn't closer to figuring out how to do that.

Many of the fall's anticipated releases tried to hook moviegoers with 3-D. It's been an effective strategy in recent years for films from "Avatar" to "Gravity," although the novelty wore off long ago for many moviegoers. While 3-D helped drive the robust grosses for Ridley Scott's "The Martian" (\$167 million domestically, No 1 for three of the last four weeks), it didn't do the same for "Everest" (\$41.9 million) or "The Walk" (\$9.9 million), both of which opened first on IMAX and large-format screens in hopes of selling audiences on a higher-priced, premium experience.

Others have depended on the full wrappings of a prestige picture, including Steven Spielberg's handsome Cold War thriller "Bridge of Spies," with Tom Hanks, and



This photo provided by Universal Pictures shows, (from left) Michael Stuhlbarg, as Andy Hertzfeld, Michael Fassbender as Steve Jobs, and Kate Winslet as Joanna Hoffman, in a scene from the film, "Jobs."

the Danny Boyle-directed "Steve Jobs," which may have been harmed by a chorus of criticisms over Sorkin's dramatization of the Apple co-founder.

"Bridge of Spies" has pulled in \$33.6 million domestically in two weeks: Solid business for a movie that cost \$40 million to make. But it's unlikely to match even the gross of Spielberg's "War Horse," which totaled \$79.9 million in late 2011 and early 2012.

Spielberg, of course, is synonymous with the big screen, but even he has felt the industry changes. The director has said his previous film, "Lincoln," was nearly an HBO movie, and the director has lamented the ubiquitous rise of the superhero film.

New experiments

Meanwhile, Paramount Pictures is in the midst of an experiment to shrink the usual 90-day window reserved for theatrical release. "Paranormal Activity: The Ghost Dimension," which opened last weekend, and "Scout's Guide to the Zombie Apocalypse," which debuts today, will both head to video-on-demand and online once they dip below 300 screens.

Of the major chains, only AMC Theaters and Cineplex Entertainment went along, meaning "The Ghost Dimension" opened to just \$8.2 million on 1,656 screens - about 1,000 less than it would have. Megan Colligan, head of distribution for Paramount, said the film succeeded where it played, suggesting the other chains missed out, and that the shorter window had no effect: "By playing it, they did the most business of any circuit with any movie," she said.

Netflix, too, made its first foray into an original film release with Cary Fukunaga's child soldier drama "Beasts

of No Nation," starring Idris Elba. Though few ventured out to see it in theaters (just \$87,000 in limited release), Netflix content chief Ted Sarandos claimed that the film was streamed by more than 3 million people in North America. For comparison, that many viewers would translate at the box office into approximately \$24 million in ticket sales.

"It's a sign of the times. It's a massive look at the future," said Elba ahead of the film's release. "People are different and definitely consuming films in a different way." Overcrowding could be an issue. Films like "The Martian," "The Walk," "Bridge of Spies" and "Steve Jobs" are anomalies: well-reviewed studio-distributed entertainments with enough seriousness or smarts to win over most critics. There might be four such studio dramas in a year, let alone in a month that also featured Lionsgate's "Sicario," Warner Bros' "Black Mass" and Universal's "Crimson Peak."

"This has to be considered one of the most crowded movie marketplaces of the year," says Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for box-office data firm Rentrak. With "Spectre" on the horizon and "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" already setting advance ticket records, the health of the theatrical business isn't much in doubt. But in a jam-packed October, many of Hollywood's anxieties - its ability to sell original films, the encroachment of streaming - have bubbled up at a box office that now awaits rescue from some of its oldest franchises. — AP



Singer Justin Bieber on stage during a concert in Oslo. — AFP

Bieber walks off stage at 'fiasco' concert

Norwegian media on Friday blasted a Justin Bieber concert in Oslo as a "fiasco" after the Canadian pop star walked off the stage after just one song, leaving his teenage fans stunned and in tears. The 21-year-old put an abrupt end to his concert on Thursday evening after performing his hit song "Boyfriend", fed up with fans throwing water on the stage.

Footage shot by fans' smartphones shows Bieber mopping the stage with a shirt and trying to reason with the young fans in the front row throwing the water. "Never mind. I'm done. I'm not doing the show," he said before stomping off the stage, removing his sweatshirt and throwing it on the ground.

Norwegian media gave the story wide play on Friday, replaying the video clips of the incident over and over again and interviewing crying girls who had attended the show for about 1,000 people. Channel TV2, which organized the concert, termed it a "scandal" and a "fiasco",

while newspaper Adresseavisen called it a "tearful drama". Bieber later apologized on Instagram.

"Sadly it's been a rough week for me, long days no sleep," he wrote. "In no way did I mean to come across mean... I don't always handle things the right way but I'm human and I'm working on getting better," he added. "Unfortunately people were affected by this as am I. For the people in the back I am so sorry and for anyone I may have disappointed I'm sorry."

Bieber once enjoyed a squeaky clean image but has more recently had run-ins with the law, including the alleged assault in 2013 of a limousine driver, who announced earlier this year that he is suing the singer. Bieber has twice been ordered to take anger management classes—once after admitting to taking part in an illegal drag race on a Miami street, and once for throwing eggs at the home of a neighbor, for which he was handed two years' probation. — AFP

Taylor Swift sues radio host for groping

Pop superstar Taylor Swift has demanded a trial of a radio host she accuses of groping her, saying she hopes to stand up for other women who have been assaulted. The singer asked for the trial in a legal counterclaim against David Mueller, who last month sued the singer as he charged he was wrongly dismissed from his job at a Denver radio station over the June 2013 incident.

In the original lawsuit, Mueller said that Swift's bodyguards and staff "verbally abused" him as they accused the radio host of fondling the singer while posing for a picture backstage before her show at a Denver arena. But in the response filed Wednesday in a Denver court, Swift said that Mueller was clearly the culprit and accused him of reaching under her skirt and touching her in an "intimate" place.

"Ms Swift was forced to begin a several-hour long concert in front of 13,000 fans still distressed that she had been so inappropriately touched," the legal filing said. The counterclaim said that Swift, then 23, felt especially uncomfortable as the radio host was much larger than her at 6-foot-3 and more than 200 pounds.

Swift requested a jury trial seeking punitive damages from Mueller, saying that any money would be donated to charitable groups that protect women. A verdict against Mueller "will serve as an example to other women who may resist publicly reliving similar outrageous and humiliating acts," the counterclaim said.

Swift said that she has held thousands of similar meet-and-greet events for fans and radio station personnel throughout her career and "she has been inappropriately groped one time-by Mueller." Mueller's lawyers did not immediately respond to the counterclaim.

In the original lawsuit, Mueller acknowledged an incident took place but blamed it on one of his colleagues, who he said had boasted to him of grabbing Swift's bottom while taking a picture. Mueller's lawsuit said

that KYGO-FM, a country music station, fired him two days later after Swift's camp warned of action unless the station "handled" the radio host.

Swift, who became a teenage star in country music, a year ago released her fifth studio album "1989," in which she went more fully in a pop direction. "1989" has been one of the most successful albums in recent years, racking up the fastest first-week sales in the United States since 2002. — AFP



In this Aug22, 2015, file photo, Taylor Swift performs during the "1989" world tour at Staples Center in Los Angeles.



Lady Gaga and executive producer/director/writer Ryan Murphy arrive at the Los Angeles premiere screening of "American Horror Story: Hotel" at Regal Cinemas Los Angeles. — AP

Lady Gaga gets jazzy at AIDS research tribute

Lady Gaga is continuing her jazzy period. The entertainer performed an hour-long jazz set Thursday at the American Foundation for AIDS Research's tribute to Ryan Murphy. "I love Ryan so much, and I'm so, so happy to be here," said Gaga, who stars on the current season of the writer-director's FX hit, "American Horror Story."

"He's really my friend and he's a wonderful person," she said. Gaga dedicated the '60s standard "Call Me Irresponsible" to Murphy, who was the guest of honor at amfAR's Los Angeles Inspiration Gala. Murphy pledged to serve as "a lifelong ambassador" for the organization, which aims to find a cure for AIDS by 2020.

Murphy said the evening raised \$3.1 million toward that goal. Gaga contributed to the total during a live auction conducted by Sharon Stone. Gaga bid a winning \$200,000 on a photograph of Elizabeth Taylor flipping the bird. Cuba Gooding, Jr. engaged in a brief bidding war with billionaire Barry Diller for a pair of platinum diamond earrings. Diller won with \$60,000.

Gwyneth Paltrow hosted the fundraiser at Milk Studios, which also included appearances by Julia

Roberts, Angela Bassett, Matt Bomer and Cheyenne Jackson. Murphy may have been the guest of honor, but Gaga was the reigning diva. She wore a long dusty pink gown with floor-sweeping kimono sleeves, an intricate diamond collar, and a platinum blonde beehive.

"You know, there are a lot of gentlemen here, but nobody's offered me a glass of Champagne yet," she said from the stage. Someone brought her a glass, which she drank in one swallow. Gaga performed "Bang Bang (My Baby Shot Me Down)," which she recorded for her 2014 album with Tony Bennett, "Cheek to Cheek."

She played piano as she sang her new single, "Til It Happens to You," a song she co-wrote with Diane Warren for the 2015 documentary "The Hunting Ground." Gaga said her performance was inspired by Murphy. For her closing number, Gaga ditched her dress for a tuxedo jacket and not much else. She sang "La Vie en Rose" - in French. — AP



Aya Shiozaki and Shoko Ushimaru pose for a photo during a Halloween party event in Tokyo.



Participants in costumes pose for a photo during a Halloween party event.

No tricks: Halloween all the rage in Japan

For the usually reserved Japanese, Halloween has become the perfect excuse to act wild in strange outfits. The spooky celebration is consuming the energy, fashion sense and wallets of people for the entire month of October, not just kids but also adults on the prowl with colorful parades, costume parties and pumpkin-inspired desserts, dress-up and decor everywhere.

"When everyone is happy like this, I feel happy," said Shoko Ushimaru, a game designer, wearing white makeup and a pirate outfit at a recent Halloween party in Tokyo. She was in a room with a crowd of people, all in costumes. A DJ was playing music, but no one was dancing. The main attraction was getting photos taken under studio lighting, perfect for posting on social media such as Instagram and Facebook. Participants use such parties, popping up in recent weeks, for making friends and letting go of inhibitions.

Yoshi Kaseki, who heads the Japan Anniversary Association and studies the business potential of holidays, said Japanese don't care about the cultural or religious backdrop of Halloween, or how it's celebrated anywhere else. The biggest attraction is that anyone can take part, in contrast to Valentine's, for instance, another holiday import that's gained in popularity but which requires a lover or partner.

'Different phenomenon'

Over the last several years, the significance of Halloween has grown, although it's still lagging Christmas in spending, according to Kaseki's calculations of merchandising and consumption. The fact that the holiday falls on a Saturday this year is a plus. "You must think of Halloween in Japan as a totally different phenomenon from Halloween in the US," said Kaseki.

Although Japan has its own traditional festivals to celebrate spookiness and honor the dead, Halloween is being observed with a special frenzy. It helps that everything about it resonates in the country that gave birth to the subculture of



Participants take a selfie— AP photos

"costume play," the art of dressing up like "manga" animation and mascot characters. Favorite characters for dressing up can range from Nintendo Co.'s video-game hero Super Mario to the pot-bellied friendly spirit Totoro from animation master Hayao Miyazaki.

Many Japanese don't bother trying to look like the usual witches, zombies and ghosts associated with Halloween. Ask them what "trick or treat" means, and they usually won't know. It doesn't matter. The Roppongi Hills shopping complex in Tokyo, where streets have been decked with bobbing pumpkin-shaped lanterns for weeks, is serving up pumpkin-theme pancakes covered with yellow coconut sauce for 2,980 yen (\$25), as well as a 36 centimeter tall "monster" tower of five hamburgers for 4,860 yen.

Yasushi Senoo, chief research analyst at Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting in Tokyo, who has been studying the economic impact of Halloween, believes it can only get bigger in Japan because the largest participation is among teenagers. As they get older, their spending power will grow. Right now, a million Japanese are estimated to be so-called "heavy" Halloween users, or those creating their own costumes and taking part in parades.

Including casual users, Halloween revelers are estimated at 20 million people, each spending on average between 1,000 yen (\$8) and 1,500 yen (\$12), which multiplies to 20 billion yen (\$170 million) or 30 billion yen (\$250 million) in economic impact, according to Senoo.

Eager businesses

"Businesses are eager to use something that's this well-known to everyone as an opportunity," he said. Japanese like to contemplate the changing seasons, and fall is one time without a cause to celebrate, according to Senoo. That's why Easter, with bunnies and painted eggs that appear conducive to costume play and merchandising, isn't likely to take off as easily because spring already has plenty of action, with school and work starting, in Japan.

One area Halloween was likely to grow in coming years is in home decoration, he said. "Halloween has potential for growth because it is so open-ended," he said, unlike Christmas, for which the market has reached saturation levels. "New Japanese forms of celebrating Halloween can develop."

Halloween madness culminates Saturday in Tokyo's Roppongi area, with thousands of carousers on the streets in various outlandish costumes. Those in regular clothing would be certain to feel out of place. "What's fun is that this is all so unreal," said party organizer Takahisa Takeishi, a young man who managed to look far more effeminate than his usual self with a purple wig dressed up as Gakupo or Gackpo, a virtual singer or vocaloid. "We can't look like this every day." — AP



Participants parade during an annual Halloween event in Kawasaki.

China Fashion Week



Models showcase the creations from the 95 Secret Deng Zhaoping Collection designed by Deng Zhaoping at China Fashion Week in Beijing. —AFP photos





Models parade the creations of the MERISIS Li Na, Jinliang Lin and J Queen Xie Jiaqi Collection at China Fashion Week. —AFP photos

GOOGLE'S INTERNET-BEAMING BALLOONS TO TAKE OFF IN INDONESIA

MOUNTAIN VIEW: Google's Internet-beaming balloons are ready to take off on the next phase of their mission to deliver online access in regions where most people live offline. The balloons will begin hovering in the stratosphere above Indonesia. About 250 million people live in the country composed of about 17,000 islands in that part of Southeast Asia, although only 42 million have Internet access, according to the CIA's estimates. Google's 2-year-old "Project Loon" program aims to change that by transmitting high-speed Internet signals from clusters of balloons floating about 60,000 feet above the Earth. Although the project is still being funded primarily by money that Google makes from digital advertising, it recently became part of an independent lab called X that is run by Google's new parent company, Alphabet Inc.

Alphabet frames Project's Loon as a noble endeavor striving to get about 100 million currently unconnected people tapped into the vast reservoir of knowledge, enter-

tainment and conveniences available online. But it could also enrich Google by expanding the potential audience that can query its search engine, watch video on YouTube, correspond through Gmail and click on digital ads. Project Loon is still testing its technology, so there is still no estimate when it will start selling the Internet service to households and businesses within range of the balloons.

The Internet access will be sold through wireless service providers in Indonesia, where there the number of mobile phones - about 319 million - outnumber people. But most of those phones don't connect to the Internet because users can't afford data plans, or more frequently, live in remote or rocky terrains where it's impractical or too expensive to install the equipment need to deliver high-speed Internet access. If things pan out as envisioned, Project Loon will deploy hundreds of balloons that serve as cell towers in the sky, invisible to the naked eye. To pull it off, the project's engineers must choreograph a high-alti-

tude dance, ensuring that as one balloon drifts out of a targeted territory's Internet-receiving range, another one will float in to fill the void.

The Indonesian expansion follows extensive testing in New Zealand, Australia and remote areas in California and Brazil. Indonesia's sheer size and geographic sprawl makes it Project Loon's most ambitious step yet. Eventually, Project Loon envisions dispatching its balloons to other unconnected regions in the world, ranging from small villages in Africa to the woods of California. Google co-founder Sergey Brin envisions Project Loon eventually creating millions of jobs around the world to raise the standard of living for now-improverished people as they are able to get online to educate themselves and make new connections.

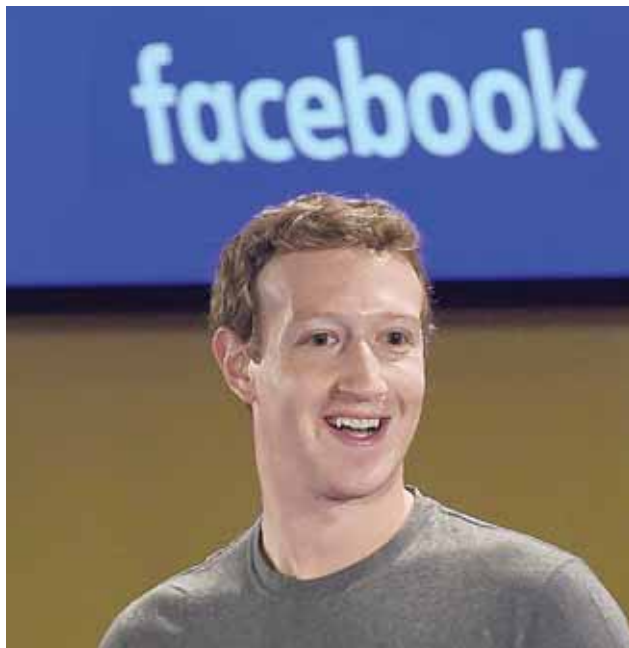
"The emotional distance of the world is shrinking, thanks to the communications we enjoy today," said Brin, who oversees the X lab as Alphabet's president. —Agencies

FACEBOOK DEFENDS EFFORTS TO EXPAND INTERNET ACCESS

NEW DELHI: Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg defended his company's contentious efforts to expand Internet access in the developing world during his second visit to India this year. The company's free platform offering a basic level of Internet access via Android devices has been introduced to 24 countries and has amassed about 15 million users, mostly in Africa and Asia, Zuckerberg said at a meeting Wednesday with students. He said it could help alleviate poverty in India by providing information to the poor and contributing to development of the economy.

