

Municipality chief inspector speaks about challenges



Foreign fighters are evading Europe's security net



Guns N' Roses reunite early at Los Angeles club



Ronaldo winner ends Barcelona's 39-game unbeaten run



## LAWMAKERS SLAM GOVT'S NEW POWER CONSUMPTION TARIFFS

MPs DERIDE REFORM MEASURES, PRIVATIZATION MOVES



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## ARMENIAN, AZERI FORCES IN DEADLY CLASHES

**YEREVAN/BAKU:** Fierce clashes left at least 30 Azerbaijani and Armenian soldiers dead yesterday as Russia and the West urged an immediate ceasefire after a major escalation in violence over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region. Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian said 18 Armenian troops were killed and some 35 wounded in the "largest-scale hostilities" since a 1994 truce ended a war that saw Armenian-backed fighters seize the territory from Azerbaijan. Sarkisian did not specify if the troops were from the forces of unrecognized Karabakh - which claims independence but is backed by Yerevan - or Armenia's army. Earlier Azerbaijan's defence ministry said that 12 of its soldiers were killed in the clashes and a military helicopter shot down.

The surge in fighting over the disputed territory reportedly also claimed the lives of one Armenian and one Azeri civilian after the arch foes accused each other of unleashing heavy weaponry across the volatile frontline. Armenia accused Azerbaijan of launching a "massive attack along the Karabakh frontline using tanks, artillery, and helicopters" on Friday night. Azerbaijan, however, insisted it had counter-attacked after coming under fire from "large-calibre artillery and grenade-launchers".

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**TERTER, Azerbaijan:** In this image from TV, a car destroyed with blood is seen after heavy fighting erupted between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces over the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh. — AFP

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** MP Saleh Ashour urged his colleagues to take a serious stand against the new electricity and water consumption tariffs due to be imposed on citizens and expats and described them as 'disastrous', because they would negatively affect their 'already empty pockets', as he put it. He also described rejecting previous proposals on determining the consumption categories' pricing and coming up with current ones as a 'pretext'. Ashour urged the government to impose the new prices on owners of fancy complexes, shopping malls, companies, banks and industrial lands that were turned into shopping malls in Shuwaikh and Sharq, netting them millions of dinars.

Ashour also suggested imposing fees on profits of companies listed on the stock exchange and using the profits made by the Kuwait Investment Authority locally instead of abroad. "Citizens are closely watching how we act and will respond in the coming elections," Ashour told his colleagues. MP Saud Al-Hurajji stressed that the new prices suggested by the government contradict its previous promises not to target those with limited and medium incomes. He added that the new rates would increase power consumption bills by 225 percent for people with limited and medium income.

MP Kamel Al-Awadhi criticized recent statements by Electricity and Water Minister Ahmed Al-Jassar about increasing electricity and water prices fourfold, noting

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## MODI BEGINS VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA

### PENTAGON WARNS BAGHDADI WILL 'TASTE JUSTICE'

**WASHINGTON:** The Pentagon on Friday warned Islamic State leader Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi that he will eventually "taste justice" as the US military continues to target the jihadist group's upper ranks. "We are hunting him, and we will find him," military spokesman Colonel Steve Warren said. "Just like we found his mentor, (Abu Musab) Al-Zarqawi and killed him. Just like we found the grand master of terrorism, Osama bin Laden, we killed him. We are going to find Baghdadi, and he will taste justice."

Warren's prediction comes after the US-led coalition has targeted several senior IS leaders in Iraq and Syria in recent weeks, including Abd ar-Rahman Mustafa Al-Qaduli - also known as Haji Imam - who was second-in-command of the extremist group. "I don't know if that justice will look like a Hellfire missile, or if it will look like a dark prison cell somewhere, but he will find justice one day," Warren said of Baghdadi.

The US Justice Department had offered a bounty of up to \$7 million for information leading to Qaduli. He had been seen as an eventual successor to Baghdadi, for whom a \$10 million reward has been offered. Warren said Baghdadi spends his time in both Iraq and Syria, where the IS group seized large areas of territory in 2014. Pentagon chief Ashton Carter last week said the military was "systematically eliminating" the IS group's leadership. Omar Al-Shishani, the man known as "Omar the Chechen", who was effectively IS' defense minister, was also killed last month. — AFP

**RIYADH:** Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday started a visit to Saudi Arabia where he will discuss energy, security and trade cooperation with leaders of the world's largest crude exporter. India, which imports around 80 percent of its oil needs, is keen to take advantage of low crude prices by signing overseas deals that will help secure supplies to meet its growing demand. "Almost 20 percent of our crude supplies come from Saudi Arabia," Indian foreign ministry official Shri Mridul Kumar said ahead of the visit. "We have to make sure that this supply continues. And this is one of the key agenda points that the prime minister will be discussing with King Salman," he added. Kumar said Modi was also expected to

discuss means "to ensure the wellbeing" of 2.96 million Indian expatriates in Saudi Arabia who send home over \$10 billion in remittances every year. Later yesterday, he met with members of the Indian community, whom he assured that the "Indian economy was rapidly progressing," according to his website. "The reason for India's growth was the political stability in the country," he said. He also visited the residential complex of workers employed by Indian engineering and construction firm Larsen & Toubro (L&T) in Riyadh, where he announced the opening of a worker resource center, his website said. L&T is constructing key facilities for the Riyadh metro lines.

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**NEW DELHI:** This photo taken on March 20, 2016 shows models presenting creations by Indian fashion designers during the Amazon India Fashion Week Autumn Winter 2016 finale. — AFP

## AMAZON MAKES FORAY INTO FASHION WORLD

**NEW YORK:** Amazon has been making moves over the past few months to position itself as a force in the ready-to-wear fashion world. The Seattle-based online retail titan has already revolutionized how consumers shop and has been selling clothes for more than a decade. In 2006, it bought the site Shopbop and snapped up online footwear go-to Zappos three years later. But its steps in recent months - some overt and others

more under-the-radar - signal that Amazon is speeding up its foray into fashion.

For one, Amazon launched a daily, free half-hour online show on fashion in early March, its first-ever live-streaming program. It also became the main partner of the fledgling New York Men's Fashion Week, which held its second season of shows in January.

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**RIYADH:** Governor of Riyadh province Prince Faisal bin Bandar bin Abdulaziz (center right) greets India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (center left) upon his arrival yesterday. — AFP



**MAKHMUR, Iraq:** Emirati singer Hussein Al-Jasmi poses for a picture with Iraqi Kurdish women during a visit to the frontline in the northern city of Mosul yesterday. — AFP

## FIRE AT UNDER-CONSTRUCTION SHOPPING COMPLEX IN QATAR

**DOHA:** A fire broke out yesterday at a Doha shopping complex under construction near one of the stadiums that will host matches during the 2022 World Cup, Qatar's interior ministry said. Hours after the blaze started at the complex near Rayyan Sports Club, the ministry tweeted that civil defense authorities have "completely" contained the fire and that there were no injuries. Local media said the fire broke out at the construction site of the Mall of Qatar, which will be the Gulf country's largest shopping center when it opens later this year.

Pictures circulated on social media showing plumes of black smoke billowing from the construction site in a western suburb of Doha. A Facebook statement by

the contractor working on the complex confirmed that the fire broke out at 2:30 pm (11:30 GMT). "No casualties have been reported, and over 14,000 laborers and staff were safely evacuated from the premises," said Mowafaq Kharbat, project director of Urbacon Trading and Contracting. "An investigation is being conducted and details will be provided once the investigation is complete," he added.

Qatar is engaged in multi-billion-dollar work on projects directly or indirectly linked to the football World Cup. The Mall of Qatar is a 500,000-sq-m retail and entertainment complex near the 40,000-seater Al-Rayyan stadium, which is undergoing renovation for the World Cup.

A previous fire at a shopping mall was the deadliest disaster to strike Qatar in recent memory. The 2012 blaze at the high-end Villaggio shopping mall in Doha killed 19 people, many of them foreigners. The victims included 13 children. Most of those killed were at a daycare center inside the shopping mall, which opened in 2006 and houses an ice skating rink and Venice-style gondolas. Investigators blamed faulty wiring for sparking the blaze, but cited a number of factors that contributed to its spread and the deaths.

Five people were sentenced to prison in 2013 in connection with the fire, but an appeals court judge overturned those convictions last October. — Agencies



Ghodoun Al-Khaled honors the Interior Ministry's team.— Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



KUWAIT: Sheikha Maimouna Khalifa Al-Athbi Al-Sabah and Ghodoun Al-Khaled participate in the walkathon.

# WALKATHON MARKS WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY



Ghodoun Al-Khaled, Founder and Chairperson of Autism Partnership - Kuwait (left) honors Sheikha Maimouna Khalifa Al-Athbi Al-Sabah.

**KUWAIT:** Autism Partnership - Kuwait organized a walkathon from the Scientific Center in Salmiya to the Marina Crescent yesterday, to mark the World Autism Awareness Day. The event took place under the patronage of Sheikha Maimouna Khalifa Al-Athbi Al-Sabah, and participation of a number of companies, banks, civil society institutions and groups in Kuwait. Kuwait Times was one of the sponsors of the event.

Sheikha Maimouna highlighted in a speech the need to invest in human resources as the "most valuable resource that any society possesses, and the key to achieve social development." Meanwhile, Ghodoun Al-Khaled, Founder and Chairperson of Autism Partnership - Kuwait said that the large number of participation at yesterday's walkathon reflects the event's success in shedding light on the importance of promoting voluntary work in society, and spreading awareness regarding the autism cause.



Ghodoun Al-Khaled, Founder and Chairperson of Autism Partnership - Kuwait is honored.



OTTAWA: Kuwait's Ambassador to Canada Abdulhameed Al-Failakawi (left) meets with Ottawa's Mayor Jim Watson. — KUNA

## KUWAIT, CANADIAN OFFICIALS DISCUSS CULTURAL, ECONOMIC TIES

**OTTAWA:** Kuwait's Ambassador to Canada Abdulhameed Al-Failakawi said Friday that organizing a Kuwaiti-Canadian economic forum in Ottawa will bolster economic ties between the two countries. Failakawi made his remarks while meeting with Ottawa's Mayor Jim Watson in the Canadian capital, Kuwaiti embassy said in a statement. Holding a Kuwaiti cultural week in Ottawa this fall will also boost the two nations' cultural relations as well, he added.

Meanwhile, the two sides expressed satisfaction towards the current Kuwaiti-Canadian relations, and reiterated aspiration to improve them in different prospects. Watson called on all diplomatic missions in Canada, including Kuwait, to join the country's Sesquicentennial Anniversary of Confederation celebrations, slated for 2017, by holding exhibitions, symposiums, and shows that reflect their cultures. Failakawi welcomed Watson's call and reiterated Kuwait's keenness in participating effectively in such national festivals. —KUNA

## 1.5-2% OF EVERY 100 KIDS IN KUWAIT AUTISTIC

**KUWAIT:** The percentage of Autism in Kuwait is 1.5 to 2 percent of every 100 children, a Ministry of Health official said yesterday. Dr Ghalia Al-Mutairi, Head of the ministry's Information Office, made those statements while announcing the launch of a social media to raise awareness of autism, and to draw attention to this category of patients on the occasion of the World Autism Awareness Day observed on April 2 of every year.

Mutairi said that this campaign aims at raising awareness and culture about autistic people in order to integrate them into society as ordinary individuals. It showed that

World Autism Day sees participation of most of the world countries, pointing out that all UN bodies, international health organizations and civil institutions work hard to achieve the desired objectives by decorating the famous monuments and important buildings in blue in an attempt to draw attention to the issue of Autism and especially in the children category.

Mutairi noted that the United Nations in this day stresses the importance of participation of autistic patients, a matter that would contribute to achieving greater equality between them and also helps in absorbing them by different communities. — KUNA



Dr Ghalia Al-Mutairi

## KRCS CONCLUDES AID DISTRIBUTION TO SYRIAN REFUGEES IN JORDAN

**AMMAN:** Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) concluded its humanitarian aid for Syrian refugees in Jordan yesterday. KRCS in cooperation with Jordan Red Crescent Society delivered varied aid of 70 tons to more than 1,300 Syrian refugee families across the country.

Head of KRCS's delegation in Jordan Mohammad Enezi expressed his gratitude to everybody who contributed to delivering the aid to refugees. He lauded efforts of Kuwaiti donors and philanthropists, which helped mitigate suffering of refugees. He also praised efforts of Kuwaiti embassy's staff in Jordan, especially Ambassador Dr Hamad Al-Duaj, who took over the process of handing out aid to refugees at the embassy's premises.

The aid included about 2,250 blankets, clothes for different ages, cleaning materials and other foodstuffs like rice and dates, Al-Enzi said, adding that the program covered refugees in different areas like Amman, Ruwaished, Ajloun and others. He voiced his hope that this aid would contribute to alleviating humanitarian suffering of Syrian refugees and meeting their basic needs. — KUNA



## KUWAIT HOSTS RENEWABLE ENERGY CONFERENCE

**KUWAIT:** The 6th Middle East and North Africa Renewable Energy Conference (MENAREC-6) will take off in Kuwait tomorrow, amid wide international participation. The three-day event, to be hosted by the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), will bring together up to 400 specialists and experts from the MENA region, head of the MENAREC-6 Preparatory Committee Dr Saad Al-Jandal said in a press statement yesterday. Participants will discuss the scientific and practical means to develop research in energy sources, and supporting services aiming to achieve the aspired goals, Jandal said in a press statement.

Themed "Renewable Innovations towards Sustainable Energy", the 6th session also reviews the world's major experiences in industries related to the natural reserves in the MENA region seeking to boost investments in the field. The conference will also shed light on the latest technology in solar energy, wind power and hydroelectricity as well as issues related to supply and demand.

Alongside the conference, a world-class exhibition, Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RE3), will allow scores of companies to showcase their expertise, latest technology and services directly to an audience of key decision makers drawn from major countries from in the region. —KUNA



Local Spotlight

PRIVATIZATION AND FOOD SECURITY



By Muna Al-Fuzai

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3,951 TICKETS ISSUED, 239 VEHICLES IMPOUNDED IN CAMPAIGN

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

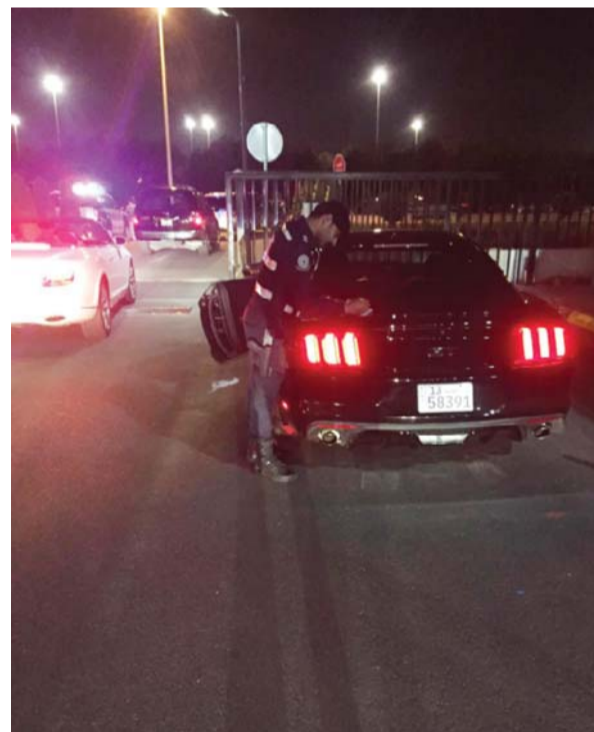
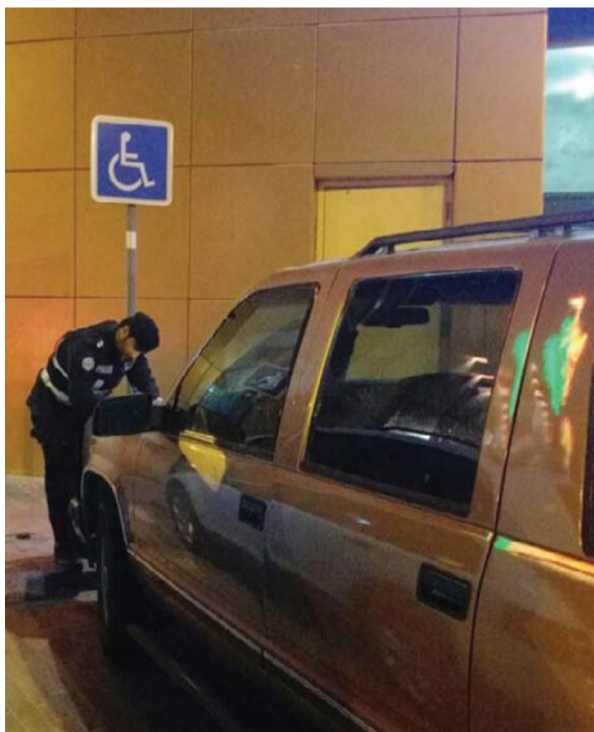
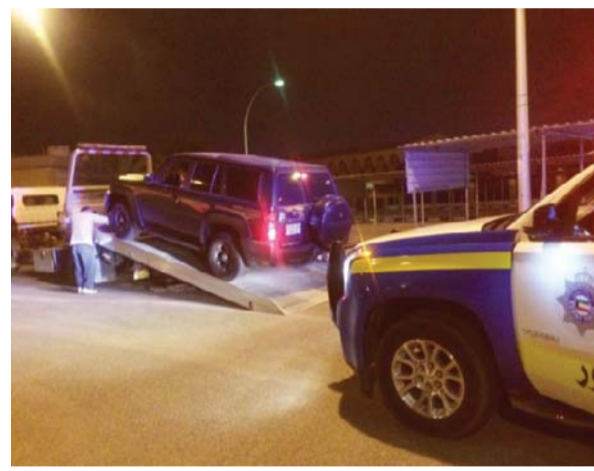
**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Interior (MoI) launched a wide-scale traffic inspection campaign with the participation of 280 police patrols, 101 officers and 179 privates. It resulted in filing 3,951 tickets, impounding 239 vehicles and six bikes, arresting 15 people, referring one person to juvenile police and another for deportation. The crackdown took place under the command of interior ministry's assistant undersecretary for traffic affairs Major General Abdullah Al-Muhanna and traffic directors in various governorates. Meanwhile, and on instructions from MoI undersecretary Lt Gen Suleiman Al-Fahd and under supervision of the assistant undersecretary for general security Major General Ibrahim Al-Tarrah, a wide-scale security inspection campaign was launched in various governorates that resulted in impounding nine vehicles for violating traffic laws - three in Mubarak Al-Kabeer and two in Hawally, in addition to filing 66 tickets.

Policeman hurt

A policeman was run over by an ATV, said security sources, noting that the ATV rider was arrested and the policeman rushed to hospital for treatment.

Municipality inspection

In collaboration with municipality inspectors, Ahmadi security forces launched an inspection operation in Mahboula, said security sources, noting that the campaign resulted in arresting 17 peddlers and referring them to relevant authorities. Separately, and as the campaign season is over, Kuwait Municipality started removing violating camps, said security sources, noting that a campaign headed by Ahmadi emergency team leader Meshaal Abalsafi resulted in removing 15 camps and cleaning the sites.



Over the past few weeks, the government has shown a determination to privatize more than 20 state-owned companies. At the forefront of these companies are the Kuwait Flour Mills & Bakeries Co and poultry companies. These key companies are categorized as food security sources, providing daily sustenance to the population of Kuwait. The government has prepared a list of some very successful and failed companies to be privatized. This process would mean a complete transformation from public to private ownership and a handover to a few merchants in an effort by the government to bridge the budget deficit, which has increased with the continuing decline in oil prices.

This decision is proof beyond any reasonable doubt that the country will put its properties in the hands of some traders through the privatization process of many state-owned companies, under the claim of supporting and securing the economic policy of the country. The existence of a list of about 20 government-owned companies or companies in which the government owns large stakes to be sold under the name of privatization is a dangerous precedent and a strike against national, social and food security due to their significant role in fulfilling the needs of citizens and providing social security to them.

I really wonder if the government is fully aware of the seriousness of privatizing a successful company such as the Kuwait Flour Mills. It's a profitable company that was established shortly after the country's independence in the '60s and regardless of the financial crises plaguing companies in Kuwait and abroad, this company has achieved profits of millions of dinars - profit at the end of the fiscal year in 2015 was about KD 30 million! Why would the government want to sell it?

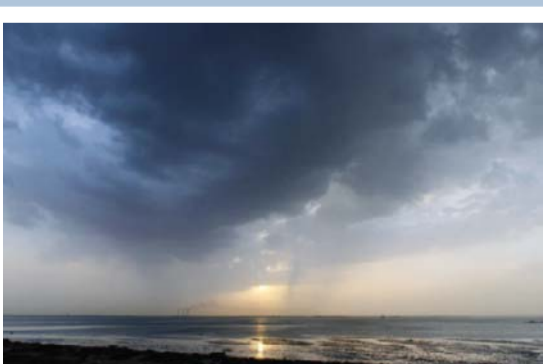
It is unfortunate that privatization has proved a failure in Kuwait. An example of this was the petrol stations' project years ago, and the result is the absence of Kuwaitization in employment, to the benefit of expatriates. The fear of repercussions of privatization is logical as we are living in an awkward political situation. I wonder if this government is aware of the risks of what they are calling for.

Another major point here is the talk about the privatization of cooperative societies, with possible loss of the rights of shareholders, in addition to the expected price hikes without real control. Most reports and statements by lawyers on the subject of privatization of cooperative societies is that privatization is illegal, as co-ops' money is of the shareholders, and not money of the state, since cooperative societies were established with the funds of the shareholders. The ministry of social affairs and labor has no right to privatize these co-ops. Why does the government want to privatize something that it doesn't own and has no share in it in the first place? This is risky indeed.

The government is making the excuse of the existence of corruption in their demand for the privatization of cooperative societies, which is not an acceptable excuse. Only those who are involved in corruption must be punished and not everyone. The government's insistence on privatization will be subjected to criticism and rejection by most political activists and the opposition because food security should not be touched in order to satisfy a minority of merchants.

DIVERS CLEAR UP LOCATION AROUND UMM AL-NAML ISLAND

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Dive Team concluded the third stage of cleaning up of waters around Umm Al-Naml island removing four tons of harmful waste and fishing nets, team leader Walid Al-Fadhel said yesterday. The operation resulted in removing fishing and iron nets, surfacing sunken boats, plastic objects, Fadhel said, affirming that it was designed to secure the navigation route off the island. The clean-up operation was successful thanks to the high tides which made the process go very smoothly, he added. —KUNA



RAIN EXPECTED TUESDAY

By A Saleh

**KUWAIT:** Rain and heavy winds are expected this Tuesday as a result of a low pressure that is also expected to affect Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Qatar. The Sudanese low pressure front would also bring with it south easterly winds with a speed of 30-50 k/h, said Khaled Al-Shuwaibi, Deputy Director of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).



Special Report

# Municipality chief inspector talks challenges, sacrifices

Law enforcement gains official respect, even from people he penalized



By Nawara Fattahova

**KUWAIT:** Being a municipal inspector or head of inspectors can bring many benefits and disadvantages at the same time. Tareq Al-Qattan, director of the emergency team of the Capital governorate at Kuwait Municipality, has gained great respect, even from people who have been penalized because of him, as he is strict in enforcing the law while being polite at the same time. He is known for not accepting bribes despite temptations of all kinds, which has made life difficult for lawbreakers.

Tareq Al-Qattan

**Career**

Kuwait Times met Qattan, who spoke about his interesting job and scores of humorous, sad, painful and exciting situations he has faced during his long career. "I was appointed to my post in this department in 2010, after I worked in the same post in the Hawally governorate from 2005. I am in charge of the governorate sector - there are three sectors in Kuwait - and the head of each sector is at the level of under-secretary," he explained.

He started his career doing administrative work for three years, then he was transferred to regulatory work. "The position of director of the emergency team has many duties and I am always under pressure. This post needs someone with a strong personality so he can resist wasta (connections) or threats. This made me eliminate violations in Hawally governorate, and now in the Asima governorate," added Qattan.

**No time**

His work does not give him enough time to spend with his family and friends. "I come to the office every morning at 6:30 am or 7:00 am, and I stay here till about 3:00 pm. Then I come back in the evening after 6:00 pm to make sure the team does not need any help. Sometimes I also go on raids and inspections or to review complaints. Also, some patrons come here in the evening as we work 24 hours. I have to be here personally so I can provide the correct information to the general director of the municipality, especially in cases of shutting down violating restaurants," he said. The inspectors at the emergency department work in shifts, from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. Each shift has a supervisor.

**Emergency team's responsibilities**

The emergency department is the second line of defense after the 'imported food' department, which is the first. "The department is in charge of various inspections including food inspection, roaming vendors, signboards of shops, removing unlicensed ads in the streets, bachelors' residence buildings, unlicensed commercial activities in commercial or investment buildings, pruning trees that block vision of drivers and others," he stated. To report any related violation, people can contact them on the hotline 1855555 or on Twitter @Baladia\_kwt.

The emergency team acts quickly. "Besides regular inspections, we also intervene based on complaints filed by people or institutions. For instance, if a building collapses, we go immediately to the location after we are informed about it. We also remove or demolish violations on state property including buildings, fences, parking shades and others. The committee that was previously formed by the Cabinet to demolish the violating diwanias and other violations of state property was dissolved and we took over its duties," highlighted Qattan.

**Many violations**

There have been many violations in the Capital governorate. "The team has raided many restaurants, warehouses and other places. We found plenty of violations including insects, mice, expired or spoiled foodstuff and others. We also found warehouses for food inside parking lots, as some

- This post needs someone with a strong personality so he can resist wasta (connections) or threats
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- The emergency department is the second line of defense after the 'imported food' department
- Some companies have converted public toilets of parking lots into storerooms or kitchens for preparing food for restaurants
- A (roaming) vendor once threw a pineapple at me when I confiscated his goods

companies have converted public toilets of parking lots into storerooms or kitchens for preparing food for restaurants. These violators paid a KD 1,000 fine and the owners signed a pledge to clear these areas and restore the toilets. Also, I remember the biggest seizure of expired foodstuff from 1988 of 18 tons, and we had to transfer it by 20 trucks," he pointed out.

The repeated raids have made violating businessmen more careful. "Some businessmen shifted their foodstuff storage to private houses so we would not reach them or find out. But we have eyes everywhere. In such cases, we cooperate with the ministry of interior by submitting a report about our suspicions to them and we wait for the results of secret investigations. If they come back positive, we obtain a warrant from the prosecution to enter the storehouse and not the main part of the house, and confiscate the materials and close the warehouse. The landlord signs a pledge to move or destroy the materials if they are spoiled within a week, otherwise we will cut off the electricity. But such cases are rare," said Qattan.

**Roaming vendors**

Qattan has also faced many situations with roaming vendors. "A vendor once threw a pineapple at me when I confiscated his goods. It was painful, but I did not insult him. They have various goods like clothing, food, CDs, electronics and others. These vendors are fined, which are paid when they want to process any paperwork, as all public institutions are connected. Only the bedoons (stateless) do not pay anything, as they have no documents, but if they get caught, a record will be registered in their security status," he stated.

The emergency team is executing more duties. "We are in charge of controlling illegal butchers that are very popular during Eid Al-Adha - we arrested 78 illegal butchers in the streets outside the slaughterhouse and they were deported. We also deal with natural disasters such as removing fallen trees during storms and have formed a team in cooperation with other public institutions to work in such situations," concluded Qattan.



## History of Kuwait Municipality

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Municipality was established on April 13, 1930 as an independent authority that practices its activities through an elected Municipal Council. A year later, the municipality's law was released, and it is considered the first law in Kuwait. In 1933, it moved to its first official headquarters in Safat square. In 1954, a new municipality law was issued, giving Kuwait Municipality the authority to work on the architectural, health, social and civil advancement

of society, while giving the Municipal Council the authority to guide and supervise the municipality's work. A new municipality law was issued in 1960, expanding the municipality's work to include urban management and beautification, as well as protection of public health, food safety, and public convenience in homes and roads. The first Municipal Council elections took place on June 1964.



In Brief

### LIVE AMMUNITION DRILLS

**KUWAIT:** The Kuwait Coast Guard will conduct live ammunition drills in the nation's regional waters on April 4-6 from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm local time, a press statement by the Ministry of Interior said in a press statement yesterday. The ministry urged all seagoers to keep away from the sites of the drills for their safety. — KUNA



### KUWAIT GRANTS DONATION

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait delivered \$200,000 to a leading association for bone surgery and implants in the central American state of Guatemala. The donated sum was handed over by Ali Nouri Al-Salamah, the diplomatic attache and the director of financial affairs at the State of Kuwait Embassy in the United Mexican States, to Dr Gerardo Claverie, the head of the Guatemalan charitable foundation for orthopedics and implants. — KUNA



### AMBASSADOR ATTENDS CEREMONY

**ROME:** The Kuwaiti Ambassador to Italy and to San Marino Sheikh Ali Khaled Al-Jaber Al-Sabah took part in the turning of the reins of power to San Marino's new dual rulers (also known as Captain Regents) Gian Nicola Berti and Massimo Andrea Ugolini. The Kuwaiti ambassador extended to the new rulers congratulations of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. — KUNA



## 'EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS BEST ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES'



Minister Dr Bader Al-Essa

**KUWAIT:** Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa said yesterday that the educational opportunities exhibition, to be held April 5-6 aims to inform students who are expected to graduate from high school on academic opportunities and disciplines in universities accredited to the Higher Education Ministry.

Minister Essa said in a press statement that the ministry is keen to facilitate the establishment and organization of exhibitions and academic forums to educate the students in this area, referring to the efforts made in the framework of strengthening students' desires for future academic study in various disciplines needed by the labor market. He added that the ministry is also keen to spread the culture of self-reliance and to identify appropriate and useful specialties for students in various activities and events that take place in schools.

Meanwhile, Chairman of the Higher Organizing Committee of the exhibition Samah Al-Farhan said that numerous universities and specialized academies will participate in the activities of the forum, which includes a lot of orientation meetings to be allocated to the internal and external scholarship, as well as Kuwaiti public and private universities. — KUNA

## GFMIS APP TO BE USED BY ALL GOVT BODIES AS OF TODAY: OFFICIAL



Khalifa Hamada

**KUWAIT:** Ministries and other government bodies and departments, totaling 47, will be using the Government Financial Management Information System (GFMIS) application as of today, a senior Finance Ministry official said yesterday. The move crowns the outcome of the reengineering financial operations project, one of the leading in the region, Undersecretary Khalifa Hamada added in a press statement. He said that the country's financial systems have been restructured to keep pace with the world's standard practices, in a bid to fulfil the needs of the government bodies.

The leading international Oracle company has been selected for enterprise resource planning (ERP), that will function as the official systems for managing the government finances.

The achievement is the outcome of hard work by the Finance Ministry staff, as well as the fruitful interaction and cooperation on the side of other government bodies, he said.

According to Hamada, the government financial management systems cover the budget systems, accounting, procurement, online group buying and managing government stockpiles. These systems will provide all financial reports for preparing budgets, for the state and for each government entity. He stressed that they enjoy a high level of secrecy.

The ministry has made arrangements likely to secure success for the project through qualifying national cadres from the EPR Department to offer training on these systems, in addition to opening a customer service center. — KUNA



MANAMA: Kuwaiti novelist Saud Alsanousi receives the award. — KUNA

## KUWAITI NOVELIST NAMED BAHRAIN CULTURAL PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR

**MANAMA:** Bahrain's Authority for Culture and Antiquities on Friday granted Kuwaiti novelist Saud Alsanousi the Mohammad Al-Banki Award for Cultural Personality of the Year in its third edition. Presenting the award, chief of the authority Sheikha Mai Al-Khalifa praised Alsanousi's accomplishments, which reflected great potential of Arab youth. The award-giving ceremony was held on the sidelines of the 17th Bahrain International Book Fair. This is the third year in a row the award is being granted, Sheikha Mai said, voicing content over Alsanousi's win.

Meanwhile, Alsanousi said that the late Mohammad Al-Banki had a major role in fostering the youth through cul-

tural activities. In memory of noted intellectual and critic Mohammad Al-Banki, the award honors leading intellectual, researcher, author, or artist from the Arab world who made significant contributions to the cultural arena.

Alsanousi termed the honoring he received in Bahrain "matchless." Born 1981, Alsanousi's debut novel "The Prisoner of Mirrors" (2010) won the Leila Othman Prize. In 2011, his short story "The Bonsai and the Old Man" won a competition organized by Al-Arabi magazine and BBC Arabic. His novel "The Bamboo Stalk," about immigrant workers, won the International Prize for Arabic Fiction (2013). — KUNA

## HOSPITALS' STAFF REQUIRED TO WEAR NAMETAGS ALL THE TIME

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

**KUWAIT:** The Ministry of Health's (MOH) undersecretaries' council called for commitment to wearing nametags by all MoH employees in various ministry departments, hospitals, health zones and polyclinics. MoH's assistant undersecretary for legal affairs and the council rapporteur Dr Mahmoud Abdulhadi said that the council discussed the issue with undersecretary Dr Khaled Al-Sahlawi and stressed that inspection teams would tour various health facilities to ensure everybody wore IDs or nametags.

## CZECH SPEAKER IN KUWAIT

**KUWAIT:** The Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament in the Czech Republic Jan Hamacek and his accompanying delegation arrived in Kuwait yesterday for a few days' visit. Upon arrival, Hamacek was received by National Assembly Deputy Speaker, head of the Honorary Mission, and President of the Kuwaiti-Czech Friendship Committee Mubarak Al-Khuraij, and Czech Republic Ambassador to Kuwait Martin Vitek, and Kuwait Ambassador to Czech Republic Ayman Al-Adsani. A statement by the National Assembly General Secretariat said that during his visit, Hamacek is expected to meet National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Hamad Al-Sabah, and First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. — KUNA



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Crime

Report

TEEN TORTURES MOM FOR TWO DAYS

**KUWAIT:** A woman recently filed a complaint against her 18-year-old son, accusing him of detaining and torturing her for two days when she refused to give him money he had asked for. The mother provided police with a medical report showing her injuries. When police tried to contact the suspect, he did not answer. A case was filed and the man is being summoned for further investigations.

Fatal accident

An Indian man died instantly when a speeding vehicle ran him over driven by a citizen along King Fahad expressway. The car's Kuwaiti driver was taken in police's custody for further action.

KD 76,000

A citizen wanted for a KD 76,000 financial claim was recently arrested in Mahboula, said security sources, noting that the man was identified and detained at a road checkpoint.

Fight

Three citizens were recently arrested for fighting in Salmiya, said security sources. They noted that two of the fighters are brothers, adding that they started the fight with a third man after they felt he was staring at them in a provoking way.

Drug possession

A citizen was recently arrested in Mahboula with possession of 14 packs of drugs, said security sources. Police searched the suspect's vehicle after he became nervous when he stopped at a security checkpoint. He was taken to the proper authorities to face charges.

Bad neighbor

A Syrian women recently filed a complaint at Salmiya police station against her Kuwaiti neighbor, accusing him of threatening and insulting her. The woman added that her neighbor used to park his vehicle behind hers, blocking her way to provoke her. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

Theft

The owner of a women accessories' store accused an African saleswoman of stealing KD 600 in cash in addition to some of the goods on display. A case was filed and further investigations are in progress.

Harassment

A Filipina waitress filed a complaint at Salmiya police station, saying that an identified person in sportswear sexually harassed while serving him at a local restaurant. The waitress said that the suspect fled the restaurant when she screamed.

Weapons found

A citizen recently reported finding a weapon and some ammunition dumped in a garbage container in Kabb, said security sources. Police rushed to the scene and picked up the weapon and ammo.

Search for bootleggers

A number of men recently escaped arrest when a police patrol spotted them selling homebrewed alcoholic drinks in an open yard in Mahboula, said security sources. The suspects left behind a vehicle containing 55 liquor bottles.