The platform known as Free Basics was developed in conjunction with other technology companies and has brought a mixed response from governments and analysts. Many criticize it for lacking transparency in how information is selected for the site and favoring Facebook's own services over those of competitors. Zuckerberg rejected the criticism as a luxury of those who can afford access to the Internet. He said limiting content on the Free Basics platform was necessary, because "you cannot provide the whole Internet for free." It was initially known as Internet.org.

There are about 300 million people using the Internet in India, including 130 million using Facebook, making India the company's second-largest user base behind the United States. But there are still about 1 billion Indians with no Internet access. "We deeply care about servicing the Indian community and giving them the best tools. That's why I want to be here," said Zuckerberg. Last month, Zuckerberg hosted Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for a Silicon Valley town hall meeting, at which Modi also touted the power of social media in economic development by helping people to share knowledge and ideas. —AP



Chief executive and founder Mark Zuckerberg



TOKYO: Honda Motor Co employees ride on Honda UNI-CUB ? through the Japanese automaker's booth during the media preview of the Tokyo Motor Show in Tokyo. —AP

GREEN SELF-DRIVING CARS TAKE CENTER STAGE AT AUTO SHOW

TOKYO: Visions of cars that drive themselves without emitting a bit of pollution while entertaining passengers with online movies and social media are what's taking center stage at the Tokyo Motor Show. Japan, home to the world's top-selling automaker, has a younger generation disinterested in owning or driving cars. The show is about wooing them back. It's also about pushing an ambitious government-backed plan that paints Japan as a leader in automated driving technology.

Reporters got a preview look at the exhibition Wednesday, ahead of its opening to the public Oct 30. Nissan Motor Co showed a concept vehicle loaded with laser scanners, a 360 degree camera setup, a radar and computer chips so the car can "think" to deliver autonomous driving. The Japanese automaker called it IDS, which stands for "intelligent driving system." Nissan, based in Yokohama, Japan, said it will offer some autonomous driving features by the end of next year in Japan. By 2018, it said vehicles with the technology will be able to conduct lane changes on highways. By 2020, such vehicles will

be able to make their way through intersections on regular urban roads.

Nissan officials said they were working hard to make the car smart enough to recognize the difference between a red traffic light and a tail light, learn how to turn on intersections where white lane indicators might be missing and anticipate from body language when a pedestrian might cross a street. Nissan's IDS vehicle is also electric, with a new battery that's more powerful than the one currently in the automaker's Leaf electric vehicle. Although production and sales plans were still undecided, it can travel a longer distance on a single charge and recharge more quickly.

A major challenge for cars that drive themselves is winning social acceptance. They would have to share the roads with normal cars with drivers as well as with pedestrians, animals and unexpected objects. That's why some automakers at the show are packing the technology into what looks more like a golf cart or scooter than a car, such as Honda Motor Co.'s cubicle-like Wander Stand and Wander Walker scooter.

Instead of trying to venture on freeways and other public roads, these are designed for controlled environments, restricted to shuttling people to predetermined destinations.

At a special section of the show, visitors can try out some of the so-called "smart mobility" devices such as Honda's seat on a single-wheel as well as small electric vehicles. Regardless of how zany futuristic and even dangerous such machines might feel, especially the idea of sharing roads with driverless cars, that era is inevitable simply because artificial intelligence is far better at avoiding accidents than human drivers, said HIS analyst Egil Juliussen. It just might take some time, such as until the 2030s, he said.

Such technology will offer mobility to people who can't drive or who don't have cars, and it can also reduce pollution and global warming by delivering efficient driving, he said. Other automakers, including General Motors, BMW, Mercedes, Toyota and Tesla are working on self-driving technology, as are companies outside the industry, such as Google and Uber.

Review

APPLE TV BRINGS IPHONE-LIKE APPS TO THE BIG SCREEN

NEW YORK: It turns out that Apple's streaming-TV box - aptly named Apple TV - isn't just for streaming anymore. Its latest incarnation, which ships this week, offers on the big screen just about anything you could previously only do on an iPhone or iPad. Whether that's good may depend on whether you really want to buy shoes, browse home listings or read comic books on your TV. The new Apple TV looks to be a capable device for those purposes, although it's not flawless. Its streaming-TV features also trump those of its predecessor. The new Apple TV will set you back \$149, or \$199 for a version with extra storage. Apple will still sell the old version for \$69. Neither requires an iPhone or iPad, although either iDevice can simplify the Apple TV setup process.

The basics

Apple TV has been a dependable streamer, but until now its repertoire was limited to a few dozen services. Sure, these included Netflix, Hulu and HBO. But Apple didn't let you add other channels - say, competitive videogame play from Twitch.tv - on your own. That's all changed. The new Apple TV features an iPhone-like app store that lets you choose your own streaming

services. And it's no longer pushy about steering you to iTunes and other Apple services. You can easily customize the home screen with your favorites. Video quality on the new Apple TV maxes out at full high definition, known technically as 1080p. That should be plenty for most people. Video enthusiasts may complain that it doesn't support a higher-quality video standard called ultra-high definition or 4K, as several other streaming boxes do. But there aren't many 4K TVs or much programming for them available yet.

The Apple TV remote doesn't have a headphone jack, which other streaming devices like the Roku 3 and 4 and the Nvidia Shield offer to spare your family and roommates late at night. It can be tricky doing chores with a remote dangling from your headphone cords. What Apple TV offers instead is support for Bluetooth wireless headphones - sold separately, of course, by Apple and others. It's not yet clear whether you'll be able to stream video from Amazon and Google Play. Both companies have competing video stores, and one sticking point could be the cut Apple takes on in-app digital sales. Other major services, including Google's YouTube, are expected on the Apple TV.

Innovations

The new Apple TV enables voice searches using the Siri virtual assistant. Request "Seinfeld" or Jennifer Lawrence, and Apple TV will look through catalogs for iTunes, Hulu, Netflix, HBO and Showtime, with more to come. You can even ask for "good documentaries to watch." Although similar capabilities are available on other devices, Apple TV goes further in a few ways:

The remote replaces traditional rewind and forward buttons with a laptop-style trackpad. By sliding left and right, you control playback and navigate the on-screen keyboard more quickly. Sliding down gets you settings and show details, when available. The remote also lets you control the TV's power and volume directly, something I've seen only with TiVo video players. You can control playback by asking Siri to rewind 45 seconds or jump ahead five minutes, though some services won't let you forward past commercials. Saying "What did she say?" will rewind video 15 seconds and briefly turn on closed captioning, when available. It works fully with iTunes for now, but the closed-captioning part doesn't work with all third-party services yet.

You can ask Siri for a specific episode, such as the "How I Met Your Mother" episode with Katie Holmes. Guest stars tend to trip up rival devices.

Beyond streaming

Siri offers weather, stocks and sports information. It was great for tracking Tuesday's World Series opener without watching the game. This feature isn't unique to Apple TV, but unlike the competition, Apple TV feeds you info without interrupting your video by sliding up results from the bottom of the screen. I had to rephrase or repeat my questions a few times, especially if I was speaking quickly. As long as I enunciated clearly, results were mostly satisfactory. Apple TV's version of Siri, however, won't handle general Web searches. Apple TV catches up with rivals in enabling games. The remote has sensors that let you navigate spaceships and swing baseball bats by moving it around. But a bigger potential lies in bringing other apps to the big screen. You can browse home to buy through Zillow and places to stay on vacation through Airbnb. Images on the big TV gave me a better sense of these properties than phone browsing would. You can also shop through Gilt and QVC. —AP

TIME WARNER CABLE PLANS FOR TV ON NET

NEW YORK: Hate your cable box? In a few weeks, Time Warner Cable is going to start testing in New York City a cable service that doesn't need one and is delivered over their customers' home Internet. And that could one day expand beyond New York as cable companies try to appeal to younger people who have grown comfortable watching TV via Netflix or Hulu without a traditional cable box. The number of people skipping cable service is increasing as more people choose the Internet for their video fix.

"Where we're headed is the ability of customers to access the complete video product without having to rent a set-top box from us," said CEO Rob Marcus on a call with analysts. He

said one thing the company had to do was make sure that every channel was available for an Internet TV alternative that worked through a streaming-TV device like a Roku. Marcus said you wouldn't need a tech to install cable for you. "You can simply type in your username and password and you have video," he said. It's not clear how the service compares to traditional TV. It'll have a couple options for service packages, but Time Warner Cable spokeswoman Nathalie Burgos declined to answer questions about prices and package specifics.

Time Warner Cable's TV app is already available on a Roku or Xbox for cable subscribers, who can use it in place of a 2nd cable box. If you had

two TVs in your house and one cable box, that app, as it exists now, serves as a second cable box. But it doesn't have DVR functionality or video-on-demand movies that you can pay extra to watch. With the new trial, Time Warner Cable is eliminating the need for a first cable box, which usually comes with a monthly fee for customers, and throwing in a free Roku. The service would require a TV that worked with Roku. Burgos wouldn't answer questions about how the service could affect a user's home Internet speeds.

Comcast is also trying to appeal to millennials with Stream, a TV service that cuts out the cable box and, when using Comcast's app, only works on mobile devices and computers. (If you subscribe, you can also log in to HBO Go through an Apple TV, say, and watch on a TV.) Stream has been testing for free in Boston. Comcast spokesman Steve Restivo says the service, which is just broadcast networks and HBO, will launch this quarter in Boston and Chicago. Using it doesn't count against Comcast's data caps when you use Comcast's app. New York-based Time Warner Cable Inc., which Charter Communications is trying to buy, said Thursday that cable customers fell by 7,000 in the July-September quarter, to 10.8 million. (Like Comcast, Time Warner Cable said that it was its best third-quarter result since 2006.)

The company said that the number of people signing up and the number of people who were leaving both improved in the third quarter, and that its internal measures of customer service showed gains. But the real driver is the Web. It gained 232,000 Internet customers, to 12.4 million. The company said more customers are signing up for faster, more expensive Internet speeds. Its net income fell 12 percent to \$437 million, or \$1.53 per share, hurt by costs related to merger activity. Adjusted earnings per share topped analyst expectations. Revenue grew 3.6 percent to \$5.92 billion, which was short of Wall Street's prediction. —AP

HOW COMCAST WANTS TO METER THE INTERNET

NEW YORK: Three years after Comcast began offering unlimited home-Internet usage, the cable giant is moving in the opposite direction. In more parts of the US, it's starting to charge heavy data users extra. The reason? Too many of its customers are dropping cable and doing their TV-watching over the Internet instead, a trend that threatens to cost Comcast money. To recoup some of those dollars, Comcast is experimenting with caps on how much data you can use. Go over the limit and you'll see a bigger bill.

Comcast used to cap monthly data use at 250 gigabytes, but ended it in May 2012 in order to experiment with alternatives to a simple cap. That August, it capped monthly data use for Nashville, Tennessee, customers at 300 GB; going over the limit costs \$10 for every 50 GB. The company launched a similar plan in Tucson, Arizona, that October - 300 GB for a base plan, 600 GB if you signed up for a faster and more expensive connection. By December 2013, Comcast had rolled out the Nashville system to Atlanta and a handful of smaller markets, many in the South. It also offered a slow Internet plan of 3 megabits per second that gave you a \$5 credit if you used 5GB or less each month, and charged you \$1 for each gigabyte of data over 5 GB.

This month, Comcast added a twist as it expanded the cap into Miami, Fort Lauderdale and the Florida Keys: Customers can now pay an additional \$30 a month for unlimited data. (In Atlanta, it's \$35 a month.) At this point, roughly 12 percent of Comcast territory is subject to "usage-based pricing," MoffettNathanson analyst Craig Moffett estimates. Comcast's Internet business is going gangbusters, although it continues to shed cable customers. In the third quarter, Comcast said Tuesday, it lost 48,000 TV customers while adding 320,000 Internet customers. —AP



NEW YORK: Time Warner Cable corporate logo is displayed at a company store in New York. Time Warner Cable is going to start testing in New York City a cable service that doesn't need a cable box and is delivered over their customers' home Internet. —AP

BBC
lifestyle

00:10 Rachel Khoo's Kitchen
Notebook: Cosmo Cook
00:35 Vacation Vacation Vacation
01:20 Masterchef: The Professionals
01:50 The Roux Legacy
02:20 Come Dine With Me
02:45 Homes Under The Hammer
03:40 Beat My Build
04:25 The Roux Legacy
05:00 Come Dine With Me
05:20 Vacation Vacation Vacation
06:05 Beat My Build
06:55 The Roux Legacy
08:00 Phil Spencer: Secret Agent -
Specials
09:40 Rachel Khoo's Kitchen
Notebook: Cosmo Cook
10:05 Rachel Khoo's Kitchen
Notebook: Cosmo Cook
10:30 A Taste Of Greenland
12:15 The Planners
13:55 Antiques Roadshow
15:40 Bargain Hunt
17:25 Come Dine With Me
19:25 Hairy Bikers: Meals On Wheels
20:15 Fat & Fatter
21:10 The Good Cook
21:35 Homes Under The Hammer
22:25 Beat My Build
23:15 Phil Spencer: Secret Agent -
Specials

Discovery
CHANNEL
HD

00:20 Gang Wars
01:10 Fast N' Loud
02:00 Wheeler Dealers
02:50 Cuban Chrome
03:40 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Marooned With Ed Stafford
06:50 Kings Of The Wild
07:40 Deadliest Catch
08:30 Outback Truckers
09:20 Manhunt With Joel Lambert
10:10 Fast N' Loud
11:00 Wheeler Dealers
11:50 Cuban Chrome
12:40 Idris Elba: No Limits
13:30 Garage Gold
15:10 Baggage Battles
16:50 Yukon Men
17:40 Ice Lake Rebels
18:30 Dynamo: Magician Impossible
19:20 What Happened Next?
19:45 Superhuman Science
20:10 The Pop Illusionist
21:00 Yukon Men
21:50 Ice Lake Rebels
22:40 Alaska: The Last Frontier
23:30 Wheels That Fail

E!

00:00 Dash Dolls
00:55 We Have Issues
01:25 Hollywood Cycle
02:20 E! News
03:15 Keeping Up With The
Kardashians
04:10 THS
05:05 E!ES
06:00 Kourtney & Kim Take New York
07:50 Style Star
08:20 E! News
09:15 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
11:10 We Have Issues
11:35 New Money
12:05 E! News
13:05 Stewarts And Hamiltons
14:05 Hollywood Cycle
16:00 WAGs
17:00 WAGs
18:00 E! News
19:00 Keeping Up With The
Kardashians
20:00 Dash Dolls
21:00 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
22:00 E! News
23:00 The Soup
23:30 Sex With Brody

itv
hd
CHOICE

00:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
01:05 May The Best House Win
02:00 Shetland
02:55 Emmerdale
03:20 Emmerdale
05:15 Coronation Street
07:30 Agatha Christie's Partners In

Crime
08:25 Doc Martin
09:20 Who's Doing The Dishes?
11:50 Keep It In The Family
12:45 Lewis
13:45 Agatha Christie's Partners In
Crime
14:40 Doc Martin
15:35 The Jonathan Ross Show
16:30 Lewis
17:20 Keep It In The Family
18:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
19:00 Doc Martin
19:45 Agatha Christie's Partners In
Crime
20:45 Lewis
21:35 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
22:30 Eggheads
23:00 Coronation Street

NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC
CHANNEL
HD

00:10 The Happenings
01:00 Paranatural
02:00 Seconds From Disaster
02:55 China To The World
03:50 Megacities
04:45 Yukon River Run
05:40 World's Most Extreme
06:35 Engineering Connections
07:30 Science Of Stupid
08:25 Dog Whisperer
10:15 Wicked Tuna
12:05 The 2000s: The Decade We
Saw It All
14:00 Engineering Connections
15:00 Explorer
16:00 Science Of Stupid
17:00 The Border
18:00 Airport Security: Colombia

OSN FIRST HD
COMEDY

00:30 Last Man Standing
01:00 The Tonight 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 Tonight 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 Tonight Show Global
Edition
22:00 Saturday Night Live
23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers

OSN FIRST HD

00:00 The Americans
01:00 Grey's Anatomy
02:00 Survivor: Second Chance
08:00 Sleepy Hollow
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
14:00 Sleepy Hollow
21:00 Heroes Reborn
22:00 The Blacklist
23:00 The Player

OSN FIRST
MORE

00:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
01:00 Good Morning America
05:00 Good Morning America
08:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
09:00 C.S.I.
11:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
12:00 Switched At Birth
13:00 Franklin & Bash
15:00 Live Good Morning America
16:00 C.S.I.
17:00 Switched At Birth
18:00 Franklin & Bash
19:00 C.S.I.
21:00 Franklin & Bash

OSN MOVIES
ACTION

00:30 The Collection
02:00 Child's Play 2
04:00 Prisoners Of The Sun
05:45 The Last Castle
08:00 The Italian Job (2003)
10:00 The Outsider
12:00 Special ID
14:00 Rage
15:45 The Last Castle
18:00 The Italian Job (2003)
20:00 Special ID
22:00 Last Passenger

OSN MOVIES HD

ACTION

00:00 Child's Play 2-18
02:00 Prisoners Of The Sun-PG15
03:45 The Last Castle-PG15
06:00 The Italian Job (2003)-PG15
08:00 The Outsider-PG15
10:00 Special ID-PG15
12:00 Rage-PG15
13:45 The Last Castle-PG15
16:00 The Italian Job (2003)-PG15
18:00 Special ID-PG15
20:00 Last Passenger-PG15
22:00 Seal Team 8: Behind Enemy
Lines-18

OSN MOVIES HD

COMEDY

00:00 Not Another Teen Movie
02:00 Mousehunt
04:00 Simon Birch
06:00 Planes, Trains And
Automobiles
08:00 The Ladykillers
10:00 Simon Birch
12:00 Mousehunt
14:00 The Naked Gun: From The
Files Of Police Squad
16:00 The Ladykillers
18:00 Captain Ron
20:00 When In Rome
22:00 Fading Gigolo

OSN MOVIES

DRAMA

01:00 Upside Down-PG15
03:00 The Disappearance Of Eleanor
Rigby: Him-PG15
05:00 The Last Days On Mars-PG15
07:00 Parkland-PG15
09:00 Chalet Girl-PG15
11:00 The Last Days On Mars-PG15
13:00 Still Mine-PG15
15:00 Dawn Rider-PG15
17:00 Chalet Girl-PG15
19:00 The Disappearance Of Eleanor
Rigby: Her-PG15
21:00 Begin Again-PG15
23:00 Horns-18

OSN MOVIES HD

FESTIVAL

01:15 Far And Away
03:45 71
05:30 Jodorowsky's Dune

07:00 Phantom
09:00 Julie And Julia
11:15 Jodorowsky's Dune
13:00 Against The Ropes
15:00 1911
16:45 Julie And Julia
19:00 Donnie Brasco
21:30 The Invisible Woman
23:30 Mary Shelley's Frankenstein

OSN MOVIES HD

01:15 Wish I Was Here-PG15
03:15 Guardians Of The Galaxy-
05:15 The Hundred-Foot Journey-
07:15 Night At The Museum: Secret
Of The Tomb-PG15
09:00 Draft Day-PG15
11:00 Guardians Of The Galaxy
13:00 Godzilla-PG15
15:00 The Fault In Our Stars-PG15
17:15 Draft Day-PG15
19:15 Alexander And The Terrible...
Very Bad Day-PG
21:00 Mostly Ghostly: Have You Met
My Ghoulfriend-PG
23:00 Oculus-PG15

OSN MOVIES HD

KIDS

01:15 Jelly T
03:00 Goat Story 2
04:30 The Olsen Gang In Deep
Trouble
06:00 Ice Age: The Meltdown
08:00 Ghatothkach - Master Of Magic
10:00 Scooby-Doo! Ghastly Goals!
11:00 Back To The Sea
13:00 Goat Story 2
14:30 Krazzy Planet
16:00 Scooby-Doo! WrestleMania
Mystery
18:00 Scooby-Doo! Frankencreepy
20:00 Scooby-Doo! Ghastly Goals!
21:00 Ghatothkach - Master Of Magic
22:45 Krazzy Planet

OSN MOVIES HD

PREMIERE

00:00 Insidious: Chapter 2-PG15
02:00 Stolen Child-PG15
04:00 Closed Circuit-PG15
06:00 Tales Of The Night-PG
08:00 Chef-PG15
10:00 House Of Versace-PG15

12:00 Closed Circuit-PG15
14:00 Brick Mansions-PG15
15:45 Chef-PG15
17:45 Into The Woods-PG
20:00 Trespass-PG15
22:00 12 Years A Slave-18

STAR
MOVIES

01:15 Henry's Crime
03:00 Death At A Funeral
04:30 Iron Man 3
06:45 Six Days, Seven Nights
08:30 The Rig
10:00 Hurricane Season
11:45 The Longshots
13:30 Mrs. Miracle
15:00 Nixon
18:15 Signs
20:00 Dawn Of The Dead
21:45 Chernobyl Diaries

STAR
WORLD

00:00 The Listener
01:00 Castle
02:00 Low Winter Sun
03:00 The Bridge
04:00 72 Hours
05:00 Cougar Town
05:30 Cougar Town
06:00 Scrubs
06:30 Scrubs
07:00 Switched At Birth
08:00 Private Practice
09:00 Private Practice
10:00 Low Winter Sun
11:00 The Bridge
12:00 72 Hours
13:00 Cougar Town
13:30 Scrubs
14:00 Transporter: The Series
15:00 Transporter: The Series
16:00 MasterChef Australia
17:00 Melissa & Joey
17:30 Happy Endings
18:00 The Walking Dead
19:00 The Walking Dead
20:00 The Walking Dead
21:00 Melissa & Joey
21:30 Happy Endings
22:00 The Listener
23:00 The Listener



SEAL TEAM 8 - BEHIND ENEMY LINES ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2015

H HISTORY

- 00:00 Storage Wars Texas
- 00:30 Pawn Stars
- 01:00 American Pickers
- 02:00 Duck Dynasty
- 02:30 Duck Dynasty
- 03:00 Storage Wars Texas
- 03:30 Pawn Stars
- 04:00 American Pickers
- 05:00 Alone
- 06:00 American Pickers
- 07:00 Ax Men
- 08:00 Shipping Wars
- 08:30 Shipping Wars
- 09:00 Duck Dynasty
- 09:30 Duck Dynasty
- 10:00 American Pickers
- 11:00 Mountain Men
- 12:00 Swamp People
- 13:00 The Curse Of Oak Island
- 14:00 American Restoration
- 14:30 American Restoration
- 15:00 Counting Cars
- 15:30 Counting Cars
- 16:00 Ice Road Truckers
- 17:00 Pawn Stars
- 17:30 Pawn Stars
- 18:00 Pawn Stars
- 18:30 Pawn Stars
- 19:00 Pawn Stars
- 19:30 Pawn Stars
- 20:00 Alone
- 21:00 Shark Wranglers
- 22:00 Lost In Transmission
- 23:00 Ice Road Truckers

AMC

- 04:00 Master Of Dragonard Hill
- 05:30 If It's Tuesday, This Must Be Belgium
- 07:10 The Boyfriend School
- 08:50 Robinson Crusoe
- 10:20 Hoosiers
- 12:15 Dirty Rotten Scoundrels
- 14:05 The House On Carroll Street
- 15:45 A Guy Thing
- 17:30 Dirty Rotten Scoundrels
- 19:20 Dust Factory
- 21:00 Fear The Walking Dead
- 22:00 Cursed
- 23:40 The Divide
- 00:40 Fear The Walking Dead
- 01:40 Pieces Of Dreams

ANIMAL PLANET HD

- 03:35 Tanked
- 04:25 Gator Boys
- 05:15 Zoltan The Wolfman
- 06:02 Treehouse Masters
- 06:49 Search For The Knysna Elephants
- 07:36 Call Of The Wildman
- 08:00 Call Of The Wildman
- 08:25 Tanked
- 09:15 Tanked
- 10:10 Tanked
- 11:05 Tanked
- 12:00 Tanked
- 12:55 Mermaids: The Body Found
- 14:45 Killer Iq: Lion vs Hyena
- 15:40 Shamwari: A Wild Life
- 16:05 Shamwari: A Wild Life
- 16:35 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli
- 17:00 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli
- 17:30 Leopard Fight Club
- 18:25 Search For The Knysna Elephants
- 19:20 Killer Iq: Lion vs Hyena
- 20:15 Shamwari: A Wild Life
- 20:40 Shamwari: A Wild Life
- 21:10 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli
- 21:35 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli
- 22:05 Leopard Fight Club
- 23:00 The Cannibal In The Jungle
- 00:50 Deadly After Dark: Polar Bear Invasion
- 01:45 Mermaids: The New Evidence
- 02:40 Monster Island

BBC ENTERTAINMENT

- 03:15 Getting On
- 03:45 Watson & Oliver



CHILD'S PLAY 2 OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

- 04:15 The Weakest Link
- 05:00 The Green Balloon Club
- 05:25 Nuzzle & Scratch: Frock n Roll
- 05:45 Nuzzle & Scratch: Frock n Roll
- 06:05 Jollywobblers
- 06:15 The Green Balloon Club
- 06:35 Nuzzle & Scratch: Frock n Roll
- 06:55 Nuzzle & Scratch: Frock n Roll
- 07:15 Jollywobblers
- 07:30 The Weakest Link
- 08:15 Doctors
- 08:45 Doctors
- 09:15 Doctors
- 09:40 Doctors
- 10:10 Doctors
- 10:40 Doctor Who
- 11:25 The Cafe
- 11:50 A Farmer's Life For Me
- 12:40 Hotel Secrets With Richard E Grant
- 13:30 Casualty
- 14:20 Eastenders
- 14:50 Eastenders
- 16:20 The Weakest Link
- 17:05 The Cafe
- 17:30 A Farmer's Life For Me
- 18:25 Abandoned At Birth
- 19:15 Doctor Who
- 20:00 Alan Carr: Chatty Man
- 20:45 Live At The Apollo
- 21:30 Inside No. 9
- 22:00 Alan Carr: Chatty Man
- 22:45 Live At The Apollo
- 23:35 Inside No. 9
- 00:05 The Cafe
- 00:30 Alan Carr: Chatty Man
- 01:15 Live At The Apollo
- 02:05 Inside No. 9
- 02:35 A Farmer's Life For Me

CN CARTOON NETWORK

- 03:35 Johnny Test
- 04:20 Grojband
- 04:42 Grojband
- 05:05 Total Drama World Tour
- 05:27 Total Drama World Tour
- 05:50 Teen Titans Go!
- 06:00 The Amazing World Of Gumball
- 07:00 Dreamworks Dragons: Riders Of Berk
- 07:25 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu
- 07:50 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu
- 08:10 New Ben 10 Omniverse
- 08:35 Ben 10: Omniverse
- 09:00 Matt Hatter New
- 09:20 Teen Titans Go!
- 09:30 Teen Titans Go!
- 09:45 New Uncle Grandpa
- 10:10 The Amazing World Of

- Gumball
- 10:21 The Amazing World Of Gumball
- 10:32 The Amazing World Of Gumball
- 10:43 The Amazing World Of Gumball
- 10:55 Adventure Time
- 11:06 Adventure Time
- 11:20 Clarence
- 11:40 Steven Universe
- 12:05 Regular Show
- 12:50 Johnny Test
- 13:40 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu
- 14:00 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu
- 14:25 Teen Titans Go!
- 14:35 Teen Titans Go!
- 14:50 Teen Titans Go!
- 15:10 Matt Hatter New
- 15:35 New Ben 10 Omniverse
- 16:00 Ben 10: Omniverse
- 16:20 Adventure Time
- 16:45 Clarence
- 17:10 New Uncle Grandpa
- 17:21 Uncle Grandpa
- 17:30 Regular Show
- 18:20 Over The Garden Wall Marathon
- 18:40 Ninjago: Masters Of Spinjitzu
- 18:42 Over The Garden Wall
- 20:10 The Amazing World Of Gumball
- 20:21 The Amazing World Of Gumball
- 20:40 Adventure Time
- 21:25 Regular Show Presents: Terror Tales Of The Park II
- 21:50 Dreamworks Dragons: Defenders Of Berk
- 22:15 Dreamworks Dragons: Defenders Of Berk
- 22:40 Adventure Time After Dark
- 01:15 Total Drama: All Stars
- 01:40 Grojband
- 02:05 Grojband
- 02:25 Transformers: Robots In Disguise
- 02:50 Regular Show

ID. INVESTIGATION DISCOVERY

- 03:10 Deadly Women
- 04:00 Blood Relatives
- 04:45 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
- 05:10 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
- 05:30 The Haunted
- 06:20 Forensic Detectives
- 07:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
- 08:00 Fatal Encounters
- 08:50 Disappeared

- 09:40 Disappeared
- 10:30 On The Case With Paula Zahn
- 12:10 The Will
- 13:00 The Will
- 13:50 California Investigator
- 14:40 Dr G: Medical Examiner
- 15:30 On The Case With Paula Zahn
- 17:10 Disappeared
- 18:00 Disappeared
- 18:50 California Investigator
- 19:40 Forensic Detectives
- 23:00 The Boston Strangler
- 00:40 Devil In The Details
- 01:30 Deadly Affairs
- 02:20 Blood Relatives

DISCOVERY SCIENCE

- 03:10 Food Factory
- 04:00 How It's Made
- 04:48 NASA's Greatest Missions
- 05:36 Deadly Dilemmas
- 06:24 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 07:12 How Do They Do It?
- 07:37 How It's Made
- 08:00 How Do They Do It?
- 11:20 How It's Made
- 13:50 Food Factory
- 16:20 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 17:10 Moon Machines
- 19:40 NASA's Greatest Missions
- 21:20 The Big Brain Theory
- 22:10 What Could Possibly Go Wrong?
- 23:00 Race To Escape
- 23:50 Deadly Dilemmas
- 00:40 Home Factory
- 01:30 Mythbusters

Disney JUNIOR

- 03:05 Calimero
- 03:20 Zou
- 03:30 Loopdidoo
- 03:45 Art Attack
- 04:10 Henry Hugglemonster
- 04:20 Calimero
- 04:35 Zou
- 04:45 Loopdidoo
- 05:00 Art Attack
- 05:25 Henry Hugglemonster
- 05:35 Calimero
- 05:50 Zou
- 06:00 Loopdidoo
- 06:15 Art Attack

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

Disney XD

- 06:00 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
- 06:25 Phineas And Ferb
- 06:50 Phineas And Ferb
- 07:15 K.C Undercover
- 07:40 Lab Rats
- 08:10 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 08:35 Kirby Buckets
- 09:00 Annedroids
- 09:25 Disney Mickey Mouse Shorts
- 09:30 Supa Strikas
- 09:55 Mighty Med
- 10:20 K.C Undercover
- 10:45 Lab Rats: Bionic Island

- 11:10 Kirby Buckets
- 11:35 Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors
- 12:00 Phineas And Ferb
- 12:45 Disney Mickey Mouse Shorts
- 12:50 Under Wraps
- 13:35 Phineas And Ferb
- 15:10 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 15:35 Star Wars Rebels
- 16:00 Mighty Med
- 16:25 Under Wraps
- 17:10 Disney Mickey Mouse Shorts
- 17:15 Phineas And Ferb
- 18:40 Annedroids
- 19:05 K.C Undercover
- 19:30 Supa Strikas
- 19:55 Lab Rats: Bionic Island
- 20:25 Kirby Buckets
- 20:50 Star Wars Rebels
- 21:15 Mighty Med
- 21:40 Phineas And Ferb
- 22:05 Penn Zero: Part Time Hero
- 22:30 Phineas And Ferb
- 23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am

NAT GEO people HD

- 03:05 Dream Cruises
- 03:55 The Great Food Revolution
- 04:45 World's Best Chefs
- 05:10 Eat Street
- 05:35 American Food Battle
- 06:00 The Food Files
- 06:25 Wineroads
- 06:50 Grandma's Boy
- 07:15 Grandma's Boy
- 07:40 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
- 08:30 Sara's New Nordic Kitchen
- 08:55 Wineroads
- 09:20 Poh & Co.
- 09:45 Poh & Co.
- 10:10 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
- 10:35 Food Lover's Guide To The Planet
- 11:00 A Marriage Of Flavours
- 11:25 Tales From The Bush Larder
- 11:50 Top Tables, Top Cities
- 12:15 Top Tables, Top Cities
- 12:40 Food School
- 13:05 Eat: The Story Of Food
- 14:00 The Wine Quest: Spain
- 14:30 Great Escapes
- 14:55 Dream Cruises
- 15:50 The Great Food Revolution
- 16:45 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
- 17:15 Eat Street
- 17:40 American Food Battle
- 18:10 East Bites West
- 18:35 Wineroads

Can't decide between spoonbread and corn pudding? Do both!

By Katie Workman

During fall - and particularly at Thanksgiving - we often find ourselves searching for just the perfect side dish. We want recipes that will be at home next to a roasted chicken or turkey, or maybe a beef roast or ham. We want recipes that are crowd-pleasers, recipes that shimmer with the glow of comfort food. We want side dishes that people inch toward while contemplating second helpings. This is the side dish you are looking for.

I knew I wanted something corn-based, and then got a bit torn between spoonbread and corn pudding. Both dishes are popular in the South and appear regularly on holiday dinner tables. Basically, spoonbread is cornbread that is soft enough to eat with a spoon and is made from a cornmeal base.

Corn pudding is more of an egg- and dairy-based pudding with corn kernels studded throughout.

I couldn't decide. So I combined both thoughts into one dish. Let's just say the "Should I have seconds?" question was answered with a definitive "Yes!" Purists from the South might cock an eyebrow at me. But I invite them to give it a shot (and acknowledge cheerfully that strict culinary authenticity is not my strongest suit).

Whipping the egg whites is an extra step, but one that ensures the resulting dish will be light and fluffy. You do want to serve this dish warm from the oven so that it holds its slightly souffle-like texture. Having said that, a scoop or two reheated in the microwave the next day - and paired with a green salad tossed with vinaigrette - is one of the finer lunches I can imagine.