Drunk driving

A female citizen was recently arrested for driving while drunk and insulting public officers while on duty. Case papers indicate that police patrol officers noticed that the suspect was driving in an unsteady course and when they stopped her, she smelled like liquor. The woman also insulted policemen and resisted arrest but was finally controlled, arrested and referred to relevant authorities. —Al-Rai

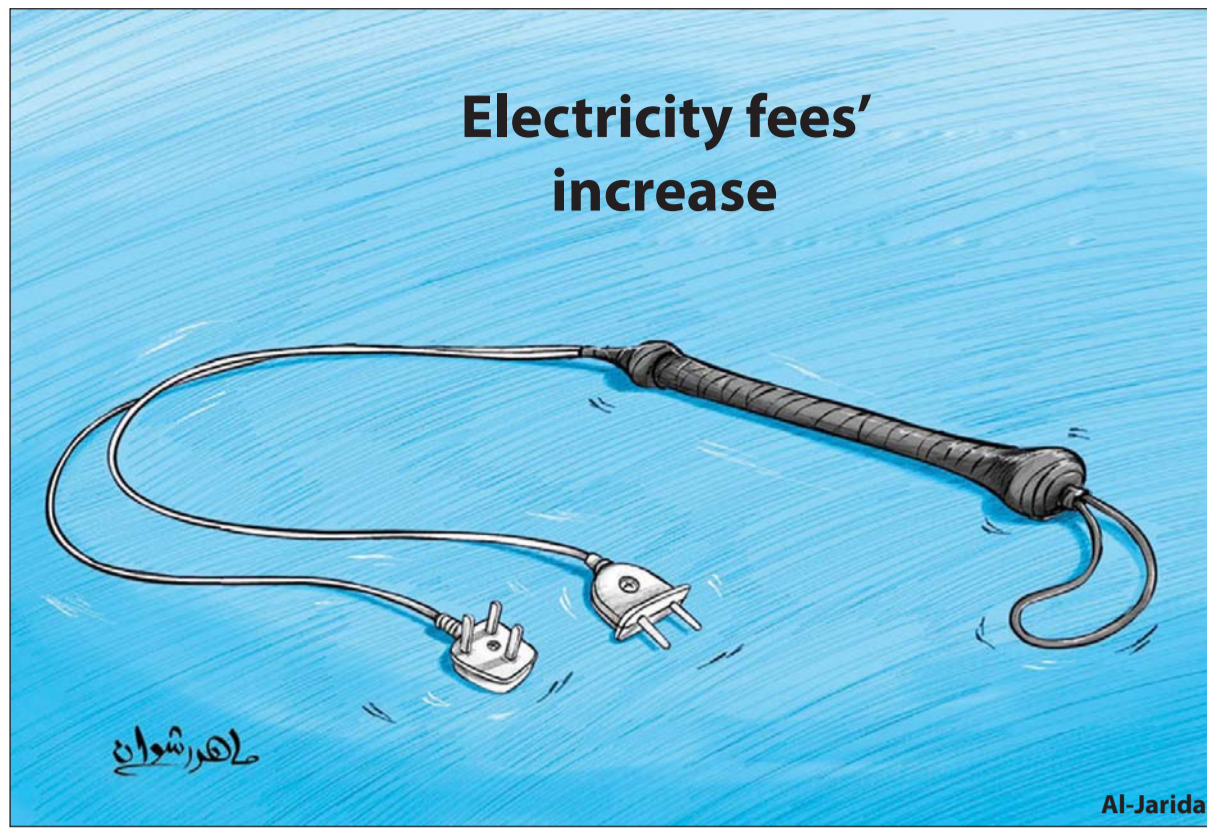
DOMESTIC HELPER OFFICES' OWNERS SLAM NEW LAW

**KUWAIT:** In a recent session, the parliament approved amending the law to establish a closed shareholding company to recruit domestic helpers and referred it to the government. The first article of the law stipulates establishing a closed shareholding company that would only make profits of a maximum 10 percent of the total cost of recruiting a domestic helper. According to the law, 10 percent of the shares would be allocated to the Kuwait investment authority, the social security body, the minors' authority and Kuwait Airways each, while 60 percent would be allocated for the Co-ops Union.

However, a number of domestic helper office owners criticized the law, accusing it of monopolizing the business at the expense of people who have been practicing it for over 25 years. Commenting on the issue, one of the owners, Nader Al-Habib, said that the new law opens for the proposed company to make considerable profits at the expense of citizens because the 10 percent proposed profit would be consumed in fees, medical tests and flight tickets. He added that the aim of amending the law was to make profit and not serve citizens.

Another owner, Ali Al-Ali, expressed amazement at the government's call to establish a new company at a time when it was considering privatization. He said that the government should fight fake offices and those trading in domestic labor through social media networks.

Meanwhile, owner Nayef Al-Mutairi stressed that over 120 offices would persist with lawsuits they had filed against the law to protect their rights. He also described the law as unconstitutional. Further, Mutairi said that domestic helper office owners had filed 33 lawsuits against bloggers who had been slandering the owners and making false accusations. —Al-Anbaa



Electricity fees' increase

Al-Jarida

القلمس

Al-Qabas

THE TRUTH OF 'OBAMA DOCTRINE'

By Khalid Al-Tarrah

The information arena witnessed many comments and analyses, in which American and Arab specialists, journalists and former officials participated, but the column by Prince Turki Al-Faisal titled "No Mr Obama", is more important as far as the content, the messages and legitimate questions are concerned. It was not strange for the Western media to pick the column and analyze its contents in light of the American president's contradicting foreign policy, which was analyzed under the title "Obama doctrine" by Prof Daniel Drezner of Tufts University, who is specialized in international affairs, on March 11.

Drezner's analysis carried five points, most notably "Obama's disrespect of the American foreign policy community, and his drop in respect for Arab leaders," while former homeland security advisor for George W Bush Frances Townsend agreed with this in a recent interview with the Ashraq Al-Awsat newspaper lately, when she expressed sympathy with what Arab countries are feeling, headed by Saudi Arabia, as regression in Obama's policy towards Riyadh became clear.

Obama began his presidential journey towards achieving warmth in relations with Arab countries and the

Muslim society, but directions changed a lot to a point that reached the status of "betraying the ally", according to Townsend.

What will Obama carry with him during his next visit with Gulf leaders? To explain his statements towards Iran, specially his call to "share power with Iran", or to convince them that Iran is a democratic and not theocratic country?

Khamenei said "martyrdom's door was closed with the end of the Iran-Iraq war, and reopened in Syria," which is the issue Obama appeared confused and hesitant in facing Iran and the "butcher of Syria's" regime, despite Riyadh's announcement about its readiness to lead a land war in order to oust Bashar's regime and liquidate Daesh, besides the contradicting American stand towards Iran's call for opening martyrdom's door in Syria, while ending the war with Iraq was for Khomeini like ingesting "poison"!

"Restoring confidence" with Gulf allies requires realizing the danger of Iran's military arrogance, and not turn on yesterday's partners in facing terrorism, and what the Gulf countries presented during Obama's presidency.

—Translated by Kuwait Times



KMC PARTICIPATES IN 32ND GULF TRAFFIC WEEK

**KUWAIT:** In collaboration with The Kuwait Traffic Department, Kuwait Motoring Co (KMC), the premier driving school, recently participated in the 32nd Gulf Traffic Week. All GCC countries celebrate the GCC Traffic week that is marked by activities ranging from workshops and seminars to distributing awareness leaflets in collaboration with ministries and official bodies. KMC is keen on supporting the official authorities' efforts and in line with its commitment to reduce traffic accidents by providing quality training. It annually takes part in the Gulf Traffic Week with a number of activities. This year KMC hosted a visit by senior officials from Kuwait Traffic Department, visiting Gulf delegations as well as local media. The dignitaries were offered a tour around the modern facilities of the driving school and witnessed a motorbike test on the special testing track.

At the event, Saqer Al-Rashoud (Public and Governmental Relations Manager) stated that KMC's goals are: To provide road safety education and driving training for all vehicle categories with high quality standards, and to improve motorists' traffic safety awareness, thus reducing traffic accidents and traffic related injuries.

Saqer Al-Rashoud emphasized on the strong ties between KMC and the Ministry of Interior, highlighting the key role of policemen in minimizing traffic congestions and achieving the highest levels of traffic security.

KMC spares no efforts in taking part in the GCC Traffic week activities that aim at increasing the awareness and achieving safety and security for the residents and citizens of the GCC countries. Safety and security traffic is important factor in achieving development and prosperity in any country.

Kuwait Motoring Co. (KMC) was established in 1987 as the first driving education school in Kuwait. Since 1987, it has been operating continuously across Kuwait providing consultancy services, educating young drivers and training professional drivers to meet the requirements of the private and corporate clients. Today KMC is a world-class driving training institution that incorporates modern theoretical classes and advanced practical lessons on vast training grounds. KMC has 3 branches currently, strategically located in Kuwait - in Shuwaikh, Farwaniya and Sabahiya. KMC provides driving theory education in state-of-



the-art facilities which include modern, specially equipped classrooms and simulators. The theoretical training covers the following subjects: traffic laws, driving behavior, traffic signs, car mechanics and first aid.

The company offers Pre-licenses training for light, motorbikes, heavy (truck and buses), construction vehicles as well as manual car driving, 4WD driving and

drifting. KMC has an in-house MOI Traffic Department to process police test appointments and driving licenses

In line with its motto "Better training, better driving" KMC strives to reduce traffic accidents and related injuries through the provision of high quality driver training which encourages clients to adopt attitudes and behaviors focused on safety and hazard awareness.

Al-Anbaa

FORMER BOYCOTTERS

By Thaar Al-Rasheedi

The main issue still discussed by politicians nowadays is 'will there be any kind of boycott of the 2017 parliamentary elections?' In order to practically answer this question, we have to assess the real impact boycotting the elections had on previous ones. Honestly speaking, boycotting the parliamentary elections had no significant impact except on those of the second annulled parliament. They also had none on the following elections or by-elections. In fact, voters did not boycott the elections and a very reasonable percentage of them took part. Therefore, boycotting the elections was done by some politicians and was not a complete public one.

Some of the boycotting political blocs had no impact on the elections, especially when the main aim of boycotting the elections was to remove part of the elections' or the results' political legitimacy. Well, this did not happen for two reasons. The first is that the boycotting blocs lacked real political tools to use in activating their boycott, because they are not parties that have real public support and followers to mobilize, affect and have them boycott the elections or take any other political stance. They are not much favored in terms of politics either, and have very limited political impact.

Secondly, the political speeches used by some of the boycotting figures does not match their deeds, as on one hand they call for boycotting the elections, while on the other they are keen on doing various transactions to promote themselves as potential candidates in the upcoming elections!

Boycotting the elections was nothing but a political move that is over now. Therefore, it is illogical to continue using it for propaganda and media purposes. Taking part in the upcoming elections will be the motto and slogan most prevailing in the coming days. It is already becoming very obvious that a number of the so-called boycotters, including some who called for it extremely, are currently promoting themselves amongst their constituents.

Word is going around that they are actively working on running in the upcoming elections. Some of them have reopened their offices and diwaniyas to start receiving voters' transactions and others have reactivated the roles played by their secretaries and representatives in various areas. Practically speaking, boycotting was only political and it is over now. It is not even appropriate to talk about it anymore.

—Translated by Kuwait Times



# COUNT ON UNPREDICTABILITY IN TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

'WE TALK TOO MUCH, WE'RE TOTALLY PREDICTABLE'

**WASHINGTON:** Deal-maker Donald Trump has lived his life as one long negotiation, going with his gut and winging it when necessary. Should Trump become president, the White House could well be transformed into the world's highest-profile improv club. It's part of what delights his followers and horrifies his critics. All of it would run smack up against the stuffy traditions of a government structured to rein in the power of the individual.

Among the leadership traits Trump would bring with him to the presidency are impulsivity, bravado, unpredictability, hype and flexibility. Candidate and businessman Trump blurts things out. He changes his mind. He tosses out threats. He belittles adversaries.

He knows how to deal. He has a long memory when someone crosses him, a short one when he wants to paper over inconsistencies. When his campaign exploits have gotten out of hand, Trump has been quick to assure people he'll be perfectly capable of striking "the serious president look" when the time warrants. "I was a great student. I went to the best schools, all that stuff. I mean, I have what it takes," he assured one TV interviewer. But wait, there's more: "At the right time," he went on, "I will be so presidential that you'll call me and you'll say, 'Donald, you have to stop that.'"

Still, political observers believe the same Donald Trump would pull up a seat in the Oval Office as the provocateur of the presidential campaign and the business-whiz darling of reality TV. "The idea that he can turn into something very different as president than he has been as a candidate is simply not the case," says Darrell West, head of governance studies at the Brookings Institution.

### His controversial views

What, then, to expect from a President Trump? There are plenty of unknowns, but the Republican front-runner has seeded his campaign comments and business memoirs with clues. Trump's notable tendency to speak first and refine his views later was illustrated anew by the flare-up this past week over abortion.

He said in an interview that if abortion were banned, women who undergo the procedure should face "some sort of punishment." Faced with a backlash, Trump quickly issued a

written statement saying that only those who perform abortions would be held legally responsible. For good measure, he added, "My position has not changed."

Earlier in the campaign, Trump tossed out the idea of making it easier for public figures to sue news organizations for libel. But he's detailed little more than a vague desire to "loosen up" such laws. "I want to make it more fair from the side where I am," he told The Washington Post last week.

Trump's recent comments condoning the idea of allowing Japan and South Korea to develop nuclear weapons showed a willingness to disregard decades of U.S. foreign policy without so much as a position paper. He has, at times, though, showed an ability to take a more measured approach. He spoke about relations with Israel from a teleprompter - something he's mocked others for using.

Despite his penchant for startling offhand comments, openness probably would not be a hallmark of a Trump administration. "We talk too much," Trump likes to complain. "We're totally predictable." Trump the deal-maker says leaders should hold their cards close to strengthen their position in negotiations.

### His courses of action

Asked how he would deter China's aggression in the South China Sea, for example, Trump said he would never let on whether he would be willing to go to war over the issue. Trump the showman could be counted on to continue his affinity for what he referred to as "truthful hyperbole" in one of his books. For all the brash talk of imposing a 45 percent tariff on goods from China for unfair trade practices, for example, Trump said in a recent radio interview: "That would never happen."

"You have to have the threat out there," he explained. "You've got to have something to negotiate with." That's part of Trump's broader theme that there needs to be more "tug and pull" to reach agreements on immigration and other tough issues.

That wall he's going to build between the U.S. and Mexico? Maybe it will be 2 feet (60 centimeters) shorter, he says. Infused through much of Trump's policy talk is an overarching focus on the power and importance of mon-

ey. "You can't make America great again unless you make it rich again," he said in one recent interview. It's why he's so rankled by what he sees as bad trade deals.

"If I were running the country, I wouldn't have people taking advantage of the United States in trade and in every other way," he asserts. As for how he will do better, Trump makes it sound easy. He talks of bringing in "the greatest minds" and top negotiators from business, mentioning activist investor Carl Icahn.

"I know the ones that are no good that people think are good," he says. "I know people that you've never heard of that are better than all of them." He says his own flexibility will be the key to success in negotiating trade deals, working with Congress and solving other government problems. "I'm going to make wonderful trade deals but you have to do it the old-fashioned way, like Ronald Reagan did with Tip O'Neill," the former Democratic House speaker, Trump says.

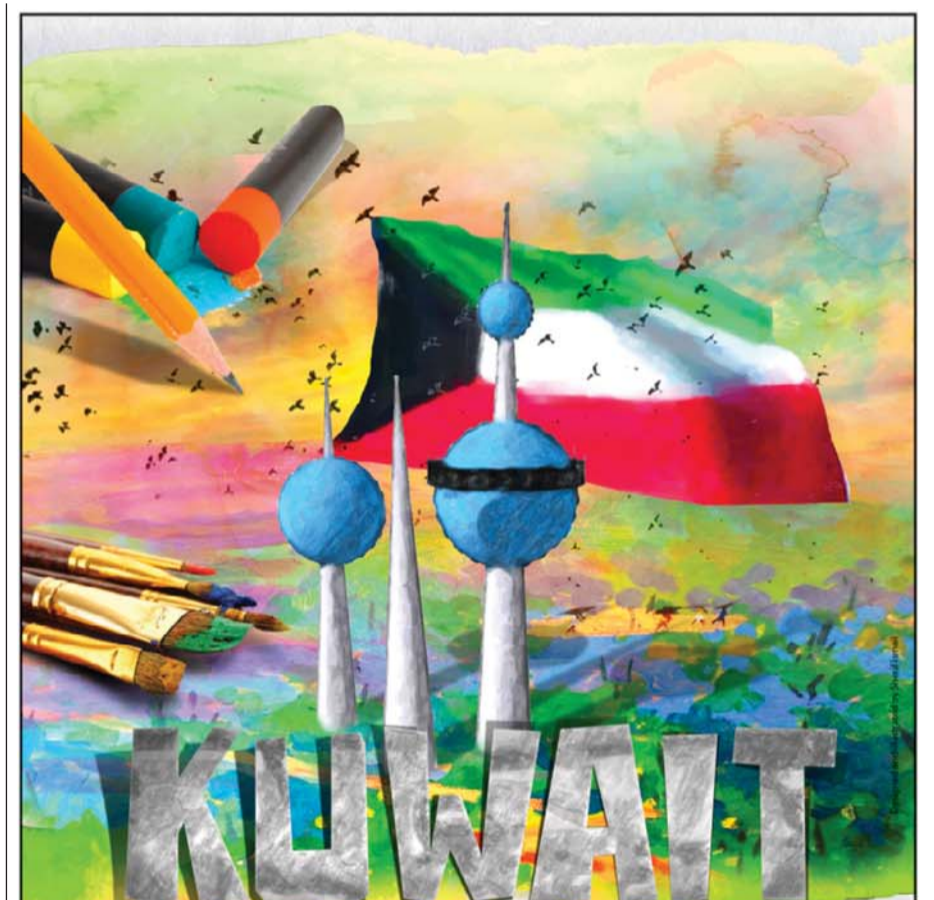
But Paul Light, a professor of public service at New York University, says Trump's optimistic pronouncements about making government function more like business are unrealistic. "It's not like doing a deal to put your name on the side of a casino," Light said. "If he thinks that this is 'The Apprentice,' he's completely off base," he added, referring to the reality TV show that Trump hosted before his presidential run.

Like any president, Trump, 69, would bring his own personal habits and quirks to the White House. He doesn't drink or smoke. He's up early to read the newspapers, but skips coffee in favor of Diet Coke. His diet makes his own children cringe: He loves red meat, McDonald's and Wendy's. His idea of exercise is a long speech. He has joked that his friends who work out are "disasters," in need of knee and hip replacements. He is a self-described "germ freak" who cringes at shaking hands. And who would have the ear of the president?

Trump seems most impressed with the credentials of one person: "My primary consultant is myself," he told one interviewer. "I have a good instinct on this stuff." That thinking alarms West. "The greatest risk of a Trump presidency is hubris," he says, "thinking you do know everything when you don't." —AP



MILWAUKEE: Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump participates in a CNN town hall.—AP



# CLINTON'S FRUSTRATION GROWS, AS PRIMARY RACE DRAGS ON

**SYRACUSE:** Hillary Clinton snapped at a Greenpeace protester. She linked Bernie Sanders and tea party Republicans. And she bristled with anger when nearly two dozen Sanders supporters marched out of an event near her home outside New York City, shouting "if she wins, we lose." "They don't want to listen to anyone else," she shot back. "We actually have to do something. Not just complain about what is happening." After a year of campaigning, months of debates and 35 primary elections, Sanders is finally getting under Clinton's skin in the Democratic presidential race. Clinton has spent weeks largely ignoring Sanders and trying to focus on Republican front-runner Donald Trump. Now, after several primary losses and with a tough fight in New York on the horizon, Clinton is showing flashes of frustration with the Vermont senator - irritation that could undermine her efforts to unite the party around her candidacy.

According to Democrats close to Hillary and former President Bill Clinton, both are frustrated by Sanders' ability to cast himself as above politics-as-usual even while firing off what they consider to be misleading attacks. The Clintons are even more annoyed that Sanders' approach seems to be rallying - and keeping - young voters by his side. While Hillary Clinton's team contends her lock on the nomination as "nearly insurmountable," the campaign frequently grumbles that Sanders hasn't faced the same level of scrutiny as the former secretary of state, New York senator and first lady. Her aides complain about Sanders' rhetoric, claiming he's broken his pledge to avoid character attacks by going after her paid speeches and ties to Wall Street, and they point to scenes of Sanders supporters booing Clinton's name at his rallies.

### The backlash

Actress Rosario Dawson's 15-minute speech at a New York City rally on Friday, in which she rallied the crowd by crying "shame on you, Hillary" and noted that Clinton could soon face an FBI interview over the email controversy while at the State Department, underscored the growing tensions between the campaigns.

Clinton hopes that big victories in New York on April 19 and five Northeastern states a week later will allow her to wrap up the nomination by the end of the month. But aides acknowledge that Sanders, who's raised \$109 million this year and has pledged to take his campaign to the party convention in July, is unlikely to feel significant political or financial pressure to drop out of the race, even if it becomes clear he cannot win the nomination. Clinton stayed in the 2008 contest against Barack Obama until the bitter end, though her initial advantage with superdelegates, who later flipped to the Illinois senator, gave her a stronger case for the nomination.

Unlike eight years ago, when California Sen. Dianne Feinstein brought Clinton and Obama together for a meeting, few Democrats are in position to broker peace between Clinton and Sanders. For most of his political career, Sanders identified as an independent - not a Democrat - leaving him with far weaker ties to party powerbrokers.—AP

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## LIBYAN OIL FIRM NOC WORKING WITH UNITY GOVT, HOPEFUL FOR RECOVERY

**TRIPOLI:** Libya's National Oil Corporation yesterday said it is working with the UN-backed unity government that arrived in Tripoli this week to coordinate future oil sales and "put a period of divisions and rivalry behind us".

NOC Chairman Mustafa Sanalla also welcomed support from the UN Security Council, which stated its concern on Friday over any attempts to undermine the integrity of the NOC, a reference to

efforts by Libya's eastern government to sell oil independently. "Combined with the recent announcement by the Petroleum Facilities Guard (PFG) that it intends to reopen export ports it has been blockading, I hope NOC and the country's oil resources can provide a solid platform on which the country's recovery can be built," Sanalla said in a statement.

The new government received the

endorsement of the PFG, a semi-official armed faction that controls key oil installations in the east, some of which it has shut down amid political disputes.

Libya descended into political turmoil and armed conflict following an uprising that toppled long-time strongman Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, with two pairs of rival parliament and governments operating in Tripoli and the country's east. Its oil production has been

slashed by rivalry between armed factions, and attacks by Islamic State militants and labour disputes, falling to less than a quarter of the 1.6 million barrels per day produced before the uprising.

The unity government emerged from a UN-mediated deal signed in December that has faced continuing opposition from hardliners inside Libya. Its leaders travelled to Tripoli on Wednesday and have been operating out of a heavily

secured naval base in the capital as they seek to gain control of government ministries and financial institutions.

PFG spokesman Ali al-Hassi said on Thursday that the guard was prepared to reopen eastern oil terminals at Zuetina, Es Sider, and Ras Lanuf, though he could not say when this might happen. The latter two ports have been repeatedly attacked and damaged by Islamic State. — Reuters



**PALMYRA:** Soldiers look over damage at the historical Bel Temple in the ancient city. — AP

## MASS GRAVE OF VICTIMS OF IS FOUND IN SYRIA'S PALMYRA

'THEY WERE EXECUTED EITHER BY BEHEADING OR BY SHOOTING'

**DAMASCUS:** Syrian troops have found a mass grave containing the bodies of 42 people executed by Islamic State jihadists in Palmyra, as Washington warned the group's leader will eventually "taste justice".

IS has in recent months claimed responsibility for deadly attacks in Brussels and Paris, but has lost ground in Syria and Iraq. Days after Syrian troops backed by Russian forces recaptured Palmyra and its ancient ruins, the army "uncovered a mass grave of officers, soldiers, members of the popular committees (pro-regime militia) and their relatives," a military source told AFP on Saturday.

Twenty-four of the victims were civilians, including three children, he said, asking not to be named. "They were executed either by beheading or by shooting." The bodies, which were found on Friday, have been transferred to a military hospital in the provincial capital Homs and some have been identified.

In a major symbolic and strategic coup for President Bashar al-Assad, the Syrian army on Sunday recaptured Palmyra and its UNESCO World Heritage Site, which IS had overrun in May 2015. During their nearly 10-month occupation of Palmyra, the jihadists executed at least 280 people, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, a Britain-based monitor which confirmed the discovery of the mass grave.

### What happened

Soon after IS stormed Palmyra, it shot dead

25 soldiers in the ancient Roman theatre. It later released a video of the mass killing in which the executioners appeared to be children or teenagers. Syria's five-year war has left at least 270,000 people dead. Few mass graves have been found, however. Nearly a week on, few of Palmyra's up to 70,000 original residents have returned. "People fear reprisal by the regime, and also the mines planted all over the city by IS," Observatory director Rami Abdel Rahman told AFP.

"In addition, many houses were flattened by Russian air strikes before Palmyra was reclaimed," he added. IS chief "to taste justice" - About 70 kilometers to the west, Syrian troops yesterday pounded the city of IS-held Sukhna, which the army wants to take back in order to consolidate its grip over Palmyra. "If the regime takes Sukhna, it will use it as a launching pad for an operation against Deir Ezzor province," which is located in eastern Syria along the Iraqi border and is mostly controlled by IS, Abdel Rahman said.

The Syrian army has previously said the takeover of Palmyra would allow it to extend operations against IS in the east and around Raqa, the jihadists' de facto capital in the north. A five-week-old ceasefire imposed by the United States and Russia, which back opposing sides in Syria's war, has seen Damascus focus its firepower on the jihadists, as the truce does not apply to them.

At least 40 mostly foreign IS members,

including 18 child soldiers, were killed in raids Thursday on a village in Deir Ezzor province, the Observatory said. It was one of the single highest tolls that IS has suffered in a single strike since it emerged in Syria in 2013, the monitor said. IS has lost a string of high-ranking commanders in the past few weeks, mainly to strikes by the US-led coalition which launched a campaign against the jihadists in 2014.

### US coalition

On Wednesday, a drone strike near Raqa, likely by the US-led coalition, killed Abu al-Haija, a Tunisian commander summoned by IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi from Iraq. IS has since arrested 35 of its members and security officers suspected of having revealed Abu al-Haija's location, the Observatory said.

On Friday, the Pentagon warned that Baghdadi himself, who in 2014 appointed himself "caliph" of swathes of Iraq and Syria, would eventually be hunted down and killed. "Just like we found his mentor, (Abu Musab) al-Zarqawi and killed him. Just like we found the grand master of terrorism, Osama bin Laden, we killed him. We are going to find Baghdadi, and he will taste justice," military spokesman Colonel Steve Warren said.

The US military is also working with "dozens" of Syrian rebels under a revamped train-and-equip program implemented after a much-criticized initiative collapsed last year, Warren said. — AFP

## QAEDA, OTHER INSURGENTS CAPTURE SYRIAN VILLAGE

**BEIRUT:** Activists say al-Qaeda's Syrian branch and other insurgents have captured a strategic overlook from government forces south of Aleppo after weeks of government air raids, in fighting that could unravel a month-old cease-fire.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights says the al-Qaeda-affiliated Nusra Front, along with other jihadis as well as more moderate factions, captured the village of Tel el-Ais early yesterday.

The village overlooks a vital highway connecting Aleppo with the capital, Damascus. The Nusra Front boasted of its offensive on social media, posting videos showing mortars and tanks firing on what is said to be government positions. Syria's state news agency acknowledged fierce clashes in the area. Both the Nusra Front and the Islamic State group are excluded from the cease-fire that began in late February. — AP

## EGYPT SENTENCES POLICEMAN TO LIFE FOR KILLING DRIVER

**CAIRO:** An Egyptian court sentenced a policeman to life in prison yesterday for shooting dead a driver taxi over a fare dispute, a judicial source said, a case that provoked outrage over police abuses.

Mustafa Mahmud was referred to an expedited trial after he shot dead Mohamed Ali Sayed Ismail with his police issue firearm in February, sparking rare protests and an apology from the interior ministry. Mahmud had hired Ismail to transport his belongings when they had a dispute over the fare that turned violent.

A life sentence in Egypt is 25 years. Mahmud can appeal the verdict issued by the Cairo criminal court. President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi had said he would ask parliament to

amend the law to toughen sanctions for police abuses after the incident. Police have been on the defensive after a string of deaths in custody, reminiscent of abuses that sparked an 18-day uprising that toppled longtime president Hosni Mubarak in 2011.

Five years on, human rights groups are again denouncing torture and deaths in police stations, arbitrary arrests and the disappearances of opponents of the regime. In February, thousands of doctors held a protest against the police after officers allegedly assaulted two doctors in a hospital. Over the past year, several policemen have been detained for violence against prisoners and some have been sentenced to jail. — AFP

## US ISSUES TRAVEL ALERT FOR SOUTHEAST TUNISIA

**WASHINGTON:** The US government is warning its citizens to avoid visiting southeastern Tunisia near the Libyan border as well as the country's mountainous western areas due to "the threat of terrorism".

In a travel warning out Friday, the State Department warns that Islamic State group jihadists have targeted Tunisia security officials, tourists and civilians in the regions. The warning urges US citizens to "exercise caution" in Tunisia "when frequenting public venues," especially tourist sites, and to avoid political gatherings, "rallies, large crowds and demonstrations, as even demonstrations that are meant to be peaceful can be unpredictable."

Tunisia, the birthplace of the Arab Spring, has suffered from jihadist vio-

lence since the 2011 revolution that ousted longtime dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. A raid on the Libyan frontier town of Ben Guerdane, blamed on the IS group, killed 20 people in March.

Last year IS claimed responsibility for attacks on the Bardo museum in Tunis and a popular resort hotel, killing 59 tourists in total, as well as a suicide bombing that killed 12 presidential guards.

The government recently extended by three months a state of emergency imposed following jihadist attacks, while the United States announced a \$24.9-million (22-million-euro) project to install an electronic surveillance system on Tunisia's border with Libya. — AFP

## SYRIAN OPPOSITION NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE GENEVA PEACE TALKS

**BEIRUT:** The Syrian opposition is not optimistic about upcoming peace talks in Geneva because there is no international will for a political transition, opposition member Riad Hijab told Al Araby Al Jadid television late on Friday.

The Syrian opposition has consistently said that it wants a halt in attacks on civilians and for the Geneva talks to result in a transitional governing body for Syria that does not include President Bashar al-Assad. "There is no international will, especially from the US side, and I do not expect anything to come of the negotiations," said Hijab, the coordinator for the Saudi-backed Higher Negotiation Committee (HNC), the main opposition bloc. The HNC will attend the next round of talks, scheduled to start around April 9 in Geneva, Hijab said, but "I will be clear to our people: we have no optimism concerning the negotiations process."

Assad has said he thinks the Geneva talks can produce a new Syrian government that includes opposition, independents and loyalists, but has explicitly rejected the idea of a transitional authority. Russia and the United States disagree on Assad's future but have jointly pressed the Syrian government and the opposition to attend the indirect peace talks in Geneva, which are being mediated by a United Nations envoy. "We are not afraid of the US-Russian rapprochement," Hijab said. "But we fear the secrecy, the lack of clarity and lack of transparency."

"We do not know what has been agreed ... what is happening in Syria is a proxy war." A fragile "cessation of hostilities" truce has held in Syria for over a month between government forces and their opponents. The truce excludes Islamic State and al-Qaeda's Nusra Front. Air and land attacks by Syrian and allied forces continue in parts of Syria where the government says Islamic State and Nusra Front are present. Syrian government forces with Russian air support took back the ancient Syrian city of Palmyra last weekend from Islamic State militants who captured it last May. — Reuters

## VIOLENCE KILLS AT LEAST 1,119 IRAQIS IN MARCH

**BAGHDAD:** The United Nations says violence killed at least 1,119 Iraqis in March, a sharp increase from the previous month, as the Islamic State group stepped up attacks on civilians despite suffering battlefield setbacks.

Another 1,561 Iraqis were wounded last month, the UN mission to Iraq said in a statement Friday. The figures include 575 civilians killed and another 1,196 wounded. The other casualties were Iraqi security forces, including Kurdish forces known as the peshmerga and government-allied militiamen.

The worst-hit area was the capital, Baghdad, with 259 civilians killed and 770 wounded, followed by the northern Ninevah province, which is almost entirely controlled by IS, with 133 killed and 89 wounded.

In February, there were 670 Iraqis killed and 1,290 wounded. The UN said it could not verify reports of large numbers of casualties from secondary effects of violence, including those who died after fleeing their homes from exposure to the elements or lack of food, water or health care. The UN envoy to Iraq, Jan Kubis, said he's "extremely dis-

turbed at the continuing loss of life and injury as a result of terrorism, violence and armed conflict."

"It is totally unacceptable that civilians should bear the

brunt of violence," Kubis said in the statement. The IS group seized much of northern and western Iraq in the summer of 2014 and established a self-styled Islamic caliphate in the

areas of Iraq and Syria under its control, imposing a violent version of Islamic law.

Iraqi forces backed by a US-led coalition have advanced against IS on a number of

fronts in recent months. But the extremists have meanwhile carried out a number of large-scale bombings targeting civilians in Baghdad and elsewhere. — AP



**RAMADI:** An injured woman comforts another as they wait for treatment after clashes between Iraqi Security forces and Islamic State group extremists. — AP



# CEOs, GOVERNMENTS SPEAK AGAINST NORTH CAROLINA LAW

## MORE COMPANY OFFICIALS OPPOSE NEW LAW

**RALEIGH:** Company CEOs and municipal officials are joining other government and business leaders opposing North Carolina's new law that prevents specific anti-discrimination rules for LGBT people for public accommodations and restroom use. The Human Rights Campaign and Equality North Carolina released Friday the names of another 10 company executives that have signed on to a letter criticizing the law and seeking its repeal, bringing the number of names to more than 120. New executives

include those from Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Qualcomm and EMC Corp.

### The issues

The law, approved by the Republican legislature and GOP Gov. Pat McCrory, responded to a Charlotte City Council ordinance approved in February that would have extended protections to gays and lesbians as well as bisexual and transgender people while at hotels, restau-

rants and stores. Charlotte also would have allowed transgender people to use the restroom aligned with their gender identity. Separately Friday, the venture capital arm of Google's parent corporation confirmed it won't invest in North Carolina startup businesses while the law is in place. GV spokeswoman Jodi Olson cited written comments by CEO Bill Maris in which he asked his firm's partners to flag possible North Carolina investments because he's "not comfortable deploying dollars into startups there until the voters there fix this." The move was first reported by Re/code, a tech-focused news site. The new law blocked Charlotte's rules and prevented other local governments from approving similar ordinances. And government agencies of all kinds must now require people who use multi-stall public restrooms to use the one that corresponds with their biological sex.

District of Columbia Mayor Muriel Bowser and Boston's city council also this week banned government-connected travel to North Carolina as a sign of opposition to the law. Similar travel bans have been issued by the governors of Washington, New York and Connecticut and by other cities.

A rally was held early Friday night in front of the Legislative Building to support transgender people and to oppose the law. Supporters of the new law held prayer vigils Thursday night in multiple locations in eastern North Carolina. One was held across from the Executive Mansion, where McCrory lives. Supporters of the law say hundreds of businesses support the law and have signed on to their own letter praising McCrory and the legislature. McCrory and a key lawmaker this week suggested some changes are possible to the law. But Senate leader Phil Berger, has no appetite for them because "an overwhelming majority of North Carolinians we've heard from support" the law, spokeswoman Shelly Carver said in a release. The General Assembly reconvenes April 25. —AP



**RALEIGH:** Human Rights Campaign Executive Director Chad Griffin, center, speaks at a news conference at the old state Capitol Building. —AP

## STRONG QUAKE SHAKES ALASKA, NO TSUNAMI WARNING ISSUED

**WASHINGTON:** A strong 6.2 magnitude earthquake shook a lightly populated remote region of southwestern Alaska late Friday, the US Geological Survey that monitors quakes worldwide reported. The quake struck at 0550 GMT Saturday (9.50 pm Friday) on the Aleutian arc some 654 kilometers southwest of Anchorage, and 100 kilometers northeast of Chignik Lake, Alaska. The National Tsunami Warning Center said that no watch, warning or advisory would be issued for the quake. "A tsunami is NOT expected to be generated by this earthquake," the Center said. The earthquake epicenter was 58 miles below the surface, the Alaska Earthquake Center reported. The Aleutian arc, part of the seismically active Pacific Ring of Fire, extends some 3,000 kilometers from the Gulf of Alaska to Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula.