SPOONBREAD CORN PUDDING

Ingredients

Start to finish: 55 minutes (20 minutes active)
Servings: 8
4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter, plus extra
3 1/4 cups whole milk, divided
2 teaspoons sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup cornmeal
2 cups corn kernels (from 3 to 4 ears of corn or frozen kernels)
Large pinch cayenne pepper
4 large eggs, separated and at room temperature
1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar

Preparation

Heat oven to 400 F. Butter a shallow 1 1/2- or 2-quart baking dish. In a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, combine the butter, 3 cups of the milk, the sugar and salt. Bring to a simmer. When the butter has melted, reduce the heat to medium-low. Whisking constantly, add the cornmeal in a slow, steady drizzle. Whisk in the corn kernels and cayenne and continue

whisking for another 4 or 5 minutes, or until the mixture is thick. Remove from the heat and transfer the mixture to a large bowl. Set aside. In a small bowl, whisk together the egg yolks and remaining 1/4 cup of milk. Set aside. In a medium bowl, use an electric mixer to beat the egg whites and cream of tartar until stiff peaks form.

Add about 1/2 cup of the cornmeal mixture to the bowl with the egg yolks and stir quickly to combine. Turn the yolk mixture into the bowl with the rest of the cornmeal mixture and whisk to combine. Fold about 1/3 of the egg white mixture into the cornmeal mixture, which will lighten the batter, then gently fold in the rest of the egg whites so that they are almost incorporated. You will see a white streak or two, which is fine.

Transfer the batter to the prepared baking dish and bake for 30 to 35 minutes, or until the top is browned and puffy. When you shake the pan the spoonbread should jiggle slightly, though not so much that it looks liquidy in the middle. Remove and cool slightly on a wire rack. Serve warm. — AP



Don't mess with the turkey, but anything goes with the sides

By Meera Sodha

The only time I have celebrated Thanksgiving where I live in London, it was with a couple of incredibly homesick American friends. Hoping to comfort them, I cooked what I felt was a spirit-lifting roasted tandoori turkey, only to receive steely glances, awkward silences and, "No thanks." I learned the painful way that the turkey is not the place for trying new things, as tradition rules at Thanksgiving. Luckily, it seems, the side dishes are given a bit more flexibility.

In India, as in the US, the pumpkin - or "kaddu" - is a real favorite at the dinner table, with every region having its own take on how best to cook it. In Uttar

Pradesh in the North, pumpkin often is transformed into a spiced sweet curry, or "subzi," that is eaten alongside a sour pickle that counterbalances it wonderfully. In Kerala in the southwest of India, pumpkin is given a more delicate treatment and paired with sweet onions, black-eyed beans and coconut milk.

For Thanksgiving, it's important to get the balance right, to have a side that will fit in with the mosaic of other offerings at the table and be quick - or at least easy - to make. Baking your pumpkin with some garam masala, a classic Indian seasoning blend, adds a gentle warmth that is so welcome this time of year. Serving it with this pistachio-cilantro chutney (which can be made ahead of time) will add some brightness in color, freshness and flavor.

ROAST SPICED PUMPKIN WITH PISTACHIO CHUTNEY

Ingredients

Start to finish: 40 minutes (15 minutes active)

Servings: 6

For the chutney:

1/2 cup unsalted, shelled pistachios, chopped (plus extra to garnish)

1 1/2 cups chopped fresh cilantro

1/4 cup lemon juice

3/4 teaspoon kosher salt

2 teaspoons sugar

1 to 2 green finger or other fresh chilies, to taste

2 tablespoons canola oil

For the pumpkin:

3-pound sugar pumpkin (or multiple smaller pumpkins)

5 tablespoons canola oil

1 tablespoon garam masala

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

Preparation

Heat the oven to 400 F. Line a baking sheet with foil or kitchen parchment. To make the chutney, in a blender or food processor, combine the pistachios, cilantro, lemon juice, salt and sugar. Add one of the chilies to start and about 6 tablespoons of water, or just enough to blend. Process or blend until the mixture is finely chopped. Taste and add the other chili if desired, then transfer to a bowl. Drizzle the oil over the chutney, lightly mix, then set aside.

Cut the pumpkin in half top to bottom, then scoop out and discard the seeds and fibers. Peel the pumpkin halves, then cut each half into 1-inch-thick slices. Mound the pumpkin on the prepared baking sheet, then drizzle with the oil and sprinkle with the garam masala, salt and pepper. Toss to coat evenly, then arrange in a single layer. Roast for 30 minutes, or until tender and starting to brown. Arrange the squash on a serving plate and sprinkle with chopped pistachios. Serve with the chutney for spooning over. — AP



NY ENROLLED DEAD IN MEDICAID, OFFERED HEALTH COVERAGE: AUDIT

ALBANY, NY: Flaws in New York's health exchange resulted in 21 dead people being enrolled in Medicaid and 333 getting continuing government-funded health coverage after they died, according to audit results released Thursday. The state comptroller's office reported that its auditors found overpayments of \$3.4 million for the year starting Oct. 1, 2013, when the exchange began operating. That included \$325,000 in coverage for the deceased.

"Only by chance does New York State Of Health receive notification of the death of an enrolled recipient and begin the process to end Medicaid coverage," the report said.

Auditors faulted "a range of design and process flaws" in the health exchange's process for checking eligibility.

The exchange was established by the state under the federal Affordable Care Act to provide commercial health insurance or Medicaid to the state's uninsured, enrolling more than 2.1 million people.

The auditors said the state also issued multiple identification numbers to several thousand adults, children, newborns and even some unborn children who enrolled, resulting in Medicaid overpayments of \$2.8 million.

The health department established the exchange and runs it. It disputed several audit findings in a written response. Officials said the Social Security database was initially used to check for deaths and the department has been awaiting a new federal service for further verification. Last year, they implemented a manual process to link and eliminate payments under

duplicate identification numbers.

Health officials also said they confirmed that 321 people cited in the audit were dead but said that four are still alive. They're still checking on the other 29.

New York's Medicaid enforcement efforts in 2011 through 2013 recovered \$1.73 billion, they said. Meanwhile the state has cut spending growth to 1.7 percent annually.

Medicaid covers about 6 million low-income New Yorkers and costs about \$60 million annually. It's paid almost half by the federal government, one-third by the state and the rest by counties and New York City. This story has been corrected to show that the Medicaid enforcement recoveries of \$1.73 billion were for the years 2011-2013, not 2011-2012. —AP

MAMMOGRAMS HAVEN'T CUT RATE OF ADVANCED BREAST CANCER: STUDY

BOSTON: A new report raises fresh questions about the value of mammograms. The rate of cancers in the United States that have already spread far beyond the breast when they are discovered has stayed stable for decades, suggesting that screening and early detection are not preventing the most dangerous forms of the disease.

The report, in Thursday's *New England Journal of Medicine*, is by three prominent cancer specialists and is based on federal statistics going back to the 1970s.

It comes a week after the American Cancer Society scaled back its mammography advice, saying most women should start annual screening at age 45, not 40, and switch to every other year at 55. A government task force recommends even less - every other year starting at 50.

"We're undergoing what I think for the public is a very confusing debate" about screening, but it's really "a course correction" prompted by more awareness of its risks and benefits to various groups of women, said Dr. H Gilbert Welch, a health policy expert at Dartmouth Medical School. "All they heard for years was, 'there are only benefits.'"

He is the lead author of the report, co-written with Dr David Gorski of Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit and Dr Peter Albertsen of the University of Connecticut Health Center in Farmington.

"Screening offers hope that cancer can be detected in an early, localized phase when it's more amenable to treatment," they write, but that assumes that cancer starts in one place, grows and then spreads. If that was always true, screening would reduce the rate of advanced cancers.

And that has not happened. The rate of breast cancers detected at an advanced stage has been stable since 1975, despite wide use of mammography since the 1980s. The average age of women diagnosed with cancer also has remained around 63, another sign cancers are not being found sooner.

The trends suggest that some breast cancers are already "systemic" or widely spread from the start, and that finding them sooner has limited impact.

"Screening mammography has been unable to identify those bad cancers, destined to become metastatic, at an earlier stage. That doesn't say mammography doesn't help less aggressive cancers," but those are less likely to prove deadly, Welch said.

Dr. Barnett Kramer, a screening expert at the National Cancer Institute, said the report shows the limitations of mammography. "I wouldn't want to say it has had no effect but it certainly has not lived up to the anticipated effect," he said. For every tumor detected early because of mammography, "you would hope to see ... an equal reduction in metastatic disease, and that has not occurred."

The situation is very different with prostate cancer. The rate of advanced cases of that disease has been cut in half since screening with PSA blood tests came into wide use around 1988, and the average age at which men are diagnosed has fallen - from 72 to 70, the authors write.

However, this does not prove PSA testing is good. Shifting the stage at which a disease is diagnosed is "only the first step for successful screening," which also has to save lives to be worthwhile, Welch said. "Just because you find something earlier doesn't mean you can change its course." —AP



NEW YORK: Activists hold signs containing the image of Turing Pharmaceuticals CEO Martin Shkreli in front of the building that houses Turing's offices, during a protest in New York highlighting pharmaceutical drug pricing. Americans from across the political spectrum are worried about the cost of prescription drugs for serious diseases, following weeks of news coverage about companies hiking prices for critical medicines. —AP

LOW-FAT DIETS NOT BEST FOR WEIGHT LOSS: STUDY

NEW TWIST TO LONG-RUNNING DEBATE ON SHEDDING EXTRA POUND

PARIS: Low-fat diets do not yield greater weight loss than other slimming regimes, said a study yesterday, adding to the long-running debate on how best to shed extra pounds or kilos.

A review of 53 scientific studies, covering nearly 70,000 adults in several countries, found "no good evidence for recommending low-fat diets," said lead author Deirdre Tobias of the Brigham and Women's Hospital in Massachusetts.

"The science does not support low-fat diets as the optimal long-term weight loss strategy." In fact, low-carbohydrate diets led to greater weight loss than low-fat ones, according to study results published in *The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology* journal. Weight loss on a low-fat diet was just 360 grammes (13 ounces), compared to 1.15 kilogrammes (2.5 pounds) on a higher-fat, low-carbohydrate eating plan.

As the world's population grows ever

fatter, the quest for an easy weight-loss plan has taken a high priority. Dietary fat has long been targeted, said the study, for the reason that every gram (0.04 ounce) of it contains more than double the calories of a gram of carbohydrates or protein. But research through the years has yielded contradictory results. Just last month a small-scale study in the journal *Cell Metabolism* said cutting back dietary fat caused obese people to lose more body fat than restricting carbohydrates.

But the latest contribution, in the form of a meta-analysis of other studies comparing low-fat diets to other ones, found the contrary. "Behind current dietary advice to cut out the fat... the thinking is that simply reducing fat intake will naturally lead to weight loss," Tobias said in a statement.

"But our robust evidence clearly suggests otherwise." Tobias said more

research must be done to "identify better approaches for long-term weight loss and weight maintenance".

A comment on the study, published by the same journal, said it showed that weight loss overall was poor, regardless of the diet chosen.

"What seems to be clear is that long-term diet adherence is abysmal, irrespective of whether low-fat or other diets... are prescribed," wrote Kevin Hall of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases in Maryland, United States.

Added Tom Sanders of King's College London: The best diet is to eat less and exercise more.

"To me, the take-home message from this paper is that energy intake determines the extent of weight loss rather than the relative proportions of fat and carbohydrates in the diet," he said via the Science Media Centre. —AFP

NOVARTIS, JUNO FACE PRODUCTION HURDLES FOR BLOOD CANCER DRUGS DRUG-MAKERS GRAPPLING TO MAKE DRUGS WIDELY AVAILABLE

NEW YORK: As drugmakers including Novartis, Juno Therapeutics and Kite Pharma race to launch what may be the most effective treatments ever seen for leukemia and other blood cancers, they are grappling with how to make them widely available in a reliable and cost-efficient way.

The new therapies, known as CAR T cells, are made by extracting immune system T cells from an individual patient, altering their DNA to sharpen their ability to spot and kill cancer cells, and infusing them back into the same patient. In some early-stage clinical trials, the treatments eliminated all trace of leukemia and lymphoma in 40 percent to 90 percent of patients who had run out of other options.

Industry analysts expect CAR T cell therapies will begin to reach the market in 2017 and command prices of up to \$450,000 if such remarkable results are replicated in larger trials. The cost is for a one-time application after which, if it works, signs of the cancer are eliminated and the patient needs no more treatment. "CAR T cell treatments are one of great advances in cancer therapy in the last decade," said Dr. James Ferrara, head of hematological cancer research at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, who has not personally tested them, but believes they could become the standard of care among the estimated 10,000 US patients who have exhausted other treatment options. "In patients that have been unresponsive to the most effective therapies we have, including bone marrow transplants, leukemia seems to completely disappear."

But the production process takes

about two weeks per patient, representing a challenge to provide individualized medications for large numbers of people. Wall Street expects Swiss-based Novartis, which owns a New Jersey plant already producing CAR T cells for its clinical trials, to seek approval next year for the first CAR T cell therapy, months before its smaller rivals. Novartis bought the facility in 2013 from Dendreon, whose Provenge treatment for prostate cancer also required a

personalized manufacturing process but failed to take off, leading the company into bankruptcy.

"We feel confident we can scale up to thousands of patients a year with a true global facility," said Usman Azam, Novartis' head of cell and gene therapies. That would be enough to satisfy commercial demand for at least a few years after the treatment is first approved, he said, adding that a second plant could be built

if necessary. Azam said the company's treatment, called CTL019, is "potentially curative."

Novartis plans to seek US approval next year for CTL019 in children with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) - a cancer caused by uncontrolled proliferation of immature white blood cells that can cause death within a year of its diagnosis. About 6,000 Americans annually are diagnosed with ALL, about 60 percent

of them under age 20. In 2017, Novartis will aim for a far bigger market: patients with the most common form of non-Hodgkins lymphoma, called diffuse large B-cell lymphoma (DLBCL). An estimated 25,000 new US cases of the aggressive blood cancer, and 10,000 deaths from it, are seen each year.

Kite and Juno in recent months have leased factories that they are retooling. In the meantime, they are using contract manufacturers for batches of their experimental cells now being used in clinical trials, the companies said. Kite is converting two leased plants. One facility, near its headquarters in Santa Monica, California, will make CAR T cells used in studies. A larger plant in El Segundo, California, will make commercial supplies of KTE-C19, Kite's treatment for diffuse large B-cell lymphoma, in time for a hoped-for launch in 2017 that would put it neck and neck with Novartis.

David Chang, Kite's chief medical officer, expects to be able to process enough CAR T cells for as many as 5,000 patients annually. "That should cover the initial launch of KTE-C19 and maybe the first two to three years afterward," Chang said. Kite will minimize overhead and manufacturing costs by building individual modules that can each handle a patient's cells and then "building out" with more factory modules as demand increases, he added.

Juno plans early next year to begin operations at a plant it is leasing in Bothell, Washington. It will seek approval for its JCAR015 treatment for adult ALL by early 2017. The Seattle-based company is testing other CAR T cells for pediatric ALL, non-Hodgkins lymphoma and other cancers. —Reuters



The logo of Swiss pharmaceutical company Novartis AG on one of their buildings in Basel, Switzerland. —AP

CLINIC
PAGE



Kuwait Times
THE LEADING INDEPENDENT DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

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KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (29/10/2015 TO 04/11/2015)

SHARQIA-1
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 11:45 AM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 1:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 3:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 5:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 7:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 9:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 11:45 PM

SHARQIA-2
 EYAL HAREEFA 1:15 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 1:30 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 3:30 PM
 HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2 3:45 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 5:45 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 8:00 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 10:15 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 12:30 AM

SHARQIA
 GOOSEBUMPS 1:00 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 3:15 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 5:30 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 7:45 PM
 THE LAST WITCH HUNTER 10:00 PM
 THE LAST WITCH HUNTER 12:15 AM

MUHALAB-1
 GOOSEBUMPS 11:30 AM
 GOOSEBUMPS 1:30 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 3:45 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 6:00 PM
 THE LAST WITCH HUNTER 8:15 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 10:30 PM
 THE LAST WITCH HUNTER 12:45 AM

MUHALAB-2
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 12:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 2:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 4:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 6:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 8:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 10:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 12:30 AM

MUHALAB-3
 EYAL HAREEFA 12:45 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 3:00 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 5:15 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 7:30 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 9:45 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 12:05 AM

FANAR-1
 GOOSEBUMPS 12:00 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 2:30 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 4:45 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 7:15 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 9:30 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 11:45 PM

FANAR-2
 EYAL HAREEFA 11:30 AM
 EYAL HAREEFA 1:30 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 3:30 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 5:45 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 8:00 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 10:15 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 12:30 AM

FANAR-3
 BURNT 1:30 PM
 BURNT 3:45 PM
 BURNT 6:00 PM
 BURNT 8:15 PM
 BURNT 10:30 PM
 BURNT 12:45 AM

FANAR-4
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 11:30 AM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 1:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 3:15 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 5:15 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 7:00 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 9:00 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 11:00 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 1:00 AM

FANAR-5
 THE GUARDIAN ANGEL 12:15 PM
 THE LAST WITCH HUNTER 2:45 PM
 THE GUARDIAN ANGEL 5:00 PM
 THE LAST WITCH HUNTER 7:30 PM
 THE GUARDIAN ANGEL 9:45 PM
 THE LAST WITCH HUNTER 12:15 AM

MARINA-1
 EYAL HAREEFA 12:45 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 3:00 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 5:15 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 7:30 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 9:45 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 12:05 AM

MARINA-2
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 12:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 2:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 4:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 6:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 8:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 10:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 12:30 AM

MARINA-3
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 11:30 AM
 GOOSEBUMPS 1:30 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 3:45 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 6:00 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 8:15 PM
 THE LAST WITCH HUNTER 10:30 PM
 THE LAST WITCH HUNTER 12:45 AM

AVENUES-1
 GOOSEBUMPS 12:45 PM
 WAR PIGS 3:00 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 5:00 PM
 WAR PIGS 7:15 PM
 WAR PIGS 9:15 PM
 WAR PIGS 11:15 PM

AVENUES-2
 HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2 12:00 PM
 HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2 2:15 PM
 HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2 4:15 PM
 AHWAK 6:15 PM
 AHWAK 8:45 PM
 AHWAK 11:30 PM

AVENUES-3
 BURNT 12:00 PM
 BURNT 2:15 PM
 BURNT 4:30 PM
 BURNT 6:45 PM
 BURNT 9:00 PM
 BURNT 11:15 PM

AVENUES-4
 THE LAST WITCH HUNTER 11:45 AM
 Special Show "AHWAK" 11:30 AM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 2:15 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 4:15 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 6:15 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 8:15 PM
 EYAL HAREEFA 10:30 PM
 THE LAST WITCH HUNTER 12:45 AM

AVENUES-5
 GOOSEBUMPS 12:45 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 3:00 PM
 Special Show "GOOSEBUMPS" 3:00 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 5:15 PM
 GOOSEBUMPS 7:30 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 9:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 12:05 AM

360°- 1
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 11:45 AM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 1:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 3:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 5:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 7:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 9:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 11:45 PM
 SPECTRE 8:00 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 11:15 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 1:15 AM

360°- 2
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 12:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 2:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 4:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 6:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 8:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 10:45 PM
 PARANORMAL ACTIVITY: THE GHOST DIMENSION 12:45 AM

360°- 3
 HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2 1:15 PM
 HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2 3:15 PM
 HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA2 5:15 PM

REQUIRED

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for a Furniture Company

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MATRIMONIAL

Seeking alliance for Marthoma Girl 31, 151 cm, M.A. Teacher, divorced, from educated non alcoholic smoker boys. Email: shaadimeonly@gmail.com **(C 5065)** **29-10-2015**

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Modapothula Elamma holder of Indian Passport No. G1689507 has converted Islam by name Shaik Ayesha, address 3/65, K.S Agraharam Chitvel, Kadapa, A.P. **(C 5064)** **28-10-2015**

I, Morasudhakar, holder of Indian Passport No. L5934350, R/o Nakkapalli Village, Kumpinipuram Post, Nandalur Mandal, Kadapa Dist, A.P., Changed my name as Muhammad Mora. **(C 5063)**

I, Potturi Harshavardhana Naidu, holder of Indian

Passport No. M7062597, R/o Diguvalallaguttapalli Village, Guttapalli Post, Sambepalli Mandal, Kadapa Dist, A.P., Changed my name as Muhammad Arshad. **(C 5063)** **26-10-2015**

SITUATION WANTED

Art Director, Jordanian, BA Graphic Design, 12 years experience with international agencies (Dubai, Riyadh & Amman) in Marketing, advertising, graphic skills, Web Design, Story boarding, Creative Solution & Mobile Design, Proficient in Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, Indesign, seeks job in Kuwait, please call +966 582 904 264 or e-mail mamoonalqutob@gmail.com Note: I can visit Kuwait without visa. **(C 5059)**

EMERGENCY

112

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



Flight Schedule

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers use seats

Arrival Flights on Saturday 31/10/2015				Departure Flights on Saturday 31/10/2015			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	405	Sohag	00:05	KAC	118	New York	17:55
KLM	413	Amsterdam/Dammam	00:20	SVA	500	Jeddah	18:00
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	UAE	875	Dubai	18:00
JZR	539	Cairo	00:40	FDB	063	Dubai	18:05
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	JZR	177	Dubai	18:20
RJA	642	Amman	01:05	IRM	1180	Mashhad	18:45
THY	772	Istanbul	01:05	ABY	123	Sharjah	18:45
MSR	614	Cairo	01:20	QTR	1080	Doha	18:55
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30	IRA	669	Mashhad	18:55
DLH	635	Doha	01:35	KAC	742	Dammam	19:05
PGT	858	Istanbul	02:00	KAC	614	Bahrain	19:10
JZR	555	Alexandria	02:25	IRM	1188	Mashhad	19:15
UAE	853	Dubai	02:30	KAC	774	Riyadh	19:25
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:30	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:30
KKK	6507	Istanbul	02:50	KAC	618	Doha	19:35
OMA	643	Muscat	02:55	CLX	856	Luxembourg	19:35
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05	KAC	104	London	19:40
MSR	612	Cairo	03:10	KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15	KAC	176	Geneva/Frankfurt	19:55
KKK	6507	Istanbul	03:20	MSR	618	Alexandria	20:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:25	KNE	480	Taif	20:10
THY	1464	Istanbul	03:25	JZR	189	Dubai	20:15
JZR	503	Luxor	04:25	FDB	061	Dubai	20:20
AGY	680	Alexandria	04:30	KAC	786	Jeddah	20:30
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	04:45	ABY	121	Sharjah	20:35
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:40	FDB	5053	Dubai	20:50
THY	770	Istanbul	05:55	DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:55
THY	764	Istanbul	05:55	JAI	572	Mumbai	20:55
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:30	MEA	402	Beirut	21:20
BAW	157	London	06:40	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:20
JZR	529	Asyut	06:50	ALK	229	Colombo	21:25
KAC	416	Jakarta/Kuala Lumpur	07:15	UAE	859	Dubai	21:40
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	07:20	GFA	219	Bahrain	21:45
QTR	1086	Doha	07:40	KAC	676	Dubai	21:45
KAC	204	Lahore	07:40	QTR	082	Doha	22:00
FDB	053	Dubai	07:45	KLM	15	Amsterdam	22:05
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	KNE	70	Jeddah	22:15
KAC	382	Delhi	08:00	KAC	64	Amman	22:25
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:25
KAC	206	Islamabad	08:25	FDB	059	Dubai	22:30
KAC	344	Chennai	08:30	OMA	647	Muscat	23:00
UAE	855	Dubai	08:40	JZR	185	Dubai	23:15
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	UAL	981	Bahrain	23:25
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:10	JAD	301	Amman	23:30
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:20	MSC	405	Sohag	23:30
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25	FDB	071	Dubai	23:45
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	JZR	125	Bahrain	23:55
OMA	641	Muscat	10:05	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:55
IRC	526	Mashhad	10:20				
RJD	135	Abu Dhabi	10:30				
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40				
SYR	341	Damascus	10:55				
UAE	873	Dubai	11:05				
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:15				
JZR	165	Dubai	11:30				
AGY	684	Sohag	11:35				
IAW	157	Al Najaf	11:50				
NIA	151	Cairo	11:55				
MRJ	4815	Mashhad	12:00				
SVA	2618	Jeddah	12:05				
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25				
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30				
UAE	871	Dubai	12:50				
JZR	241	Amman	12:50				
OMA	645	Muscat	13:00				
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00				
IRC	6511	ABD	13:05				
SVA	2312	Jeddah	13:05				
JZR	779	Jeddah	13:35				
KNE	460	Riyadh	13:50				
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	13:55				
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00				
QTR	1078	Doha	14:10				
FDB	057	Dubai	14:10				
KNE	72	Jeddah	14:35				
SVA	314	Jeddah	14:45				
KAC	512	Mashhad	14:50				
KAC	788	Jeddah	14:50				
KNE	462	Madinah	14:55				
GFA	221	Bahrain	15:00				
IRM	1186	Tehran	15:00				
SVA	2610	Jeddah	15:00				
IZG	4167	Mashhad	15:00				
KAC	562	Amman	15:40				
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:45				
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45				
JZR	535	Cairo	16:10				
QTR	1072	Doha	16:10				
JZR	357	Mashhad	16:30				
FDB	051	Dubai	16:30				
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	16:40				
KAC	542	Cairo	16:55				
RJA	640	Amman	16:55				
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15				
UAL	982	IAD	17:15				
KNE	474	Jeddah	17:25				
KAC	502	Beirut	17:30				
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30				
JZR	325	Al Najaf	17:50				
JZR	777	Jeddah	17:55				

Word Search Puzzles

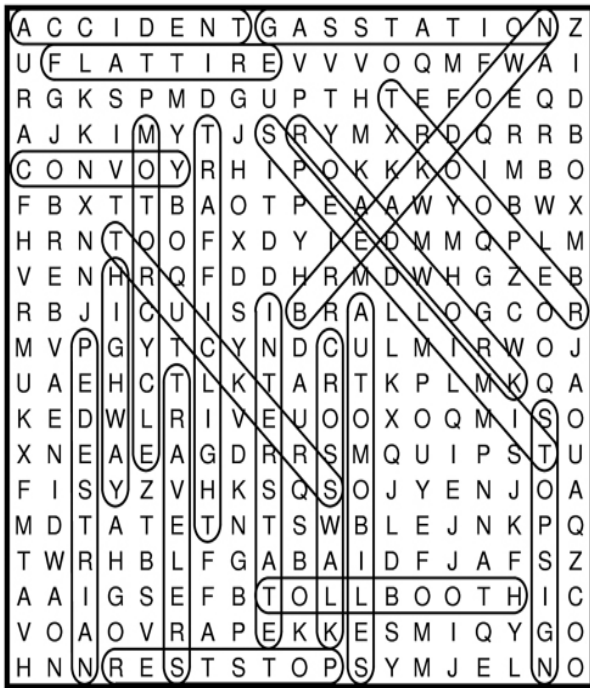
FIRST NOVELS WORD SEARCH PUZZLE



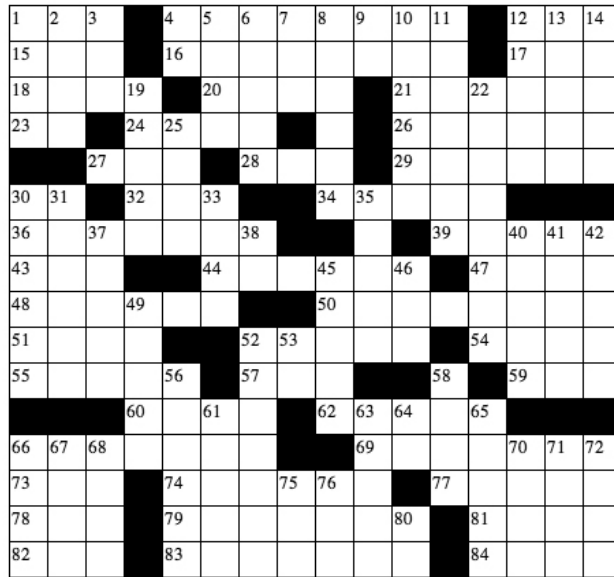
- A STUDY IN SCARLET
- A TIME TO KILL
- BLACK BEAUTY
- CARRIE
- COLD MOUNTAIN
- FIGHT CLUB
- FRANKENSTEIN
- JANE EYRE
- PLAYER PIANO
- ROOTS
- STONES FOR IBARRA
- THE BIG SLEEP
- THE BLUEST EYE
- THE HOBBIT
- THE JOY LUCK CLUB
- THE NOTEBOOK
- THE PICKWICK PAPERS
- THE SUN ALSO RISES
- THE TIME MACHINE
- WUTHERING HEIGHTS

Yesterday's Solution

SOLUTION TO ON THE ROAD PUZZLE



CROSSWORD 1065



ACROSS

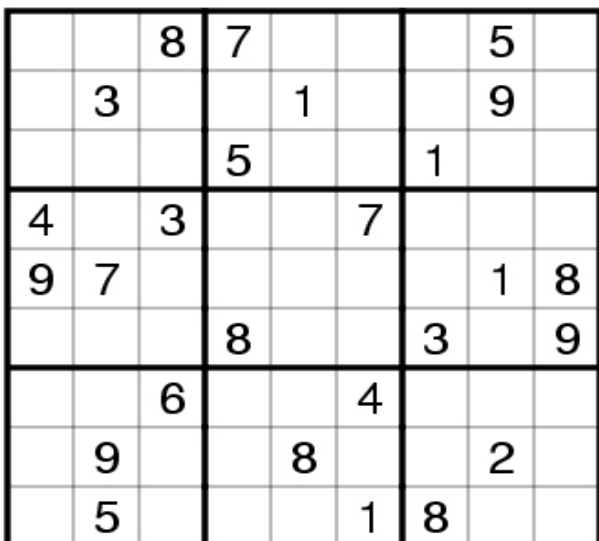
1. A federal agency established to coordinate programs aimed at reducing pollution and protecting the environment.
4. A view of the sea.
12. Considerate and solicitous care.
15. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
16. Shaped like a cube.
17. A port in southwestern Scotland.
18. Singing jazz.
20. (computer science) A kind of computer architecture that has a relatively small set of computer instructions that it can perform.
21. Provide with new wiring.
23. (Akkadian) God of wisdom.
24. A slender double-reed instrument.
26. Fungus used in the preparation of punk for fuses.
27. An accountant certified by the state.
28. (usually followed by 'to' or 'for') On the point of or strongly disposed.
29. Robbery on the high seas.
30. Being one more than one hundred.
32. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
34. Essential oil or perfume obtained from flowers.
36. A city of east central Mexico (west of Veracruz).
39. (astronomy) An indistinct surface feature of Mars once thought to be a system of channels.
43. A unit of length equal to one thousandth of an inch.
44. Having a bib.
47. An amino acid that is found in the central nervous system.
48. Suitable for use as food.
50. Red Asian weaverbirds often kept as cage birds.
51. The face of a timepiece.
54. Any of the short curved hairs that grow from the edges of the eyelids.
55. English scholastic philosopher and assumed author of Occam's Razor (1285-1349).
57. An independent agency of the United States government responsible for collecting and coordinating intelligence and counterintelligence activities abroad in the national interest.
59. Towards the side away from the wind.
60. Greater than normal in degree or intensity or amount.
62. A summary that repeats the substance of a longer discussion.
66. A publication (such as a book) that is reprinted without changes or editing and offered again for sale.

69. An ideal instance.
73. A rapid bustling commotion.
74. (Jewish cookery) A loaf of white bread containing eggs and leavened with yeast.
77. (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.
78. Of the blackest black.
79. Pertaining to or resembling amoebae.
81. A notable achievement.
82. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
83. Fudge made with brown sugar and butter and milk and nuts.
84. Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.

DOWN

1. Freedom from difficulty or hardship or effort.
2. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
3. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
4. A white trivalent metallic element.
5. The basic monetary unit of most members of the European Union (introduced in 1999).
6. True firs.
7. An internationally recognized distress signal in radio code.
8. Small genus of perennial herbs having deadly poisonous tuberous roots.
9. A public promotion of some product or service.
10. A flourish added after or under your signature (originally to protect against forgery).
11. Resembling or characteristic of or appropriate to an elegy.
12. Long-tailed arboreal mustelid of Central and South America.
13. Expressing deep personal emotion.
14. The first decisive battle of the Hundred Years' War.
19. A yellow quartz.
22. Australian wild horse.
25. A small cake leavened with yeast.
31. Of or containing iridium.
33. A French abbot.
35. The subject matter of a conversation or discussion.
37. (anatomy) Of or relating to the ilium.
38. The branch of computer science that deal with writing computer programs that can solve problems creatively.
40. Connected with or belonging to or used in a navy.
41. Lower in esteem.
42. Machine tool for shaping metal or wood.
45. An imaginary elephant that appears in a series of French books for children.
46. An informal term for a father.
49. (informal usage) A general feeling of boredom and dissatisfaction.
52. A body of troops arranged in a line.
53. Destruction of heart tissue resulting from obstruction of the blood supply to the heart muscle.
56. An unpredictable outcome that is unfortunate.
58. God of death.
61. Tropical tree of Central America and West Indies and Puerto Rico having spikes of white flowers.
63. An ancient Hebrew unit of dry measure equal to about a bushel.
64. A white metallic element that burns with a brilliant light.
65. A genus of Ploceidae.
67. Any place of complete bliss and delight and peace.
68. A tiny or scarcely detectable amount.
70. A Gaelic-speaking Celt in Ireland or Scotland or the Isle of Man.
71. An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
72. A quantity of no importance.
75. A zodiacal constellation in northern hemisphere between Cancer and Virgo.
76. The elementary stages of any subject (usually plural).
80. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.

Daily SuDoku



hard

Yesterday's Solution



medium

Yesterday's Solution



TWO QB CLASH AS PACKERS TAKE ON BRONCOS

LOS ANGELES: Two of the greatest quarterbacks of the past decade will face off for only the second time on Sunday when Aaron Rodgers goes head-to-head with Peyton Manning in a clash between the unbeaten Green Bay Packers and undefeated Denver Broncos.

Packers star Rodgers and Broncos veteran Manning have won seven NFL MVP awards between them, including five in the last seven years, but have only ever played each other once, in 2008, when Manning was still with the Indianapolis Colts.

Since that meeting—a Rodgers-inspired 34-14 Packers win at Lambeau Field much has changed for the two men. Manning, 39, left the Colts in 2012 and has not been able to add to his lone Super Bowl triumph from 2007, falling at the final hurdle with the Broncos in a blowout defeat to Seattle in 2014.

Rodgers, 31, meanwhile, has won a Super Bowl and gone on to establish himself as one of the greatest quarterbacks the NFL has ever

seen, topping the all-time charts for passer rating and touchdown-to-interception ratio. Rodgers, regarded by many as the natural heir to Manning, speaks in awe of the Denver veteran's career, now in its 18th season.

"He's been doing it at the highest level for a long time, so you've got to have a ton of respect, and I do," Rodgers said. "I appreciate the contributions he's made to the game. Both on and off the field. He's a legend." Manning meanwhile has been struggling to rediscover his best form despite the Broncos 6-0 start to the season.