The arc "marks the region where the Pacific plate subducts into the mantle beneath the North America plate," the USGS said on its website. Since 1900 there have been 12 earthquakes of magnitude 7.5 and above in the Aleutian arc, the USGS said. The most powerful quake was the 9.2 magnitude Prince William Sound earthquake—the second most powerful quake ever recorded—on March 28, 1964. It devastated Anchorage, Alaska's main city located about 120 kilometers northwest of the epicenter and also unleashed a devastating tsunami that slammed the Gulf of Alaska, the US west coast, and Hawaii. More than 250 people were killed by the quake and the tsunami. —AFP

## OBAMA SAYS COMMENTS LIKE TRUMP'S SHOW IGNORANCE

**WASHINGTON:** President Barack Obama said Friday that suggestions from people like Donald Trump that nuclear weapons would help South Korea and Japan show a lack of understanding of the world.

The Republican presidential front-runner told The New York Times last week he would be open to Japan and South Korea having their own atomic arsenals as a deterrent to North Korea. When asked about the issue Friday night, Obama said, "The person who made the statements doesn't know much about foreign policy or nuclear policy or the Korean Peninsula or the world generally."

He described the US alliance with Japan and South Korea as "one of the cornerstones of our presence in the Asia-Pacific region." US policy there, he said, "has prevented the possibilities of a nuclear escalation in conflict between countries that in the past and throughout history have been engaged in hugely destructive conflicts and controversies. So you don't mess with that." Obama added, "And we don't want somebody in the Oval Office who doesn't recognize how important that is."

Without naming specific candidates, Obama noted that the hectic campaign to replace him had come up during discussions with leaders at this week's nuclear summit in Washington. "What we do is really important to the rest of the world," he said. "And even in those countries that are used to a carnival atmosphere in their own politics want sobriety and clarity when it comes to US elections." —AP

## OFFICER JUMPS TO HELP HOMELESS GIRL

**HUNTINGTON:** A police officer in Southern California has jumped to help an 11-year-old homeless girl. The Orange County Register reports that officers found the girl and her mother living in a car in parking lot in Huntington Beach on Wednesday. Officer Zach Pricer turned to hopscotch to make the child feel more at ease. While Officer Scott Marsh reached out to the department's homeless task force to arrange housing for the pair, video shows Pricer hopping up and back.

The 38-year-old officer explained the rules of the game to the girl, then reached down to grab the marker, causing her to giggle. Pricer says a police officer can seem scary to a child and he wanted to make the girl feel more comfortable. —AP

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## AUSTRIA WANTS TO DEPLOY SOLDIERS ON ITALY BORDER

**BERLIN:** Austria plans to deploy soldiers at the Brenner border with Italy to stem an expected increase in migrants trying to get to northern Europe, Defense Minister Hans Peter Doskozil told a German newspaper yesterday.

Austria, which has broken ranks with Germany in handling Europe's migrant crisis by imposing border restrictions, has previously said it is preparing to introduce tighter controls if needed. But

the minister's choice of words appears to have intensified the discourse.

"As the EU's external borders are not yet effectively protected, Austria will soon ramp up strict border controls. That means massive border controls on the Brenner (Pass), and with soldiers," Doskozil told Die Welt daily. Soldiers could support border protection and also help with registration of migrants, aid the humanitarian effort and assist

with deportations, he said.

A spokesman for Doskozil was not immediately available to comment. Doskozil also reiterated his call for a civil-military European Union mission to support the bloc's border agency Frontex where needed at external borders, possibly in Greece, Bulgaria or Italy.

With the main migrant route through the Balkans and Austria largely closed,

due largely to Austrian border restrictions, Vienna fears new routes will develop through Bulgaria or Albania as Mediterranean crossings to Italy from Libya resume.

On Monday, a deal takes effect between the EU and Turkey which is aimed at stopping the flow of migrants to Europe in return for political and financial rewards for Ankara, sealing off the main route by which a million

migrants crossed the Aegean into Greece last year.

"We expect strong use to be made of the central Mediterranean route in the coming weeks," said Doskozil. "Last week alone, 5,000 refugees came via the central Mediterranean route. When the weather gets better, these numbers will increase strongly," he added. The Austrian army is already helping police handle migrants at its borders. —Reuters

## FOREIGN FIGHTERS EVADING EUROPE'S NEW SECURITY NET

HOW DOES THE UNION PLAN ON HANDLING THIS SERIOUS THREAT

**BRUSSELS:** When Ibrahim El Bakraoui blew himself up in the Brussels Airport check-in area, killing and maiming scores of travelers, it was at least the third time he had passed unimpeded through an airport terminal in recent months.

Suspected by Turkey of being a "foreign terrorist fighter" and known at home in Belgium as an ex-con wanted for parole violations, Bakraoui was still allowed to board a commercial airliner unaccompanied last summer, flying freely from Istanbul to the Netherlands and disappearing without a trace.

The ease with which he did so raises questions about how much governments know about the movements of returnees among the 5,000 home-grown jihadis who have trained and fought in places like Syria or Iraq. Many now pose a "serious threat," according to the police agency Europol. Some,

with a 10-year conviction, who spent a few years in prison, then traveled via Turkey to the Syrian border," Belgian Interior Minister Jan Jambon said on March 25, as lawmakers probed for security shortfalls three days after the Brussels attacks left 32 people dead. "You don't have to have worked long on terrorism to conclude from all this that there is a very high probability - 90 percent, 99 percent, take your pick - that we are dealing with a foreign fighter," he said.

Bakraoui may be just one case among many. Turkey has deported around 3,250 suspected "foreign terrorist fighters" since 2011 - a number that does not include those turned back before making it to Syria, according to its foreign ministry. Turkey's government says Belgium made no extradition request for Bakraoui when it learned on June 26 that he was in

Amsterdam's Schiphol airport. Turkish officials, including Erdogan, maintain they did their job by warning Belgium that Bakraoui could be a "foreign terrorist fighter." The Belgian government says the warning failed to include that crucial detail. "Turkey only explained to us in January 2016 exactly why this man was stopped," Belgian Justice Minister Koen Geens told lawmakers, though he conceded "we should have guessed, based on the place he had been to."

For their part, the Dutch said the Bakraoui case was not handled according to the usual protocol. There was no direct exchange between police in the two countries, or any indication of terror links in the notification. In five other cases with Dutch nationals - all but one involving suspected travel to Syria - Turkish authorities followed up the electronic notification by contacting Dutch police. The foreign ministry said Bakraoui's case seemed to be the only slip-up of its kind.

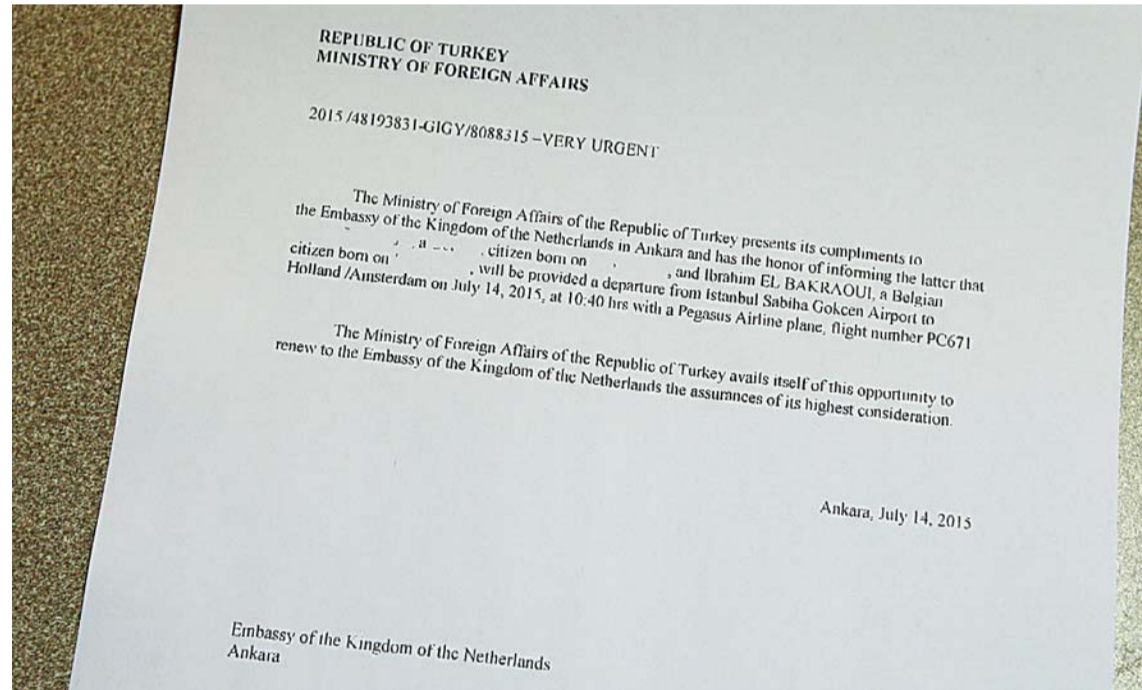
Still, a history of violent crime and a probation violation, as was the case for Bakraoui, would not necessarily raise alarms, the ministry said. Certainly he was not flagged in either the Interpol or European databases. "It is clear the procedure is vulnerable," the Dutch justice ministry said. Security officials say sometimes their hands are tied. It's hard to prove whether suspects have even set foot in Syria, where swathes of the country are virtually lawless, let alone establish if they have committed any crimes there.

Without proof, "we can go to the airport and say, 'We have reason to believe you have been to Syria. Would you like to talk about that?' And if he says, 'No, I've been visiting friends in Turkey,' we have to let him go," a European security official said, speaking on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the issue.

Deportation is not just a one-way street. More than 82,000 people were expelled from EU countries in 2012, mostly migrants, and the procedures involved were similar to those followed in Turkey, according to aviation officials.

Indeed what's most surprising is that little of this is out of the ordinary. There are no enforceable international laws governing deportations, only guidelines and standards. Intelligence sharing is virtually non-existent. European Union agencies are reluctant to share information among themselves let alone with an outsider like Turkey, even if it is a candidate to join the 28-nation bloc.

And when no crime has been committed on Turkish soil, let alone a trial held, all must respect the right to the presumption of innocence and confidentiality. —AP



**BRUSSELS:** The notice given to the Dutch government by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, giving notice of the return of two people on an air flight back to Amsterdam on July 14, 2015. —

like Bakraoui, have already used their deadly skills in cities like Brussels or Paris.

### Security gaps

Testimony from government ministers, extracts of documents and conversations with police, border and aviation officials reveal a series of security gaps, misunderstandings and procedural red-tape that surrounded the deportation last July of this future suicide bomber.

Even those who take some responsibility for missing the threat Bakraoui posed find it hard to understand why his capture raised no alarms. This was a man picked up by Turkish authorities in Gaziantep near Syria, who had done jail time in Belgium for armed robbery, including shooting at police with a Kalashnikov.

"We are talking about someone

Turkey, leaving him free to travel anywhere in Europe.

"It was obvious that he was affiliated and involved in the conflict zones, and he was wounded. That is the reason why he was deported. And this is the information that was communicated to Belgium," President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told CNN in an interview aired Thursday.

### Communications issues

Bakraoui is not the only case to fall through the communications gap. In September 2014, just over a year before Bakraoui's trip to Amsterdam, three French jihadis who said they were defecting from the Islamic State group were able to buy tickets to Marseille, fly together unescorted and walk out of customs as free men, one of their lawyers, Pierre Dunac, said.

According to France's interior min-

istry, they were detained in Turkey for visa violations - although they were wanted men back home. Before setting out for Syria, two of them were associated with Mohamed Merah, the Islamic extremist who killed seven people in the south of France in 2012.

Amid a government uproar, the three turned themselves in to French police and have been behind bars ever since, facing terrorism charges. As for Bakraoui, what he did while in Turkey and what he would go on to do in Brussels would remain a mystery to Belgian authorities for quite some time.

He disappeared off their radar last May and only popped back up on June 26, when Turkey notified Belgium that he had been picked up two weeks earlier near the Syrian border. More than two weeks would go by without a Belgian response. Then,

## KENYA MARKS GARISSA MASSACRE ANNIVERSARY

**GARISSA:** Kenyans yesterday commemorated the first anniversary of a terrorist attack that killed 148 people, mostly students, at a university in Garissa in the country's worst massacre since 1998. Four gunmen from the Shebab, Al-Qaeda's East Africa branch, raided Garissa University College on April 2 last year, shooting students dead in their dormitories and then rounding up and executing scores more in hall of residence.

It was the worst terrorist attack to hit Kenya since Al-Qaeda bombed the US embassy in Nairobi in 1998, killing 213 people. Yesterday, a group of some 100 people wearing T-shirts with

peace slogans gathered in Garissa, 365 kilometers northeast of the capital Nairobi, to participate in a run in honor of the victims.

"We stand with the parents, we want to tell them that together as a country, from the north to the south, west to east, Muslims and Christians... together we must fight terror," said Garissa MP Aden Duale, who took part in the run. Wheelchair-bound Farah Ali, a Garissa resident, pushed himself along the five-kilometer course to show "strength in solidarity" with the victims.

Other remembrance ceremonies were held in dozens of schools and universities across Kenya,

including in the central town of Eldoret where hundreds of attack survivors relocated to continue their studies. Garissa university reopened in January but few of the former students were willing to return.

### Vigils

Prayers and candlelight vigils were due to be held later in the day in Garissa and Nairobi, led by government officials. Government involvement in the anniversary commemorations contrast starkly with the days following the attack itself when it was left to ordinary folk to organize memorial vigils. The security response to Garissa was as during an assault on Nairobi's Westgate mall in 2013 - strongly criticized by many Kenyans. It took 16 hours for a special anti-terror unit to bring the attack to an end, with their deployment slowed by a senior police officer who had commandeered the force aero plane for a family excursion.

As with Westgate there has been no public enquiry into what went wrong. Kenya has suffered at the hands of Shebab since sending troops into neighboring Somalia to fight the jihadists in 2011.

Terrorist attacks have been frequent and deadly while in Somalia, Kenyan soldiers have been killed and their commanders accused of war profiteering through involvement in charcoal and sugar smuggling.

In January, Kenya suffered what is thought to be its worst-ever military loss when an army outpost in southern Somalia was overrun by Shebab fighters. Some estimate that as many as 180 soldiers died in the El-Adde raid but the government has so far refused to give any numbers or name the dead. —AFP



**GARISSA:** Yesterday workers mount a plaque as they work on the memorial for the victims of last year's terrorist attack that killed 148 people at the campus of Garissa University College. —AFP



**IDOMENI:** Migrants and refugees go about their daily life on the rail tracks in the makeshift camp at the Greek-Macedonian border. Migrant returns from Greece to Turkey will begin on April 4, 2016 under the terms of an EU deal that has worried aid groups. —AFP

## GREECE TO SEND 750 MIGRANTS TO TURKEY IN EU DEAL LAUNCH

**ATHENS:** Yesterday Greek officials declined to comment on a report it will send some 750 migrants back to Turkey from Monday to kick off a controversial EU readmissions deal. The report by state news agency ANA said the operation would take migrants from the island of Lesbos to the Turkish port of Dikili between Monday and Wednesday.

"Planning is in progress," Yiorgos Kyritsis, spokesman for Greece's refugee coordination unit, told AFP, while declining to comment further. ANA said EU border agency Frontex had chartered two Turkish leisure vessels for the purpose, and that Frontex police would be on hand to escort the migrants on a one-to-one basis.

Government officials have been tight-lipped on the scheme, which has attracted strong criticism on ethical grounds from the United Nations refugee agency and aid groups. Critics have warned that the Greek registration sites would become de facto detention centres for people slated to be sent back to Turkey after risking their lives and spending a small fortune just to reach Europe.

A Greek government source told AFP this week that some 400 Frontex police officers were expected to arrive over the weekend to participate in the operation. Parallel to this operation, Turkey on Monday will begin sending a first batch of refugees directly to Germany.

German interior ministry spokesman Tobias Plate this week said that most of

the arrivals expected Monday would be families with children, putting the number in the "double-digit range." Under the EU pact, all irregular migrants who have landed on the Greek islands since March 20 face being sent back to Turkey-although the deal calls for each case to be examined individually.

And for every Syrian refugee sent back, another Syrian refugee will be resettled from Turkey to the EU, with the numbers capped at 72,000. Athens has struggled to manage the influx, while hundreds of migrants have drowned crossing the Aegean from Turkey to the Greek islands.

Clashes among migrants and refugees have broken out at Greek facilities. On Friday hundreds of migrants walked out of a registration centre on the island of Chios following fresh violence, prompting a leading medical charity to pull out its staff.

Over 52,000 refugees and migrants seeking to reach northern Europe are already stuck in Greece after Balkan states sealed their borders. Hundreds more continue to land on the Greek islands on a daily basis, despite the EU deal, which was approved by the Greek parliament in a vote Friday.

Amnesty International this week said there were "fatal flaws" in the EU's migrant deal. The rights group said its research in the south of Turkey suggested the country was forcing around a hundred Syrians including women and children to return home on a daily basis. —AFP

## UN INVESTIGATING SEX ABUSE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST TANZANIAN PEACEKEEPERS IN CONGO

**KINSHASA:** The UN peacekeeping mission in Democratic Republic of Congo said late on Friday that it has received allegations of sexual abuse against Tanzanian peacekeepers based in Congo's northeast, the latest in a series of such accusations against UN forces.

The mission said in a statement that it received the allegations against members of its Force Intervention Brigade, tasked with offensive operations, in the village of Mavivi on March 23 and immediately launched an investigation.

"Initial results suggest that there is evidence of transactional sex and sex with minors," the statement said. "There are also a number of paternity claims." The statement did not say how many cases of abuse had been alleged or provide any further details

about the accusations.

UN peacekeeping missions have been beset by accusations of sexual abuse. The United Nations reported 99 such allegations against staff members across the UN system last year.

The United Nations said this week that it has expanded an investigation into new allegations of sexual abuse by foreign peacekeepers in Central African Republic. UN officials said they have interviewed some 108 alleged victims, most of them minors. The UN peacekeeping mission in Congo, which was initially put in place during a civil war that took place in 1998-2003, is the world's largest, with around 20,000 uniformed personnel. The Security Council renewed its mandate earlier this week for one year. —Reuters

## SALAH ABDESALAM REFUSED TO BLOW HIMSELF UP ALLEGEDLY

**BFM TV PARIS:** Salah Abdeslam, the Paris attacks suspect who was arrested in Brussels last month, refused to blow himself up on the day of the attacks, his brother Mohamed told French news channel BFM TV. Abdeslam, who will be extradited to France, has renewed an offer to cooperate with French authorities investigating the Nov. 13 attacks that killed 130 people, his lawyer said this week. "There would have been more victims had I done it,"

Salah Abdeslam told his brother. "Luckily, I couldn't go through with it."

After his arrest in Brussels on March 18, Abdeslam answered some investigators' questions but then exercised his right to silence following the suicide bombings in Brussels on March 22 that killed 32 people. Investigators believe the attacks in Paris and Brussels were carried out by militants from the same Islamic State network. —Reuters

## INDIAN VILLAGERS BLOCK WOMEN ACTIVISTS FROM HINDU TEMPLE

**MUMBAI:** Angry villagers blocked a group of women activists from entering the inner sanctum of a temple in western India yesterday, despite a court order mandating Hindu women's right to worship.

The high court in Mumbai said Friday women had a fundamental right to enter temples and directed authorities not to bar them from any Hindu place of worship across the state of Maharashtra. Buoyed by the high court order, a group of about 30 women activists tried to enter the shrine of Shani Shingnapur temple in Ahmednagar district on Saturday, television footage showed.

But hundreds of villagers—both male and female—who believe in the centuries-old tradition of barring women from entering the shrine formed a

human wall, forcing the female protesters to retreat. "The honorable court has recognized our right to pray. Police must provide us protection and allow us to enter the shrine," Trupti Desai, the activists' leader, told TV channels.

"We will not leave without entering the platform (where the Shani idol is kept)," she said amid chaotic scenes on the temple grounds. A few Hindu temples in India ban women from entering the inner sanctum, with Kerala's famous Sabarimala temple barring all female worshippers aged between 10 and 50 years.

The court also said Friday that state authorities must implement a 1956 law on Hindu worship, which stipulates that a person who prevents women from entering a temple can be imprisoned for

six months. The court's directive came after Desai challenged the ban and called it "a symbol of gender inequality" that should not be tolerated in the 21st century.

Women have also been prevented from entering Mumbai's Haji Ali Dargah mausoleum since 2011, with its trust saying close female proximity to the tomb of a revered saint is "a grievous sin" in Islam.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis had earlier voiced support for Desai, saying Indian culture and Hindu religion gave women the equal right to pray. Around 80 percent of India's 1.2 billion population is Hindu, but the country is also home to large numbers of Muslims, Christians and Buddhists. — AFP



**AHMEDNAGAR:** Indian activists including Trupti Desai (C) gather as they attempt to enter The Shani Shingnapur Temple yesterday. — AFP



**SRINAGAR:** Indian Kashmiri Muslims pray before a religious official shows a relic believed to be hair from the beard of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) during special prayers on the death anniversary of Abu Bakr Siddiq, the first Caliph of Islam at the Hazratbal Shrine on Friday. — AFP

## INDIA FURIOUS AS CHINA BLOCKS UN BLACKLISTING OF MILITANT CHIEF

### CLAIMING THE CHIEF DOES NOT MEET 'REQUIREMENTS'

**UNITED NATIONS:** China has put a hold on India's request to add the head of the Pakistani militant group Jaish-e-Mohammad to the United Nations' al Qaeda-Islamic State blacklist, UN diplomats said on Friday, eliciting an angry reaction from the Indian government.

India accused Jaish-e-Mohammad of masterminding a fatal attack on the Pathankot air base in India in January. India had requested that its leader be added to a UN Security Council blacklist of groups linked to al Qaeda or Islamic State, the diplomats said, but China objected.

The Kashmir-based group Jaish-e-Mohammad has already been blacklisted by the 15-nation Security Council, but not its leader, Maulana Masood Azhar, an Islamist hardliner and long-time foe of India. "We find it incomprehensible that while the Pakistan-

based Jaish-e-Mohammad was listed ... as far back as 2001 for its well-known terror activities and links to al Qaeda, the designation of the group's main leader, financier and motivator, has been put on a technical hold," Indian government spokesman Vikas Swarup said in Washington.

"This does not reflect well on the determination that the international community needs to display to decisively defeat the menace of terrorism," he told reporters on the sidelines of a nuclear summit in the US capital. It was not immediately clear why China requested that a hold be placed on the Indian request to blacklist Masood Azhar. Technical holds can be lifted and often arise when a Security Council member wants more information. But sometimes they lead to a permanent blocking of a proposed blacklisting.

Asked about China's decision to place a technical hold on the proposed blacklisting of Masood Azhar, Chinese UN Ambassador Liu Jieyi offered no details. "Any listing would have to meet the requirements" for blacklisting, he said. Pakistani security officials have said that a special investigation team set up in Pakistan to probe the Pathankot attack found no evidence implicating Masood Azhar.

If Masood Azhar was blacklisted by the UN Security Council, he would face a global travel ban and asset freeze. The Jan. 2 attack at Pathankot was followed by a raid on an Indian consulate in Afghanistan that has also been linked to Jaish-e-Mohammad, or the Army of Mohammed. Jaish-e-Mohammad militants are blamed for a 2001 attack on India's parliament that nearly led to a war between the nuclear-armed rivals. — Reuters

## COAL MINE COLLAPSE KILLS THREE IN NW PAKISTAN

**PESHAWAR:** At least three workers were killed when a coal mine collapsed in northwest Pakistan yesterday, with several others still trapped, officials said. A gas explosion may have caused the mine collapse in the remote mountainous Orakzai tribal district, which follows a similar accident in the same area last month that left seven people dead. Several people were injured in the latest mine collapse, and others remain buried. "At least three people have died, five

injured and five to six others still trapped inside the mine," a statement issued by the paramilitary Frontier Corps said. It added that rescue officials were digging at the site to recover the buried miners. Pakistani mines are notorious for poor safety standards and bad ventilation. At least 43 workers were killed in March 2011 when explosions triggered a collapse in a coal mine in southwestern Baluchistan province, which is rich in gas, oil and mineral deposits. — AFP

## AFGHAN OFFICIAL: 11 DE-MINERS KIDNAPPED

**KABUL:** An official says gunmen have kidnapped 11 land mine clearers in western Afghanistan. Rauf Ahmadi, the spokesman for the police chief of the western Herat province, said Saturday that a military operation has been launched in the area, with six suspects detained. He says tribal elders had earlier tried negotiating the de-miners' release.

He says all 11 were Afghans employed by the HALO Trust mine clearing organization. They were abducted Friday. Abduction for ransom is widespread in lawless Afghanistan, and de-miners are soft targets as they usually work in remote regions.

After almost 40 years of war, Afghanistan is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world. — AP

## UN COURT INDEFINITELY HALTS CROATIAN SERB REBEL'S TRIAL

**BELGRADE:** The UN war crimes tribunal has indefinitely halted the trial of former Croatian Serb rebel leader Goran Hadzic, who was provisionally released a year ago for ill health, his lawyer said yesterday.

The 57-year-old is the last of 161 suspects charged by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY).

"The decision to halt the proceedings against Goran Hadzic... for an indefinite period was reached on March 24," his lawyer, Zoran Zivanovic, told AFP. The deadline for the prosecution to appeal expired on Thursday, he added.

The decision by The Hague-based court means that if Hadzic's health improves the trial will resume, Zivanovic said. But "due to the nature of his illness, Hadzic's health condition is rather serious," he said. Hadzic's trial at ICTY opened in 2012 but

the following year he was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer, with doctors saying he had at best two years to live.

Proceedings were suspended in October 2014 as he was unable to take part because of the side effects of his treatment, which includes chemotherapy. Hadzic returned to Serbia in April last year on provisional release for treatment at home in Novi Sad, 70 kilometres (40 miles) north of the Serbian capital.

The one-time leader of the self-proclaimed Republic of Serbian Krajina in Croatia during the 1990s war, Hadzic faces charges including the murder of civilians taken from a hospital in the town of Vukovar in 1991, in one of the conflict's darkest episodes. Croatia's proclamation of independence from the former Yugoslavia sparked the 1991-1995 war with rebel Serbs who opposed the move. — AFP

## IN 'SIGN OF HOPE', BOMBED BRUSSELS AIRPORT IS SET TO REOPEN TODAY

**BRUSSELS:** Brussels Airport will partially reopen for passengers today, 12 days after suicide bombers destroyed its departure hall and killed 16 people. There will be far fewer flights than normal at the start and tighter security will be in place, but the airport operator said the aim was to return to full capacity by summer.

The country's main airport has not handled passenger flights since two suspected Islamist militants carried out the suicide attacks. Those bombs and a separate one on a metro train in the city killed 35 people, including three bombers. "Never will we forget this black day," the airport's chief executive Arnaud Feist told a news conference. "A restart of the operations even only partially as quick as this is a sign of hope. "As of tomorrow, Sunday, Brussels Airport should be partially operational," he added.

Feist said the airport had planned three flights for the first day, to Faro, Athens and Turin, all operated by Brussels Airlines. The number of flights should increase over time. The airport is one of the largest in Europe, handling 23.5 million passengers and 489,000 tons of freight annually. It links the Belgian capital, headquarter city of the

European Union and NATO, with 226 destinations worldwide through 77 different airlines.

With its temporary check-in zone, it will only be able to handle some 800 departing passengers per hour, around 20 percent of previous capacity. The airport says it aims to return to maximum capacity before the start of summer holidays at the end of June or early July, with some check-in desks restored in the departure hall, followed by a full reopening of that space.

Initially, the airport will only be accessible by car. Special cameras will be set up to read number plates, there will be random checks of vehicles and the drop-off zone will not be accessible. Passengers and their baggage will be checked on arrival and there will be increased patrols of armed police and military.

Brussels Airlines, Belgium's largest carrier and 45 percent owned by Lufthansa, has estimated the closure of its Brussels hub is costing it 5 million euros (\$5.7 million) per day. The city's association of hotel operators pointed to the closed airport as one of the main reasons for a more than 50 percent drop in overnight stays up to March 28. — Reuters

## INDIA CONSIDERS POSSIBLE MURDER CHARGES IN OVERPASS COLLAPSE

**KOLKATA:** Indian police said yesterday that they are investigating possible murder charges against 10 construction company employees who have been either arrested or detained in connection with the collapse of an unfinished overpass in Kolkata that killed at least 26 people.

Rescuers continued clearing rubble from the scene of Thursday's accident. Sixty-nine people have been pulled out alive, but authorities said they doubted more survivors would be found. Judge Sanchita Sarkar of the Kolkata city court remanded three arrested employees of IVRCL Infrastructure Co. yesterday, which was contracted to build the overpass, to police custody for nine days for questioning and investigation.

Seven other company employees have been detained for questioning, police said. The employees were being questioned regarding possible charges of murder and culpable homicide, which are punishable by death or life imprisonment, and criminal breach of trust, which carries a prison sentence of up to seven years, police said.

Rescue workers pulled out two more bodies from under the rubble on yesterday, raising the death toll to 26, said police inspector Debashish Chakraborty. The bodies were pinned under concrete slabs and were recovered by emergency workers at the crash site.

Police believe there may be more bodies under the debris. While most of the injured have been discharged from the hospital, 18 were still undergoing treatment, Chakraborty said. IVRCL Infrastructure, based in the southern city of Hyderabad, was contracted in 2007 to build the overpass, a project that was expected to take two years. But construction was far behind schedule.

The overpass had spanned nearly the width of the street and was designed to ease traffic through Kolkata's densely crowded Bara Bazaar neighborhood. The structure fell within hours of concrete

being poured into a framework of steel girders on Thursday.

"We completed nearly 70 percent of the construction work without any mishap," IVRCL official K.P. Rao said Thursday. "We have to go into the details to find out whether the collapse was due to any technical or quality issue." Rao was not among those detained on Friday.

Two West Bengal state engineers overseeing the construction of the overpass were suspended from

jobs pending an inquiry into the disaster, a state government statement said.

Around 100 residents of several buildings located close to the collapsed overpass have been ordered to vacate the buildings, where some of them have been living for generations. Government engineers said the buildings have been weakened from the impact of the overpass collapse and it would be risky for them to stay in the nearly 100-year-old tenement buildings. — AP



**HYDERABAD:** K Panduranga Rao, center left, group head of, human resources and administration, and Sita, center right, legal head of IVRCL, the company that was constructing the underpass in Kolkata, that collapsed partially on Thursday, March 31, address the media at their office on Friday. — AP

## GUNMEN KIDNAP FOUR MALAYSIAN SHIP CREW

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Gunmen have kidnapped four Malaysians from a ship off the east coast of Sabah state in waters where Abu Sayyaf militants are known to operate, local media reported yesterday. If the Philippine Islamist group is confirmed to be behind the kidnapping, it would be their second such hostage-taking in as many weeks and comes amid an uptick in such attacks.

Philippine regional army spokesman Felimon Tan said the military was verifying the reported kidnapping after Malaysian authorities informed them of the incident on Friday. "Whether or not

they were seized by the Abu Sayyaf or brought to the Philippines, we have yet to confirm," Tan told AFP.

Sabah police commissioner Abdul Rashid Harun told Malaysia's official news agency Bernama that authorities were still investigating if the kidnapping occurred in Malaysian or international waters. "The area is vast and we have our assets there. So we are investigating whether it happened in or off our waters," he was quoted as saying by Bernama.

"The five other individuals in the ship comprising Myanmar and Indonesian nationals were released."

There were conflicting reports over whether the boat, the size of which was not immediately known, had been sailing to Malaysia from the Philippines or making the reverse journey. Many Western and other embassies routinely issue warnings against travelling to most of the Philippines' Muslim-populated southern regions, which lie just northeast of Sabah, because of the risk of being abducted by the Abu Sayyaf.

On Tuesday, officials said that 10 Indonesian sailors had been kidnapped in waters off the southern Philippines. The incident was believed to have hap-

pened last Saturday. The Philippine military said initial information indicated the sailors may have been taken by an Abu Sayyaf faction to Sulu, a remote southern island that is a hideout of the militant outfit. Someone claiming to be from Abu Sayyaf called the vessel's owners to demand a ransom for the sailors' release. Other recent kidnappings, including of two Canadian tourists and a Norwegian resort owner in areas previously considered beyond the group's reach, have further raised fears.

Last year, Malaysian Bernard Then was kidnapped from a seaside restaurant in

Sabah, about 300 kilometers from the Abu Sayyaf's Jolo stronghold. He was later killed by the group. The Abu Sayyaf has staged cross-border raids into Malaysia before, including in April 2000 when gunmen seized 21 European and Asian tourists from a dive resort. They were released in batches after a ransom was paid the following year.

Founded in the 1990s with the help of late Al-Qaeda mastermind Osama Bin Laden, the Abu Sayyaf has been blamed for some of the Philippines' worst terror attacks, including bombings and kidnappings for ransom. — AFP



**SAN MARCELINO:** US Marine MK-58 Hawker Hunter fighter jets flying over an assault amphibious vehicle (AAV) during an amphibious landing exercise as part of annual joint US-Philippines naval exercises facing the South China Sea at a naval training center ON October 9, 2015. — AFP

## US PLANS THIRD PATROL NEAR DISPUTED SOUTH SEA ISLANDS

CHINA WARNS US TO 'BE CAREFUL'

**WASHINGTON:** The US Navy plans to conduct another passage near disputed islands in the South China Sea in early April, a source familiar with the plan said on Friday, the third in series of challenges that have drawn sharp rebukes from China. The exact timing of the exercise and which ship would travel inside a 12-nautical mile limit around a disputed island was not immediately clear.

The United States has conducted what it calls "freedom of navigation" exercises in recent months, sailing near disputed islands to underscore its right to navigate the seas. US Navy officials have said they plan to conduct more and increasingly complex exercises in the future.

### Navigation plan

The USS Stennis carrier strike group is currently operating in the South China Sea. The next freedom of navigation exercise is unlikely to be conducted by a carrier like the Stennis, but rather by a smaller ship, the source said.

Experts predict the next US challenge to the various claims in the South China Sea could occur near Mischief Reef, a feature claimed by the Philippines and which was submerged at high tide before China began a dredging project to turn it into an island in 2014.

Mischief Reef is now the site of one of three military-length airfields China has built on man-made islands in the Spratly Islands archipelago. US Navy ships regularly patrol the South China Sea, through which more than \$5 trillion of world trade travels every year. China claims most of the area, and Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, the Philippines and Taiwan have rival claims.

In recent months, with tensions rising around

China's reclamation activities, US ships have been frequently and routinely shadowed by Chinese ships and regular communications with Chinese vessels have often been tense. News of the planned exercise comes a day after US President Barack Obama met with Chinese President Xi Jinping at a nuclear summit in Washington.

### China's warning

During the meetings, Xi told Obama that China would not accept any behavior in the guise of freedom of navigation that violates its sovereignty, in a clear warning to the United States.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei told Reuters yesterday that China opposed any such exercise. "China consistently respects and supports the freedom of navigation and fly over that all countries' enjoy in the South China Sea under international law, but resolutely opposes any country using so-called 'freedom of navigation' as an excuse to damage China's sovereignty, security and maritime rights," Hong said. Beijing's defense ministry on Thursday warned the US navy to "be careful" in the South China Sea and slammed a newly signed agreement between Washington and the Philippines.