So far this season he has thrown seven touchdowns and 10 interceptions, and admitted this week he was "working hard every day to get better."

Manning, who turns 40 next March, said he had not set himself a deadline for when to call it a day.

"I never really talked about it in that way as far as a set number of years," Manning said. "I think I had one goal coming out, I kind of wanted to play for the same team

(my whole career). "Obviously things happen and it doesn't always work that way, but I certainly feel fortunate to still be playing and don't take it for granted. I'm still enjoying it out there."

While the clash between Rodgers and Manning is the box office storyline, Sunday's contest could ultimately turn on which defense comes out best.

Denver's defense leads the rankings in the NFL this year in terms of fewest yards conceded per play and in takeaways per game. "What defense plays the best, I think that's who will win the game," Broncos linebacker Brandon Marshall said. Whatever happens, one side will be reflecting on their first defeat of the season after Sunday's game, only the fourth time in NFL history that two unbeaten sides with records of at least 6-0 have met.

Two other 6-0 teams—the Cincinnati Bengals and the Carolina Panthers—will also be in action on Sunday looking to preserve their perfect starts to the campaign.

The undefeated Bengals travel to Pittsburgh to face rivals the Steelers (4-3) aiming to extend their stranglehold on the AFC North. Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger is aiming to make his first appearance since injuring his knee in the third game of the season at St. Louis, and admits he couldn't have chosen a more daunting assignment for his comeback.

"This is a heck of a test for us," Roethlisberger said. "This is one of the best teams in football right now," he said of the Bengals. The Panthers meanwhile face the struggling Indianapolis Colts (3-4) aiming to remain at least one game clear of NFC South rivals Atlanta (6-1).

Panthers head coach Ron Rivera has warned his team about complacency, noting that at the same stage last year their season unraveled with a six-game losing streak.

"As soon as you're in the limelight, you can be pushed out of it by not playing well," Rivera said. "Our guys have to stay focused and keep that approach." — AFP

PATRIOTS THRASH DOLPHINS

MIAMI: Tom Brady threw four touchdown passes to lead the undefeated New England Patriots to a 36-7 win over the Miami Dolphins at Gillette Stadium on Thursday.

Running back Dion Lewis returned from injury with a strong game as the Patriots cruised to their seventh straight victory while the loss brought the Dolphins crashing back to Earth after they had scored 82 points and won their first two games under interim coach Dan Campbell.

Despite the streak, Brady said there was a long season ahead. "We're only seven games through,

so we've still got a lot of work to do," he said. New England's Stephen Gostkowski kicked two field goals in as many tries and has made 26 straight in the regular season, breaking Adam Vinatieri's team record of 25. The Patriots scored in each quarter for the sixth straight game. After failing to score in the first quarter of the season, against the Pittsburgh Steelers, the defending Super Bowl champions have scored in 27 straight quarters.

Brady threw two touchdown passes to wide receiver Julian Edelman and one each to tight end Rob Gronkowski and Lewis.

He finished 26 of 38 for 356 yards, recording his 69th 300-yard game - which ranks third all-time - and his 24th game with four or more touchdowns, which also ranks third. It was Brady's 19th career game with at least four touchdowns and no interceptions, an NFL record.

Lewis, who did not play last Sunday because of an abdominal injury, ran for just 19 yards on five carries but caught six passes for 93 yards and a score.

Gronkowski caught a 47-yard catch and run for the first score of the game, finishing with six catch-

es for 113 yards, his 19th career game with at least 100 yards.

That tied him with Shannon Sharpe for sixth place all-time among tight ends. Miami quarterback Ryan Tannehill finished 28 of 44 for 300 yards and two interceptions. He was sacked five times. "You have to play good football in all three phases when you play the New England Patriots," Miami coach Campbell said. "They've always been that way. You can't have mistakes, or if you do, you can't have many of them. Had a couple of turnovers, which doesn't help." — Reuters



FOXBOROUGH: New England Patriots defensive back Justin Coleman (22) tackles Miami Dolphins running back Lamar Miller (26) in the first half an NFL football game. — AP

NFL Standings

American Football Conference							
AFC EAST							
	W	L	T	OTL	PF	PA	PCT
New England	7	0	0	0	249	133	1.000
NY Jets	4	2	0	0	152	105	.667
Miami	3	4	0	0	154	173	.429
Buffalo	3	4	0	0	176	173	.429
AFC North							
Cincinnati	6	0	0	0	182	122	1.000
Pittsburgh	4	3	0	1	158	131	.571
Cleveland	2	5	0	1	147	182	.286
Baltimore	1	6	0	1	161	188	.143
AFC South							
Indianapolis	3	4	0	0	147	174	.429
Houston	2	5	0	0	154	199	.286
Jacksonville	2	5	0	1	147	207	.286
Tennessee	1	5	0	0	119	139	.167
AFC West							
Denver	6	0	0	0	139	102	1.000
Oakland	3	3	0	0	144	153	.500
Kansas City	2	5	0	0	150	172	.286
San Diego	2	5	0	0	165	198	.286
National Football Conference							
NFC East							
NY Giants	4	3	0	0	166	156	.571
Washington	3	4	0	1	148	168	.429
Philadelphia	3	4	0	0	160	137	.429
Dallas	2	4	0	1	121	158	.333
NFC North							
Green Bay	6	0	0	0	164	101	1.000
Minnesota	4	2	0	0	124	102	.667
Chicago	2	4	0	1	120	179	.333
Detroit	1	6	0	0	139	200	.143
NFC South							
Carolina	6	0	0	0	162	110	1.000
Atlanta	6	1	0	0	193	150	.857
New Orleans	3	4	0	0	161	185	.429
Tampa Bay	2	4	0	0	140	179	.333
NFC West							
Arizona	5	2	0	0	229	133	.714
St. Louis	3	3	0	0	108	119	.500
Seattle	3	4	0	2	154	128	.429
San Francisco	2	5	0	0	103	180	.286

OILERS SLIP PAST CANADIENS

EDMONTON: Leon Draisaitl's second goal with 1:02 left broke a tie and the Edmonton Oilers scored four straight goals in a 4-3 victory over the league-leading Montreal Canadiens on Thursday night.

Draisaitl was called up earlier in the day from Bakersfield of the AHL and missed the morning skate. He played in 37 NHL games last season.

Brandon Davidson and Benoit Pouliot also scored, and the Oilers erased a 3-0 first-period deficit to end a three-game skid. Brendan Gallagher, Torrey Mitchell and Alex Galchenyuk scored for Montreal. The Canadiens have lost two straight after starting the season with nine straight victories. Edmonton completed the comeback when Ryan Nugent-Hopkins fed it out front to Draisaitl for his second of the contest.

HURRICANES 3, ISLANDERS 2

Ron Hainsey scored at 2:21 of overtime to lift Carolina over New York. Brock McGinn and Chris Terry scored in regulation to help Carolina win its second straight to cap a 4-3-0 road trip. Eddie Lack stopped 17 shots. Hainsey took a pass from Jordan Staal and slid the puck past Islanders goalie Thomas Greiss near the midpoint of the extra period for his second of the season. Terry had tied the score with 5:04 left in the third, finishing off a slick passing play with Eric and Jordan Staal. The goal was Terry's second of the season. Matt Martin and Frans Nielsen scored for the Islanders, and Greiss finished with 26 saves.



Leon Draisaitl in action in this file photo.

NHL Results/Standings

Carolina 3, NY Islanders 2 (OT); New Jersey 4, Philadelphia 1; Pittsburgh 4, Buffalo 3; Colorado 2, Tampa Bay 1; St. Louis 2, Anaheim 1; Winnipeg 3, Chicago 1; Dallas 4, Vancouver 3 (OT); Edmonton 4, Montreal 3.

Western Conference

Central Division

	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS
Dallas	8	2	0	35	27	16
Nashville	7	1	1	27	17	15
St. Louis	7	2	1	27	21	15
Minnesota	6	2	1	28	25	13
Winnipeg	6	3	1	32	26	13
Chicago	6	4	0	20	19	12
Colorado	3	5	1	22	26	7

Pacific Division

Los Angeles	6	3	0	20	18	12
Vancouver	4	2	4	28	22	12
Arizona	5	4	1	27	28	11
San Jose	5	4	0	24	20	10
Edmonton	4	7	0	28	34	8
Calgary	2	7	1	20	40	5
Anaheim	1	7	2	10	27	4

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division

Montreal	9	2	0	39	21	18
Tampa Bay	5	4	2	28	28	12
Florida	5	3	1	30	18	11
Ottawa	4	3	2	29	30	10
Boston	4	3	1	33	29	9
Detroit	4	4	1	22	24	9
Buffalo	3	7	0	23	33	6
Toronto	1	5	2	19	28	4

Metropolitan Division

NY Rangers	6	2	2	28	20	14
NY Islanders	6	2	2	33	25	14
Washington	6	2	0	30	21	12
Pittsburgh	6	4	0	20	20	12
New Jersey	5	4	1	25	27	11
Philadelphia	4	3	2	20	26	10
Carolina	4	6	0	20	28	8
Columbus	2	8	0	22	41	4

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

PENGUINS 4, SABRES 3

Evgeni Malkin scored his fourth of the season on the power play, Jeff Zatkoff made 50 saves in his season debut and Pittsburgh beat Buffalo.

Pascal Dupuis, Patric Hornqvist and Ben Lovejoy all scored their first of the season and Malkin added an assist for Pittsburgh. The Penguins earned their third straight victory, sixth win in seven games and seventh straight over Buffalo. Malkin has four goals and nine points in his last seven games. Sidney Crosby had two assists, his first points in three games. Crosby is off to the worst start of his career and went without a point in eight of the team's first nine games.

Pittsburgh's power play, the worst in the league, scored its third of the season in 32 chances, breaking an 0-for-11 slump. Jamie McGinn, Nicolas Deslauriers and Matt Moulson scored for Buffalo.

DEVILS 4, FLYERS 1

Travis Zajac scored twice and Kyle Palmieri had a goal and two assists to lead New Jersey over Philadelphia. Andy Greene scored an empty-net goal with 6.7 seconds left for the Devils, who won their fourth straight on the road. Luke Schenn scored for Philadelphia. Palmieri put the Devils in front at 1:28 into the third period when he blocked Evgeny Medvedev's shot attempt at the blue line, raced past Medvedev and fired a wrister from the left circle over goalie Steve Mason's left shoulder that made it 2-1.

Zajac made it a two-goal lead just over a minute later with his second power-play goal of the night. Mason made 29 saves. Cory Schneider had 27.

AVALANCHE 2, LIGHTNING 1

Alex Tanguay and Nathan MacKinnon each had a goal and an assist, Semyon Varlamov made 34 saves and Colorado beat Tampa Bay to end a four-game losing streak. Varlamov won his 108th game with the Avalanche and moved past Dan Bouchard into second place on the franchise wins list. Jarome Iginla had two assists to move past Phil Housley (1,232) into sole possession of 38th place with 1,233 points in his career. Tampa Bay, coming off a 1-1-2 road trip, got a goal from Alex Killorn.

STARS 4, CANUCKS 3

Jamie Benn scored midway through overtime and Dallas rallied to beat Vancouver. Patrick Sharp twice tied the game with goals for Dallas. The Stars have won two in a row by overcoming multiple-goal deficits. Sharp's second score tied it with 4:35 left in the third period, erasing what had been a 3-1 Canucks lead. Jason Demers had scored about 5 minutes earlier. Alexandre Burrows, Alexander Edler and Radim Vrbata scored for the Canucks. Vancouver was held without a shot on goal for nearly 12 minutes to start the game. Benn scored after skating out of the corner with the puck, shooting from just inside the right faceoff dot 2:28 into overtime. The Canucks scored first on Burrows' penalty shot, the first awarded in the NHL this season.

JETS 3, BLACKHAWKS 1

Michael Hutchinson stopped 45 shots and Andrew Ladd scored on the power play to lead Winnipeg over Chicago. Bryan Little set up a pair of goals for the Jets, who stopped the Blackhawks' four-game winning streak. The Jets (6-3-1) were ahead 2-1 going into the third period on goals by Blake Wheeler and Ladd. Mark Scheifele added to the lead at 8:04 when he took a pass from rookie Nikolaj Ehlers and beat goalie Corey Crawford on the short side. Patrick Kane scored the game's first goal, his sixth of the season, at 1:26 into the game on a power play for Chicago (6-4-0). Crawford had come into the game with a pair of shutouts in his four straight wins. He stopped 28 shots.

BLUES 2, DUCKS 1

Colton Parayko broke a tie about midway through the third period to lift St. Louis over Anaheim. Vladimir Tarasenko also scored and Jake Allen stopped 22 shots to help the Blues win for the sixth time in the last eight games (6-1-1). Hampus Lindholm scored and Frederik Andersen finished with 31 saves as the Ducks closed out a winless five-game road trip (0-4-1). Anaheim was outscored 15-5 on the trip, including a 4-3 loss at Dallas on Tuesday night. Anaheim entered the game ranked last in the NHL in scoring (1.0 goals per game), was without captain Ryan Getzlaf, who missed his second game and is expected to be out up to 12 days due to appendicitis. — AP

THOMAS TAKES HALFWAY LEAD IN MALAYSIA

KUALA LUMPUR: American Justin Thomas came close to joining golf's exclusive 59 club after a spectacular birdie blitz in Malaysia yesterday but instead had to make do with the halfway lead at the PGA Tour's CIMB Classic.

The 22-year-old from Kentucky, in his second year on Tour after a solid rookie season, looked set to achieve golf's magical mark when he reached 11-under after 15 holes of his second round at the Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club. But he could only par the remaining three, including the generous par-five last, to miss out on becoming the seventh player to shoot a 59 on the PGA Tour

and first since American Jim Furyk two years ago at the BMW Championship. "It was obviously a great day. It was one of those days when you kind of get unconscious and get rolling out there. They don't happen too often," the world number 64 told reporters.

"I would say after I birdied 14, 15, I knew I just needed to get two of my last three. They're all pretty easy holes. They're all wedge holes. "So it was obviously unfortunate not to get that number, but I'm sure I'll have many more chances in my career."

Still Thomas, who fired nine birdies and an eagle, will take a one shot lead into the

weekend after posting a tournament-record 15-under 129 tally at the \$7 million co-sanctioned Asian Tour event, the third of the new PGA Tour season. The in-form American is chasing his first PGA Tour win. He achieved his best finish of tied third two weeks ago at the season-opening Frys.com championships. "Obviously, it's a great position to be in, but there's a lot of golf left. I just need to keep firing," he said. American Brendan Steele led the chasing pack after a bogey free nine-under 63 left him at 14-under and in sight of only his second PGA Tour title and first in more than four years. Overnight leader

Scott Piercy fell down the field into a share of third after a modest 69, with two bogeys halting his progress, left him at 13-under.

"I think the heat got to me a little bit today and I made some mistakes," the American said. The 13-under mark was matched by Japan's Hideki Matsuyama, who followed up his opening 65 with a 66 on Friday, to sit level with American Spencer Levin (64). The event, in its sixth year, has always provided a bounty of birdies for the field and the 2015 edition has proved no different with only 10 of the 78 players over par after the second round. — Reuters

DAY-NIGHT TEST TO GO AHEAD DESPITE STINK OVER PINK BALL

SYDNEY: Cricket Australia says it intends to proceed with next month's contentious first-ever day-night Test despite player unease over the experimental pink ball to be used.

The historic Test is scheduled for Adelaide Oval on November 27 between Australia and New Zealand in a move authorities hope will boost television audiences and usher in a lucrative new era for the five-day game. Manufacturer Kookaburra said it has tried to sculpt a suitable ball for the occasion-something that is visible under lights but behaves similar to a traditional red ball.

But the innovation has been criticised by players, with new Australia skipper Steve Smith saying on Wednesday he had trouble seeing the seam after batting against it for the first time. Senior Australian batsman Adam Voges added that the pink ball did not hold up well in recent games against New Zealand in Canberra, while one-day interna-

tional paceman John Hastings scoffed: "The ball doesn't move off the straight.

"All you got to do is set straight fields, it's quite a boring brand of cricket when you do have that pink ball," he said. It has sparked calls from some for Cricket Australia to revert the Adelaide Test back to its traditional daytime schedule, but the organisation is having none of it.

"We're confident with the work that's been done on the pink ball over many years and Kookaburra have been developing it over seven years," a CA spokesman told AFP.

"We've had two successive seasons of Sheffield Shield cricket where pink balls have been trialled." CA said the move to stage part of each day's play under lights was to suit fans. "The day-night Test is all about the fans. We are challenged in the early parts of the season-the first month of the summer when kids are still at school and adults are working.

It's difficult to get people to the cricket," the spokesman said. "That's why time shifting the ordinary hours of the Test match to later in the day will allow more people to attend the matches and watch on TV." CA said ticket sales for the Test have been "incredibly strong" with the interest shown by fans on par with an Ashes series against England.

Kookaburra has defended its pink ball and said it had gone through rigorous testing. "I don't think any Test ball has gone through the level of testing and development that the pink ball has got and the number of trials and feedback," Kookaburra managing director Brett Elliott said. "I think there is probably more data on the development of this ball than there is on any ball before it was entered into the first-class arena."

But still there are questions about its use, just weeks before the hotly debated day-night Test in Adelaide. Smith, batting this

week for his New South Wales state side, said he had trouble sighting the pink ball, even though the entirety of his innings against Queensland was played in daylight.