Earlier this month, Manila agreed to give US forces access to five military bases, including some close to the disputed South China Sea, where tensions have risen over Beijing's assertion of its territorial claims. China claims virtually all the South China Sea despite conflicting claims by Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam, Taiwan and the Philippines, and has built up artificial islands in the area in recent months, including some

with airstrips. Washington has since October carried out two high-profile "freedom of navigation" operations in which it sailed warships within 12 nautical miles of islets claimed by China. Asked about a recent report on US patrols in the sea, defense ministry spokesman Yang Yujun told a briefing on Thursday: "As for the US ships which came, I can only suggest they be careful."

The agreement between Washington and Manila applies to the Antonio Bautista Air Base on the western island of Palawan, directly on the South China Sea. Asked about the deal, Yang said: "To strengthen military alliances is a reflection of a Cold War mentality." "It is in the opposite direction of the trends of the era for peace, development and cooperation," he said, adding bilateral military cooperation "should not undermine a third party's interests."

Washington regularly accuses Beijing—which says it has built runways on and deployed unspecified weapons to islands in the South China Sea—of militarizing the area. Beijing denies the accusations and says US patrols have ramped up tensions. "Now, the United States has come back, and is reinforcing its military presence in this region and promoting militarization in the South China Sea," Yang said.

Beijing acknowledges that the facilities on its new islands will have military as well as civilian purposes. China's comments came as Malaysia accused "a large number" of Chinese fishing trawlers and a coast guard vessel of entering its waters, understood to be last week. Kuala Lumpur said China's envoy to Malaysia was summoned on Thursday "to seek clarification as well as to register Malaysia's concerns over the matter." — Agencies

## CHINA PARTY JOURNAL DENOUNCES CRITICS SEEKING TO DISCREDIT ANTI-GRAFT DRIVE

**BEIJING:** A top magazine of China's ruling Communist Party lashed out at critics of its ongoing anti-corruption campaign, saying foreign media and individuals from home and abroad were intentionally trying to discredit the effort as a political "power struggle."

Chinese President Xi Jinping has pursued a sweeping campaign to root out corruption since assuming power about three years ago, and has promised to strike hard at both senior and low-level officials, the "tigers" and "flies". Nonetheless, there has been persistent speculation that the graft crackdown is also about Xi taking down his rivals.

"Some foreign media and individuals take their own countries' anti-corruption efforts as a just display of rule of law, but see our anti-corruption work as a 'power struggle' that entails shadowy business," the influential bimonthly journal Qishi said.

Domestically, there are also some people who "parrot" these words, an article in the magazine's latest issue released this week said. "This kind of viewpoint is perhaps due to a misunderstanding of our

anti-corruption efforts, but even more it's a kind of deliberate discrediting and distortion," it said. Xi has warned the problem of corruption could threaten the party's ability to retain power.

He has publicly rebuked criticism of the crackdown on graft, including during a state visit to the United States last year, where he told business leaders in Seattle that it was not a "House of Cards"-style power struggle, a reference to the U.S. remake of the British political drama that is popular in China.

Several top officials have been felled in the campaign, including disgraced retired domestic security chief Zhou Yongkang, the most senior leader to be ensnared in a graft scandal since the party swept to power in 1949. The article said some unnamed people would suggest that the crackdown was "selective" because no "tigers" have been brought down in Beijing or Shanghai or certain provinces.

"From Communist Party institutions to the highest levels of the military, from central ministries to the provinces and cities, there are no gaps in the anti-corruption," it said. — Reuters

## FORMER BRITISH COLONY AUSTRALIA SAYS IT WANTS BRITAIN TO STAY IN EU

**SYDNEY:** The former British colony of Australia wants Britain to stay in the European Union, Foreign Minister Julie Bishop said, weeks before Britain holds a referendum on EU membership.

Bishop told reporters in Washington that "a strong UK as part of the European Union would be in Australia's interests", according to the Australian Associated Press. Bishop said that she told British Prime Minister David Cameron of the Australian position at a meeting in Washington on the sidelines of the Nuclear Security Summit, AAP said. Britain holds a referendum on EU membership on June 23. Britain's entry into the Common Market in 1973 was widely considered a betrayal in Australia, upending decades of tra-

dition and a host of tariff agreements. But now Britain takes only 2.5 percent of Australia's exports, while China takes more than 31 percent.

Supporters of Britain's exit from the European Union argue that "family ties" with Commonwealth members such as Australia could compensate for the partial loss of Europe's 444 million customers. David Davis, a Conservative MP and die-hard eurosceptic, outlined their ambitions in a recent exhaustive speech. "This is an opportunity to renew our strong relationships with Commonwealth and Anglosphere countries," he said. "These parts of the world are growing faster than Europe. We share history, culture and language. We even share similar legal systems. The usual barriers to trade are largely absent." — Reuters

## PAKISTAN ARRESTS RUSSIAN SEEKING BRIDE IN NORTH

**CHITRAL:** Russian national who went to Pakistan in search of a wife has been arrested and is being questioned by intelligence agencies, officials said yesterday.

Apelgans Viacheslav, a 28-year-old from Moscow, had put up posters in the northern district of Chitral advertising his dream of marrying a local woman and offering a one million rupees (\$9,550) reward to anybody who could help him achieve it, district police chief Asif Iqbal said.

"The Russian national had embraced Islam for his dream and his new name is Turud Ali," he told AFP, saying the poster featured a picture of the Russian and the address of the hotel he was staying at. The Russian was arrested for failing to register with Chitral police station, as foreigners are

required to do for security reasons when visiting the area, Iqbal said.

A local security official confirmed the arrest. "He said he wants to marry a local woman and settle here," the security official told AFP, asking not to be named. He said a joint investigation team of the police and intelligence agencies has been formed to investigate the Russian.

The security official said the man also visited Chitral last December. Officials did not say why intelligence agencies were questioning him. Chitral, a remote district bordering Afghanistan, is a tourist hotspot famous for its landscape and for being home to the Kalash people, an animistic tribe and Pakistan's smallest religious minority. — AFP

## EX-GIRLFRIEND SAYS BUS STATION GUNMAN HATED POLICE OFFICERS

**RICHMOND:** A woman who dated the Virginia bus station gunman says he frequently expressed his hatred toward police and once nearly choked her to death after she broke up with him.

A former girlfriend of James Brown III spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity because she said she fears for her safety. Court records show that a judge granted a

protection order against Brown in 2011 by his ex-girlfriend's request. Brown pleaded guilty in 2012 to domestic battery and aggravated battery of pregnant woman. He was released from prison in March 2014.

Authorities said Brown shot Virginia state trooper Chad Dermeyer at a Richmond bus station Thursday before being killed by two other troopers. — AP

## 7 KILLED, 1 SERIOUSLY INJURED IN NORTHEAST SPAIN CAR CRASH

**MADRID:** Spanish officials say seven people have died in a crash between two cars near the northern city of Figueras, 25 kilometers south of the border with France. The collision occurred early yesterday at Pont de Molins on the outskirts of Figueras, the regional government of Catalonia's traffic department said on its Twitter account.

The Interior Ministry said all five

occupants of a car with French license plates were killed when it was hit side-on by another car in which two occupants died and one was seriously injured. The ministry said not all the occupants had been identified but Spanish officials were in contact with French and Moroccan consulates. Carles Puigdemont, president of Catalonia, offered his 'condolences and solidarity to the victims.' — AP

## ANTI-APARTHEID ACTIVIST JAILED WITH MANDELA URGES ZUMA TO RESIGN

**JOHANNESBURG:** An anti-apartheid activist jailed alongside Nelson Mandela called on Jacob Zuma to step down, adding pressure on South Africa's president to quit after a court ruled he acted dishonestly over improper state spending at his private home.

Echoing similar calls from opposition parties, Ahmed Kathrada said in a letter published on Saturday that Zuma's resignation would give the country's government the chance to recover from "a crisis of confidence". "In the face of such persistently widespread criticism, condemnation and demand, is it asking too much to express the hope that you will choose the correct way that is gaining momentum, to consider stepping down?" Kathrada asked in the letter, dated March 31.

Mandela and Kathrada were among eight African National Congress (ANC) activists sentenced to life imprisonment after being convicted of trying to overthrow

the apartheid government during the 1963-1964 Rivonia Trial. South Africa's top court on Thursday held that Zuma had failed to uphold the constitution by ignoring instructions to pay back some of the \$16 million in state funds spent on renovations at his sprawling residence at Nkandla.

In a televised address to the nation on Friday evening, 73-year-old Zuma apologised and said he would pay back some of the money, as ordered, and that he never knowingly or deliberately set out to violate the constitution. He made no reference to calls for him to resign, led domestically by Democratic Alliance leader Mmusi Maimane and the Economic Freedom Fighters party led by Julius Malema.

The opposition also launched impeachment proceedings against Zuma but these are unlikely to be successful because of the ANC's strong majority in parliament. The ANC's top leadership said it was



**JOHANNESBURG:** Anti-apartheid activist Ahmed Kathrada. — AP

united behind its leader, though the 86-year-old Kathrada's intervention may carry weight within the party, which has governed the country since apartheid ended in 1994.

The calls for Zuma to quit dominated local newspaper headlines and got high-profile play abroad. "It is a shame that the ANC is allowing its moral and political authority

to be so grievously eroded by Zuma, instead of bringing his corrupt presidency to an end," The New York Times wrote in an editorial on Friday. The scandal is arguably the biggest yet to hit Zuma, who has fended off accusations of corruption, influence peddling and rape since before he took office in 2009. — Reuters



Palestinians sit on the branches of a tree as they watch performances during a carnival organized the municipality on Friday in Gaza City. — AFP

## MODI BEGINS VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA

Continued from Page 1

Indian officials will also discuss the hajj to ensure it takes place smoothly, after a stampede at the annual pilgrimage last September killed more than 2,000 pilgrims, including 116 Indians. Muslim pilgrims have blamed the stampede on police road closures and poor Saudi management of the flow of hundreds of thousands of people, who found escape routes blocked when the crush occurred.

Security cooperation is also expected to be on the agenda of the talks, Kumar said, describing the two-day visit as "very important". Saudi Arabia and the US Treasury this week announced joint sanctions on four individuals and two organizations with alleged links to Al-Qaeda, the Taliban and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) - which India blames for the 2008 Mumbai attacks that killed 166 people. Among those sanctioned was Saudi-based Muhammad

Ijaz Safarash, who allegedly provided financial, material or technological support for the Pakistan-based militant group LeT.

Modi will also meet Saudi business leaders today to discuss bilateral investment. "Saudi Arabia is our fourth largest trading partner" with exports to the kingdom exceeding \$11 billion, said Kumar. Modi's rightwing nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) swept to power in 2014 promising to revive India's economy and create much-needed jobs. Modi has bolstered ties with the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council - Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. He visited the UAE in August, the first such trip by an Indian premier in more than three decades. Some eight million Indians live in the GCC states and send home each year remittances of around \$35-40 billion, according to Kumar. — AFP

## AMAZON MAKES FORAY INTO FASHION WORLD

Continued from Page 1

And the giant founded by US entrepreneur Jeff Bezos has also begun airing "The Fashion Fund," a reality show during which young designers face off against each other in a competition sponsored by the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) that organizes New York Fashion Week.

As for its more muted moves - these are visible on Amazon.com where new fashion labels have popped up that, it turns out, have been trademarked by the tech giant. The labels Lark & Ro, North Eleven and Franklin Tailored have been registered by Amazon over the past few months, according to data accessed by AFP on the website of the European Union Intellectual

Property Office. After focusing on clothes designed, made and sold by others, Amazon - whose revenue in 2015 passed the \$100 billion mark - is developing its own clothing lines. When contacted by AFP on the topic, Amazon declined to comment. "I'm happy to reach out once we are ready to share news and overall strategy regarding our business," said a spokeswoman for Amazon Fashion. "Amazon has made apparel a priority," analysts with KeyBanc Capital Markets wrote in a February research note after attending the MAGIC apparel trade show in Las Vegas. "Amazon is being viewed as a strategic opportunity and partner" in the vendor community they wrote, with some believing that "it can be a top three customer for them in the medium-term." — AFP

## ARMENIAN, AZERI FORCES IN DEADLY CLASHES

Continued from Page 1

Sarkisian said that clashes were continuing yesterday evening "in the north and south" of the frontline but insisted the "armed forces of Karabakh are in control of the situation". Ethnic Armenian separatists backed by Yerevan seized control of the mountainous Nagorno-Karabakh region in the early 1990s war that claimed some 30,000 lives and the foes have never signed a peace deal despite the 1994 ceasefire.

The region is still internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan and the two sides frequently exchange fire across the front, but the latest episode marked a surge in violence and sparked frantic appeals for peace from international powers. Azeri forces claimed that they had taken control of several strategic heights and a village in the Armenian-controlled territory, but Yerevan denied the claim as "disinformation".

Russian President Vladimir Putin called for an immediate end to fighting along the frontline, the Kremlin said. "President Putin calls on the parties in the conflict to observe an immediate ceasefire and exercise restraint in order to prevent further casualties," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told Russian news agencies. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu held phone talks with their counterparts in Armenia and Azerbaijan to urge a de-escalation in the fighting.

Meanwhile, mediators from a group made up of representatives from Russia, the United States, France and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which has been trying to negotiate a settlement, expressed "grave concern". The European Union's foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said that the reports of heavy fighting were "deeply worrying" and called on all sides to "avoid any further actions or statements that could result in escalation".

Azerbaijan's strongman President Ilham Aliyev also spoke by phone to ally President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in which the Turkish leader expressed "solidarity" with Azerbaijan, Aliyev press office said. Energy-rich Azerbaijan, whose military spending has in the past exceeded Armenia's entire state budget, has repeatedly threatened to take back the breakaway region by force if negotiations fail to yield results. Moscow-backed Armenia says it could crush any offensive.

The last big flare-up occurred in Nov 2014 when Azerbaijan shot down an Armenian military helicopter. US Vice President Joe Biden met this week separately with both Aliyev and Sarkisian, as they attended a nuclear summit in Washington. He urged a peaceful settlement to the dispute. Biden "expressed concern about continued violence, called for dialogue, and emphasized the importance of a comprehensive settlement for the long-term stability, security, and prosperity of the region", the White House said. — AFP

## LAWMAKERS SLAM GOVT'S NEW POWER...

Continued from Page 1

that such prices were too much and beyond citizens' capabilities, especially since such increases would be followed by other price increases of rent and basic consumer goods.

"Such statements contradict previous promises that economic reform measures would not affect citizens," he underlined, pointing out that the government could have revived the economy by other alternatives such as building more factories, supporting agriculture, opening up for touristic investments, supporting small projects and imposing taxes on companies and luxury imports. "The government can also save millions every year if lights were switched off at various ministries and government offices outside of official working hours," he stressed.

Incidentally, most MPs are only opposing new power tariffs on residential houses, mostly inhabited by Kuwaitis, and not those proposed for commercial enterprises and investment buildings, mostly inhabited by expatriates.

Meanwhile, MP Abdullah Al-Turajji said fears expressed by Finance Minister and acting oil minister Anas Al-Saleh were unjustified and were only meant to promote the economic reform package that the government wishes to make simple citizens pay for. Turajji warned Saleh to be careful with the statements he makes, especially since he is responsible for two important portfolios. He added that if the tasks were too

much for the minister, he should step down, because Kuwait is full of other competent citizens. "International bodies including IMF's Christine Lagarde have denied that Kuwait suffers any deficits and made fun of exaggerations of a true deficit that does not exist in Kuwait," he said, noting that Kuwait managed to go through tougher financial situation a few years ago when oil prices dropped to \$8 a barrel.

Also, MP Hamdan Al-Azmi renewed his total rejection of privatizing government companies and called for fighting such moves that would crush Kuwait's middle class and create extremely wealthy and an extremely poor classes. "This is against the constitution," he said, noting that what Kuwait really needs at such a critical time is a strong government capable of facing problems and diversifying sources of income.

Separately, MP Ahmed Al-Qudhiabi rejected referring the Audit Bureau's report on the oil pipeline tender to the fatwa and legislation department because he alleged the latter was not a neutral body and because it was one of the bodies responsible for the tender's mistakes. In other news, the Civil Services Commission (CSC) has received lists of expat employees at various ministries due to be laid off either because they have reached legal retirement age or because their skills were no longer needed. CSC sources added that these employees would not be replaced by expats and that the vacancies would be filled by citizens who are awaiting employment. The sources added that the lists received came from the education and awqaf ministries.

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## Issues

## HOSTAGES KEY TO TRICKY COLOMBIA NEW PEACE TALKS

By Alina Dieste

New talks to end Colombia's half-century of conflict face tough challenges as the government presses for hostages to be released by a rebel group with a sprawling command structure. Bogota says a peace deal with the leftist ELN force will depend on the guerrillas freeing captives — but it admitted it does not know how many the group is holding. The sensitive issue underlines the challenges facing the government as it hopes to end what is considered the last major armed conflict in the West.

The government announced Wednesday that it would launch peace talks with the National Liberation Army (ELN), Colombia's second-biggest rebel group. "This is starting in a heated atmosphere among the public," said Angelika Rettberg, a conflict resolution specialist at the University of the Andes. "People are skeptical about the armed groups' will to make peace and polls show there is weak support for the government."

The hostage issue threatened to pose an obstacle. President Juan Manuel Santos insisted it was "not acceptable to proceed with peace talks with the ELN while there are people held hostage". The ELN has released two captives in recent weeks and said after Wednesday's announcement that it would release a policeman it abducted last week. But the government's chief negotiator, Frank Pearl, said Thursday: "We do not know exactly how many abductees the ELN is holding."

### Complex Peace Process

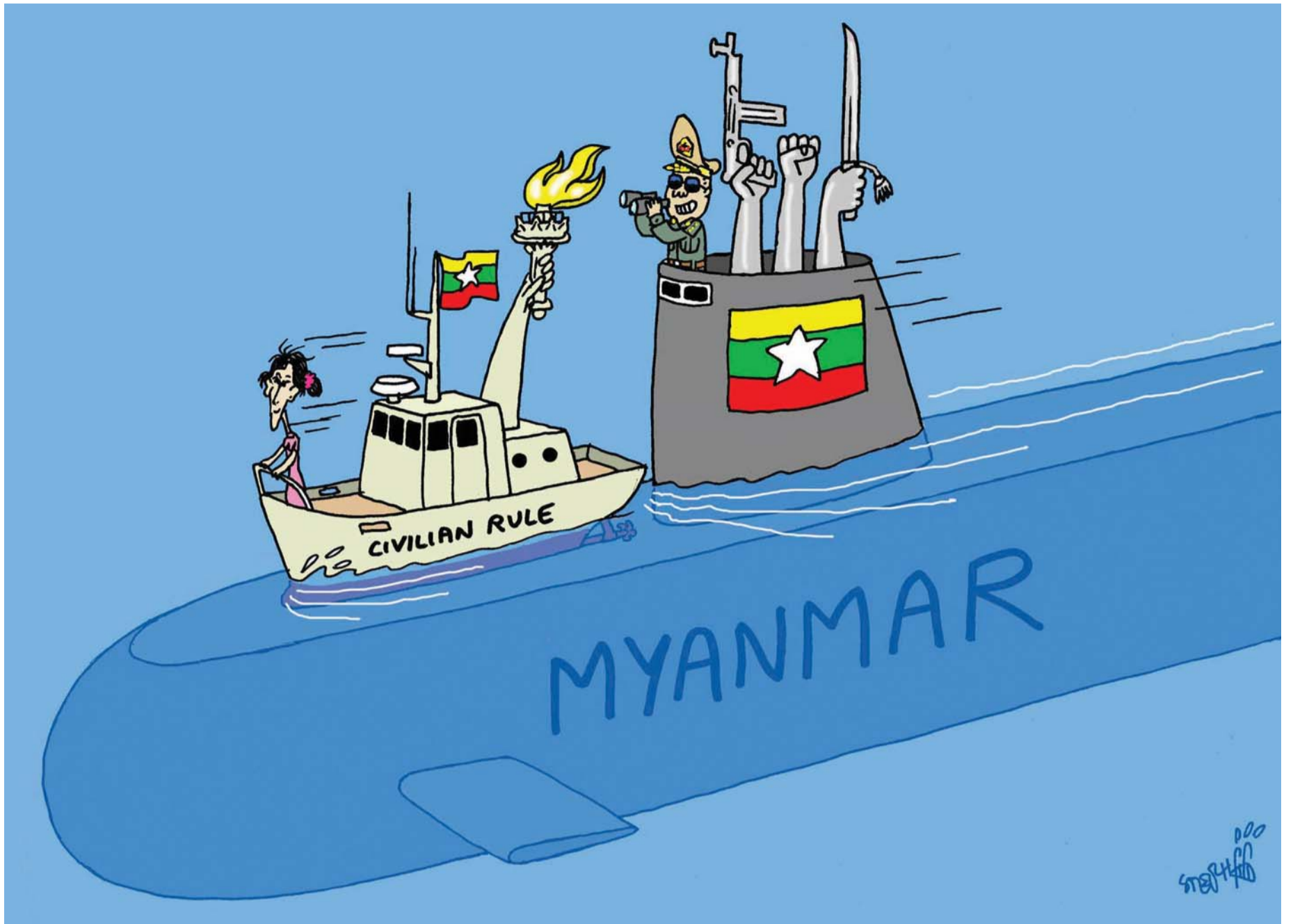
The government hopes the talks will bring the ELN into a broader peace process alongside the country's biggest rebel force, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The sides are trying to end what is seen as the last major armed confrontation in the West, which has killed 260,000 people since it broke out in 1964. The ELN is a leftist group like the FARC, but they have fought as rivals for territory in a many-sided conflict that started as a peasant uprising.

Although talks with the FARC have advanced close to a peace deal, observers warn the process with the ELN will be more complicated. The negotiations with the ELN "are of a very different nature from the Havana process because the ELN and the FARC are very different organizations," said Santos. Officials estimate the ELN currently has some 1,500 formal members but also countless civilian supporters.

The talks "will not be easy" as the ELN is a very decentralized guerrilla group, warned Ariel Avila of the Peace and Reconciliation Foundation. He said the process will be complex, particularly since the ELN has called for civilian participation in the negotiations, which are due to take place in various countries acting as guarantors. Political scientist Victor De Currea added that another challenge is dealing with the remnants of rightwing paramilitary groups that have taken part in the conflict. Those militias were disbanded in the 2000s but the ELN and the FARC say the former paramilitaries still pose a threat, especially if the leftist groups disarm.

Disarmament is one of the still-unresolved issues in the government's talks with the FARC. While the FARC has observed a ceasefire since last year as its own peace talks have advanced, the ELN has continued attacks. The agreement to hold talks announced in Venezuela on Wednesday by Pearl and ELN commander Antonio Garcia does not include a cessation of hostilities. "The ideal thing would be for the ELN to engage in a process of de-escalating the conflict, so that the violence it has committed since 2013 does not threaten the negotiations," said analyst Jorge Restrepo, director of the conflict research group CERAC. "Repeating the same kind of negotiations while the conflict is continuing would be a mistake." —AFP

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## Washington Watch

## THE '13 KEYS' TO WINNING THE WHITE HOUSE

By Dr James J Zogby

This year's presidential contest has proven to be both fascinating and, at times, frightening. Both parties are engaged in near existential struggles. In an effort to get the long view of the dynamics at work in this contest, last week, I hosted Allan Lichtman, Distinguished Professor of History at American University, on my weekly NYU TV show "Viewpoint". Always an interesting guest, Lichtman is the author of "The Keys to the White House" which lays out his proven method of predicting the winners in presidential elections.

Hosting Lichtman is a quadrennial "must" for me and I have made a point of inviting him to join me on my show in the lead up to every election since 1996. With this year's contest looking like a "wild ride" all the way to November, I was eager to hear his analysis. Lichtman often begins his discussion with the admonition to "throw away the polls and ignore the pundits". Instead of looking at polling numbers which show a snapshot of public opinion at a point in time or listening to the pundits whose predictions are largely based on guess work, Lichtman has developed a method of prediction that analyzes macro trends in the economy and the society.

Lichtman developed his model in 1981 basing it on an analysis of presidential contests going back to 1860 and he has been using it to correctly call the results of every race since 1984. He has identified 13 indicators that define the contours of the political landscape and calls them his "13 Keys". According to Lichtman, if the incumbent party (that is, the political party that

is currently in the White House) can claim eight of the 13 Keys, then they can be assured of victory in the next election. Holding less than eight keys means that the political setting is so hostile to the incumbent party that the victory is impossible.

### The "13 Keys" are:

- 1) The incumbent party holds more seats in the US House of Representatives after the last midterm election than it did after the previous midterm election;
- 2) The incumbent party has no real contest for the presidential nomination;
- 3) The incumbent party's candidate is the sitting president;
- 4) There is no real third-party (threatening the incumbent party);
- 5) The short-term economy is not in recession;
- 6) In the long-term, per capita economic growth is improving;
- 7) The incumbent administration effected major policy changes in the past four years;
- 8) There is no major social unrest;
- 9) The incumbent administration is untainted by major scandal;
- 10) There have been no major military or foreign policy failures in the past four years;
- 11) There was a major military or foreign policy success during the past four years;
- 12) The presidential candidate of the incumbent party is charismatic or a national hero; and
- 13) The challenger is not charismatic and not a national hero.

As Lichtman analyzes each of these keys, he concludes that, at this point, Democrats

can comfortably claim only seven of the keys. (4) if there is a serious third-party challenge, it will come from the right. (5) the short-term economy shows no sign of going into recession. (6) on the macro level, over the long-term, per capita income has been rising (although it has been stagnant for 80 percent of the population). (8) despite the rise of the Tea Party and the "Black Lives Matter" movements, there is not the level of social unrest we witnessed during the Great Depression or with the civil rights and anti-Vietnam war movements. (9) the president has not been implicated in any major scandals like the Tea Pot Dome or Watergate scandals (and while Hillary Clinton still has the email issue hanging over her head, Lichtman thinks it unlikely that the Department of Justice will indict her). (10) the administration has suffered no major foreign policy defeat. (12) none of the GOP candidates can be considered charismatic or a national hero.

On the negative side, Democrats can expect to lose at least four of the keys. (1) they held less seats in the Congress after the 2014 election than they held after the 2010 midterm contest. (3) Obama is not running for reelection. (7) while the Administration won major domestic victories in its first term, they have been forced to spend the last three years on the defensive. (12) Lichtman doesn't see either of the Democratic candidates as charismatic national heroes.

For Lichtman, this election comes down to keys (2) and (11). A year ago, it was assumed that Hillary Clinton would easily win the Democratic nomination, but challenger Bernie

Sanders has made it a real race and appears positioned to take the contest all the way to the convention. According to Lichtman, unless Clinton can sew up the nomination soon and win with two-thirds of the vote, Democrats might well lose this key. As for (11), while the administration will, with some justification, claim the environment pact with China, the completion of negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Iran nuclear deal, and the opening to Cuba as victories, these "successes" have been controversial, have not gained substantial traction with US public opinion, and, to some degree, they have been overshadowed by the unraveling of Libya, the continuing bloodshed in Syria, the Russian occupation of Crimea, and the rise of ISIS.

Lichtman notes that it is this last key may be the Democrats' best chance to secure the eighth key they need to win the White House. But to turn this key in their favor they must, before November, either resolve one of the still unresolved crises, listed above, or do a better job of convincing the public that the agreements with China, the TPP, Iran, and Cuba are the victories they claim them to be.

A cautionary note: While some dismiss the "13 Keys" as gimmicky, Lichtman's analysis has been right in every election since he designed his method in 1981. But, more than that, because it focuses on the macro trends that define the political, economic, and social landscape, it provides a useful tool with which to understand the dynamics at work in this election year.

NOTE: Dr James J Zogby is the President of the Arab American Institute

## OUTRAGE AT 'REWRITING' OF BALKANS WARS

By Jo Biddle

Legal experts and historians have reacted with outrage to the controversial war crimes acquittal of firebrand Serb Vojislav Seselj, saying it overturns international law and rewrites the history of the Balkans conflict. "The decision of the majority (judges) is divorced from the reality of what was happening in Croatia and Bosnia," former top US diplomat on war crimes issues, Stephen Rapp, told AFP. No stranger to complex cases, having led the prosecution of ex-Liberian president Charles Taylor, Rapp said he was very "disappointed" that Seselj was on Thursday found not guilty of nine charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The majority ruling by a three-judge panel at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) departed "from established law and accepted practices of fact-finding," said Rapp, now an expert with the Hague Global Institute for Justice, a think tank. Seselj, once a firebrand paramilitary leader, had been charged with murder, persecution and torture of non-Serb civilians by being allegedly a member of a "joint criminal enterprise" along with the late Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic.

But in essence, the judges found that Seselj was a politician who ardently supported his vision of a Greater Serbia, but was not a criminal. The judges also tossed aside decades of international law by saying "the crimes happened in an atmosphere of war, and this justifies them," Balkans expert Eric Gordy told AFP.

"This is simply in conflict with the law," added Gordy, a senior lecturer on Southeast European politics at University College London. Chief ICTY prosecutor Serge Brammertz is already studying the judgement to see if there are grounds for appeal, and said many of the judges' arguments were "absolutely not in line with the factual reality."

### 'No Reasoning'

Dissenting judge Flavia Lattanzi, in an unusually strong opinion, said her two colleagues had used "insufficient reasoning, or no reasoning at all" to support their acquittal of Seselj, "in contravention" of the court's rules. Read by French judge Jean-Claude Antonetti, the judgement acquitted Seselj of any wrongdoing during the period of the indictment between August 1991 and September 1993. "The prosecution failed to prove beyond all reasonable doubt that there was a widespread and systematic attack against the non-Serb civilian population in large areas of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina,"



Serbian ultranationalist Vojislav Seselj addresses a press conference in Belgrade on March 31, 2016. —AFP

Antonetti said.

He specifically mentioned Vukovar, a Croatian town razed by Serb forces in Nov 1991, and Zvornik where some 40,000 non-Serb Bosnians were expelled by paramilitary groups in 1992. The judges could not rule out that the buses used to transport non-Serbs away from Serb-claimed territories "were in fact provided on humanitarian grounds," Antonetti said. As for Seselj's

inflammatory speeches such as urging Serb forces attacking Vukovar "to spare no one," he was "participating in the war effort by galvanizing the Serb forces," the judges concluded. The historical facts outlined by the judges "conflict with what the tribunal has found and what researchers and others know about what happened," said Gordy, the Balkans expert. He highlighted in particular the finding that there was no sustained attack on civilians in the Croatian town of Vukovar. "This is an impossible claim," said Gordy.

### 'Revisionism'

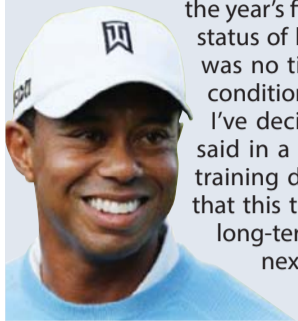
Vukovar suffered a three-month long siege before being captured by Serb forces in November 1991. The hospital was heavily shelled throughout the siege, but stayed open, coping with desperate conditions including a lack of medicines, electricity, food and water. In late Nov 1991, Serb soldiers bused some 400 wounded Croats and other non-Serbs from the hospital to nearby Ovcara. Some 260 of them were taken to a secluded pig farm, where they were beaten, killed and buried in mass graves.

Seselj was acquitted of murder as a war crime for the massacre committed by volunteers known as "Seselj's men" as the judges found he had no "hierarchical" responsibility for his militiamen. "This kind of historical revision is quite simply unacceptable," said Niccolo Figatellana, head of the No Peace Without Justice non-governmental organization. The judges had said "their role is not to establish the entire truth about the events that occurred; this may be true, but their role is equally not to deny the truth."

Noted author and Balkans expert, Jelena Subotic, writing for the EU-backed Balkans Transitional Justice initiative, denounced Thursday's verdict as "an embarrassment." "The Seselj verdict so fundamentally changes the interpretation of the character of the Yugoslav wars that it flips the main causal chain of events completely backwards," she said. —AFP

### TIGER WOODS CONFIRMS HE WILL NOT PLAY IN MASTERS

**MIAMI:** Former world number one Tiger Woods confirmed Friday that he will not participate in next week's 80th Masters, saying his rehabilitation from back surgery has not progressed far enough to allow him to compete. The 14-time major champion, a four-time Masters winner, has not played a PGA event since last August. Since then, he underwent back surgery and a follow-up procedure to ease discomfort from a pinched nerve. "I've been dedicated to my rehab and improving daily, but I'm not physically ready to compete in the Masters," Woods tweeted. There had been a bit of mystery about Woods' status for the year's first major tournament, as Woods had not updated the status of his rehabilitation for several weeks. He had said there was no timetable for his return. "After assessing the present condition of my back, and consulting with my medical team, I've decided it's prudent to miss this year's Masters," Woods said in a posting on his website. "I've been hitting balls and training daily, but I'm not physically ready. I've said all along that this time I need to be cautious and do what's best for my long-term health and career. Unfortunately, playing Augusta next week wouldn't be the right decision. — AP

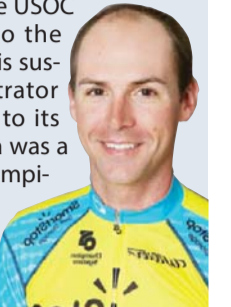


### TEAGARDEN SUSPENDED FOR 80 GAMES BY MLB

**LOS ANGELES:** Free-agent catcher Taylor Teagarden, who was among the athletes mentioned in an Al-Jazeera America documentary on doping, was suspended for 80 games by Major League Baseball on Friday. In MLB's announcement, officials did not indicate that Teagarden failed a drugs test, but said he was suspended for violating the league's drug prevention and treatment program. Teagarden's suspension will go into effect when he signs with a Major League team. He last played for the Chicago Cubs in 2015. In the documentary that aired in December, Teagarden was taped discussing his use of performance-enhancing drugs the previous season. The report also named players Ryan Zimmerman and Ryan Howard, but created its biggest sensation in linking iconic Denver Broncos quarterback Peyton Manning to human growth hormone in citing a clinic worker who said that HGH was shipped to Manning's wife. The 39-year-old Manning, who led the Broncos to the Super Bowl title in February and announced his retirement from the National Football League in March, vehemently denied using performance-enhancing drugs. —AFP

### CYCLIST BOBBY LEA ADDED TO US RIO TEAM

**LOS ANGELES:** Bobby Lea, a two-time US Olympic cyclist who had a doping ban reduced from 16 months to six, was named to the US team for the Rio Games on Friday. USA Cycling announced the move, which came after an arbitrator ruled that Lea was eligible under the US Olympic Committee rules and should be selected. In February, the Court of Arbitration for Sport upheld Lea's doping violation for a positive test at the US championships in August of 2015 for noroxycodone, a metabolite of the banned substance oxycodone. However, the CAS panel trimmed the length of his ban. Following the CAS ruling, Lea filed for arbitration under the USOC bylaws, arguing that USA Cycling should name him to the Olympic Long Team despite the fact that he was serving his suspension at the time of the team nomination. The arbitrator determined that USA Cycling was required to add Lea to its Olympic Long Team since he met the selection criteria. Lea was a bronze medalist in the scratch race at last year's world championships. He failed to finish the points race and was 16th in the Madison at the 2008 Beijing Olympics and was 12th in the Omnium at the 2012 London Games. —AFP



### MCILROY SENSES GRAND SLAM GLORY AT THE MASTERS

**WASHINGTON:** At just 26-years-old it's clearly far too early to talk about Rory McIlroy having a Masters jinx, but he knows that each year that goes by without him donning the Augusta winner's green jacket will only crank up the pressure on him.

To some extent, the Northern Irishman's own precociousness is to blame for this situation, with him having won the US Open, British Open and PGA Championship by the age of just 25.

That left him on the cusp of becoming just the sixth player in the history of the game to win all four majors - after Tiger Woods, Jack Nicklaus, Gary Player, Ben Hogan and Gene Sarazen.

The only other active player who has that tantalising prospect dangling before him is Phil Mickelson and the American's increasingly heart-breaking efforts to finally win a US Open (he has been runner-up six times) will no doubt spur McIlroy on further to get that first Masters win under his belt early in his career before it becomes a monkey on his back.

He has already come close once before - in 2011 when he took a four-shot lead into the final round only to shoot 80 in a spectacular meltdown that left him in a tie for 15th.

Last year, when he had his first crack at the career Grand Slam, he posted his best finish yet at fourth, but that was due to a superb closing round of 66 that hoisted him up the leaderboard. He was never really in contention.

On that occasion he voiced satisfaction that he is getting closer to pulling it all together at Augusta National and that he remains confident of winning there one day.

#### RELIEVE THE PRESSURE

This year, McIlroy's form has been steady if not spectacular and a run, as defending champion, into the World Matchplay semi-finals, boosted his confidence.

"I do feel as though I am similar to where I was with my game last year as I am very happy with my game as everything feels pretty good," he said at Austin.

"Compared to a year ago and all the hype of winning the Grand Slam, I already feel a little more mellow and a lot more chilled.

"This year you have the attention spread between Jordan (Spieth) going back to defend and Jason (Day) winning for a second week in a row and also there's Adam (Scott) who has won at Augusta before and is coming off his back-to-back wins.

"So there's a lot more going on around others competing in the Masters this year already than the spotlight I found myself in a year ago." In another move that could be seen as a way of relieving the pressure, McIlroy has decided to replicate his buildup to the 2011 tournament by opting not to play in the Wednesday Par-3 tournament.

"I'm not going to play the Par-3 contest this year as it's just too much hassle and it's a bit of a distraction," said the Ulsterman whose previous caddies have included former girlfriend and tennis player Caroline Wozniacki and pop star Niall Horan.

"The year I had my best chance at Augusta, and that was in 2011 as I didn't play the Par-3 contest, so maybe the decision not to play it this year can work in my favour," he added. Apart from the personal achievement, a win for McIlroy would make him the first Irishman to lift the Masters title and the first European since Jose-Maria Olazabal in 1999. — AFP



Abdullah Al-Rashidi (right) with Egyptian and UAE shooters.



Eman Al-Shamma, Afrah Adel and Bahrain's Fatima Nasrallah

## KUWAIT SHOOTERS EXCEL AT ARAB CHAMPIONSHIP

By Abdellatif Sharaa

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait shooting continued its winning ways in the Arab championship being held in Cairo, when shooter Afrah Adel won the women skeet's gold medal scoring 71 hits out of 75, while her teammate Eman Al-Shamma, took second place and the silver medal.

Meanwhile, the gold medal of the team skeet competition was claimed by Kuwait's Abdallah Al-Rashidi, Saud Habib and Zaid Al-Mutairi, while Abdallah Al-Rashidi won the bronze in the skeet individuals competition. Egypt's shooter Azmi Muhailba won the gold medal in the skeet event, and Egypt's team ended in second place.

Meanwhile, the 12th Arab shooting tournament began with Kuwait winning both the individual and team gold medal in the double trap event.

President of the Arab and Kuwait Shooting Federations Duaik Khalaf Al-Otaibi said Kuwait Shooting Sport Club is proud with Kuwait shooters' achievements so far, as there are more events yet to come. He said the shooting federation and club highly appreciates the major role of Information Minister, State Minister for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah, and Director General of Public Authority for Sports Sheikh Ahmad Mansour Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah and his deputies for their efforts in supporting Kuwait shooting and backing plans of

the club be it technical or administrative. Al-Otaibi thanked Egypt's Youth and Sports Minister Khalid Abdelaziz for supporting Arab shooting, and thanked President of African and Egypt Shooting Federations President Hazim Hosny, and all technical and administrative departments and Egypt Shooting Federation, for the good organization and hospitality, and wished them success.

Al-Otaibi, on behalf of Kuwait Shooting Sport community, dedicated those outstanding achievements to HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, HH the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, in recognition of their support and care.



Double trap team: Hamad Al-Afasi, Fuhaid Al-Daihani, Ahmad Al-Afasi.



(Backrow) Zaid Al-Mutairi, Saud Habib, Abdallah Al-Rashidi (Front) Eman Al-Shamma Afrah Adel.

## ADRIEN BRONER STOPS THEOPHANE IN NINTH



WASHINGTON: Ashley Theophane (L) and Adrien Broner exchange punches in their super lightweight championship bout at the DC Armory on Friday in Washington, DC. — AFP

**WASHINGTON:** Adrien Broner stopped Britain's Ashley Theophane in the ninth round on Friday in a victory that left the World Boxing Association super lightweight title vacant after Broner failed to make weight. The fight at the DC Armory went ahead, and Broner, a four-division world champion, dominated.

Theophane, who could have taken the title with a victory, was on the ropes in the second round, and absorbed punishing blows that had one eye swelling by the fourth.

He rallied, landing some solid punches in the sixth, seventh and eighth, but Broner had him under pressure again in the ninth with a body shot and a right hook.

Theophane was backing up and had raised a glove-possibly to complain of a low blow-when referee Luis Pabon stopped the fight. "I always could do better but I did what I had to do to get the victory," said Broner, who improved to 32-2 with 24 knockouts while Theophane fell to 39-7 with one drawn and 11 knockouts.

The technical knockout punctuated a turbulent fight week, with US media reporting that Washington DC boxing officials agreed to license Broner after he vowed to surrender to authorities in Ohio, where police have issued warrants for his arrest on suspicion of

felony assault and aggravated robbery. The charges stem from an incident on January 21 in which Broner allegedly robbed a man after an altercation outside a bowling alley in Cincinnati. Broner was scheduled to make the first defense of the junior super lightweight world title he won with a 12th-round knockout of Russian Khabib Allakhverdiev in October.

But Broner registered 140.4 pounds (63.68 kg) at Thursday's weigh-in, 0.4 pounds over the division limit and he was stripped of the title. In compensation Broner agreed to pay \$50,000 from his purse to Theophane, who weighed on the 140-pound limit.

"I've been going through a lot this whole week and to come in here and bottle everything up and stay focused and get it done, I want to give a pat on the back to myself," Broner said before turning his attention to retired pound-for-pound king Floyd Mayweather, a co-promoter of the bout. "Somebody I look up to and somebody I admire talked all bad about me," Broner said. "Me and Floyd, we got a feud."

With Mayweather laughing at ring-side Broner challenged him. "I come from nothing and I will never let a man disrespect me," said Broner. "He got to come see me. We got to get it on." — AFP



SAKHIR: Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain steers his car during the third free practice at the Formula One Bahrain International Circuit, in Sakhir, Bahrain, yesterday. The Bahrain Formula One Grand Prix will be held today. —AP

## FERRARI BREAK MERCEDES' DOMINATION IN BAHRAIN

**MANAMA:** Sebastian Vettel topped the times ahead of his Ferrari team-mate Kimi Raikkonen in yesterday's third and final free practice ahead of the Bahrain Grand Prix.

On a hot day in the desert, the four-time champion ended Mercedes' domination at the desert track with a best lap of one minute and 31.689 seconds.

This lifted him 0.040 seconds clear of Finn Raikkonen who is seeking a first win at the Bahrain International Circuit where he has seven times appeared on the podium.

The Ferrari resurgence pushed the two Mercedes men down to third and fourth with Nico Rosberg and defending champion Lewis Hamilton four-tenths off the leading pace.

Rosberg had been fastest ahead of Hamilton in both sessions on Friday, but the

hotter weather changed the track conditions in Ferrari's favour.

Valtteri Bottas was fifth fastest for Williams ahead of Frenchman Romain Grosjean, who impressed again in the new Ferrari-powered Haas car.

Russian Daniil Kvyat was seventh for Red Bull ahead of Mexican Esteban Gutierrez in the second American Haas car, Felipe Massa in the second Williams, sporting a new shorter nose section, and Australian Daniel Ricciardo in the second Red Bull.

After the cool conditions on Friday, final practice was run in more familiar weather with a vast blue sky, sunshine and an air temperature of 26 degrees Celsius. The track temperature at the Bahrain International Circuit was 38 degrees.

### NEW FORMAT

Following the verbal interventions of commercial chief Bernie Ecclestone on Friday, the president of the sport's ruling body, the International Motoring Federation (FIA), Jean Todt held a pre-session news conference at which he was questioned closely on the new format qualifying fiasco at the season-opening Australian Grand Prix and the uncertainty surrounding its future.

The Frenchman said he hoped for unanimous support for a possible revision to the format as likely to be proposed at a meeting today morning.

Todt said his favoured option was to retain the progressive elimination system in Q1 and Q2, but to revert to the former method for Q3. "I am optimistic about this," he said. Once

the action began, Ricciardo was the first driver to set a flying lap time after 10 minutes before being overhauled by Perez and then the two Mercedes men with identical times.

Bottas and then Raikkonen took over at the top of the times, the flurry of action confirming the teams' anxiety to make the most of the changed conditions.

McLaren, whose boss Ron Dennis had applied unsuccessfully for two-time champion Fernando Alonso to drive, despite failing a medical test on Thursday, were left frustrated when his replacement Belgian Stoffel Vandoorne was delayed because of an oil leak. He ended up 19th, one place behind teammate Briton Jenson Button.

"It is a complete decision by the doctors," said Todt, when asked about the FIA decision

to reject McLaren's plea. "It is something that I discussed yesterday with the president of the medical commission, Gerard Saillant, and, probably, we should make one step forward in a deeper check after such an accident."

"Maybe something we need to think about is to make sure that the driver is followed very carefully for two, three or four days after such an incident."

"But from what I understand, it is a very wise decision (to not allow Alonso to race) and the doctors will never consider giving an authorisation unless all the evidence is very clear to them."

The session was busy, but without major incidents other than two punctures suffered by Spaniard Carlos Sainz of Toro Rosso and Briton Jolyon Palmer of Renault. —AFP

### TODT OPTIMISTIC OF RESOLVING QUALIFYING PROBLEM

**MANAMA:** Formula One stakeholders will meet today to decide what to do with the much-criticised new qualifying format, with the head of the sport's governing body saying he is confident of reaching a solution.

"I am optimistic that we will get a unanimous agreement tomorrow," FIA president Jean Todt told reporters at the Bahrain Grand Prix yesterday. "I hope the decision which will be taken in the light of the second qualifying (of the season) will be a decision which respects the fans, the media, the promoters and be a good step forwards."

The Frenchman agreed the new format which made its debut in Australia two weeks ago had been a disappointment, and was aware of the backlash against it, although he said that the FIA "cannot be guided only by social media." The format was agreed only weeks before the season started, aimed at creating more excitement in the Saturday session through instant elimination of the slowest drivers at timed intervals.

While the first and second phases of qualifying involved more action, the final eight-car session in Melbourne proved a flop with drivers watching from the garages as the clock ticked away the closing minutes. Todt said the change had been sought by race promoters but team managers had signalled before the start of the season that there would be a problem, unless Pirelli made more sets of tyres available or the third and final phase reverted to the 2015 format.

He added that Pirelli could only provide more tyres, at an extra cost to teams, from the Chinese Grand Prix in Shanghai on April 17. "One more set of tyres would increase the show," Todt said, adding that another option could be for the final eight-car phase to see each run alone on track in descending order with the fastest from the second session going last.

Mercedes motorsport head Toto Wolff told Reuters there were several interesting possibilities but the sport needed to put the issue to rest. "I think there are more formats that are worth a try but we just need to be reasonable in assessing them properly, and whatever we find out should be implemented," he said.

"We just started the season, we had a disastrous qualifying in Melbourne, we are trying it another time now and we need to go with a safe way for the rest of the season." — Reuters



DENVER: Gabriel Landeskog #92 of the Colorado Avalanche puts the puck in the goal against the Washington Capitals as the Capitals held a 3-2 lead in the third period at Pepsi Center on Friday in Denver, Colorado. The Capitals defeated the Avalanche 4-2. —AP

## CAPITALS BEAT AVALANCHE FOR FRANCHISE WINS RECORD

**DENVER:** Alex Ovechkin scored in a three-goal second period as the Washington Capitals won their franchise-record 55th game of the season by beating the Colorado Avalanche 4-2 on Friday night. Jay Beagle, Ovechkin and Jason Chimera all had goals within a 5:26 span to help Braden Holtby notch his 47th victory of the season. The Capitals goaltender is one away from matching Martin Brodeur's mark for most wins in a single season. The loss was costly for the Avalanche, who trail Minnesota by five points for the last playoff spot in the Western Conference. The Wild lost earlier in the night, but Colorado couldn't capitalize. Jarome Iginla scored his 609th career goal and Gabriel Landeskog also scored for Colorado.

### CANUCKS 3, DUCKS 2

Emerson Etem scored the tiebreaking goal against his former team with 6:37 to play as Vancouver rallied from a third-period deficit for its second straight victory. Dan Hamhuis scored the tying goal shortly after Nate Thompson put the Ducks ahead in the third period. Etem then batted home a rebound in the long-time Ducks forward's first game back at Honda Center since Anaheim traded the native of nearby Long Beach last summer. Bo Horvat also scored and Jacob Markstrom stopped 34 shots for the Canucks, who snapped their nine-game winless skid Thursday in San Jose. John Gibson made 25

saves and Josh Manson scored in the opening minute for the injury-depleted Ducks, who had won three straight.

### BRUINS 6, BLUES 5

David Krejci had two goals and two assists as the Boston Bruins snapped out of a scoring funk to beat the St. Louis Blues 6-5 Friday night to hang onto third place in the Atlantic Division. Loui Eriksson got his 500th career point with a goal and an assist and Patrice Bergeron scored his 30th this season for the Bruins, who totaled 10 goals while dropping six of their previous seven games. They're a point ahead of Detroit, which beat Minnesota 3-2, with four games remaining. Paul Stastny had a goal and an assist and Alexander Steen and David Backes each had two assists for the Blues. St Louis ended a five-game winning streak, during which it allowed one goal and recorded for consecutive shutouts. The Blues are second overall in the Western Conference with 101 points and have four games to go.

### BLACKHAWKS 5, JETS 4, OT

Brent Seabrook scored 1:02 into overtime after Artemi Panarin tied it late in the third period with his second goal of the game as Chicago beat Winnipeg. Panarin also had two assists, including orchestrating a 2-on-1 with Seabrook in overtime. Panarin passed

across the slot to the defenseman, and Seabrook beat Ondrej Pavelec with a shot inside the near post. Patrick Kane and Brandon Mashinter also scored for the Blackhawks, who sneaked away winners in a game with four lead changes. Earlier Friday, Blackhawks defenseman Duncan Keith was suspended six games for high-sticking Minnesota Wild forward Charlie Coyle. Keith will miss five regular season games and one postseason game. Scott Darling had 28 saves for Chicago. Blake Wheeler scored twice for Winnipeg and extended his point streak to seven games. Nic Petan and Dustin Byfuglien also scored.

### RED WINGS 3, WILD 2

Riley Sheahan had a goal and an assist to lead Detroit over Minnesota in a game with playoff implications for both teams. Detroit entered one point behind Boston for third place in the Atlantic Division, while Minnesota came in with a five-point lead on Colorado for the final Western Conference wild-card spot. Dylan Larkin scored on a power play in the first period before Tomas Tatar put Detroit up 2-0 2:32 into the second period. After Jonas Brodin scored for Minnesota with 4:18 left in the second, Sheahan got his goal 2:08 into the third. Mikael Granlund scored for the Wild 9:43 into the third. Detroit goalie Jimmy Howard had 20 saves, while Devan Dubnyk made 26 stops for Minnesota. — AP

### NHL Results/Standings

Detroit 3, Minnesota 2; Boston 6, St. Louis 5; Chicago 5, Winnipeg 4 (OT); Washington 4, Colorado 2; Vancouver 3, Anaheim 2.

	Western Conference				
	W	L	OTL	GF	GA
Dallas	47	22	9	256	221
St. Louis	46	23	9	211	192
Chicago	45	26	7	218	196
Nashville	39	26	13	217	204
Minnesota	38	30	11	214	196
Colorado	39	35	4	207	222
Winnipeg	31	39	8	199	230
	Pacific Division				
Los Angeles	46	26	5	211	180
Anaheim	43	24	10	206	184
San Jose	43	29	6	230	203
Arizona	34	36	7	200	230
Vancouver	29	36	13	179	225
Calgary	32	40	6	213	251
Edmonton	30	42	7	194	234
	Eastern Conference				
	Atlantic Division				
Florida	43	25	9	221	191
Tampa Bay	44	28	5	214	185
Boston	41	29	8	229	214
Detroit	39	28	11	201	214
Ottawa	36	33	9	222	237
Montreal	36	36	6	208	224
Buffalo	32	35	11	189	211
Toronto	28	38	11	187	226
	Metropolitan Division				
Washington	55	16	6	241	179
Pittsburgh	44	25	8	224	192
NY Rangers	43	25	9	222	203
NY Islanders	42	25	9	214	196
Philadelphia	38	25	13	198	200
Carolina	34	28	16	191	211
New Jersey	37	33	8	175	197
Columbus	30	39	8	198	241

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





# ICC WORLD TWENTY20

## EXPLOSIVE WINDIES FACE FEARLESS ENGLAND IN FINALE



**KOLKATA:** England's cricket captain Eoin Morgan (C) with others play a game of football during a training session at the Eden Gardens cricket stadium in Kolkata yesterday. England play West Indies in the World T20 tournament final match today 3 in Kolkata. — AFP

### MORGAN: ENGLAND 'MINDSET' CAN WIN WT20 FINAL

**KOLKATA:** England's defeat against the West Indies in its opening game will have no impact in today's final at the World Twenty20 when they meet again, captain Eoin Morgan insisted yesterday.

"It's two completely different teams," Morgan said. "We've grown as a side from every game. It's difficult to compare sides from the first game to the final of the World Cup. I think the strides we have made in the last 12 months, this (winning the final) would be a great reward for the mindset we have shown and the hard work we've put in." West Indies captain Darren Sammy said he respected England but was confident his "boundary-hitting team" will win. Despite scoring 182-6, England started with a six-wicket loss to the West Indies on March 16 as Chris Gayle smashed a 48-ball unbeaten century before a successful 230-run chase against South Africa put England back on track.

It had hard-fought victories over Sri Lanka and Afghanistan before a resounding seven-wicket win over New Zealand in the semifinals with 17 balls to spare.

"I've always stressed that the talent we have in the changing room, the hard work put in, the key component within that has been the mindset. The mindset of the players, the mindset of the backroom staff and it has rubbed off on everybody. I think tomorrow the opportunity we do have is a product of that," he said.

Morgan was all praise for the pace bowling pair of Ben Stokes and Chris Jordan, who have been clinical in the death overs. "It's a small ground here given that it could

be a good wicket, that's going to be a key area for us," Morgan said. "I think the last game we went for 20 runs in (the last) four overs, two from Stokes, two from Jordan. I thought they were very clear in their thoughts and executed exceptionally well."

Sammy conceded that 2010 champion England was now a different team to the one beaten early in the tournament with Joe Root, Jos Buttler and opener Jason Roy all among the runs.

"We're not taking anything away from England, they have improved every game since that defeat to us," Sammy said. "They've their strengths and it's up to us to come up with a better plan than what they execute. We have the belief in the dressing room that our brand will make us victorious come Sunday."

Sammy said he was impressed with England's death bowling but backed his batsmen to once again come up with explosive batting to seal a second title for the 2012 champion. "I think since the inception of T20s you've seen West Indies is a boundary-hitting team. We know the power we have in the dressing room. We'll focus on England but more or less focus on us and we believe if we do what West Indies can do best, we'll always be destructive in this format," Sammy said. West Indies defeated England, defending champion Sri Lanka and South Africa in group games but fell to a surprise seven-run loss to qualifier Afghanistan.

In the semifinals, it defeated favorite India by seven wickets with Lendl Simmons producing an unbeaten 82. — AFP

**KOLKATA:** West Indies' rag-tag army of short-format mercenaries will be hoping they have the weapons to overcome a fearless England in today's World Twenty20 final as both sides target the honour of being the first to claim a second title in the tournament.

For a group of players who nearly boycotted the event over a contractual dispute with their board, Darren Sammy and his troops have waltzed into the Kolkata final displaying all the Caribbean flair that has earned them global admiration. If Twenty20 cricket is essentially about power-hitting, no team does it better and more unabashedly than the West Indies. England have first-hand knowledge of that destructive potency, having been blown away by Chris Gayle's 47-ball century in a Super 10 shellacking in Mumbai a fortnight ago. Revenge may be regarded as a dish best served cold but Eoin Morgan's men would probably like nothing more than to exact it in the heat of a World Cup final. A task easier said than done against a West Indies outfit packed with swashbuckling players who ply their trade in lucrative Twenty20 leagues around the globe. What makes the job doubly difficult is that Sammy's men have proved in India that they are more than just a one-man army who bank on Gayle to punch holes in their opponents. Marlon Samuels, Lendl Simmons and Andrew Russell have stepped out of their illustrious team mate's shadow and made their own mark in the last month.

"We said this before the tournament that Chris is under pressure," Sammy said after the exhilarating semi-final victory against hosts India.

"He is our best Twenty20 player but we have 15 match-winners in this side," he added. The ever-smiling all-rounder is seeking to become the first captain to lead a team to a second World Twenty20 title but West Indies are anything but infallible.

#### PEAKING ENGLAND

They showed two extremes to their game in the last couple of outings, slumping to an embarrassing defeat to qualifiers Afghanistan before silencing a raucous home crowd in Mumbai as they knocked out favourites India.

Also, the England they will face today is not the same team they thumped by six wickets in the group stage last month. Morgan's side have peaked gradually in the tournament since that defeat and seem to have found the right rhythm



**KOLKATA:** West Indies' captain Darren Sammy (R) and teammate Dwayne Bravo jog during a training session at The Eden Gardens Cricket Stadium in Kolkata yesterday, on the eve of the World T20 cricket tournament final match. — AFP

and combinations.

They accomplished a high-scoring chase against South Africa, recovered well to subdue an upset-minded Afghanistan, held their nerve to edge out Sri Lanka and stunned the previously unbeaten New Zealand with a near-perfect game in the semi-finals. Their batsmen—especially Jason Roy, Joe Root and Jos Buttler—have batted with refreshing freedom and their catching has been extraordinary.

Equally, if not more impressive, has been their bowling at the death. Ben Stokes appeared to have ice in his veins in the final over against Sri Lanka to thwart Angelo Mathews's audacious bid to pull off a sensational victory as England

secured their place in the last four.

Against New Zealand, Stokes and Chris Jordan pacified the Black Caps in the final four overs, which cost only 20 runs and garnered five wickets, to restrict them to a total that England could chase down with 17 balls to spare. Morgan has freed his batsmen from the weight of expectation and it is showing in the team's performance. "That's the way a lot of us play," Roy said of England's aggressive batting after his 44-ball innings of 78 set the foundations for victory over New Zealand. "The whole team has got that kind of licence, that kind of opportunity to go out there and do what they want and be free with their skills." — Reuters

### KEY MATCH-UPS AT WORLD T20 FINAL

**KOLKATA:** England take on the West Indies in the World Twenty20 final in Kolkata today. Below we take a look both sides' key batsman, all-rounder and spinner.

#### CHRIS GAYLE AND JOE ROOT

Today's final is likely to be Chris Gayle's last at the World T20 as he'll be 40 when the next edition comes around. The explosive batsman is the Windies' biggest and most recognisable star. His lightning century against England earlier in the tournament, which included 11 sixes, left Eoin Morgan's side shell-shocked. But the left-hander has played a bit part since then, picking up only nine runs, on the Windies' run to the final and he may feel he has a point to prove-making him even more dangerous.

England possess their own match-winner in classy batsman Joe Root. The 25-year-old is proving himself to be one of the most accomplished stroke players in the game, showing poise and composure in pressure moments. His 83 against South Africa in the group stages was one of the most impressive knocks of the tournament and fired England to their highest-ever run chase in T20 cricket as they stunned the Proteas with just two balls to spare. The calming influence of the right-hander, who bats at number three, will be key to England's chances of a second World T20 title.

#### ANDRE RUSSELL AND BEN STOKES

The West Indies and England boast the two most dangerous all-rounders in Twenty20 cricket in Andre Russell and Ben Stokes. Russell, who came into the tournament on the back of reports that he three missed drug tests, proved his hitting prowess with a 43-run blitz against India, including a big six on the third-last ball of the semi-final that sent his team into the final. The right-arm fast-medium bowler, who sports an orange mohawk haircut, has bagged eight wickets so far and is one of the most dangerous in Darren Sammy's arsenal. Stokes has been equally crucial to England's advance to the final. The left-handed batsman, who bowls right-handed, has been compared to Ian Botham and has helped his team get over the line in a couple of crunch games with near-perfect death bowling. Stokes, who has an array of tattoos and who broke his wrist once punching a locker, also has the ability to chip in with big hits in the middle-order, supplementing England's new and aggressive brand of cricket.

#### SAMUEL BADREE AND MOEEN ALI

Both West Indies and England have also got spin aces up their sleeve in Samuel Badree and Moeen Ali. Leg-spinner Badree was the only bowler to hold his own with figures of 1-26 when the rest of the West Indian attack got a pasting by Indian batsmen in the semi-final. Having bagged seven wickets in five outings, Badree can certainly make a difference on an Eden Gardens track that is known to turn. Off-spinner Ali is also not far behind with five wickets and his knack of providing vital breakthroughs makes him a great attack force for England. Ali's flexibility in taking up any batting position also provides skipper Eoin Morgan with options to experiment in the shorter format. Ali's calmness to hit the winning run from the third-last ball in England's sensational victory emphasised his importance to the side. — AFP



**KOLKATA:** West Indies cricketer Deandra Dottin bowls during a practice session ahead of the World T20 women's final against Australia, at the Eden Gardens stadium in Kolkata yesterday. — AFP

### WINDIES EYE HISTORY AGAINST AUSSIES IN WOMEN'S T20 FINAL

**KOLKATA:** West Indies captain Stafanie Taylor said yesterday the team had "nothing to lose" against three-time champions Australia in the women's World Twenty20 final in Kolkata. Making their first T20 final after failing in the last three semi-final attempts, Windies women have a chance to enter the history books with the men's team battling England for the big prize later today. It can be a rare hat-trick of titles for Windies cricket with the Under-19 boys lifting the youth World Cup in February.

"It's the first final for us. I know there's going to be some nerves around because it's the first time but we just have to embrace it, just try to be calm and composed and just go out there and fight for it," Stafanie told reporters on the eve of the final today.

"But we are not intimidated by them. They have won three titles, we have nothing to lose. We need to be positive and relaxed." The fifth-ranked West Indies built a steady momentum to bring out their best in the semi-final against a New Zealand side that had emerged unscathed in the league.

The Meg Lanning-led Australia is on familiar ground after winning three straight titles but the skipper admitted that "tomorrow is a new day". If records alone mattered, Australia would be the

overwhelming favourite to win today, having beaten the West Indies in all their eight previous T20 Internationals, but Lanning is wary of the challenge. "We're expecting a really tough battle tomorrow and the West Indies will certainly come out firing so we're looking forward to the challenge and make sure we're right to go right from the start," said Lanning on Saturday. Australia have peaked at the right time after losing to the Kiwis in the league and displayed its prowess with a five-run win over old foe England in New Delhi on Wednesday.

Lanning said the entire team was "excited" about playing the final at the iconic Eden Gardens.

#### Teams (from):

Australia: Meg Lanning (capt), Kristen Beams, Alex Blackwell, Nicola Carey, Lauren Cheatle, Sarah Coyte, Rene Farrell, Holly Ferling, Alyssa Healy, Jess Jonassen, Beth Mooney, Erin Osborne, Ellyse Perry, Megan Schutt, Elyse Villani.

West Indies: Stafanie Taylor (capt), Merissa Aguilera, Shemaine Campbelle, Shamilia Connell, Britney Cooper, Deandra Dottin, Afy Fletcher, Stacy-Ann King, Kyshona Knight, Kycia Knight, Hayley Matthews, Anisa Mohammed, Shaquana Quintyne, Shakera Selman, Tremayne Smartt. — AFP



**KOLKATA:** Air hostesses rehearse a Bollywood dance routine for the final during a West Indies training session at The Eden Gardens Cricket Stadium in Kolkata yesterday. — AFP

## NISHIKORI CONFIDENT IN DOWNING DJOKOVIC FOR MIAMI TITLE

**MIAMI:** Kei Nishikori enters today's ATP Miami Open final confident he can break a five-match losing streak to top-ranked Novak Djokovic and dethrone the two-time defending champion.

The 26-year-old Japanese sixth seed has dropped six of eight meetings with Djokovic, who will try to match Andre Agassi's career record with a sixth Miami crown. But Nishikori has been impressive on the Florida hardcourts, saving five match points to subdue French 16th seed Gael Monfils in the quarter-finals and dispatching other foes in straight sets, including Australian 20-year-old Nick Kyrgios in the semi-finals. "I've been

playing well. I'm not surprised I'm in the final," Nishikori said. "If I can maintain this tennis, I think I have a chance to win the title."

"I have confidence to play him. If I can be aggressive and play (well), I have a chance. I have to play 100 percent or 120 percent to have a chance to beat him, but I will try my best."

Djokovic, an 11-time Grand Slam champion, has won titles this year at Doha, Indian Wells and the Australian Open, where he ousted Nishikori in the semi-finals.

"He's at another level right now," said Nishikori of Djokovic. "He doesn't have

much weakness. He's very patient. He doesn't give you any free points.

"I have to focus almost every point if I want to beat him. That's the toughest thing against him. And he has been serving well. I have to return well, serve well—everything has to be there to beat him."

Djokovic has won 15th Miami matches and 29 of his past 30 overall. He's 27-1 this season and seeking his 63rd career title, plus a record 28th ATP Masters crown to surpass the mark he now shares with Rafael Nadal. The 28-year-old Serbian also could sweep the Miami-Indian Wells double for the third year in a row. "He's playing really good tennis. It's

going to be tough," Nishikori said. "I'm not going to do something crazy. I'm playing good. If I can maintain this, I have some chance."

"He has beaten me many times but every time is a different situation. I've been playing well. Physically I'm in good condition. I have nothing to lose playing against him. I'll try something different and we'll see what happens in the final."

Nishikori, who won his fourth consecutive Memphis title in February, has reached only his second ATP Masters final, the other coming in 2014 at Madrid.

"He does look very composed on the

court so I don't think he's going to feel any much different because we've played against each other so many times," Djokovic said.

Djokovic, who would own all four Grand Slam crowns if he wins the French Open final in June, has reached five of the past six US Open finals, but he was denied in 2014 when Nishikori beat him in a semi-final before falling to Marin Cilic in the final.

"He is somebody that has been around and played so many matches on the big stage," Djokovic said of Nishikori. "I don't see him being too overwhelmed or nervous." —AFP

### English Premier League results/table

AFC Bournemouth 0, Manchester City 4; Arsenal 4, Watford 0; Aston Villa 0, Chelsea 4; Norwich City 3, Newcastle United 2; Stoke City 2, Swansea City 2; Sunderland 0, West Bromwich Albion 0; West Ham United 2, Crystal Palace 2.
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	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leicester City	31	19	9	3	54	31	66
Tottenham Hotspur	31	17	10	4	56	24	61
Arsenal	31	17	7	7	52	30	58
Manchester City	31	16	6	9	56	32	54
West Ham United	31	13	12	6	49	37	51
Manchester United	30	14	8	8	38	27	50
Southampton	31	13	8	10	41	32	47
Stoke City	32	13	8	11	36	39	47
Chelsea	31	11	11	9	49	41	44
Liverpool	29	12	8	9	45	40	44
Albion	31	10	10	11	30	37	40
Everton	29	9	11	9	51	41	38
AFC Bournemouth	32	10	8	14	38	54	38
Watford	31	10	7	14	30	36	37
Swansea City	32	9	10	13	33	42	37
Crystal Palace	31	9	7	15	34	42	34
Norwich City	32	8	7	17	35	56	31
Sunderland	31	6	9	16	36	55	27
Newcastle United	31	6	7	18	31	58	25
Aston Villa	32	3	7	22	22	62	16

### LA LIGA RESULTS/STANDINGS

Atletico Madrid 5, Real Betis 1; Rayo Vallecano 2, Getafe 0.							
Barcelona	30	24	4	2	86	24	76
Atletico Madrid	31	22	4	5	51	15	70
Real Madrid	30	20	6	4	87	28	66
Villarreal	30	15	9	6	37	25	54
Celta Vigo	30	14	6	10	43	51	48
Sevilla	30	13	9	8	43	35	48
Athletic Club	30	14	5	11	48	39	47
Malaga	30	10	9	11	29	28	39

### BUNDESLIGA RESULTS/STANDINGS

Mainz 4, FC Augsburg 2; Bayern Munich 1, Eintracht Frankfurt 0; FC Ingolstadt 04 3, Schalke 04 0; Hannover 96 0, Hamburg SV 3; SV Darmstadt 98 2, VfB Stuttgart 2; Bayer Leverkusen 3, VfL Wolfsburg 0.							
Bayern Munich	28	23	3	2	66	13	72
Borussia Dortmund	27	20	4	3	64	26	64
Hertha Berlin	27	14	6	7	37	27	48
Bayer Leverkusen	28	13	6	9	42	33	45
Mainz	28	13	5	10	39	35	44
Schalke 04	28	13	5	10	39	38	44
Moenchengladbach	27	13	3	11	54	44	42
VfL Wolfsburg	28	10	8	10	39	37	38
FC Ingolstadt 04	28	9	9	10	26	31	36
Hamburg SV	28	9	7	12	34	38	34
Cologne	27	8	9	10	28	34	33
VfB Stuttgart	28	9	6	13	45	56	33
SV Darmstadt 98	28	6	11	11	30	43	29
Werder Bremen	27	7	13	16	36	54	28
FC Augsburg	28	6	9	13	35	47	27
Hoffenheim	27	6	9	12	30	43	27
Eintracht Frankfurt	28	6	9	13	29	44	27
Hannover 96	28	5	2	21	22	52	17



**OAKLAND:** Avery Bradley #0 and Amir Johnson #90 of the Boston Celtics try to steal the ball from Stephen Curry #30 of the Golden State Warriors at ORACLE Arena on Saturday in Oakland, California. — AFP

## WARRIORS' HOME WINNING STREAK ENDS AT 54 IN LOSS TO CELTICS

**OAKLAND:** Stephen Curry missed a long 3-pointer to tie it with 5.3 seconds left as the Golden State Warriors suffered their first home defeat in more than 14 months Friday night. The Warriors lost 109-106 to the Boston Celtics to snap an NBA-record 54-game home winning streak in the regular season at Oracle Arena that included 36 straight home wins to start this season. Golden State hadn't lost at home since a 113-111 overtime defeat to the Bulls on January 27, 2015. Isaiah Thomas made a driving layup with 8.3 seconds left on the way to 22 points for Boston. Curry finished with 29 points for the Warriors (68-8), who must win five of their final six games to break the 1995-96 Bulls' record of 72 wins. Curry's final look from long range fell short on a night he had been spectacular - 8 of 14 - from beyond the arc. Harrison Barnes grabbed the offensive rebound and missed on a desperation heave with 0.2 seconds left.

### CAVALIERS 110, HAWKS 108, OT

LeBron James had 29 points to pass another Hall of Famer on the NBA's career scoring list as the Cleveland Cavaliers recovered from blowing a big first-half lead to beat the Atlanta Hawks in overtime. James had 16 rebounds and nine assists, just missing a triple-double. The Cavaliers still lead Toronto, which won at Memphis, by 21/2 games in the race for the No. 1 seed in the Eastern Conference. James moved past Hall of Famer Oscar Robertson into 11th place on the NBA's scoring list when he scored on a layup late in the third quarter. Atlanta's Al Horford was called for goaltending on the play. The basket gave James 26,711 points. He began the night 21 points behind Robertson's 26,710 points.