"I found it quite hard to see the seam," he told reporters. "I found it quite hard to tell when the bowler was sort of trying to swing it a certain way, or sometimes with the spinners, it was a bit hard to pick up." But overall he thought the pink balls "played quite well".

"It looked like it held together quite well throughout the day, probably a lot better than it did on the more abrasive surface of Canberra, so that is I guess good signs."

Former Test fast bowler Ryan Harris said it was time players accepted the radical change. "It's here to stay," he said of the pink ball. "It's new, it's like when Twenty20 came in-no one knew how it was going to go. Players had to adapt to it and that's what they will have to do here." — AFP

TRICKY KIWI TEST FOR AUSSIES IN TRANSITION

MELBOURNE: A resurgent New Zealand have landed in Australia with high hopes of upsetting Steven Smith's rebuilding side in a three-match series capped by test cricket's first day-night clash.

New Zealand have not won a test series on Australian soil since 1985/86, when a marauding Richard Hadlee was in his pomp, but Brendon McCullum's team may have their best chance to break the drought against vulnerable opponents in the throes of transition.

The series continues a calendar-long feast of sporting rivalry between the Antipodean nations, who face off in the Rugby World Cup title-decider in London on Saturday and have also clashed in rugby league and netball this year.

For McCullum's Black Caps, however, it offers the chance to extract a measure of revenge for their stinging World Cup final loss in March, when they were destroyed by the hosts in front of a baying Melbourne Cricket Ground crowd. Then, New Zealand's run to the final had a fairy-tale quality, and their team were cast as a swashbuckling band of upstarts crashing a party for cricket's traditional powers.

McCullum's side have since established themselves as contenders in the red-ball game, splitting an enthralling test series 1-1 on English pitches, where Australia were found wanting in a subsequent 3-2 Ashes defeat. The Black Caps can expect little of the patronising tone that has welcomed weaker New Zealand teams of the past in Australia but more than the usual serving of outright hostility from local crowds. Australian fans are unaccustomed to disappointment, having not witnessed a test defeat on home pitches for three years and are likely to give McCullum's team a similarly spirited reception to that which greeted England during the 5-0 whitewash in 2013/14. Australia may only dream of such dominance now, with new captain Smith inheriting a side depleted by the retirements of former skipper and master tactician Michael Clarke, opening batsman Chris Rogers and all-rounder Shane Watson.

Mitchell Marsh is a worthy candidate to carry the all-round duties, but New Zealand seamers Trent Boult and Tim Southee will be eager to tear into Australia's top order reinforcements Joe Burns and Usman Khawaja, who have been named for next week's opening test in Brisbane and the second match in Perth. Burns showed himself an able replacement for Rogers in scoring two half-centuries against India during the last home summer but Queensland captain Khawaja is on his third life after failing twice before to cement his place at the highest level. — Reuters



KABUL: Afghanistan's national cricket team players hold their trophies in Kabul yesterday. — AP

PAKISTAN SEEK SERIES WIN AS FAREWELL GIFT FOR MISBAH

SHARJAH: Pakistan target victory over England in the third and final Test from tomorrow in what would be a fitting farewell for Misbah-ul-Haq, the country's most successful captain who has hinted he's ready to retire.

The 41-year-old, who quit one-day cricket after the World Cup earlier this year, had suggested that he would leave the game after a two-Test series against India in December-January. But with relations between the arch-rivals once again strained and with that series in doubt, this England series may be Misbah's last. "To be honest, I haven't made a decision on my retirement yet. I don't know if we will be playing against India this season or if there will be an alternative series coming up, so I've not made up mind yet," Misbah wrote in his column for cricket.com.au. Pakistan are 1-0 up against England after winning the second Test by 178 runs in Dubai. The first Test ended in a draw in Abu Dhabi.

A 2-0 series win will lift Pakistan to number two in ICC (International Cricket Council) Test rankings, previously briefly attained by them for few days in August 2006.

Misbah's personal form and fitness suggest he can carry on, having scored 3, 51, 102 and 87 in the four innings of the series.

But he said a player should leave the game on a high. "One should think about leaving the game with respect rather than leaving it when he is forced to leave," said Misbah. Misbah will hope his team does not squander a good opportunity to win another Test series, like they did against New Zealand to who fought back for 1-1 in Sharjah last year.

The Sharjah stadium pitch has been relaid and is likely to help spinners, with leggie Yasir Shah, who took eight wickets in Dubai, and left-armer Zulfikar Babar, who managed three wickets, playing a key role. Shah worked with legendary Australian spinner Shane Warne in the nets on Thursday.

Pakistan are likely to bring in Azhar Ali who missed the first Test with injury and second after his mother-in-law died-to open the innings in place of Shan Masood. England, who were routed 3-0 by Pakistan in the United Arab Emirates three years ago, are likely to bring in middle-order batsman James Taylor for Jos Butler who has failed as wicket-keeper/batsman, managing just 34 in four innings.

If that happens, Jonny Bairstow will keep



DUBAI: Pakistan's Misbah Ul Haq walks off the pitch after losing his wicket in this file photo. — AFP

wicket. Skipper Alastair Cook said changes will be decided after inspecting the pitch.

"Naturally when you lose a game or people haven't performed as well as they would have liked, people will look at the team. We have a good squad and players itching to get in," said Cook. "We'll look at our team and if we sustain the type of cricket we've played for five days rather than four-and-a-half we've got a really good chance." If England, currently third in the rankings, lose the series 2-0 they will drop to as low as sixth.

Teams (from):

Pakistan: Misbah-ul-Haq (captain), Ahmed Shehzad, Shan Masood, Azhar Ali, Mohammad Hafeez, Fawad Alam, Asad Shafiq, Younis Khan, Shoaib Malik, Sarfraz Ahmed, Yasir Shah, Zulfikar Babar, Wahab Riaz, Imran Khan, Rahat Ali, Junaid Khan, Bilal Asif, Mohammad Rizwan
England: Alastair Cook (capt), Moeen Ali, James Anderson, Samit Patel, Jonny Bairstow, Ian Bell, Stuart Broad, Jos Buttler, Chris Jordan, Alex Hales, Liam Plunkett, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, Ben Stokes, James Taylor, Mark Wood. — AFP



LOS ANGELES: Clippers' Blake Griffin (front) is fouled by Dallas Mavericks' Jeremy Evans during the first half of an NBA basketball game. —AP

CLIPPERS ROLL PAST MAVERICKS

NBA results/standings

Memphis 112, Indiana 103; Atlanta 112, NY Knicks 101; LA Clippers 104, Dallas 88.

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division

	W	L	PCT	GB
Boston	1	0	1.000	-
Toronto	1	0	1.000	-
NY Knicks	1	1	.500	0.5
Brooklyn	0	1	0	1
Philadelphia	0	1	0	1

Central Division

Chicago	2	0	1.000	-
Detroit	2	0	1.000	-
Cleveland	1	1	.500	1
Milwaukee	0	1	0	1.5
Indiana	0	2	0	2

Southeast Division

Miami	1	0	1.000	-
Washington	1	0	1.000	-
Atlanta	1	1	.500	0.5
Orlando	0	1	0	1
Charlotte	0	1	0	1

Western Conference

Northwest Division

Denver	1	0	1.000	-
Portland	1	0	1.000	-
Oklahoma City	1	0	1.000	-
Minnesota	1	0	1.000	-
Utah	0	1	0	1

Pacific Division

LA Clippers	2	0	1.000	-
Golden State	1	0	1.000	0.5
LA Lakers	0	1	0	1.5
Sacramento	0	1	0	1.5
Phoenix	0	1	0	1.5

Southwest Division

Memphis	1	1	.500	-
Dallas	1	1	.500	-
Houston	0	1	0	0.5
San Antonio	0	1	0	0.5
New Orleans	0	2	0	1

SACRAMENTO: Los Angeles forward Blake Griffin scored 26 points and grabbed 10 rebounds to guide the Clippers to a 104-88 victory over the short-handed Mavericks on Thursday.

An eight-point halftime lead ballooned into double-digits in the second half as Dallas failed to recover. "We just calmed down, trusted our offense, executed and got stops defensively, which led to easy baskets on the offensive end," said Griffin, who made 11 of 17 shots from the floor in only 27 minutes. The Clippers' defense also contributed to the outcome, holding the Mavericks to 36.1 percent shooting. "We played better defense, number one," Clippers coach Doc Rivers said.

"Number two, I thought we walked the ball up the floor for most of the first half. The first unit was much better the second time they came on the floor in the last six minutes of the first half.

"In the second half, both units played at pace instead of walking up the floor after both makes and misses, which was not who we are."

Jamal Crawford added 15 points off the bench as the Clippers (2-0) prevailed in their home opener. Austin Rivers and J.J. Reddick scored 14 and 12.

John Jenkins had 17 points and Dirk Nowitzki 16 to lead the Mavericks (1-1). Dallas played without Deron Williams and Wesley Matthews.

Williams sustained a left knee contusion on Wednesday in a 111-95 blowout of the Phoenix Suns, while Matthews, who scored nine points in the rout, was held out for precautionary reasons. Matthews had surgery on a torn left Achilles tendon last March, and club officials refuse to risk playing him in back-to-back games this early in the season.

Dallas were already without Chandler Parsons (right knee surgery) and JaVale McGee (left tibial stress fracture). "It was a tough matchup, but we kept battling," said Nowitzki, who also had seven rebounds. "We didn't shoot the ball particularly well. That was tough, but I thought we hung in there for the first half."

The Clippers also were playing for the second night in a row, coming off a 111-104 win over the Kings in Sacramento. —Reuters

ALL BLACKS MUST BEAT AUSTRALIA FOR PLACE AMONG RUGBY GREATS

TWICKENHAM: Richie McCaw will lead New Zealand's charge for a place among rugby's all-time greats today when they battle Australia in the World Cup final at Twickenham.

A convincing win over Michael Cheika's reborn Wallabies to become the first country to win two straight world titles—and three in all—could see the All Blacks acclaimed as the best of all time.

A titanic battle is guaranteed for the 80,000-plus crowd who will witness the first final between two sides who have dominated rugby's showpiece since it started in 1987.

At least one of them has been in every final, except 2007. Never together though. New Zealand coach Steve Hansen is banking on the experience of McCaw, fly-half great Dan Carter and their fellow Test centurion Ma'a Nonu. McCaw is at his fourth World Cup and led New Zealand to their narrow 8-7 win over France in the 2011 final.

"He's probably the greatest player we've had play the game, certainly from New Zealand anyway," the coach said. The Twickenham final has been billed as the battle of the breakdown, McCaw leading the All Black marauders against Australia's jackals David Pocock and Michael Hooper.

Australian coach Cheika has played up the underdogs tag. But he has aces up his sleeve with Pocock a hot contender for player of the tournament.

A running game is in the offing from two of the world's best attacking sides who know each other well. "The boys are feeling fresh and energised," said Hansen. "I couldn't be happier with where we are at. We'll be looking to put in a performance all of us can be proud of."

Australia have taken a tough road to the final—beating Wales, England, Scotland and Argentina—but Cheika there is "still have lots of scope to improve." —AFP

AL-OTAIBI CONFIRMS 13TH ASIAN SHOOTING CHAMPIONSHIP WILL BE HELD ON SCHEDULE

KUWAIT: President of Kuwait Shooting Federation (KSF), Chairman of the Higher Organizing Committee of the 13th Asian Championship Eng. Duaj Khalaf Al-Otaibi said the championship will be held on time, and the right to distribute the qualifying places was guaranteed for the State of Kuwait during the selection of the host country which took place four years ago during the general assembly of ASC. He said the KSF reserves the right to distribute the qualifying places during this championship.



Eng. Duaj Khalaf Al-Otaibi

Al-Otaibi said the Higher Organizing Committee of the 13th Asian Championship rejects the unfair decision taken by the International Olympic Committee IOC and the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) 24 hours before the start of the championship after the HOC had taken all necessary preparations to hold it.

He said that there are 500 athletes representing 20 countries already in Kuwait, while 16 countries had made airline and hotel bookings to participate, which makes it a total of 36 countries and 1200 shooters and officials.

Al-Otaibi said it is not realistic to take such decision in Washington during the IOC & ANOC meetings with ISSF president, with the representative of State of Kuwait not defending the rights of Kuwait athletes.

He said those attempts by The IOC and ISSF are known to all and are an extension to the interferences by the ISSF since its elections in 2014 with collusion from Kuwait Olympic Committee to influence Kuwait shooting.

Al-Otaibi said the HOC holds IOC and ISSF responsible for the repercussions of this unfair and illegal decision, and will take all legal measures to safeguard the rights of athletes participating in the 13th Asian Shooting Championship, it will also take ISSF and IOC with its president Thomas Bach responsible for their actions.

TRIPLE CROWN KING PHAROAH SEEKS CLASSIC FINISH

LOS ANGELES: American Pharoah, US racing's first Triple Crown winner in 37 years, will try to expand his legacy today when he closes out his career in the \$5 million Breeders' Cup Classic at Keeneland in Kentucky. "This one is for Pharoah," trainer Bob Baffert said Thursday, echoing comments by owner Ahmed Zayat—who could easily have stopped running the horse after his sweep of the Kentucky Derby, Preakness and Belmont Stakes.

"Winning the Derby, we wanted for the Zayats," admitted Zayat. "The Triple Crown, I wanted that for the fans and for the sport."

"I want him to win Saturday's unbelievable race for Pharoah, to go out in a way that people will always remember him as a brilliant and kind horse."

The 1-1/4-mile Classic, which caps the two-day, 13-race Breeders' Cup extravaganza worth \$26 million, is widely seen as Pharoah's to lose—especially after super mare

Beholder was scratched on Thursday because of illness.

He'll be up against older horses for the first time in a grade one race, while the three-year-olds challenging him include familiar foes Frosted and Keen Ice—who dealt American Pharoah his only defeat of the year at the Travers Stakes at Saratoga in August—as well as European raider Gleneagles the Aidan O'Brien-trained 2,000 Guineas winner in England and Ireland. The question for Gleneagles, who will break from the fifth post with jockey Ryan Moore aboard, is how he will handle the Keeneland dirt track, which he jogged on for the first time on Thursday with Joseph O'Brien in the saddle.

"It is impossible to tell how he will handle the dirt, but what I would say is when he stretched his legs this morning he was in very good form and moving well," Joseph O'Brien said. "I think we will know after a couple of furlongs. If he's travelling and happy, he is in with a shout."

Frosted, trained by Kieran McLaughlin, was third in the Travers, pushing American Pharoah early before Keen Ice passed them both.

While McLaughlin likes what he's seeing from Frosted, he was cautious about his prospects of beating American Pharoah, whose early speed gives him an advantage. "It will be hard," he said. "I'm sure it will be hard, but it's horse racing," McLaughlin said.

A victory today would demonstrate what Baffert says is American Pharoah's greatest quality, his ability to hold his form over time.

"They used to call horses like him 'hickory,'" Baffert said. "He's an old-fashioned thoroughbred. Other horses get dull. He never has. "Other horses have windows of excellence, like a month or two. He has stayed consistent, solid. He's shipped all over the country and stayed sharp." —AFP



SIRBB CIRCUIT HONORS AL-ATTIYAH

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: The Sirbb Circuit honored Qatari rally champion Nasser Al-Attiyah on Thursday night for his achievements in 2015, as he is the WRC2 champion, Dakar champion, Middle East champion and cross country champion. Attiyah said that this year was a good and lucky year for him

as he bagged four titles. "Through these achievements, we proved that Arab champions can rank on top of international championships in various sports," he noted during the event.

Salah bin Eidan, Director of Sirbb Circuit, praised the achievements of Attiyah and noted that Attiyah is his idol in this sport as he is also a rally champion. "Attiyah cares about safety

measures during the race and this is very important. I wish him luck in his next race in Oman and I hope he gets his 61st title to set a record," he said.

Attiyah is also a champion shooter, in which he excels as well. "I like both sports - car racing and shooting - as both need concentration, and both need dedication as well," he pointed out.

Attiyah was driving a Ford since 2011, and only recently started driving a Skoda. Commenting on the shift, he stressed that both vehicles are good, but Qatar has shares in Volkswagen, so it's easier with the sponsorship. At the end of the ceremony, Sheikh Mohammad Al-Attiyah, Director of Drag 965, presented an award to Nasser Al-Attiyah.

BESIEGED MOURINHO FACES FORMER NEMESIS KLOPP

LONDON: Facing a crunch match against Liverpool today, embattled Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho must confront an adversary who condemned him to one of the most painful defeats of his career. Jurgen Klopp, Liverpool's new manager, was in charge of the Borussia Dortmund side who ousted Real Madrid in the 2012-13 Champions League semi-finals, dashing Mourinho's dream of

slumped to 15th place in the Premier League and were knocked out of the League Cup by Stoke City, but he has drawn hope from their recent upturn in performances.

Asked how hard it would be to lift his players after they relinquished their League Cup crown at Stoke, Mourinho said: "It's difficult. But it's more difficult when you play very badly and lose, than playing well and losing.



Chelsea's Portuguese manager Jose Mourinho

bringing the European Cup back to the Bernabeu in what he knew would be his final season at the club.

The pair resume hostilities with Mourinho reported to be facing the sack if results do not improve after the defending champions

"How can (Eden) Hazard or Oscar or (John) Mikel (Obi) or John Terry, to say some names-I could say everyone-how can they go home with a lack of confidence? They played well. They didn't make many mistakes." Mourinho is expected to be in the dug-out despite having

been hit with a Football Association misconduct charge after being sent to the stands during last weekend's 2-1 loss at West Ham United. But the bad news continues to pile up for the 52-year-old. Young Brazilian forward Lucas Piazon, on loan at Reading, is the subject of an arrest warrant over an alleged sexual assault in Canada, while former team doctor Eva Carneiro is believed to have begun legal proceedings against the club after being sidelined by Mourinho earlier in the season.