### HORNETS 100, 76ERS 91

Kemba Walker had 27 points and 11 rebounds to help the Charlotte Hornets beat the Philadelphia 76ers, leaving them on the verge of clinching an Eastern Conference playoff spot. The Hornets (44-31) can wrap up a postseason berth for the second time in three seasons if Detroit beats Chicago tonight. Walker had three 3-pointers late in the fourth quarter to seal the win. Nicolas Batum overcame a shaky start and had 19 points and seven assists for the Hornets, who have won 14 of their last 17 games and positioned themselves to potentially host a playoff series. Jerami Grant and Hollis Thompson each had 17 points for Philadelphia.

### MAVERICKS 98, PISTONS 89

J.J. Barea scored 29 points and Dirk Nowitzki added 19 as the Dallas Mavericks beat the Detroit Pistons. With the win, Dallas remained tied with Utah for seventh place in the Western Conference. Even with the loss, Detroit leads eighth-place Indiana by a half-game and ninth-place Chicago by 1 1/2 games in the East. The Pistons visit the Bulls tonight. Marcus Morris led the Pistons with a season-high 29 points, while Andre Drummond had 12 points and 17 rebounds.

### KNICKS 105, NETS 91

Langston Galloway scored 14 of his 18 points in the fourth quarter as the New York Knicks beat the Brooklyn Nets to split the four-game season series with their city rival. Derrick Williams had 16 points in place of injured starter Kristaps Porzingis as the Knicks avoided dropping the series for the second straight season. Jerian Grant, also getting a start because of injury, fin-

ished with 14 points and Carmelo Anthony scored 13. Porzingis has a strained right shoulder and Jose Calderon is out with a deep thigh bruise. It's unclear if either will play again this season. Sean Kilpatrick scored 17 points and Brook Lopez had 16 in outplaying twin brother Robin on their 28th birthday, but the Nets fell apart in the fourth quarter of their fourth straight loss.

### BUCKS 113, MAGIC 110

Jabari Parker made a driving basket with 10.1 seconds left to put Milwaukee ahead and Tyler Ennis hit two free throws that sealed the Bucks' win over the Orlando Magic. Parker finished with 26 points, Giannis Antetokounmpo had a triple-double with 18 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists, and Greg Monroe and Khris Middleton each added 18 points as the Bucks snapped the Magic's three-game winning streak. Nikola Vucevic scored 22 points on 10-of-13 shooting and Victor Oladipo added 18 for the Magic.

### RAPTORS 99, GRIZZLIES 95

DeMar DeRozan scored 27 points and Kyle Lowry added 22 as the Toronto Raptors held off the Memphis Grizzlies. Terrence Ross was key in the fourth quarter, scoring all 12 of his points in the final period, making four 3-pointers in the fourth. Jonas Valanciunas had 11 points, 14 rebounds and a career-best seven blocks as the Raptors won their second straight and third in the past four. Zach Randolph led seven Memphis players in double figures with 16 points as the Grizzlies lost their fifth straight.

### JAZZ 98, TIMBERWOLVES 85

Gordon Hayward scored 22 points as the Utah Jazz defeated the Minnesota Timberwolves to hold on to their place in the Western Conference playoff race. The Jazz (38-38) are tied with the Dallas Mavericks for the final two slots

and are a full game ahead of the Houston Rockets. Andrew Wiggins paced Minnesota with 24 points, while Karl-Anthony Towns chipped in 17 and 11 rebounds.

### HEAT 112, KINGS 106

Luol Deng made a 3-pointer with 45.7 seconds left as the Miami Heat held on to beat the Sacramento Kings, avoiding a second straight late-game collapse. Two nights after blowing a big lead and losing in overtime to the Lakers, the Heat nearly let another one get away before Deng's shot from the left corner halted Miami's slide and helped move coach Eric Spoelstra's club one step closer to the playoffs despite being without leading scorer Dwayne Wade. Wade was injured during Wednesday's loss to the Lakers and watched the game from Miami's bench in street clothes. Gerald Green started in place of Wade and scored a season-high 30 points. Darren Collison scored 26 points for Sacramento.

### WIZARDS 106, SUNS 99

Markieff Morris overcame a rude welcome in his Phoenix return by scoring 21 points to help the Washington Wizards beat the Suns. John Wall added 22 points, eight rebounds and 10 assists, and Brandon Beal scored 21 points for the Wizards, who moved within 2 1/2 games of idle Indiana for the final Eastern Conference playoff spot. Morris, whose tumultuous 4 1/2-year Phoenix stint ended when he was dealt to the Wizards on Feb. 18, was booed in introductions and every time he touched the ball. But he shot 8 of 14 and grabbed nine rebounds as the Wizards rallied to snap a two-game losing streak. Mirza Teletovic had 24 points and 12 rebounds off the bench for the Suns, who got 14 points on 6-of-22 shooting by rookie Devin Booker in their fifth straight loss. — AP

## FIVE-STAR ATLETICO CLOSE GAP ON BARCA

**MADRID:** Antoine Griezmann struck twice as Atletico Madrid moved to within six points of Barcelona at the top of La Liga with a comprehensive 5-1 win over Real Betis yesterday. Barca host Real Madrid in what is set to be an emotional Clasico later as the Catalan giants pay homage to legendary former player and coach Johan Cruyff, who died last week at the age of 68.

Atletico and Barca also meet at the Camp Nou in the first leg of their Champions League quarter-final on Tuesday and Diego Simeone's men will travel with plenty of confidence after one of their most complete performances of the season. Fernando Torres opened the scoring with a lovely dinked finish reminiscent of his winner for Spain in the Euro 2008 final over Germany after racing onto Koke's fine through ball nine minutes before half-time. Griezmann doubled Atletico's advantage five minutes later thanks to a huge error from Betis' keeper Antonio Adan as the French international's scooped pass into Koke's path slipped through his legs and rolled into the net. Adan made amends with great saves

from Torres and Griezmann as Atletico threatened to run riot before the break.

Right-back Juanfran was Atletico's hero with the winning penalty in a marathon shootout against PSV Eindhoven to reach the last eight of the Champions League last month.

And the Spanish international netted his first goal from open play for nearly three years when he slammed home Angel Correa's fine cross just after the hour mark.

Jan Oblak looked well on course to register a 20th clean sheet in 31 Liga games this season, but a rare slip from the Slovenian goalkeeper presented the ball at Ruben Castro's feet to slam home his 16th goal of the season and reduce Betis' deficit.

Yet, Atletico took just three minutes to restore their three-goal lead as more great and unselfish work from Correa teed up Griezmann to fire home his 26th goal of the season despite Adan's best efforts. And Griezmann turned provider in stoppage time when he squared for substitute Thomas Parthey to round off the scoring. — AFP



**MUNICH:** Frankfurt's US defender Timothy Chandler (L) and Bayern Munich's French midfielder Franck Ribery vie for the ball during the German Bundesliga first division football match between FC Bayern Munich and Eintracht Frankfurt in Munich, southern Germany yesterday. — AFP

## NORWICH JOY AS OLSSON PUSHES NEWCASTLE TOWARDS RELEGATION



**NORWICH:** Norwich pushed Newcastle closer to relegation and boosted their own hopes of Premier League survival as Martin Olsson's last-gasp strike clinched a dramatic 3-2 win yesterday.

Alex Neil's side had twice squandered the lead in their crunch clash at Carrow Road, with Newcastle substitute Aleksandar Mitrovic levelling following Timm Klose's opener and then again with four minutes remaining after Dieumerci Mbokani's blistering strike.

But Sweden defender Olsson bagged his first Norwich goal since September 2014 in stoppage-time to send the Canaries six points clear of the relegation zone and leave second bottom Newcastle six points adrift of safety with a game in hand.

Newcastle's eighth successive away league loss means they are without a win in their last six matches and have taken one point from their three games since Rafael Benitez replaced the sacked Steve McClaren.

Norwich's first home league win in six attempts was perfectly timed with fixtures against relegation rivals Crystal Palace and Sunderland in their next two matches. Benitez had made five changes after the derby draw against Sunderland, with Karl Darlow replacing Rob Elliot following the Republic of Ireland goalkeeper's knee ligament injury sustained on international duty this week. It was just Darlow's second Premier League appearance and his first since December, when he was at fault for West Brom's winner. If he had any nerves on his return to action, there was early encouragement for Darlow as he dived low to his right to keep out Steven Naismith's low shot.

### UNDER SEIGE

Newcastle were under seige early on and Jonny Howson crossed towards Mbokani, who fired home only to see his effort ruled out for offside.

Norwich were thrashed 6-2 by Newcastle at St James' Park in October, but the Canaries were the dominant force this time.

Darlow denied Robbie Brady from the edge of the penalty area before instinctively sticking out a foot to block Mbokani's close-range strike from Naismith's cut-back.

Norwich deservedly broke the deadlock in first-half stoppage-time when Newcastle's sloppy marking allowed Swiss defender Klose to rise unchallenged to head Brady's free-kick past Darlow.

Benitez responded by sending on Ayoze Perez at half-time and Newcastle looked re-energised as they threatened an equaliser through Andros Townsend's effort.

Benitez's next move was to introduce Mitrovic and the Spaniard's switch paid immediate dividends as the Serbian forward leapt to meet Townsend's superb cross with a header that drew Newcastle level in the 71st minute.

Parity lasted less than three minutes however and Congo striker Mbokani did all the damage himself, driving into the left side of the area and smashing a powerful shot high past Darlow.

It was an emotional moment for Mbokani who, on his way home from international duty, was outside the Zaventem Airport terminal in Brussels when two terrorist bombs exploded and killed 26 people last month.

With four minutes left, Newcastle thought they had rescued a point when Norwich midfielder Gary O'Neil handled in the area after the ball bounced up awkwardly and Mitrovic stepped up to slam home the penalty. But that set the stage for a remarkable finale as Olsson tried his luck with an angled shot that crept past several defenders before nestling in the bottom corner to spark wild celebrations all around Carrow Road. — AFP



**BOURNEMOUTH:** Manchester City goalkeeper Willy Caballero makes a save during their English Premier League match against Bournemouth at the Vitality Stadium, Bournemouth, England, yesterday. — AP

## DE BRUYNE PUTS MAN CITY IN GEAR FOR PSG TRIP



**BOURNEMOUTH:** Kevin De Bruyne scored on his injury comeback as Manchester City warmed up for Wednesday's Champions League quarter-final against Paris Saint-Germain by crushing Bournemouth 4-0 yesterday.

Short of form and goals before this match, City roared back from the international break looking well rested and produced a dominant performance against a Bournemouth team who had no answer to their movement and craft.

Three goals in the opening 19 minutes, from Fernando, De Bruyne and Sergio Aguero, effectively won City the game and they could have had more before Aleksandar Kolarov scored a fourth in the final seconds.

The result, and West Ham United's draw at home to Crystal Palace, strengthened City's hold on fourth place in the Premier League table.

It keeps them on course to return to the Champions League next season, which was beginning to seem unlikely after a run of four defeats in six league games.

Bournemouth have now failed to beat City in any of their six league meetings, and have yet to score against them at home, but with their safety almost certain, they could regard this as a learning experience. City were without the injured Joe Hart, Vincent Kompany, Yaya Toure, Fabian Delph and Raheem Sterling, but Belgium winger De Bruyne returned to the starting XI after two months out with a knee problem.

The absences were hardly felt, although Bournemouth missed an excellent chance to take the lead after only five minutes when Josh King, sent clear by Lewis Grabban, pulled his shot harmlessly across goal.

Two minutes later, City were ahead. Jesus

Navas's right-wing corner was hit with a low trajectory that took the ball past attackers and defenders until it reached Fernando, who hooked it past goalkeeper Artur Boruc from 12 yards out.

In the 12th minute it was 2-0. Charlie Daniels, the Bournemouth left-back, was culpable when he tried to dribble out of defence, but once he had given the ball away, City's quality took over.

### FERNANDINHO HITS BAR

Aguero flicked the ball over the back four to David Silva, who cushioned a lay-off for De Bruyne to volley home. The Belgian nearly made it 3-0 to City in the 17th minute, swerving a first-time shot inches over the crossbar after Silva had sent Gael Clichy scampering down the left to cross low.

But a third did come two minutes later when Aguero outjumped Adam Smith at the far post to nod Navas's cross past Boruc, with Steve Cook just unable to clear.

Next it was almost Ferdinandinho's turn as he curled a shot over Boruc from 22 yards, only to see the ball strike the crossbar.

Bournemouth had some chances. Willy Caballero dived low to his right to scoop away a header from Cook, while Grabban headed over from Smith's cross and Matt Ritchie saw a shot blocked after some neat juggling.

But City were never in danger and threatened to start the second half as they had the first, De Bruyne's volley forcing Boruc to save low to his left. De Bruyne was withdrawn short of the hour and Silva followed shortly afterwards, but Manuel Pellegrini's men continued to create openings.

Aguero just failed to reach a cross by Pablo Zabaleta and Boruc had to block a shot by substitute Kolarov with his legs.

As City turned their attention towards Paris, gaps opened in their defence, but Eunan O'Kane was unable to take the best, scuffing his shot into the advertising boards.

Kolarov had the final word, dribbling into the penalty area and hitting an angled shot high beyond Boruc. —AFP

Live Matches on TV (Local Timings)	
<b>ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE</b>	
Leicester v Southampton	15:30
Man United v Everton	18:00
<b>SPANISH LEAGUE</b>	
Athletic de Bilbao v Granada	13:00
Malaga v RCD Espanyol	17:00
SD Eibar v Villarreal	19:15
Sevilla v Real Sociedad	21:30
<b>ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE</b>	
Udinese Calcio v Napoli	13:30
Atalanta v AC Milan	16:00
Fiorentina v Sampdoria	16:00
SS Lazio v AS Roma	16:00
Chievo Verona v Citta	16:00
Genoa v FC Frosinone	16:00
Internazionale v Torino	21:45
<b>GERMAN BUNDESLIGA</b>	
Monchengladbach v Hertha	16:30
TSG Hoffenheim v FC Koln	18:30
<b>FRENCH LEAGUE</b>	
Nantes v Lille OSC	15:00
Bastia v de Marseille	18:00
Lorient v Lyonnais	22:00



**LONDON:** Arsenal's German midfielder Mesut Ozil (C) passes the ball during the English Premier League football match between Arsenal and Watford at the Emirates Stadium in London yesterday. — AFP

## ARSENAL BEAT WATFORD TO STAY IN TITLE HUNT



**LONDON:** Arsenal kept their slender Premier League title hopes alive with a 4-0 victory over Watford at the Emirates Stadium yesterday that exacted some revenge for their FA Cup defeat by Quique Sanchez Flores's side last month.

Alexis Sanchez's fourth-minute goal set the tone for a one-sided win that was completed by Alex Iwobi's 38th-minute effort, Hector Bellerin's strike early in the second half and Theo Walcott's last minute tap-in.

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger had insisted before this game his side, currently in third place, could yet win the title if they won their remaining eight games.

And this victory moved them to within eight points of leaders Leicester City, 24 hours before Claudio Ranieri's side face Southampton.

Veteran French boss Wenger had admonished Mesut Ozil earlier this week after the Germany international claimed Arsenal had "screwed up" their title challenge. Having been clear favourites at the turn of the year, it was hard to disagree with Gunners playmaker Ozil's contention but Wenger insisted this was no time for any of his players to allow their belief to weaken.

He knew better than anyone though that the only way to strengthen the view that Arsenal might yet challenge for the championship would be to build on their impressive victory at Everton last time out.

That win, coming in the wake of the Champions League exit at Barcelona and the FA Cup defeat by Watford, prompted as much frustration.

Nevertheless, the victory appeared to have lifted the squad and having named an unchanged line-up, Wenger saw his side

make the ideal start against Watford.

### BRIEF REPRIEVE

With Sanchez starting on the right, Arsenal immediately threatened to open up the visitors with the Chile international delivering a teasing cross that would have presented Danny Welbeck with a routine chance to open the scoring but for a late intervention by Craig Cathcart.

Watford's reprieve was brief, however. Moments later Iwobi picked out Sanchez and the winger rose above left-back Nathan Ake to head goalwards, finishing at the second attempt after Watford goalkeeper Heurelho Gomes blocked the initial effort.

Watford looked like a team with little to play for and who had one eye on the upcoming FA Cup semi-final with Crystal Palace.

Having proved formidable opponents in last month's cup tie at the Emirates, the Hornets were unable to halt the Gunners' relentless attacking moves that should have seen Arsenal out of sight by half time.

Iwobi drew a fine save from Gomes with a curling shot moments before Welbeck's effort was deflected wide after the striker was teed up by Ozil.

Arsenal's second goal finally came in the 38th minute with Sanchez this time playing the role of provider, pulling a low cross back towards the penalty spot where Iwobi connected with a first time effort that beat Gomes.

Flores had seen enough and withdrew the ineffective Etienne Capoue after just 41 minutes, sending the midfielder straight down the tunnel and back to the dressing room. The Watford manager made a further change half-time, replacing Odion Ighalo with Ikechi Anya.

Flores's switches had little effect and three minutes after the restart Arsenal scored their third goal. Sanchez was again involved, exchanging passes with Bellerin before delivering a cross that was cleared by Allan Nyom. The ball fell to Bellerin whose left-foot shot deflected off Sebastian Prodl past Gomes. —AFP

## GAYLE EARNS PALACE 2-2 DRAW AT 10-MAN WEST HAM



**LONDON:** Cheikhou Kouyate's dismissal proved the turning point as West Ham United's charge towards a Premier League top-four finish was slowed in a 2-2 draw with Crystal Palace yesterday.

After Damien Delaney had punished a mistake by Adrian to put Palace ahead in the 15th minute, West Ham equalised through Manuel Lanzini and then went ahead courtesy of another glorious free-kick from Dimitri Payet.

But Kouyate was shown a straight red card by referee Mark Clattenburg for a high foot on Dwight Gayle in the 67th minute and eight minutes later Gayle pounced on an error by Angelo Ogbonna to equalise.

Slaven Bilic's West Ham are now three points below Manchester City, who occupy the fourth and final Champions League qualifying berth, with seven matches of the season remaining.

Palace remain seven points above the relegation zone, but although they are now without a win in 14 league games, manager Alan Pardew will have drawn encouragement from their second-half fightback.

With Emmanuel Adebayor sustaining

a knock on international duty with Togo, Bakary Sako started up front for Palace and it was his free-kick that led to the opening goal.

Sako's cross appeared to be drifting away from danger, only for West Ham goalkeeper Adrian to palm it back into play, and Delaney headed home from a narrow angle.

### FIRST GOAL

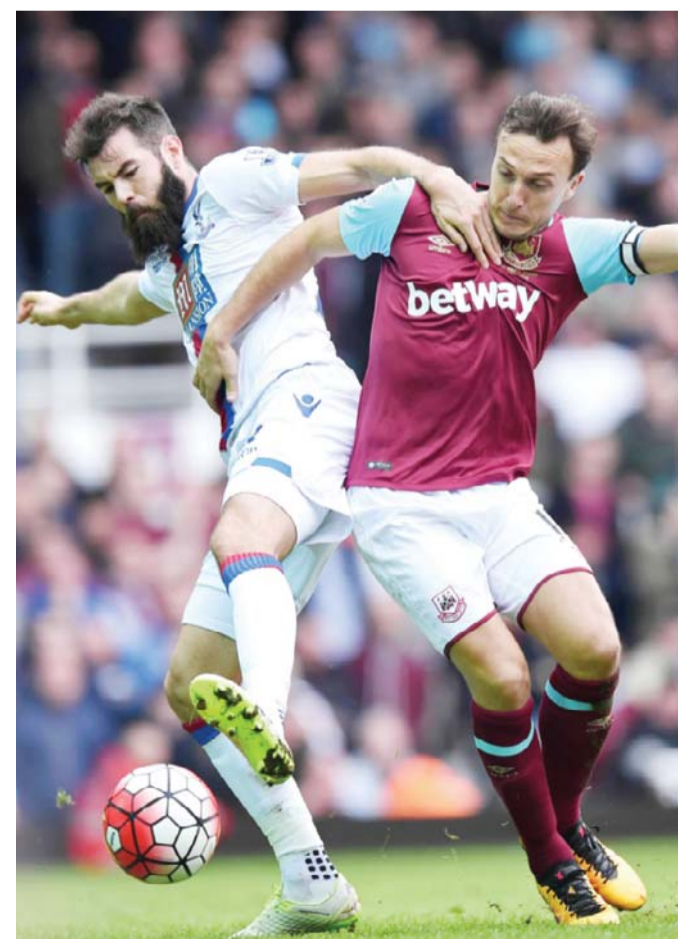
It was the first goal West Ham had conceded at home in the league since January, but they quickly composed themselves and equalised three minutes later when Lanzini rifled in from Diafra Sakho's knock-down.

The wind in their sails, West Ham twice went close to taking the lead, only for visiting goalkeeper Wayne Hennessey to thwart first Sakho and then Payet.

Jason Puncheon squandered a glorious chance to put Palace ahead when he miscued from Pape Souare's cross, before Sakho headed over at the other end after Hennessey failed to claim a Payet corner.

Payet's set-pieces have been integral to West Ham's fine form and he gave another display of his skill with a dead-ball four minutes from half-time by arcing an inch-perfect free-kick into the top-right corner.

Hennessey prevented Lanzini from swelling West Ham's lead, before Aaron Cresswell produced a brilliant goal-line clearance to thwart Sako at the other end after Kouyate's back-pass had sold Adrian short. —AFP



**UPTON PARK:** West Ham United's English midfielder Mark Noble (R) vies with Crystal Palace's Welsh midfielder Joe Ledley during the English Premier League football match between West Ham United and Crystal Palace at The Boleyn Ground in Upton Park, in east London yesterday. The game finished 2-2. —AFP

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BARCELONA: Real Madrid's defender Sergio Ramos (C) vies with Barcelona's Croatian midfielder Ivan Rakitic during the Spanish league "Clasico" football match FC Barcelona vs Real Madrid CF at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona yesterday. — AFP

## RONALDO ENDS BARCELONA'S 39-GAME UNBEATEN RUN

BARCELONA: Cristiano Ronaldo struck the winner as 10-man Real Madrid came from behind to end Barcelona's 39-game unbeaten run 2-1 in El Clasico at the Camp Nou yesterday. Gerard Pique's towering header put the hosts in front on the night they honoured legendary former player and coach Johan Cruyff. Yet, Karim Benzema quickly levelled before Ronaldo fired home five minutes from time after Madrid captain Sergio Ramos had seen the 21st red card of his career.

Victory reduces Barca's lead over third-placed Madrid to seven points with seven games remaining, but Atletico Madrid closed the gap on the leaders to six points with a 5-1 thrashing of Real Betis earlier on Saturday. There was an emotive homage to Cruyff before kick-off with over

90,000 fans holding up a display reading "Thank you Johan" alongside a Barca jersey with the number 14 the Dutch great adorned during his playing career. Once the action got underway, Barca started by far the better and only an incredible miss by Luis Suarez let Madrid off the hook on 10 minutes. Neymar unselfishly squared for his Uruguayan strike partner, but Suarez failed to make any connection from his low cross with the goal at his mercy. Keylor Navas was then forced to make a smart save from Ivan Rakitic as Madrid struggled to contain wave upon wave of Barca attack. The hosts were enraged midway through the half when Lionel Messi looked to have been brought down by Ramos right on the edge of the area, but referee Alejandro Jose Hernandez waived play on

with Ramos already having been booked. Madrid grew into the game as the first-half progressed and finally threatened the Barca goal when Ronaldo's shot was beaten away by Claudio Bravo before Gareth Bale blazed a volley over from a narrow angle. Barca started on the front foot again after the break and Navas made a brilliant save to prevent Messi's cheeky chipped effort floating in at the far post.

Yet, that save only momentarily denied Barca as Pique rose highest to power home Rakitic's corner on 56 minutes. The lead lasted just six minutes, though, as Benzema swivelled by blast home Toni Kroos's deflected cross into the bottom corner. Bale had the chance to turn the game on its head, but his tame effort on his favoured left foot

was easily held by Bravo as Madrid again threatened on the counter-attack.

The Welshman did have the ball in the net nine minutes from time, but was incredibly unfortunate to be penalised for a push on Jordi Alba as he headed in. Ronaldo then fired against the bar and Bravo saved a one-on-one with Bale as Madrid's pace on the break began to tear a tired-looking Barca apart. The visitors' hopes of a famous win looked to have gone when Ramos was finally given his marching orders for a second booking after chopping down Suarez seven minutes from time.

Yet, just two minutes later Ronaldo struck the winner as he controlled Bale's cross to the far post before slotting under Bravo. — AFP



KEY BISCAIYNE: Svetlana Kuznetsova of Russia and Victoria Azarenka of Belarus pose for photographers after the women's final on Day 13 of the Miami Open presented by Itau at Crandon Park Tennis Center yesterday in Key Biscayne, Florida. — AFP

## AZARENKA WINS WTA MIAMI OPEN TITLE

MIAMI: Two-time Australian Open champion Victoria Azarenka captured her third WTA Miami Open title yesterday by defeating two-time Grand Slam champion Svetlana Kuznetsova 6-3, 6-2 in the final.

Azarenka, who also took the trophy in 2009 and 2011, won her 20th career title and third of the year after Brisbane in January and two weeks ago at Indian Wells, where she beat top-ranked Serena Williams in the final. "I have so many great memories here," said Azarenka. "It's always a pleasure to come here. Hot tennis is amazing this month." The 26-year-old from Belarus became only the third woman to sweep the Miami-Indian Wells double in the same season, after Steffi Graf in 1994 and 1996 and Kim Clijsters in 2005.

Azarenka will jump from eighth to fifth in the world rankings today, her first time in the top five since March 2014. Azarenka dedicated the title to her parents, Alla and Fedor, saying, "They gave me roots to know where I come from and wings to fly so I could be here."

Kuznetsova, the 2006 Miami champion, will jump from 19th to 13th in the world rankings next week.

Azarenka won her fourth meeting in a row over 30-year-old Kuznetsova without dropping a set to seize a 5-4 lead in the career rivalry. Azarenka broke Kuznetsova five times in the first set, including the final game when the Russian sent a forehand wide to surrender the set after 40 minutes.

Azarenka, broken three times herself but crucially able to hold serve in the second game, had five double faults and connected on only 48 percent of her first serves in the opening set, winning just 40 percent of those points and taking only 36 percent on her second serve.

But Kuznetsova, while hitting 75 percent of her first serves in the match, also won only 45 percent of those points and just 14 percent off her second serve. Both struggling players kicked balls at times in their first-set frustration. — AFP

## IBRAHIMOVIC SCORES HAT TRICK AS PSG BEAT NICE

PARIS: Zlatan Ibrahimovic scored a hat trick to take his tally to 30 French league goals as Paris Saint-Germain warmed up for its Champions League match against Manchester City with a convincing 4-1 win over Nice yesterday.

Having already secured a fourth consecutive league title, PSG hosts the English Premier League club on Wednesday in the first leg of their quarterfinal.

Ibrahimovic, the league top-scorer, put PSG ahead of defender David Luiz's assist. He gave the hosts a 2-1 lead from a direct free kick after Hatem Ben Arfa leveled the score with a superb solo goal.

Luiz made it 3-1 after the interval, and Ibrahimovic sealed the win eight minutes from time with a clean finish, matching his best league season for goals. PSG, which has yet to advance past the Champions League quarterfinals since Qatari investors took over the club in 2011, increased its

lead over Monaco to 25 points.

After a tribute to the late Johan Cruyff, who died last month of cancer, Ibrahimovic created the first chance of the match with a curled low shot that ended wide from Lucas' pass on the edge of the box. The imposing striker, who is also the league's best passer with 11 assists, connected with a long ball from Luiz to open the scoring. Ibrahimovic controlled the ball with a subtle first touch inside the box then slotted it into the goal with a powerful shot past keeper Yoan Cardinale.

But PSG could not hold onto its lead for more than three minutes as Ben Arfa leveled. The former France international, who said before the game he wanted to pay a tribute to Cruyff at the Parc des Princes by showing his great technique, collected the ball at the halfway line, ran through PSG's midfield and fired a 20-meter strike into the top corner. — AP



PARIS: Paris Saint-Germain's French midfielder Blaise Matuidi (L) vies with Nice's French forward Hatem Ben Arfa (C) during the French L1 football match between Paris Saint-Germain and Nice at the Parc des Princes stadium in Paris yesterday. — AFP

## SPURS HELD AT LIVERPOOL



LONDON: Leaders Leicester City can go seven points clear in the Premier League after closest rivals Tottenham Hotspur dropped points in a frantic 1-1 draw at Liverpool yesterday. Harry Kane struck in the 63rd minute to cancel out Philippe Coutinho's opener for Liverpool, leaving Spurs four points below Leicester, who host Southampton today.

Having finished the first half strongly, Liverpool took the lead in the 51st minute at Anfield when Coutinho exchanged passes with Daniel Sturridge before steering a shot into the bottom-right corner.

But after Son Heung-Min had volleyed a fraction wide, Spurs levelled when Christian Eriksen's cut-back found Kane, who brilliantly rolled Dejan Lovren before slamming home his 22nd goal of the campaign.

There were chances thereafter at both ends—Liverpool goalkeeper Simon Mignolet thwarting Eriksen and Mousa Dembele, Coutinho drilling inches wide—but to Leicester's delight, Spurs could not find a winner. — AFP

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CALIFORNIA: Union workers hold signs during a demonstration in support of a proposal to raise the California minimum wage to \$15 by 2022 in Oakland. —AFP

## 'FIGHT FOR \$15' MINIMUM WAGE POWERS ON MINIMUM-WAGE MOVEMENT SETS SIGHTS ON MORE US STATES

**NEW YORK:** California and New York - where almost 1 in 5 Americans live - are on their way to raising their minimum wage to \$15 an hour, and the activists who spearheaded those efforts are now setting their sights on other similarly liberal, Democratic-led states. Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon, Rhode Island and Washington are among the states with active "Fight for \$15" efforts, and even economic experts who oppose the increased rate see it gaining momentum. "There is lots of pressure to do this," said Douglas Holtz-Eakin, a former Congressional Budget Office director who is now president of the conservative American Action Forum, which says big minimum-wage increases cost jobs.

The idea faces headwinds in more conservative and rural states in the South and the Midwest. But activists believe the movement is picking up steam, even if their two big victories so far were achieved in two highly receptive places: trend-setting, liberal, labor-friendly states with a high cost of living and yawning gaps between rich and poor, especially in New York City and Silicon Valley. "In the beginning, it looked impossible," said Alvin Major, a fast-food worker and leader of the Fight for \$15 campaign. But now, "what happened in New York, in California, it's going to spread around the country."

Since the \$15-an-hour movement planted roots with a 2012 New York City fast food workers strike, it has gained ground amid the broader debate over income inequality. Cities

such as Seattle, Los Angeles and San Francisco have recently agreed to go to \$15 in the coming years, and Oregon's minimum wage is headed to \$14.75 in Portland.

Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders has been pushing for a \$15-an-hour standard nationally, while President Barack Obama has called more generally for raising the minimum wage. The federal minimum is currently \$7.25; 29 states and Washington, D.C., have set theirs higher. Sanders' primary opponent and a former New York senator, Hillary Clinton, has supported raising the federal minimum wage to \$12. Her campaign website says she also believes "we should go further than the federal minimum through state and local efforts, and by workers organizing and bargaining for higher wages, such as the Fight for 15..."

New York and California are now on track to have the highest. California Gov. Jerry Brown, a Democrat, is set Monday to sign a measure boosting the current \$10 rate to \$15 by 2022.

In New York, Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo and legislative leaders have agreed on a more complex plan. The \$9 minimum would gradually rise to \$15 in New York City by the end of 2018 and then in some prosperous suburbs by the end of 2021, but only to \$12.50 in 2020 in the rest of the state, with further increases to \$15 tied to inflation and other economic indicators. The measure headed to Cuomo's desk after passing the Legislature on Friday.

New York's graduated approach stemmed from negotiations with Republicans who worried such a sharp increase would devastate businesses, particularly in the more fragile economy outside the New York metropolitan area.

Similar dynamics may play out in other parts of the country. While \$15 may seem reasonable in high-paying areas, "it's a much harder lift in low-wage areas," said Jared Bernstein, senior fellow at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and former adviser to Vice President Joe Biden. Also, California and New York have politically influential unions, strong community organizing activity and Democratic politicians eager to translate the movement into legislation. "That's not going to happen in some states, particularly in the South and maybe some of the Midwest," said Peter Dreier, a politics professor at Occidental College. Idaho lawmakers, for example, recently passed a measure barring local governments from raising the statewide minimum of \$7.25, and Republicans in Arizona are trying to do the same.

The income gap has been widening in every state for at least 30 years but is particularly pronounced in states with large financial or information technology industries, according to economists Mark Price of the Keystone Research Center and Estelle Sommeiller of the Institute for Research in Economics and Social Sciences in France. The top 1 percent of New York taxpayers, for instance, earned 40 times the average income of the state's remaining 99 percent in 2011, according to research from University of California at Berkeley economist Emmanuel Saez. Nationally, the top 1 percent made 24 times that of everyone else; in California, the top earned 26 times more. Economists have long debated the impact of raising the minimum wage, and some recent research has found that modest increases seldom cost many jobs. But the jumps to \$15 are larger than those economists have tested in the past, and there are fears of widespread job losses in some places.

In New York City, Joseph Sferrazza worries that paying \$15 will cost him his bakery, La Bella Ferrera. The rate is nearly double what he now pays his employees, mostly students working part time. "The rent is so high, the profit margin is already so low, I don't see how we can make it work," he said. "You can only charge so much for a cookie." But \$15 an hour would be a 50 percent raise for Maria Velez, 29, who makes \$10 an hour working at a children's program and helps support her parents and grandparents. "This city is crazy expensive and only getting worse," she said. If the boost took effect immediately, "it would make my life and my family's life better - but in five years? I can't say." —AP

## UK URGES TALKS ON STEEL CRISIS WITH CHINA AT G20

**LONDON:** Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron wants Britain and China to work together to tackle over-capacity in the steel industry and that the G20 could be a good forum to address it later in the year, his spokesman said yesterday. Cameron, who spoke to Chinese President Xi Jinping during a Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, is trying to salvage Britain's steel industry after Tata Steel put its British plants up for sale, putting thousands of jobs at risk.

The government has said it is working to broker a deal with potential buyers after Tata Steel sought to end its almost decade-long venture in Britain, which employs 15,000 people but has been hit by high costs and Chinese competition. Steelmakers in Britain pay some of the highest energy costs and green taxes in the world, but the government says the fundamental problem facing the industry is the collapse in the price of steel, caused by overcapacity in China. Britain imported 826,000 tons of Chinese steel in 2015, up from 361,000 two years earlier, according to the International Steel Statistic bureau. China said on Friday it would impose import tariffs of up to 46 percent on some steel, including a type of hi-tech steel imported from Japan, South Korea and the European Union.

Meanwhile, British authorities have appealed for time to save the country's biggest steel maker after parent company Tata Steel said it couldn't promise to keep plants open while it seeks a buyer. In a sign of the worsening political fallout from the decision, Prime Minister David Cameron's office said he would chair a meeting of key

ministers Thursday to underscore his commitment to a sustainable future for steel in Britain. But Britain's government refused the demands of the opposition Labour Party to recall Parliament from Easter recess to discuss the crisis. Koushik Chatterjee, an executive director for Tata Steel, said the UK business had become "quite a burden for the company." "The view the board took finally was we can't sustain this kind of exposure," he told the BBC.

UK Business Minister Anna Soubry said that the government is considering "all options," including management and unions participating in a takeover. When asked about nationalizing the plants, she said this would be difficult because of rules against state aid for business. "We want to establish a good period so we can sell it on," she told the BBC. "That is our priority, to look for a buyer. But we are being realistic about the state of the industry." Britain's steel industry has been hit hard by cheap Chinese imports, which have depressed prices, and manufacturers have asked the government and European Union to impose anti-dumping duties.

Tata Steel, which operates the country's biggest steel plant at Port Talbot in south Wales, is losing 1 million pounds (\$1.4 million) a day in its UK operations. Some 19,000 people are employed by Tata across 14 sites in Britain, according to Len McCluskey, leader of the Unite union. "This is the time for the government to say categorically, without hesitation, that these assets will be taken into safe-keeping by the nation, because without them our economy will not flourish," he said. —Agencies



CALIFORNIA: Chuck Hammers owner of Pizza My Heart, displays one of his pies in San Jose, Calif. California state lawmakers voted on Thursday, on a proposal to gradually raise the minimum wage to a nation-leading \$15 an hour by 2022. —AP



WALES: The Tata steel plant dominates the skyline over the roof tops of Port Talbot, Wales. UK authorities say they will look at all viable options to keep the British steel industry at the heart of its manufacturing base after Tata Steel announced it may sell its UK assets. The sale could put thousands of jobs at risk. —AP



## MASSIMO DUTTI PRESENTS TRENDY SPRING SUMMER 2016 COLLECTION

**KUWAIT:** The 2016 Spring Summer collection showcased the unique craft of the legendary Spanish brand, Massimo Dutti to its VIP customers on Thursday, March 30th at the Massimo Dutti store. This event also brought together an audience of long awaited fans and media partners at its store in the popular hot-spot, The Avenues Shopping mall. The event kicked off with an introduction to the new seasonal collection and its inspired looks that cater to fashion palette of men, women and children.

While enjoying the classic ambience within the store, this year's trendy SS16 display was well received by its viewers as it conceptualised a true woman's style through its colour and sleek patterns while the men's collection inspired by the fifties in Cuba, embodied a neutral appearance with a dash of varied

bright colours. The B&G line presented earthy hues with crochet work, tweed sweaters and cardigans for the girls and

denim shirts and light-weight feather parkas for the boys as part of the wider collection. The Spring Summer 2016 col-

lection which falls under four lines namely The Industry collection, The Asilah Collection, The Atlas Collection

and The Saint Malo Collection can be viewed exclusively at its stores in The Avenues and Marina mall.



## ANBANG'S STARWOOD RETREAT IS SETBACK FOR CHINA'S CAMPAIGN

### ANBANG'S CASE COULD MAKE US BOARDS MORE SKEPTICAL

**NEW YORK:** Anbang Insurance Group Co's unexpected withdrawal this week of its \$14 billion offer to buy Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc is a wider blow to the unprecedented drive by Chinese companies to acquire North American and European assets. Fresh disclosures by Starwood on Friday showed how Anbang's hard-charging Chairman Wu Xiaohui backed out of the deal even after calling Starwood Chief Executive Thomas Mangas as early as March 29 to assure that the Anbang consortium needed "a couple of days" to finalize its proposal.

Instead, on the afternoon of March 31 a representative of Anbang consortium's legal counsel Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP delivered the unexpected news to Starwood's legal counsel Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP that the Chinese-led consortium is abandoning the multi-billion dollar bid for Starwood. That brought down the curtains on two weeks of high drama during which Anbang and its consortium partners J.C. Flowers and Chinese private equity firm Primavera Capital came within striking distance of owning some of the world's best known hotel brands including Sheraton and Westin hotels.

"Though Anbang has decided to withdraw from the Starwood situation, don't yet count it out," Primavera chairman Fred Hu said. From semiconductors and industrial

equipment, to financial services and real estate, China's insatiable appetite for Western companies has pushed the country's announced outbound cross-border M&A to \$101.1 billion year-to-date, nearly surpassing the full-year record of \$109.5 billion set last year. Yet Anbang's abrupt move, which came after Starwood said on Monday that the Chinese insurer's latest offer was "reasonably likely" to be superior to a cash-and-stock deal with Marriott International Inc, added fuel to concerns that many Chinese companies may not be able to deliver on their acquisition expectations.

"To succeed in the US, Chinese companies will have to adapt to American styles of governance and transparency. It will be difficult to close mega deals without a more open style, so we may see more modest deals until China changes," said Erik Gordon, a professor at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business. To be sure, the largest M&A deal of this year thus far globally is by a Chinese company: China National Chemical Corp's agreement to acquire Swiss seeds and pesticides group Syngenta for \$43 billion. Several Chinese companies, however, are having trouble convincing Western peers that they are a credible M&A counterparty.

Earlier this week, for example, US gene-sequencing products maker Affymetrix Inc rejected an offer by some of its former executives that

was financed by a Chinese investment firm, even though they offered more money than an existing deal with Thermo Fisher Scientific Inc, on the basis of financing and regulatory risks. Anbang's case could make corporate boards in the United States and Europe more skeptical about the ability and motives of Chinese buyers, investment bankers and lawyers said.

#### Concerns over intentions

Starwood had declared Anbang's previous \$78 per share cash offer superior to Marriott's on March 18. This meant that Starwood deemed it to be fully financed, and that it expected it to clear the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, an interagency panel that reviews deals to ensure they do not harm national security. Marriott, however, raised its bid on March 21, and Starwood responded with a new \$82.75 bid disclosed on March 28. Anbang was expected to firm up that offer in order for Starwood to deem it superior.

Anbang said on Thursday that it withdrew its offer due to "market considerations", without elaborating. One of Anbang's private equity partners, Primavera chairman Hu, said Anbang walked away to avoid a protracted bidding war, even though Marriott had not disclosed a higher offer. "We have little independent insight into what happened, but based on what

Starwood has told us, Anbang did not deliver the same kinds of undertakings or arrangements that would have allowed the Starwood board to conclude that they were credible at \$82.75," Marriott Chief Executive Arne Sorenson told investors and analysts on a conference call.

Anbang became concerned that Starwood had no intention of declaring its latest offer superior and was stalling for time for Marriott to come in with a new offer, according a source close to Anbang's consortium. Sources close to Starwood, however, said Anbang did not deliver the assurances on financing its latest offer it had said it would on Monday, and had since had no communication with Starwood until its withdrawal on Thursday.

Chinese financial magazine Caixin reported last month that China's insurance regulator would likely reject a bid by Anbang to buy Starwood, since it would put the insurer's offshore assets above a 15-percent threshold for overseas investments. Defending Starwood decision to declare Anbang's first bid as superior, Starwood Chief Executive Mangas said he had found both Anbang and its chairman Wu to be "very credible." "They moved mountains to persuade our board. They moved quickly and were incredibly shrewd in how they worked with us to get a deal done quickly," Mangas said. — Reuters

## LOWER-PRICED TESLA ORDERS HIT 198,000

**HAWTHORNE:** Demand for Tesla Motors' new lower-priced electric car surprised even the company's CEO Friday as 198,000 people plunked down \$1,000 deposits to reserve their vehicles. "Definitely going to need to rethink production planning," a surprised CEO Elon Musk said on his Twitter feed. Musk unveiled the car Thursday night at a design studio near Los Angeles. It starts at \$35,000 and has a range of 215 miles per charge, which is far more than most people drive each day.

The orders came from across the globe even though the car isn't scheduled for sale until late in 2017. But they could jeopardize a \$7,500 US electric car tax credit that many buyers are counting on to reduce the price. The tax credits gradually phase out after a company hits 200,000 in US sales. A Tesla spokeswoman wouldn't say how many of the 198,000 orders came from the US Thursday night, Musk said Tesla had 115,000 orders since the company started taking them earlier in the day in Australia.

There were long lines at Tesla stores from Hong Kong to Austin, Texas, reminiscent of crowds at Apple stores for early models of the iPhone. But the number kept rising into Friday. "Thought it would slow way down today, but Model 3 order count is now at 198k," Musk tweeted during the afternoon, saying the wait time for the car is "growing rapidly." The news pushed Tesla shares to a Friday closing price of \$237.59, up 3.4 percent from Thursday. The Model 3 is less than half the cost of Tesla's previous models, and its range is about double what drivers get from current competitors in its price range, such as the Nissan Leaf and BMW i3.

On Twitter, Musk estimated that the average selling price of a Model 3 with options would be around \$42,000. So the sales would bring more than \$8.3 billion in revenue to Tesla. Prototypes looked like a shorter version

of Tesla's Model S sedan. The Model 3 has a panoramic glass roof and an elongated hood. Inside, it seats five and has the same large touchscreen dashboard as other Teslas. It also has Tesla's suite of semi-autonomous driving features, including automatic lane changing and lane keeping. Musk said it will accelerate from zero to 60 in less than 6 seconds.

Tesla has a history of missing deadlines for its vehicles to hit the market, but Musk said Thursday that he feels "fairly confident" that the Model 3 will come out next year. The lower-priced car is the most serious test yet of 13-year-old Tesla's ability to go from niche player to a full-fledged automaker. It could be the car that finally makes electric cars mainstream - or consumers could continue to be skeptical that electric cars will work for everyday use. In the US, they still make up less than 1 percent of annual sales. Either way, the Model 3 is already changing the industry, spurring competitors to speed development of electric cars. General Motors Co is set to start selling the Chevrolet Bolt electric car at the end of this year with a similar price tag and a 200-mile range. Hyundai's Ioniq, which has a 110-mile electric range and could match Tesla on price, goes on sale this fall. Audi will follow with an electric SUV in 2018.

The orders show there's real, underlying demand for reasonably priced electric cars with high range, says Edmunds.com senior analyst Jessica Caldwell. Customers put down \$1,000 knowing that they'll probably have to wait two years to get their cars, leading Caldwell to believe it's more about the cultural phenomenon of Tesla. "You're not seeing people wait in long lines to purchase a Chevy Bolt, considering it comes out much sooner and the range is about the same," she said. During his Thursday night presentation, Musk gave details on how electric cars can fit into people's lives, she said. "You felt like the lifestyle was attainable in his talk," she said. — AP

### EXCHANGE RATES

#### AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES	
Japanese Yen	2.711
Indian Rupees	4.593
Pakistani Rupees	2.889
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.083
Nepali Rupees	2.848
Singapore Dollar	225.900
Hongkong Dollar	39.417
Bangladesh Taka	3.859
Philippine Peso	6.581
Thai Baht	8.630
GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	80.763
Qatari Riyal	83.194
Omani Riyal	786.642
Bahraini Dinar	804.300
UAE Dirham	82.457
ARAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	34.400
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	34.479
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.413
Tunisian Dinar	151.730
Jordanian Dinar	426.730
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.018
Syrian Lira	2.158
Morocco Dirham	31.863
EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES	
US Dollar Transfer	302.700
Euro	347.800
Sterling Pound	433.920
Canadian dollar	234.650
Turkish lira	108.110
Swiss Franc	319.640
Australian Dollar	233.308
US Dollar Buying	301.500

GOLD	
20 Gram	247.540
10 Gram	126.690
5 Gram	64.190

#### UAE EXCHANGE CENTRE WLL

CURRENCIES	TELEX TRANSFER PER 1000
Australian Dollar	201.91
Canadian Dollar	219.82
Swiss Franc	306.95
Euro	336.85
US Dollar	299.90
Sterling Pound	431.04
Japanese Yen	2.67
Bangladesh Taka	3.817
Indian Rupee	4.375
Sri Lankan Rupee	2.083
Nepali Rupee	2.732
Pakistani Rupee	2.860
UAE Dirhams	0.08161
Bahraini Dinar	0.7970
Egyptian Pound	0.03819
Jordanian Dinar	0.4265
Omani Riyal	0.7788
Qatari Riyal	0.08269
Saudi Riyal	0.07994

#### DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	303.250
Canadian Dollar	230.325
Sterling Pound	429.535
Euro	339.765
Swiss Franc	297.075
Bahrain Dinar	802.260
UAE Dirhams	82.805
Qatari Riyals	84.020

Saudi Riyals	81.545
Jordanian Dinar	427.185
Egyptian Pound	34.053
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.063
Indian Rupees	4.538
Pakistani Rupees	2.891
Bangladesh Taka	3.857
Philippines Peso	6.540
Cyprus pound	577.595
Japanese Yen	3.675
Syrian Pound	2.375
Nepalese Rupees	3.835
Malaysian Ringgit	76.000
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.930
Thai Bhat	9.565
Turkish Lira	105.085

#### BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
<b>Europe</b>		
British Pound	0.424803	0.433803
Czech Korune	0.004791	0.016791
Danish Krone	0.042369	0.047369
Euro	0.0339733	0.0347733
Norwegian Krone	0.032627	0.037827
Romanian Leu	0.086832	0.086832
Slovakia	0.009020	0.019020
Swedish Krona	0.033397	0.038397
Swiss Franc	0.309900	0.320100
Turkish Lira	0.101292	0.111592
<b>Australasia</b>		
Australian Dollar	0.224540	0.236040
New Zealand Dollar	0.202984	0.212484
<b>America</b>		
Canadian Dollar	0.227397	0.235897
US Dollars	0.298600	0.303100

US Dollars Mint	0.299100	0.303100
<b>Asia</b>		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003441	0.004015
Chinese Yuan	0.045322	0.048822
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036955	0.039705
Indian Rupee	0.004290	0.004680
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002627	0.002807
Kenyan Shilling	0.003104	0.003104
Korean Won	0.000253	0.000268
Malaysian Ringgit	0.073735	0.079735
Nepalese Rupee	0.002869	0.003039
Pakistan Rupee	0.002684	0.002964
Philippine Peso	0.006489	0.006769
Sierra Leone	0.000067	0.000073
Singapore Dollar	0.221636	0.227635
South African Rand	0.014666	0.023166
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001696	0.002276
Taiwan	0.009178	0.009358
Thai Baht	0.008290	0.008840

<b>Arab</b>		
Bahraini Dinar	0.796349	0.804349
Egyptian Pound	0.030698	0.035816
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000192	0.000252
Jordanian Dinar	0.422934	0.430434
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.000251
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020649	0.044649
Nigerian Naira	0.001248	0.001883
Omani Riyal	0.779814	0.785494
Qatar Riyal	0.082433	0.083643
Saudi Riyal	0.079833	0.080783
Syrian Pound	0.001283	0.001503
Tunisian Dinar	0.148494	0.156494
Turkish Lira	0.101292	0.111592
UAE Dirhams	0.081433	0.082582
Yemeni Riyal	0.001368	0.001448



**BANGKOK:** This picture taken shows a construction site (center) along the current extension of the Metropolitan Rapid Transit (MRT) subway 'Blue Line' into Bangkok's historic district of Chinatown, next to Hua Lamphong's central railway station (left). The Blue Line is the MRT's only line currently in operation, running from the central Hua Lamphong train station to the north of Bangkok and was opened in 2004 as Bangkok's second public transit system. The MRT serves hundreds of thousands of passengers each day, allowing them to escape the city's famously-chaotic traffic, and currently has 18 operational stations along 20 kilometers of underground route. — AFP



**IOWA:** Rick Ring (left) and Corinne Schmitt-Bries attach a panel to a John Deere 1050K Crawler Dozer at John Deere Dubuque Works in Dubuque, Iowa. The Institute for Supply Management on Friday reported on US factory activity during March. — AP

# INVESTOR DERBY: GOLD WON FIRST QUARTER, STOCKS WIN LONG TERM

## ANOTHER LESSON IN LONG-TERM INVESTMENTS

**NEW YORK:** Another quarter, another lesson in long-term investments. Economic uncertainty around the world and a brutal start to the year for stocks helped send the price of gold surging to its best quarter in 30 years. But an analysis of 10 common investments by the Associated Press shows that regular investors who put a steady amount of money every month into an account like a 401(k) would have been far better off in stocks or bonds. In just the first three months of 2016 the biggest gold exchange traded fund soared 16 percent.

Gold's track record over the last decade is far from glittering, though. Last quarter's jump allowed the gold fund to cut only a bit into the long string of losses it has turned in for years.

Over the last five years, an investor who had faithfully put in \$500 a month into that gold fund lost money on the investment. Investors who did the same over the last 10 years are only slightly in the black. And they have only about two-thirds what they would if they had simply invested in a broad US stock market fund.

The AP analysis, using data from FactSet, shows that the top-performer over the past 10 years for regular investors - those who invest a portion of their income every month and hold for the long term - has been US stocks. That period includes the entire Great Recession, which caused stocks to lose more than half their value and terrified retirement savers. Someone who put in \$500 every month into a broad US

stock fund over the last decade would have \$101,181 today, a gain of \$41,181 on the \$60,000 they invested over that time.

A small subset of the US stock market, real-estate investment trusts, has performed even better, a surprise considering the real-estate bubble is what got the economy into its mess. But REITs rebounded strongly following the financial crisis because they tend to pay relatively big dividends, and investors were hungry for income in a low-interest rate world. Someone who had the patience and wherewithal to keep putting \$500 monthly into a REIT fund over the last decade would have \$107,918 today on that \$60,000 investment.

The weakest performers over the last

decade have been foreign stock funds, particularly those that focus on China, Brazil and other developing economies. These emerging-market stock funds were some of the hottest investments in the mid-2000s, but they have struggled mightily over the last year amid slowing economic growth. Periodic investments in an index fund focused on emerging markets would have lost money over the last year and five years, and over 10 years would have generated the smallest gain of the 10 investments studied by AP. — AP

## GREECE WANTS IMF EXPLANATIONS OVER WIKILEAKS REPORT

**ATHENS:** Greece yesterday demanded "explanations" from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) after Wikileaks said the lender sought a crisis "event" to push the indebted nation into concluding talks over its reforms. Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras said he would write to IMF chief Christine Lagarde and reach out to European leaders after the website published what it said was a transcript of a teleconference in which IMF officials complained that Athens only moves decisively when faced with the peril of default. An "event" was therefore needed to drive the threat of default and get the Greeks to act, the officials say in the document dated March 19, and released by the whistleblowing website yesterday. The nature of such an "event" is not specified.

The officials also express concern that Britain's

referendum in June on EU membership will hold up the negotiations, predicting that the vote will halt the talks on Athens' latest massive international bailout "for a month". The Greek government reacted strongly to the report, saying it wanted the IMF to clarify its position. "The Greek government is demanding explanations from the IMF over whether seeking to create default conditions in Greece, shortly ahead of the referendum in Britain, is the fund's official position," spokeswoman Olga Gerovassili said in a statement. Tsipras' office added: "The Prime Minister will immediately send an official letter to Christine Lagarde over the issue."

"We need an event"

Those taking part in the leaked discussion were Iva Petrova and Delia Velculescu, who have been representing the IMF in the negotiations

with Greece, and Poul Thomsen, director of the Fund's European Department. In it, Thomsen allegedly voices exasperation with the slow pace of talks on the economic reforms Athens has agreed to carry out in exchange for a new 84-billion-euro (\$95 billion) international bailout agreed in July after months of bruising negotiations that saw Greece teeter on the brink of a euro-zone exit.

The IMF has yet to officially sign onto Greece's latest bailout and is making its participation conditional on the fact that no ground is yielded on the reforms needed by Athens, especially on pensions. "In the past there has been only one time when the decision has been made and then that was when (the Greeks) were about to run out of money seriously and to default," Thomson is quoted as saying in the transcript. — AFP

## News

in brief

### Iran seeks \$2.5 billion to modernize its oil tankers

**DUBAI:** Iran is seeking \$2.5 billion investment to modernize its oil tankers fleet following the lifting of sanctions against Tehran, managing director of National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC) was quoted as saying by state news agency IRNA yesterday. Iran emerged from years of economic isolation after crippling sanctions were lifted in January in return for Tehran complying with steps to curb its nuclear ambitions. Reuters reported last month that two Chinese firms were pushing for multi-billion dollar deals with Iran to modernize its shipping fleet and build a high-speed railway. "To expand Iran's oil tanker activities, \$2.5 billion will be invested in it," said Ali Akbar Safaei, managing director of National Iranian Tanker Company (NITC). NITC has around 70 tankers but many of them are ageing and require valid insurance, testing, inspection and certification, known as ship classification, to be able to ply international waters again.



### Fiat used by Pope in NY fetches \$300,000

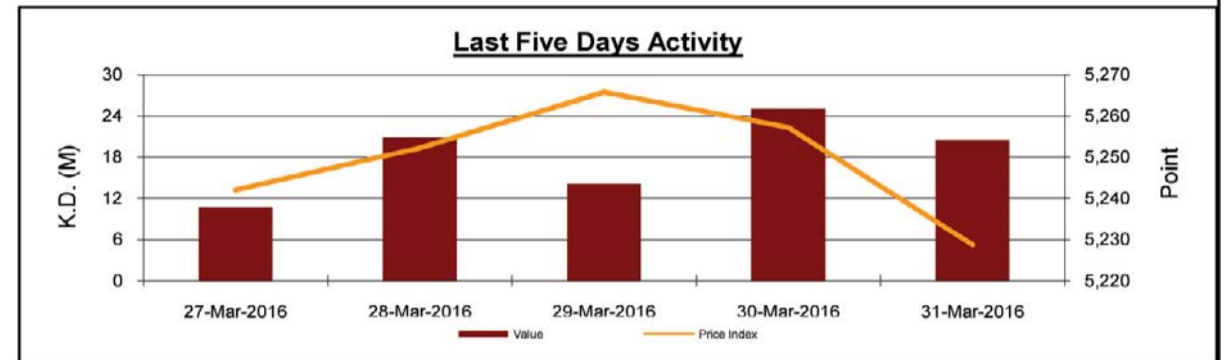
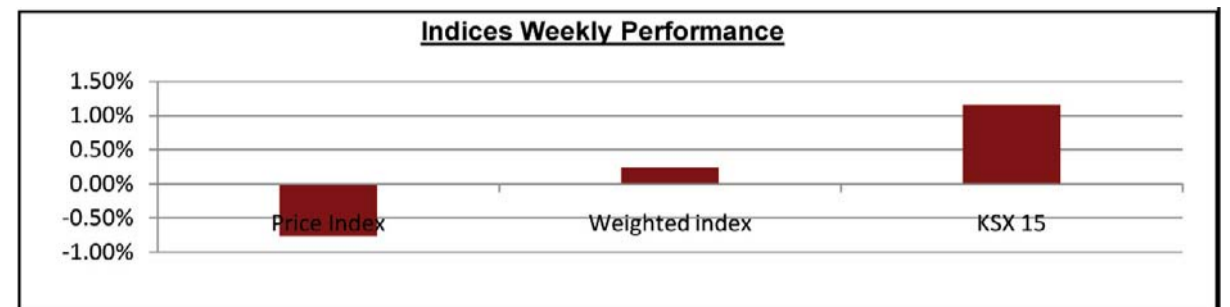
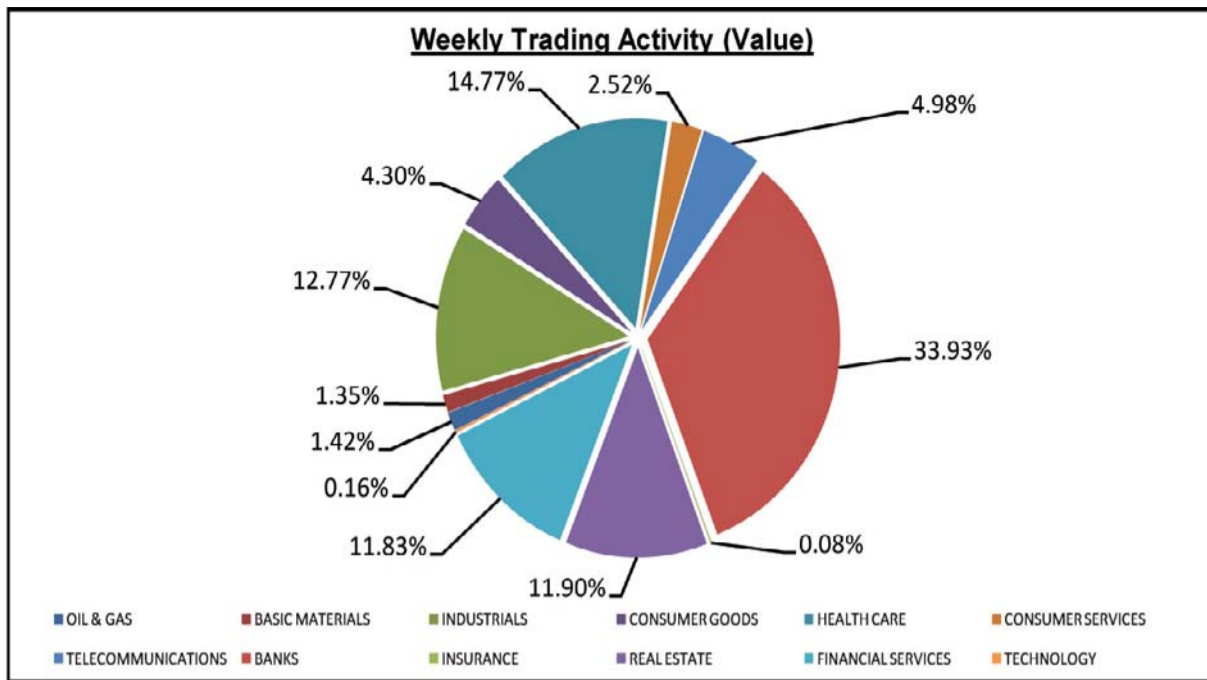
**NEW YORK:** A four-door hatchback Pope Francis used while visiting New York in September has fetched \$300,000 at auction, said the website that held the sale. The black Fiat 500 Lounge was one of two such mini Popemobiles that ferried the pontiff around the Big Apple. At more than 12 times its base price, it was snapped up by millionaire businessman Miles Nadal, who already owns more than 130 cars and motorcycles, according to the Charitybuzz auction website. Proceeds will go to Catholic schools and charities in the New York diocese, as well as two international agencies: Catholic Relief Services and the Catholic Near East Welfare Association. "In a couple of occasions, (Pope Francis) was in the Popemobile. For the rest of his time, when he was not in the Popemobile, this is how he traveled around in the motorcade," New York Archdiocese spokesman Joseph Zwilling told AFP earlier this week. The second Fiat will also be used to raise money for charitable causes, although plans have not been set, he said.

## Announcement to Burgan Bank Shareholders (Burgan Bank Customers only)

Burgan Bank would like to advise its shareholders who maintain accounts with Burgan Bank and wish to receive Burgan Bank dividends through an electronic transfer to their accounts, instead of receiving the dividends through cheques, to kindly visit any of Burgan Bank branches, after filling out and signing the designated Kuwait Clearing Company form available at Kuwait Clearing company website, via the link below: [http://www.maqasa.com/pdf/epayment\\_div.pdf](http://www.maqasa.com/pdf/epayment_div.pdf)

Note: Shareholders must select the option "Electronic Transfer Service (Dividends)" in the above mentioned form.





# KSE ENDS WITH MIXED PERFORMANCE

## BAYAN INVESTMENT WEEKLY REPORT

**KUWAIT:** Kuwait Stock Exchange (KSE) ended last week with mixed performance. The Price Index closed at 5,228.75 points, down by 0.75% from the week before closing, the Weighted Index increased by 0.24% after closing at 359.82 points, whereas the KSX-15 Index closed at 850.50 points up by 1.15%. Furthermore, last week's average daily turnover increased by 41.08%, compared to the preceding week, reaching K.D 18.25 million, whereas trading volume average was 203.90 million shares, recording an increase of 44.32%.

For the KSE weekly performance, both of the Weighted and KSX-15 indices were able to record limited gains by the end of the week, however the Price Index couldn't invert its direction to close in the red zone, whereas the low-priced and small-cap stocks were subject to quick speculative operations for profit collection, which had a main role in pushing the index thus couldn't increase by the end of the week. Also, the market was subject to profit collection operations that concentrated on the leading stocks, and was a reason to shrink the gains of the Weighted and KSX-15 indices.

Moreover, the stock market initiated its first session of the week with a grouped losses for the three indicators, affected by the selling pressures and the profit collection operations executed on many large-cap and small-cap stocks, as the Weighted Index recorded its lowest level during the month of March to close at 355.62 point, in light of a noticeable refrain from purchase by some traders, which also caused the trading activity to drop in general.

On the second session of the week, the three stock market indicators were able to invert its direction to close in the green zone, supported by the active purchasing operations on most of the stocks especially the large-cap ones, which were subject to selling pressures and strong profit collection operations in the previous session, which pushed the trading activity to rise, especially the cash liquidity that grew by 94.16%. Furthermore, the active purchasing trend continued in the mid-week session, as it concentrated on the small-cap and low-priced stocks, which enhanced the profits of the Price and Weighted indices, whilst the selling pressures that the leading stocks were subject to pushed KSX-15 Index to decrease, in light of relatively active trading, especially the volume which increased by 47.45% by the end of the session.

The mixed performance of the three indicators continued on Wednesday's session, as the Price Index's performance declined due to the selling pressures and the profit collection operations witnessed by the small-cap stocks, especially the ones are threatened to be stopped from being traded for not disclosing its 2015 financial results, while the purchasing and collection operations witnessed by the leading stocks pushed the Weighted and KSX-

	Last Week	Previous Week	Ch. %
Volume	1,019,512,662	706,418,616	44.32%
Value (K.D)	91,260,735	64,687,296	41.08%
Deals	19,206	15,558	23.45%

	Last Week	Previous Week	Weekly Ch. %	Annual Ch. %
	23,007,550,421	23,192,207,557	-0.80%	-8.94%

Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch. (fils)	Ch. %
EXCH	1,500.00	130.00	1,370.0	1053.85%
MAYADEEN	23.50	20.50	3.0	14.63%
MARKAZ	90.00	80.00	10.0	12.50%
BPCC	530.00	480.00	50.0	10.42%
ITHMR	37.00	34.00	3.0	8.82%

Company	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Ch. (fils)	Ch. %
MADAR	16.00	20.50	-4.5	-21.95%
ENERGYH	43.50	53.00	-9.5	-17.92%
MARAKEZ	22.50	27.00	-4.5	-16.67%
MASSALEH	43.50	51.00	-7.5	-14.71%
AQAR	60.00	70.00	-10.0	-14.29%

15 indices to close in the green zone, with a noticeable improvement in the cash liquidity levels in the market.

On the end of week session, the Price Index continued its downward direction which

added to its daily losses, and the Weighted Index couldn't continue its previous session's increase to follow the Price Index and close in the red zone, as a result to the strong selling operations witnessed by the low-priced stocks

		Price Index	Weighted Index	KSX 15
Weekly	Last week	5,228.75	359.82	850.50
	Previous week	5,268.45	358.97	840.79
	Change (Point)	-39.70	0.85	9.71
	Change (%)	-0.75%	0.24%	1.15%
Annual	Last year	5,615.12	381.70	900.43
	Change (Point)	-386.37	-21.88	-49.93
	Change (%)	-6.88%	-5.73%	-5.55%

which did not disclose its 2015 financial results until the end of the day, which increased the traders' fears of such companies getting stopped and pushed them to liquidate such stocks, meanwhile KSX-15 Indicator maintained a part of its gains due to the limited purchasing operation witnessed by the leading stocks.

On the other hand, the number of companies that disclosed its 2015 financial results reached 156 company by the end of last week, representing 82.98% of the total 188 listed company in the primary market, realizing around KD 1.62 billion, with an increase of 1.82% from 2014 results for the same companies, where it was around KD 1.59 billion. By the end of last week, the market capitalization for the listed companies in the primary market reached around KD 23.01 billion, decreasing by 0.80% from its value in a week earlier, where it was KD 23.19 billion. As far as KSE annual performance, the price index ended last week recording 6.88% annual loss compared to its closing in 2015, while the weighted index decreased by 5.73%, and the KSX-15 recorded 5.55% loss.

whereas its index closed at 954.61 points. Whereas, in the second place, the Banks sector's index closed at 809.61 points or 0.26% increase. On the other hand, the Technology sector headed the losers list as its index declined by 5.98% to end the week's activity at 905.09 points. The Health Care sector was second on the losers' list, which index declined by 3.59%, closing at 912.92 points, The Insurance sector was third on the losers' list, which index declined by 1.43%, closing at 1,072.13 points. The least declining sector was the Consumer Goods, as its index closed at 1,067.90 points at a loss of 0.08%.

### Sectors' Activity

The Real Estate sector dominated a total trade volume of around 374.53 million shares changing hands during last week, representing 36.74% of the total market trading volume. The Financial Services sector was second in terms of trading volume as the sector's traded shares were 23.29% of last week's total trading volume, with a total of around 237.47 million shares. On the other hand, the Banks sector's stocks were the highest traded in terms of value; with a turnover of around KD 30.97 million or 33.93% of last week's total market trading value. The Health Care sector took the second place as the sector's last week turnover was approx. KD 13.48 million representing 14.77% of the total market trading value.

### Sectors' Indices

Ten of KSE's sectors ended last week in the red zone, while the other two recorded growth. Last week's highest gainer was the Basic Materials sector, achieving 2.28% growth

Sector	Volume	To Market %	Value	To Market %
OIL & GAS	70,085,163	6.87%	1,292,289	1.42%
BASIC MATERIALS	4,712,453	0.46%	1,235,753	1.35%
INDUSTRIALS	156,606,407	15.36%	11,658,430	12.77%
CONSUMER GOODS	4,282,114	0.42%	3,919,775	4.30%
HEALTH CARE	14,664,331	1.44%	13,478,278	14.77%
CONSUMER SERVICES	14,260,300	1.40%	2,300,471	2.52%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	19,836,026	1.95%	4,542,033	4.98%
BANKS	121,178,976	11.89%	30,966,004	33.93%
INSURANCE	135,025	0.01%	72,235	0.08%
REAL ESTATE	374,530,498	36.74%	10,856,950	11.90%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	237,473,193	23.29%	10,795,306	11.83%
TECHNOLOGY	1,748,176	0.17%	143,211	0.16%

Sector	Last Week Closing	Previous Week Closing	Weekly Ch. %	Annual Ch. %
OIL & GAS	787.08	792.00	-0.62%	-3.87%
BASIC MATERIALS	954.61	933.30	2.28%	-3.22%
INDUSTRIALS	984.99	990.75	-0.58%	-5.56%
CONSUMER GOODS	1,067.90	1,068.80	-0.08%	-2.47%
HEALTH CARE	912.92	946.90	-3.59%	-1.34%
CONSUMER SERVICES	923.86	930.24	-0.69%	-8.41%
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	607.03	608.58	-0.25%	1.40%
BANKS	809.61	807.55	0.26%	-10.75%
INSURANCE	1,072.13	1,087.68	-1.43%	-4.87%
REAL ESTATE	822.01	830.85	-1.06%	-12.62%
FINANCIAL SERVICES	563.42	565.80	-0.42%	-5.37%
TECHNOLOGY	905.09	962.66	-5.98%	10.36%

# ETIHAD AIRWAYS RENEWS PARTNERSHIP WITH SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

**ABU DHABI:** Etihad Airways and the Sydney Opera House yesterday announced the extension of their Major Partnership for a further five years. The extension will take Etihad Airways well into the Opera House's Decade of Renewal - launched in its 40th Anniversary year in 2013 to ensure the World Heritage-listed 'masterpiece of human creativity' continues to inspire new generations of audiences and visitors. Today's announcement comes at an exciting time for Etihad Airways and Australia's number-one tourist destination.

In addition to being named Air Transport World's Airline of the Year 2016, Etihad Airways was last year voted World's Leading Airline\* for the seventh consecutive year. The Abu Dhabi-based airline is also rapidly increasing its global footprint through groundbreaking innovations in product and service, major investments in destination marketing, and brand campaigns.

Meanwhile, Opera House Renewal is well underway, from a suite of building projects that will touch all four corners of Jørn Utzon's masterpiece to a renewed focus on integrating the experience audiences and visitors enjoy at the Opera House - transformative arts and culture, the greatest contemporary and classical music, inspirational speakers, creative shows for children and families, insightful tours and incredible Australian cuisine.

Under the terms of the new deal, Etihad Airways will continue as the Sydney Opera House's Major Partner and Opening Nights Presenting Partner. The airline will support Opera House programming by flying guest artists and performing arts companies to Sydney from across its extensive network of 116 international destinations. It will also leverage its investment in Australian tourism - through its partnership with Tourism Australia

- to bring more visitors to Sydney and to the Sydney Opera House.