Reports differ as to the likely consequences of another defeat for Mourinho, but there is general consensus that his future at Stamford Bridge is on the line.

The dismissal of Klopp's predecessor Brendan Rodgers was a stark reminder of the cost of failure in the English top flight and while the German drew his first three games, his side will travel to London on the back of a 1-0 League Cup win over Bournemouth.

With his back to the wall, Mourinho needs his senior players to stand up and be counted, but he may be without Diego Costa after the striker went off against Stoke with a badly bruised rib.

Should Costa not be passed fit, Loic Remy is in line to deputise and although Chelsea are nine points adrift of the top four, the French striker remains confident of Champions League qualification. "Today will be a big game, but we can still be in the top four of the league if we win games," Remy said. "When you know the quality of the group and the fact we were champions last season, which was not by chance, the quality is still here."

Klopp has also been inconvenienced by injury, with Kolo Toure, forced off against Bournemouth, the latest casualty, while Daniel Sturridge is taking time to recover from a knock sustained in training. — AFP

ARSENAL LOOK TO REBOUND FROM WEDNESDAY'S WOE

SWANSEA: Arsenal will bid to erase the painful memory of their embarrassing League Cup exit against Sheffield Wednesday when they return to Premier League action at Swansea City today.

Arsene Wenger's side have endured a frustrating week after the high of hitting the head of the Premier League table last Saturday by beating Everton.

The Gunners' stint at the top lasted just 24 hours but they will attempt to maintain the pressure on leaders Manchester City when they travel to the Liberty Stadium.

However, Wenger's side will head to south Wales still smarting from a dismal 3-0 League Cup exit at the hands of second-tier Wednesday in midweek.

The pain of that defeat was compounded by the loss of Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain (hamstring) and Theo Walcott (calf) to injury, with both players out until the coming international break which means they will also miss next week's Champions League visit to Bayern Munich.

With Aaron Ramsey also sidelined, Wenger will be forced to turn to his fringe players including Alex Iwobi, who is in contention to make his Premier League debut on the right flank.

Wenger is keen not to move Santi Cazorla from the centre of midfield following the Spaniard's impressive run alongside Francis Coquelin.

The 30-year-old admits he is enjoying the switch to a deeper position. "It's a position I really like, though of course it means I'm further away from the opposing area so I have fewer chances to score," Cazorla said. "I'm finding my best form and I'm really enjoying the new position," he told Arsenal's website. "You have different responsibilities. In terms of defence, you have to defend more and you have to help the team more in terms of making sure you're well-positioned to ensure the players in attack can stay fresh."

Mesut Ozil will be expected to maintain the form that has seen the Germany international provide more assists than any other Premier League player this season.

And former Arsenal striker Thierry Henry believes Ozil is finally demonstrating the form that persuaded his old club to pay £42 million (\$64.3m, 58.6m euros) for the player two years ago.

"For me, he has finally started to deliver on a consistent basis. We all know his quality; he is a World Cup winner; his touch is second to none; he has vision; he shares... everything is there," Henry told Sky Sports. "The only thing you can say, in all fairness, is that before he wasn't doing it on a consistent basis. "Now, he looks like he's doing it every game so you have to give him credit."

Swansea will welcome Wenger's side with renewed confidence following their 2-1 victory at Aston Villa last weekend, their first win seven games.

And Swansea boss Garry Monk insists there was never any panic during that run. "Each team will have a period where they will suffer and it's about how you deal with that. Winning games obviously breeds confidence but this group is very strong," Monk said.

"Our effort and commitment is always there and it's about continuing to do the right things and working hard on the training ground.

"We know that when we are at our best we can give anyone a game in this league and we'll need to be at that level today.

"If we do that we are in with a chance of getting the result we want." Monk, meanwhile, insists his players were not responsible for the tunnel fracas that followed the win at Villa Park and led to Villa captain Micah Richards facing an improper conduct charge.

"In terms of my players, and I've spoken to them, there was nothing at all from our side. I can't speak for Aston Villa but everything from the Swansea side was fine," Monk said. — AFP



Arsenal's French manager Arsene Wenger

SCHOLES TAKES AIM AT MISFIRING UNITED

LONDON: Manchester United face a difficult visit to Crystal Palace today with their legendary former midfielder Paul Scholes the latest high-profile figure to question Louis van Gaal's tactical approach.

Two home games in the space of four days saw United record consecutive goalless draws against Manchester City and Middlesbrough in the League Cup, the latter leading to a penalty shoot-out which saw them exit the competition 3-1.

Wayne Rooney, the first of three United players to miss kicks in the shoot-out, has come in for particularly fierce criticism. But his former team-mate Scholes, now a television pundit, believes the fault lies with United manager van Gaal rather than the record-breaking England forward and concedes he would not enjoy playing in the current side.

"There's a lack of creativity and risk," Scholes told BBC Manchester. "It's a team now you wouldn't want to play against because they're tightly organised.

"But it seems he doesn't want players to beat men and it's probably not a team I'd have enjoyed playing in. "The hardest thing to coach is scoring goals and creativity.

"I was at the derby and Rooney's movement was brilliant but when he's playing in

that team there's no one prepared to pass to him. I think after 20 minutes you'd be tearing you hair out. "I played with some brilliant centre forwards and I don't think they could play in this team - the likes of Ruud van Nistelrooy, Andy Cole, Dwight Yorke, Teddy Sheringham. "You don't get crosses into the box or midfielders looking for runs."

Van Gaal made nine changes between the Manchester derby and the cup tie, although forward James Wilson, making his first start of the season, picked up a muscle injury against Middlesbrough and will not be in consideration at Palace. The United manager must therefore decide whether to persist with the unproductive Rooney as a lone forward or bring in promising teenager Anthony Martial from a wide to central position.

In any case, defender Chris Smalling admits United players need a quick response to the Middlesbrough defeat. "Everyone's very flat in the dressing room," said Smalling. "We need to turn our attentions immediately to Saturday, because it's another big game, an away game, and we need a response." Palace have been one of the division's outstanding sides during the opening weeks of the season, but problems are beginning to mount for Alan Pardew and his players.

The south London club remain seventh despite suffering back-to-back league defeats to West Ham United and Leicester City, but the sense they are entering a testing period of the campaign was reinforced by the 5-1 midweek loss at Manchester City in the League Cup.

Pardew remains confident his squad can sustain their challenge for a place in next season's Europa League, but a run of injuries to key players will test the manager's confidence.

Yohan Cabaye was the most notable absentee against City. The France midfielder has been Palace's standout player so far and if he doesn't recover from a knock in time to face United, Pardew's side will lose their main creative force.

James McArthur should return after missing the trip to Eastlands, but Pardew faces an anxious wait to discover if midfielder Jason Puncheon will recover from illness in time, while left-back Pape Souare is also doubtful.

"I do think the scoreline was fair but it is not good enough and we have got to pick ourselves up and go again against United," said Palace midfielder Joe Ledley.

"It is frustrating because we could have been right in it but we missed a few chances and gave away sloppy goals. We need to concentrate on the Premier League now." — AFP

LAS PALMAS KEEN TO AVOID REPEAT OF REAL MAULING



SPAIN : Real Madrid's Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo (right) celebrates with Croatian midfielder Luka Modric after scoring in this file photo. — AFP

MADRID: Las Palmas make their first visit to the Santiago Bernabeu for 13 years yesterday hoping to avoid the same punishment they received in a 7-0 thrashing on their last trip to the capital.

The Canary Islanders have already changed their coach just nine games into their return to the top flight as Paco Herrera was sacked despite guiding them to promotion.

Quique Setien got off to a promising start with a 0-0 draw at home to Villarreal last weekend, which at least moved Las Palmas off the bottom on goal difference, but is aware of the daunting task that faces his side at the Bernabeu.

"Real Madrid are a team that doesn't need to play well to win," he said on Thursday. "They have the players to resolve a game in any moment. It will be a difficult game, but during this season we have seen other teams cause them problems and have chances to take something from the game."

Rafael Benitez remains unbeaten as Madrid boss 12 games into his tenure and should have the luxury of welcoming back a host of injured stars who have been absent in recent weeks. James Rodriguez, Karim Benzema and Pepe could all feature having returned to training this week, but Gareth Bale misses out once more due to a calf problem. With Madrid and Barcelona tied on 21 points at the top of the table, a Real victory can take them clear for a few hours at least before Barca face Getafe late today. The Catalans only managed a 0-0 draw at the Alfonso Perez Coliseum last season and are again debilitated by injuries and suspensions.

Javier Mascherano joins injured Argentine international teammate Lionel Messi on the sidelines due to a two-game ban for being sent-off against Eibar last weekend.

Brazilian duo Rafinha and Douglas are long-term injury absentees, while midfielders Andres Iniesta and Sergi Roberto face a race against time to be fit. "Statistically, I think Barcelona have never been comfortable coming to the Coliseum," Getafe midfielder Pedro Leon told the club's website. "There have been all sorts of results and we hope that on Saturday we can make it as difficult for them as possible and get a positive result."

Atletico Madrid have the chance to usurp the big two and go top for just short of 24 hours when they travel to Deportivo la Coruna on Friday night.

Los Rojiblancos produced their best performance of the season in beating Valencia 2-1 last time out, but coach Diego Simeone doesn't want his talented young squad to get ahead of themselves.

"We always live for the next game. We have spoken with the team about leaving the past behind us and concentrating on what we do on Friday," said the Argentine. "Every game is a new world and people will value what you are going to do, not what you have done."

Simeone is expected to name the same starting line-up for the first time in 47 games despite an energy-sapping near 6,000 kilometre trip to face Kazakh champions Astana in the Champions League to come on Tuesday. Sevilla have the chance to continue their upturn in form and make up lost ground on the top four caused by a poor start to the campaign when they travel to Villarreal today.

Villarreal still hold a five-point lead over Sevilla and Valencia in the battle between the three most likely candidates for the fourth Champions League place, but the Yellow Submarine have taken just one point from their last three games.

Valencia are in badly in need of a win to ease the pressure on coach Nuno Espirito Santo when they host Levante in the Valencia derby. Meanwhile, Celta Vigo can put David Moyes's position as Real Sociedad coach back under serious scrutiny should they bounce back from their first defeat of the season against Real Madrid last weekend with victory at Anoeta. — AFP



Matches on TV
(Local Timings)

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Chelsea v Liverpool	15:45
beIN SPORTS	
Swansea v Arsenal	18:00
beIN SPORTS	
Manchester v Norwich	18:00
beIN SPORTS	
Newcastle v Stoke	18:00
beIN SPORTS	
Albion v Leicester	18:00
beIN SPORTS	
Crystal Palace v Man United	18:00
beIN SPORTS	
Watford v West Ham United	18:00
beIN SPORTS	

SPANISH LEAGUE

Real Madrid v Las Palmas	18:00
beIN SPORTS	
Villarreal v Sevilla	20:15
beIN SPORTS	
Valencia v Levante	20:15
beIN SPORTS	
Getafe v Barcelona	22:30
beIN SPORTS	
Real Sociedad v Vigo	0:05
beIN SPORTS	

ITALIAN LEAGUE

Juventus v Torino	20:00
beIN SPORTS	
Inter v Roma	22:45
beIN SPORTS	

GERMAN LEAGUE

Koln v Hoffenheim	17:30
beIN SPORTS	
Hertha Berlin v Borussia	17:30
beIN SPORTS	
Werder Bremen v Dortmund	17:30
beIN SPORTS	
Schalke v Ingolstadt	17:30
beIN SPORTS	
Augsburg v Mainz	17:30
beIN SPORTS	
Wolfsburg v Bayer	20:30
beIN SPORTS	

FRENCH LEAGUE

Saint Etienne v Stade Reims	19:00
beIN SPORTS	
Bastia v Caen	22:00
beIN SPORTS	
Troyes v Lyonnais	22:00
beIN SPORTS	
Ajaccio v Girondins	22:00
beIN SPORTS	
Toulouse v Montpellier	22:00
beIN SPORTS	
Guingamp v Lorient	22:00
beIN SPORTS	

ROMA AT SAN SIRO, JUVE IN DERBY TEST

MILAN: Roma seek to consolidate their summit spot at Inter Milan today as sleeping Serie A giants Juventus need a much needed pick-me-up in their derby clash with Torino. Roma arrive at the San Siro on a six-match winning streak after Wednesday's Maicon-inspired 3-1 success over Udinese. That lifted them back into the Serie A lead, two points clear of Napoli, Fiorentina and Inter, who saw off Bologna 24 hours earlier. Roma's Greek international Kostas Manolas, who set up Gervinho for the third goal against Udinese, says the mood is buoyant at the Stadio Olimpico. "We have a great side here...we're getting more and more confident. We have to carry on like this, but we need to work even more. Next up is Inter and we want to win that game."

Brazilian star Maicon, who scored one and set up another on Wednesday, says despite Roma's surge to the summit it was too soon to start contemplating a first Scudetto title since 2001.

"It's too early. I've won many titles and I know it doesn't work like that. "We've got a long way to go, but we're on the right track and we have to keep on moving in this direction." Roberto Mancini's Inter snapped a four-game winless run in midweek to put them in an improved frame of mind for their top-of-the-table clash.

Whatever the outcome Inter's Slovenia keeper Samir Handanovic can expect to put in a busier shift on Saturday than the one against Bologna. "The team is flying right now. We've got another match coming up on Saturday and we need to recover before then, plain and simple. Roma will be a big test in our home stadium," he said.

While Roma and Inter's stars are in the ascendancy, Juve's appears on the wane-Wednesday's 1-0 loss at Sampdoria leaving the defending champions in a lowly 12th position, 11 adrift of Roma.

Coach Massimiliano Allegri did not mince his words about what he

wanted from himself and his under-achieving titleholders.

Speaking after the Sampdoria loss he said: "There was no need for us to be tense and commit fouls near our area. "There's absolutely no excuse for it, we must grow quickly and take responsibility. We are Juventus and our approach needs to be different.

"We need to get through this by working and preparing for Saturday's derby, then we've got the Champions League. "Everyone needs to take the blame for tonight and I'm the first to hold my hands up. We must do better." Sunday's action sees Napoli, in second on goal difference, at Genoa and third-placed Fiorentina hosting strugglers Frosinone. Maurizio Sarri's highflying Napoli extended their winning run in all competitions to seven with a 2-0 defeat of Palermo in midweek. "I'm satisfied with our performances but we can't become big headed," said Sarri. —AFP

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Sports



Mourinho faces former nemesis Klopp 46



SINGAPORE: Garbine Muguruza of Spain slips during her women's singles round robin tennis match against Petra Kvitova of the Czech Republic at the WTA Finals in Singapore. —AFP

MUGURUZA MARCHES, KVITOVA SCRAMBLES

SINGAPORE: Garbine Muguruza reached the WTA Finals last four unbeaten yesterday after a tough win over Petra Kvitova—who also qualified for the semis with help from her fellow Czech Lucie Safarova.

On a rollercoaster last day of group play, Muguruza and Kvitova shared 15 service breaks in a see-sawing three-setter before the increasingly impressive Spaniard won 6-4, 4-6, 7-5.

Kvitova's hopes were hanging by a thread but she went through when her friend and Fed Cup teammate Safarova beat Angelique Kerber 6-4, 6-3, stopping the German finishing second in White Group. Already-eliminated Safarova said she met a delighted Kvitova in the locker room and "she said she might buy me some beers".

Muguruza will play Poland's Agnieszka

Radwanska in today's semi-finals while Kvitova will meet Maria Sharapova, who like Muguruza has swept through all three of her group matches.

The semi-finals line-up raises the possibility of a title clash between fast-rising star Muguruza and Russia's Sharapova, the established force with five Grand Slam titles to her name.

"You know to be here for me is a great pay-off after the whole year, and hopefully I can continue winning and playing like this," said Muguruza, who is also into the doubles semi-finals.

Safarova, who was already eliminated and playing for little more than personal and national pride, was delighted to keep Kvitova's hopes alive with her win over Kerber. "Teamwork! Well, I'm happy for her that she went through to the semis, I'm happy for my win as well," she said. The two will lead

defending champions Czech Republic at the Fed Cup final in Prague next month against a Russian team spearheaded by Sharapova. "After Fed Cup we can celebrate," Safarova said.

In yesterday's first match, Muguruza didn't have it easy against two-time Wimbledon winner Kvitova and she had to dig deep in a messy first encounter with the Czech.

With five breaks in the final set alone, Muguruza grabbed the crucial break for 6-5 and it took her four match points before she closed it out with a lunging volley.

Kerber, who needed to win only one set to qualify, did not mask her disappointment and indicated she was distracted by people audibly calculating her match progress during a changeover. "They were counting. 'Okay she won one set, now you

must win just one set,'" she said. "I was not feeling good. From the first point I couldn't find my rhythm. I was actually not there," she added. "I was tight and I was not playing my tennis. Lucie played a good match for sure, but for sure it was not my best match today."

Muguruza is bracing herself for a very demanding day as she will also play the doubles semi with compatriot Carla Suarez Navarro against Czechs Andrea Hlavackova and Lucie Hradecka.

"It's going to be a challenge for me to see how much my body can handle, because now I don't have a day off," said Muguruza, 22. "So, I mean, it's great to be in my position I think now, to be playing singles and doubles semifinals, but it's going to be hard. I have to recover well and do everything possible to be ready for both matches." —AFP