NSW Deputy Premier and Minister for the Arts Troy Grant said: "The Sydney Opera House is a world-renowned performance venue and continuing a partnership with the award-winning global airline Etihad Airways makes perfect sense. "I would like to congratulate both the Sydney Opera House and Etihad Airways on this agreement that will deliver countless benefits to both organizations."

"The Sydney Opera House has attracted commercial sponsorship in a way that has brought serious innovation and investment in Australia's most recognized building while maintaining its heritage and integrity."

Sydney Opera House CEO Louise Herron AM said: "We began our partnership in the Opera House's 40th Anniversary year, which was an important milestone for us. Three years on we are now seeing huge momentum across Renewal, so this is the perfect time for us to explore how we can continue to work together, building on our shared commitment to Australia and its central role in global culture and the arts."

"We want everyone's experience of the Opera House to be as inspiring as the building itself. Working closely with Etihad Airways we want to explore how they can best support a more integrated artistic and visitor experience as we prepare the Opera House for future generations." Etihad Airways General Manager Australia and New Zealand Sarah Built said extending the partnership with Sydney Opera House for another five years underscored the airline's commitment to Australian tourism and to the arts and culture worldwide. "The partnership with the Sydney Opera House, one of the world's architectural wonders, is especially significant for Etihad Airways."

"Together with the five-year, \$30 million deal we signed with Tourism Australia last year, it multiplies our efforts to promote travel to Australia and to elevate Sydney's profile as one of the world's great tourist and cultural destinations in key markets. "It also increases our investment in Australia's cultural sector enabling us to support the programming of arts and entertainment experiences that enrich the lives of local citizens as well as visitors to the city. "The partnership is a natural fit because both organizations share many of the same values, including a shared passion for excellence and inspirational guest experiences." Voted World's Leading Airline at World Travel Awards, the Oscars of the travel industry for seven consecutive years from 2009-2015.





## WARBA BANK ASSEMBLY APPROVES FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OPERATING INCOME RISES TO KD 26.3 MILLION

**KUWAIT:** Warba Bank is the fastest growing bank in Kuwait. It offers a variety of integrated Sharia-compliant investment banking services on both the local and international levels. Its General Assembly meeting was held in Hall No 4, Courtyard, Marriott at 11:30 am on Wednesday 30 March 2016. On the conclusion of that meeting the General Assembly agenda, the reports of the Board of Directors and the Auditors, and the financial statements for the fiscal year that ended on 31 December 2015 were approved. Moreover, the General Assembly, inter alia, approved the election of the Board of Directors for the third cycle (2016-2018), and recruitment of the members of the Fatwa and Sharia Supervisory Board for the year 2016, and the Bank's Auditors for the fiscal year 2016.

Jassar Dakheel Al-Jassar, the Vice Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer said: "The bank will continue its medium-term strategic plan, which is based on a range of objectives, taking into account the rapid economic changes faced by the global economy, particularly in the Gulf region in light of the sharp drop in oil prices. This plan has made the bank stand out of the Islamic banks in the local market. The strategy strengthens the bank's position and contributes to its success in achieving a leading position in the Islamic banking sector during its very first five years and extending its roots at the local level and maintaining a solid financial status that provides protection for its shareholders."

Al Jassar also pointed out that in 2015 the bank achieved significant growth in all aspects and that was accompanied with significant growth in its operating income, which rose by about KD 7.7 million and amounted to KD 26.3 million, compared with KD 18.5 million in 2014, a growth of 42%. Furthermore, deposits rose by 25% to reach KD 433.5 M compared with KD 346.1 million in 2014.

### Profit doubled

"The bank's profit before provisions doubled - reaching KD 4.1 M, compared with KD 1.9 million in 2015, achieving significant growth rate of 108%. The net profit amounted to KD 1 M in 2015 - an increase of 770% per cent over 2014. The bank's financing portfolio grew by 40 per cent so as to reach KD 543.8 M at the end of 2015, compared with KD 388.2 at the end of 2014. The bank's total assets reached KD 776.1 M at the end of 2015, compared with KD 594.8 M at the end of 2014 with a growth rate of 30%," Al-Jassar added.

Al-Jassar elaborated that although Warba



Jassar Dakheel Al-Jassar seen during the General Assembly meeting.

Bank is a relatively young entity in the Islamic banking industry, in 2015 Moody's Investors Services awarded it the top credit rating Baa2/Prim-2 for deposits in local and foreign currency accompanied with a stable future. This is a great achievement of the Bank and reflects its promising future.

He added: "Based on our goal to make Warba Bank the favorite Islamic banking corporation of all customers, we make sure to offer new and unique services and products, and continue to meet the financing and investment needs of our customers, and provide the same in accordance with the highest quality standards. We launched several Sharia-compliant banking products and services. In addition to the bank's focus on operational activities, it also focuses on investment in human capital." Al-Jassar explained.

### National cadres

The Bank is committed to its quest to attract promising national cadres to work in different departments in the bank and provide them with training so as to add them to the assets that contribute to promoting the bank's progress, let alone to reflect the bank's commitment to encouraging national employment. We have made achievements in the field of attracting local talents. We have already attracted and trained young Kuwaiti employees in various sectors. Besides, we attracted Kuwaiti competencies at the leadership level, and supported them with promising competencies. That will provide important support for the bank in the next phase to ensure that the customers get the best services in accordance with the highest professional and top-quality international standards.

Al-Jassar also pointed out that in 2015 Banker Middle East magazine awarded the bank its Fastest Growing Bank prize in Kuwait in recognition of the bank's excellence in the Islamic banking sector. Moreover, the magazine ranked the bank as the Best Bank in Kuwait in the corporate finance sector. In addition, the bank won two awards by Islamic Finance News (IFN). The bank was awarded the 2015 award for the Best Structured Finance for its acquisition of a portfolio of financing from Al-Mulla International Finance Co. through a deal with a total value of KD 20 M (\$66 million).

This exceptional deal reflected the bank's unshakable commitment to offer its customers innovative Sharia-compliant financial solutions. It also was in line with strategic expansion plan adopted by the bank at the local and regional levels. According to Al-Jassar, Warba Bank will continue its expansion plan in 2016. It has nine branches distributed in all governorates of Kuwait. In 2015 two new branches were opened, namely Al-Aqeela and Al-Fahaheel. This year is expected to witness the opening of a number of new branches in the vital areas as the Bank is keen on providing services and products to a broader spectrum of customers all over Kuwait.

In addition, the year 2015 witnessed several achievements of Warba Bank at various levels that contributed to strengthening its expansion strategy in the regional and global markets, based on the bank's strategy to take advantage of the unique regional and international investment opportunities. The bank acquired an equipment rental portfolio operated by Atel Capital Holding Group, an American independent equipment rental



company. That made Warba Bank the first Kuwaiti entity to invest through the said Group. A fund, in which Warba Bank is a major investor, acquired The Nathaniel commercial building in New York.

### Technological advances

Warba Bank is one of the early investors pursuing a strategy based on focusing on the real estate sector in the United States, operated by Wafra Investment Advisory Group (WIAG). The bank participated in a deal to hire aircraft for Kuwait Airways as part of the first deal to be concluded with International Company for aircraft financing for rental of five A330-200 Airbus planes to Kuwait Airways," Al-Jassar explained. Furthermore, in 2015 the bank acquired a financing portfolio of Al-Mulla International Finance Co through a deal with a total value of KD 20 M (\$66 million).

Al-Jassar added: "In 2015 Warba Bank made sure to keep abreast with technological advances. That's why it provided its customers a new range of online banking services, and Android and iOS applications for smart phones, let alone its constant quest to improve the customer's banking experience. The new services gave the customers access to a range of financial transactions that used to require appearance at one of the bank's branches. Such access is free and meets the highest quality, speed and safety standards."

By launching many new electronic services simultaneously and updating and developing other services, Warba Bank seeks to confirm its leading role in the electronic banking services market so to make them more comfortable, easy and important. Thanks to the newly-introduced electronic services, the customers of the bank can open

a new savings account or a deposit account, apply for a checkbook and cheque-related services that allow the customer to obtain a summary of his/her checkbook, the details of his/her transactions, and get a detailed account statement, let alone the ID card service.

The customer can upload a copy of his/her ID card and update his/her data through Warba Online. All these services have become one-click/touch away. All the customer needs is to enter the required data manually without having to go to the nearest branch to fill out papers, while ensuring the highest quality, speed and safety standards.

Warba Bank also developed some existing services such as cards through which the customer can get a summary on his/her ATM or Credit Card, check the statement of account of such cards and find out the latest transactions carried out, the amounts drawn, the remaining balance, the dates of such transactions, and report missing cards. "One of the services the bank offers is the transfer service that enables the customers to transfer balance between his/her own accounts, make domestic and international transfers, pay mobile phone bills, and access to all personal finance transactions."

In conclusion, Al-Jassar confirmed that Warba Bank is determined to spare no efforts in achieving success and excellence in the Islamic banking sector by providing the best and finest unprecedented Sharia-compliant banking products and services. This way Warba Bank seeks to meet the requirements of quality-seekers customers. This makes the Bank a pioneering banking entity that is expected to be the first choice in the Islamic banking sector, as that helps Warba Bank to be the leading Islamic bank.

## AUTOMAKERS REPORT US 'BEST SALES' IN 16 YEARS

**DETROIT:** Most major automakers reported US sales gains last month as stronger employment figures and consumer confidence drove the auto industry to its best March in 16 years. But the sales growth rate appeared to be slowing as brisk SUV and truck sales barely offset falling car sales. Some automakers had to raise discounts on cars or peddle more of them to rental companies. That could mean better deals for car buyers down the road. Overall, US sales rose 3.2 percent to 1.59 million, the best March since 2000, according to Kelley Blue Book. But the growth was only about half of last year's 6 percent increase. Car sales dropped 6 percent, while SUVs and trucks were up 11 percent, according to Autodata Corp.

Ford, Honda, Fiat Chrysler, Nissan, Hyundai and General Motors all reported increases, largely driven by SUVs and trucks. But Toyota sales fell nearly 3 percent as rising SUV numbers couldn't overcome car sales that fell almost 10 percent. Toyota's Camry, the top-selling car in the US, saw sales drop 9 percent to just under 37,000. The sales figures, coupled with Friday's announcement that US employers added 215,000 jobs in March, showed that the economy remained healthy despite stock market turmoil. Unemployment rose slightly to 5 percent, but that was because the number of Americans looking for work has increased.

It all means that auto sales will continue to lead economic growth, said Mustafa Mohatarem, GM's chief economist. "We expect historically low interest rates, strong employment, rising wages and stable fuel prices to continue for the foreseeable future," he said. Nissan sales were up 13 percent, hitting a record for any month in its history. At Fiat Chrysler and Ford, sales rose 8 percent, while they grew 0.9 percent at General Motors. Honda reported a 9 percent increase fueled largely by the all-new Civic compact, and SUVs. Hyundai sales

rose just 0.4 percent, but it was enough to set a record for monthly sales.

Ford and Fiat Chrysler posted their best March numbers in a decade. General Motors, which has been cutting sales to rental car companies, said its retail sales to individual buyers rose 6 percent. Volkswagen, still mired in an emissions cheating scandal, saw its sales tumble 10 percent. Some analysts said there were troubling signs for automakers beneath the numbers. Last month had two more selling days than a year ago, and spending on discounts is on the rise. Discounts, while good for new-car buyers, cut profits and hurt used car values. The auto pricing site TrueCar.com said automakers averaged just over \$3,000 in discounts per vehicle in March, up more than 10 percent from a year ago. The increase comes mainly because automakers are having trouble selling cars as the US market shifts to trucks and SUVs, according to JD Power and Associates. Discounted cars can push down used car values so buyers have less to trade in, said Thomas King, a JD Power vice president. "March car sales remain strong, but automakers are being forced to pull additional levers to sustain those sales, like selling more cars to fleets, enriching incentives and using leasing and extended-term loans to keep monthly payments within consumers' budgets," said Autotrader.com senior analyst Michelle Krebs.

Mark LaNeve, Ford's US sales chief, said he's seeing increased car discounts because of the market shift toward SUVs and trucks, but "not anything that would be alarming." If car inventories start to rise, automakers will offer more discounts to sell them, said Tom Libby, manager of industry analysis for the IHS Automotive consulting firm. "That will offer opportunities for consumers in the short-term," he said. But in the long term, companies will follow the trends and produce more SUVs and fewer cars, he said. — AP



ATLANTIC CITY: Job seekers create resumes at the NJ Department of Labor's resume clinic in the Atlantic City Convention Center in Atlantic City, NJ. — AP

## JOB-SEEKERS RETURN AT FASTEST PACE SINCE BEFORE RECESSION

### AMERICANS FLOODING BACK INTO JOB MARKET

**WASHINGTON:** Americans are flooding back into the job market at the fastest pace since before the Great Recession, encouraged by steady hiring and some signs of higher pay. The flow has halted, at least temporarily, one of the economy's more discouraging trends: the sharp decline in the percentage of people either working or looking for work. That figure fell last year to a four-decade low. The pickup since then suggests that nearly seven years after the recession ended, Americans are finally more confident that they can find jobs.

In March, nearly 400,000 people began job hunts, though not all found work. Their searching lifted the unemployment rate to 5 percent from 4.9 percent. Employers added 215,000 jobs, the Labor Department said Friday, a solid figure but not enough to keep up with the new job-seekers. Since last September, 2.4 million people have either found jobs or started looking. The proportion of Americans working or looking for work, known as the "participation rate," has increased to 63 percent during that time, from 62.4 percent, a 38-year low. "The rise... over the past six months has been truly astounding, suggesting that the job market is finally pulling discouraged workers off the sidelines," said James Marple, an economist at TD Bank.

Still, the participation rate was 66 percent before the recession began. The drop has fueled concerns that the recession rendered millions of Americans essentially unemployable, held back by deteriorating skills or a lack of available jobs nearby. The increase in the past few months provides hope that's not the case. Martin Nyholt, 61, of Apex, North Carolina, recently began looking for work again after retiring from IBM last May. He is looking for a part-time position, but

would take a "simple job" that pays \$10 to \$15 an hour if it is full-time. He wants less pressure than existed in his former project-manager position.

"I've kind of run out of TV shows that I want to watch," Nyholt said, outside an employment center. "Every additional month I go is money that's going to be coming out of (savings) and that's a negative there." Economists estimate that at least half of the decline in the participation rate is a result of ongoing retirements by the vast baby boom generation. That demographic trend could overwhelm the return of younger workers, keeping the participation rate flat or pushing it lower in the coming months.

The extra job-seekers also give the Federal Reserve additional flexibility in the timing of future interest rate increases, economists said. If employers have more potential workers to choose from, they won't be forced to raise wages as quickly, a step that can push up inflation. The Fed raised rates for the first time in nine years in December. Most economists don't expect Fed policymakers to move again until June. Average hourly wages rose 2.3 percent in March compared with a year earlier, a faster pace than the first few years after the recession. But that is still about a percentage point below the rate that is typical for a healthy economy.

The percentage of Americans without high school degrees who are working or seeking jobs has jumped sharply since last fall. That could be a response to big increases in low-paying jobs in industries such as retail, which added 48,000 jobs in March, and hotels and restaurants, which gained 26,000. Older Americans are also more likely to work or look for work than they were a year ago. Tara Sinclair, chief economist at the online job site Indeed, says that many companies are

frustrated that they cannot find the workers they need. So they are trying to keep older workers on board by offering perks such as flexible hours or part-time work.

Last month's healthy hiring comes even as growth has showed signs of slowing. That suggests employers see the tepid growth figures as temporary. Sluggish consumer spending in January and February caused many economists to lower their estimates for growth in the first quarter to 1 percent or below. That would follow an anemic 1.4 percent pace at the end of last year. Yet many analysts think the GDP figures will likely be revised higher in the coming months. Consumers may also spend more of their savings from lower gas prices, boosting the economy. Kevin Wilson, CEO of Buzz Franchise Brands, said the growing economy is helping him expand. He plans to add eight more employees to his headquarters staff of 22 by the end of this year.

The company operates Mosquito Joe, a pest-control provider, and Pool Scouts, which provides pool-cleaning services. Wilson expects to hire more workers at the existing 113 Mosquito Joe franchises and open 58 new ones. Those steps should create about 450 new jobs. Yet he hasn't had to offer much higher pay to attract workers. "We get a ton of responses to our job ads," he said. Sluggish wage growth has been a source of frustration for many workers and has spilled over into widespread demands for a higher minimum wage. California approved a measure this week to lift its minimum to \$15 an hour by 2020, more than double the current federal minimum of \$7.25. New York lawmakers have also approved a \$15 minimum that will be phased in at different times around the state. — AP



ROSWELL: In this photo, Nissan electric vehicles sit on display at an auto dealership in Roswell, Ga. Major automakers reported huge sales for March. — AP



# KIPCO ON TRACK TO DOUBLE ITS PROFITS

**KUWAIT:** At its annual Investors' Forum, KIPCO - the Kuwait Projects Company - said that while 2016's difficult trading conditions are expected to result in revenue growth in the high single digits for KIPCO, the company remains on track to double its 2014 profits by 2018. This is driven by the continued growth of the company's core businesses, which are forecast to generally deliver revenue growth in the two digits in 2016. At the company's annual Shafafiyah (transparency) Investors' Forum, KIPCO presented a review of 2015 and its outlook for 2016 to 2018 to an audience of shareholders, financial analysts and institutional investors.

The forum followed the company's General Assembly meeting where KIPCO's shareholders

approved a cash dividend of 25 per cent (25 fils per share). As part of its review, KIPCO said that it has maintained its exemplary track record and that 2015 was its twenty-fourth consecutive year of profitability. It also highlighted the company's strengthened funding profile after raising US\$ 500 million under KIPCO's Euro Medium Term Note (EMTN) Program and extending the average debt maturity to 3.6 years. This will result in an annual interest saving of US\$ 20 million from 2017 onwards.

KIPCO's net profit in 2015 increased 15 per cent to KD 53.03 million (\$175 million), compared to KD 46.1 million (\$152 million) in 2014. The company's total revenue from continuing operations increased 4 per cent in 2015 to stand at KD

621 million (\$2.1 billion), compared to the KD 598 million (\$2 billion) reported in 2014. Also as part of its 2015 review, KIPCO said that Burgan Bank - one of the company's largest revenue makers - continues to grow robustly. As a result of efficient capital management under Basel III, the bank's capital adequacy is expected to be at around 16.5% by the end of March 2016. During 2015, the bank received an A+ rating from Fitch and opened a representative office in the UAE.

For OSN, the pay-tv company secured a US\$ 400 million syndicated loan, reflecting investor confidence in its business model. The company's subscriber base and revenue increased 2.6 and 2.5 times respectively from 2010 to 2015, and 2015 also saw the payment of US\$ 100 million in dividends to OSN's shareholders. A mega real estate development was announced in 2015 and construction will begin in 2016 on prime land in the area of Daiya, at the heart of Kuwait City. The project, which will cost close to \$2.5 billion when completed, will have a leasable area of around 400,000 sqm and comprise mostly of residential units, alongside restaurants, health clubs, clinics, retail units and a hotel.

For SADAFCO, the dairy company has increased its total shareholder return by 2.3 times over the past five years, standing at over 20 per cent in return on equity in 2015. This success is driven by the company's leading market position, large distribution network and strong operational performance. In its outlook for 2016, KIPCO said it expects that its portfolio of core companies - which includes Burgan Bank, OSN, Gulf Insurance Group, United Real Estate and KAMCO - will continue to deliver revenue growth over the next year, generally in the double digits.

KIPCO's Vice Chairman (Executive), Faisal Al Ayyar said: "Over the past two years, we have seen a consistent double digit financial growth trend for KIPCO's core businesses. In last year's Shafafiyah Investors' Forum, we promised to double our 2014 profit by 2018, and our companies are on track to deliver this. Revenue for Burgan Bank increased 12% in 2015, while that of both OSN and Gulf Insurance Group was up 11%, and United Real Estate raised its revenue by 17%. These results are a strong indication that our core companies will continue to deliver growth in the double digits."

Commenting on the outlook for 2016, Al Ayyar said: "We enter this year with the expectation that it will continue to bring difficult trading conditions. While KIPCO is moving forward confidently along the track of doubling its 2014 profit by 2018, we expect these global market circumstances to result in revenue growth in the high single digit for KIPCO in 2016."



# COSTA COFFEE LAUNCHES EXCLUSIVE MENU ITEMS

**KUWAIT:** Costa Coffee, London's favorite coffee shop chain and part of Alghanim Industries Food and Beverage portfolio, has announced the launch of a new specialized menu that will be rolled out across its stores in Kuwait on 13 March 2016. The popular UK coffee chain is known for its hand-crafted products and passion for quality coffee, all while satisfying its customers with wholesome and fresh ingredients.

The new exclusive items on the menu have been created in collaboration with the world-renowned and professional baker, author, television and radio celebrity, Dean Brettschneider, who has made a name for himself in the international world of artisan baking via his own brand, Global Bakery. Commenting on his partnership with Costa Coffee, Chef Dean said, "Working with Costa Coffee was a natural fit, they are very passionate about their coffee and I am very passionate about bakery-inspired food. In my mind, great coffee deserves great food, it's as simple as that."

Working with a focused and dedicated team, together we have refined the food range to reflect the rich heritage of bakery products and at the same time not losing our sights of subtle local influences. The magic of baking is all about taste, flavors, textures, and awakening all of your senses with a fresh look at food, adding, "You will taste many new world flavors combined in traditional baking styles... baking is alive and should be fun."



Some of the new specialty items that will be served at Costa Coffee include halloumi with Turkish pita, Bombolone (custard, Lotus, or plain with sugar), scones with spinach, feta, or pumpkin, and Strawberry Lamington. Other items include the

classics of which Chef Dean is most known for, such as the carrot cake, chocolate cake and Danish treats. Many of these items were sampled at the official opening of Costa's new flagship store at Sheikhha Complex on 2 March 2016.

Speaking about Costa's mission, Haamed Alfulaj, General Manager of Costa Coffee Kuwait, said, "Alghanim Industries prides itself on its customer centricity, and we at Costa live up to that philosophy. By placing our customers first, providing them with only the freshest of ingredients, handcrafted coffee, and now a world-renowned chef to launch this exciting new menu, we set ourselves apart from the competition. We already serve some of the best coffee in the country, and we can confidently say that after this launch, our food will be just as good because Kuwait deserves nothing less." Photos of the new items are available on various social media channels of Costa Coffee, under the name CostaKuwait on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat.

Costa is the UK's No. 1 coffee shop with over 2000 stores in the UK and over 1,000 internationally. The brand is already present across more than 30 countries and growing at a rapid rate. The brand currently operates in 34 locations across Kuwait and has a number of outlets slated to open across the country over the next year, including its first drive-thru at The Dining and at Salmiya Boulevard Mall.

Alghanim Industries acquired Costa Kuwait in July 2013. Since then, Costa Coffee has been focusing on customer service, refurbishing existing stores, opening new ones around Kuwait and refreshing and broadening its product range.

# TOYOTA GENUINE 'SPARE PARTS DIAMOND SURPRISES'

**KUWAIT:** Mohamed Naser Al Sayer & Sons Co, one of the Al Sayer Group Holding Companies, held an electronic draw at the Ministry of Commerce & Industry premises on 20 March 2016 to select the winners for Toyota Genuine Spare Parts Diamond surprise promotion held. 5 lucky winners who were selected from the first raffle draw were presented marvelous diamond prizes. List of 5 winners of the first draw and the prizes of are: (1) Fatemah Abdullah Dhuwaihi Alenezi 0.90 carat (VS) diamond (2) Nawal Hamad Falah Alajmi 0.83 carat (VS) diamond (3) Sadeq Saleh Hussain Alhadad 0.73 carat (VS) diamond (4) Nasser Dahi Falah Al Hagry 0.50 carat (VS) diamond (5) Abdul Mohsen Zayed Dawas Alajmi 0.40 carat (VS) diamond.

The Spare Parts Winter Promotion commenced on the 14 February, and will continue for 3 months ending on the 14 May 2016. Customers will enter one of the three draws with every KD 5 spent on Toyota Genuine Parts at any Al Sayer spare parts outlet or service facility during the promotion period and grab a chance to win the attractive prize. Toyota Genuine Spare Parts are built to the highest standards of quality, durability and performance, and they're designed to fit your vehicle's exact specifications. Each part will fit perfectly



and meet the high quality standards of Toyota. The 2 remaining draws of this promotion will be conducted during the months of April and May respectively.



# TSC ANNOUNCES WINNER OF SALMIYA STORE PROMOTION

**KUWAIT:** The Sultan Center exclusive promotion in TSC Salmiya store for its Reward Card holders is ongoing until April 12th. For every KD 10 a customer spends he/she has a chance to win one of four ATV's and to enter into a final draw for a Nissan 370Z. Launched on March 7th, the campaign made a great impact amongst customers. As part of the month long event Hamad Al Harbi the 2nd winner of the draw was awarded his prize of an ATV. Al Harbi, expressed his joy at winning the bike and participating in the exciting campaign.

Commenting on this event, Lisa Alghareeb, Marketing at TSC said: "we would like to congratulate the lucky winner and to invite all of our customers to participate in our upcoming draws, the feedback we receive from our customers is very positive and we have a number of promotional draws that take place on an annual basis. Customers can apply for TSC Rewards cards free at any TSC store, TSC initiatives are an integral part of its operations and ongoing social commitments to society."

# FOXCONN'S BOSS PLEDGES A TURNAROUND AT SHARP

**TOKYO:** The head of Taiwanese contract manufacturer Foxconn pledged yesterday to turn around Japan's Sharp Corp by driving change at the struggling LCD panel and home appliance maker, as the two companies signed a takeover deal after a one-month delay. Foxconn, also known as Hon Hai Precision Industry Co, is buying a 66 percent share in Sharp for 389 billion yen (\$3.5 billion) in the first foreign takeover of a major Japanese electronics company. A giant in contract manufacturing, Foxconn assembles Apple iPhones and other products for name-brand companies.

The two companies held a signing ceremony yesterday at a large-screen LCD panel factory that they have jointly managed outside the west Japanese city of Osaka since 2012. "I see us as a catalyst for change," Foxconn founder and chairman Terry Gou said at a news conference following the ceremony. "If we cannot drive change in Sharp, our global competitors will eat us alive." Sharp, a leader in LCD technology and a maker of flat-screen televisions and smart appliances, has been hit hard by fierce price competition for

LCD displays.

Kozo Takahashi, the president of the 104-year-old Japanese company, said the infusion of capital from Foxconn would improve Sharp's financial situation and allow it to "invest in the new growth initiatives that were suppressed due to the financial challenges we have been facing in recent years." Both Takahashi and Gou paid tribute to Sharp's history of innovation, which includes the world's first LCD calculator, and said they would seek to marry it with the production and supply chain capabilities that Foxconn has developed in the intensely competitive field of electronics manufacturing.

"My direction of turnaround is clear," Gou said. "We will focus on helping Sharp to transform its technology into products in a speedy and cost-competitive way with high quality." The final sale price is about 20 percent less than the 489 billion yen that Sharp said Foxconn had agreed to pay a month ago. News reports say that Foxconn was concerned about taking on additional liabilities that it learned about late in negotiations. —AP

# NEWARK'S AIRPORT FLIGHT LIMITS EASED

**NEWARK:** The Federal Aviation Administration announced Friday its easing limits on the number of hourly flights at Newark Liberty International Airport, and the airport's operator said that should lead to greater competition and lower airfares. The limits at Newark Liberty, which serves the New York City region and is one of the busiest airports in the nation, were put in place in 2008 to reduce congestion and delays. They restricted flight operations during peak times to 81 per hour.

The FAA said arrival and departure delays have decreased significantly since then. It also said the number of scheduled flights has been well below the limits and Newark's runways can handle more flights. For example, on-time arrivals increased by 11 percent since 2007, and mean arrival and departure delays were down by about 33 percent, the FAA said. Delays greater than an hour were down 37 percent for arrivals and 38 percent for departures. However, the

past year has had much better weather, leading to fewer delays across the nation.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, which operates Newark Liberty and the region's other main transit hubs, said lifting the restrictions could lead to lower airfares for passengers. "This action will help travelers by increasing competition and choices at Newark Liberty by allowing more flights by different airlines, thereby helping to reduce airfares," it said in a statement. The easing of flight restrictions also will address an issue that is the subject of a US Department of Justice lawsuit filed last November against Newark's dominant carrier, United Airlines. According to the lawsuit, Chicago-based United controls around 900 of the roughly 1,200 slots takeoff and landing authorizations allocated by the FAA - at the airport, while no other airline holds more than 70. —AP

## MICROSOFT OUTLINES INTELLIGENCE VISION, INNOVATIONS FOR WINDOWS 10

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella and Terry Myerson, executive vice president of Windows and Devices Group, talked to thousands of developers about the work Microsoft Corp. is doing to help them embrace the new era of conversational intelligence and create more personal computing for every customer, industry and business. Nadella showcased improvements to Cortana and announced previews of new cloud services and toolkits designed to understand the world around us and create intelligent bots. Myerson announced the Windows 10 Anniversary Update, which will deliver significant new innovations for consumers and developers for the Universal Windows Platform.

"As an industry, we are on the cusp of

a new frontier that pairs the power of natural human language with advanced machine intelligence," said Satya Nadella, CEO, Microsoft. "At Microsoft, we call this Conversations as a Platform, and it builds on and extends the power of the Microsoft Azure, Office 365 and Windows platforms to empower developers everywhere."

"With Windows 10 now running on over 270 million active devices, we're celebrating with our fans by delivering the Windows 10 Anniversary Update. This significant update will help you interact with your Windows 10 devices as naturally as you interact with the world around you - using your pen, presence and voice," Myerson said. "We are dedicated to making Windows the most productive

development environment for all developers, with all-new capabilities for the Universal Windows Platform and all-new tools for bringing apps to Windows 10 from any platform."

Introducing cloud services that understand, interactive bots and the Cortana Intelligence Suite, formerly known as the Cortana Analytics Suite, is powered by cutting-edge research into big data, machine learning, perception, analytics and intelligent bots. Built on Microsoft Azure, these capabilities can be used by developers and businesses to create intelligent end-to-end solutions, including new apps that learn about our world and bots and agents that interact with people in personalized, intelligent ways.

Wednesday, Microsoft announced new additions to the Cortana Intelligence Suite, both in preview. The first, Microsoft Cognitive Services, is a collection of intelligence APIs that allows systems to see, hear, speak, understand and interpret our needs using natural methods of communication. The second, the Microsoft Bot Framework, can be used by developers - programming in any language - to build intelligent bots that enable customers to chat using natural language on a wide variety of platforms including text/SMS, Office 365, Skype, Slack, the Web and more.

Microsoft demonstrated how developers can use services, like those found in the Cortana Intelligence Suite, to transform not only businesses but people's

lives. Seeing AI, a research project under development, shows how these new capabilities can help people who are visually impaired or blind better understand who and what is around them.

Today, Microsoft also released the Skype Bot Platform, which includes the SDK, API and Workflows all in the new Skype Bot Portal. With this platform, developers can build bots that leverage Skype's multiple forms of communication, including text, voice, video and 3-D interactive characters. Today, customers can get started with Skype Bots by downloading the latest Skype apps for Windows, Android and iOS. Developers can start building Skype Bots today using the Skype Bot Platform and reach hundreds of millions of Skype users.



**MOUNTAIN VIEW:** File photo shows Google's self-driving Lexus drives along a street during a demonstration at Google campus. —AP

## HIGH-TECH BOSTON AREA IN LEGAL BIND ON DRIVERLESS-CAR TESTS

**PROVIDENCE:** With its Colonial-era street patterns, icy winters, notoriously aggressive drivers and high-tech talent, the Boston region would seem the perfect place to test self-driving cars and ensure they can handle anything thrown at them. But the area, and indeed the entire Northeast, has no law outlining how the technology should be driven and tested. And lawmakers who want to respond are being spurned by leaders of the fast-growing industry, who would rather have no rules than a patchwork of state laws getting in their way.

That's leaving local startups and some of the country's most renowned engineering departments in a bind. "I'm hoping that the New England states will make it possible for us to do this work right at home very soon," said Daniela Rus, a professor who directs the artificial intelligence laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which has partnered with Toyota to advance autonomous driving. "We have more flexibility testing our algorithms and self-driving vehicles in Singapore than we do here. It's really onerous to pack up your research and move to a place to test it."

## Tussle for control

In the absence of clear rules, researchers are welcoming an emerging Massachusetts plan by the administration of Republican Gov Charlie Baker to carve out a self-driving testing ground at a former military base an hour's drive from Boston, which is a center for robotics and artificial intelligence research.

But state lawmakers in New England and elsewhere hoping to further boost innovation by letting driverless vehicles on public streets and highways have been getting a clear message from large companies competing to build the vehicles of the future: We don't want or need your permission right now. "In the absence of a law prohibiting such testing, you do not need a law permitting testing," Wayne Weikel, of the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, told Rhode Island senators at a Tuesday hearing on a bill that would allow self-driving vehicles in the state.

Democratic Sen Joshua Miller, who introduced the legislation, had thought the smallest state would be a perfect place to test the vehicles. Its assets include Quonset Point, a state-owned former naval base that is home to a high-performance driving school and a major auto importation port. But companies that found out about the legislation swiftly opposed it - especially its provision that would require a human operator for testing.

Google, Volkswagen and Weikel's lobbying group - which represents 12 of the biggest traditional automakers - sent letters to Rhode Island lawmakers this week saying the bill sent the wrong signal and is a disincentive to research. They've raised similar objections to laws proposed in Connecticut and other states, arguing that lawmakers should wait until the federal government creates national guidelines.

## Computer simulations

US Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx has said those guidelines are coming before the end of the year. "Rhode Island would lose nothing by giving this process time to play out," wrote Ron Barnes, head of state legislative affairs for Google Inc. and its parent company Alphabet Inc., in a letter to state senators. But in neighboring Massachusetts, engineers and scientists who now mostly work with computer simulations of autonomous driving say they don't have time to wait as real-world testing advances elsewhere.

"I would prefer that there would be rules so we wouldn't be guessing what was allowed and what wasn't allowed," said Roger Matus, of Boston artificial intelligence software startup Neurala Inc. Simulations can't capture all the unpredictable conditions of traveling down a city street, he said.

"In Boston, it would be the pothole in the road or the person who darts out from behind a bus," he said. "Those are the things that need to be tested in order to make self-driving cars work right." Massachusetts is heeding the concerns of researchers and auto industry companies with a two-pronged approach, said Katie Stebbins, the state's assistant secretary of innovation, technology and entrepreneurship.

One is to study and create rules that address safety concerns without getting in the way of researchers, she said. The other is to open up the former Fort Devens as a fake city for self-driving cars based on similar sites near the University of Michigan and at a former naval weapons base in California.

The Army base, which closed 20 years ago this month, is occupied by businesses and homes but still has hundreds of acres of available space. The quasi-public agency that manages the property is now in early talks with undisclosed entrepreneurs, academic institutions and companies about developing it as a testing site. Four states - Nevada, California, Michigan, Florida - have passed laws allowing and regulating the testing of self-driving cars. Arizona does so via executive order. —AP

## APPLE STILL STRONG AT 40, BUT ARE BEST YEARS BEHIND IT?

'WE STILL THINK WE'RE GOING TO CHANGE THE WORLD'

**CUPERTINO:** Apple turned 40 on Friday, and it's a very different company from the audacious startup that Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak launched in a Silicon Valley garage in 1976. Today, the maker of iPhones and Mac computers is the world's most valuable public corporation, with 100,000 employees and a new, multi-billion dollar headquarters in Cupertino, California, set to open next year.

But despite its astounding financials - Apple reported \$53 billion in profit on \$233 billion in sales last year - some critics have suggested Apple's best years are behind it, as it has struggled to come up with new products and match the phenomenal success it has had in recent years. Not surprisingly, longtime employees like software vice president Guy "Bud" Tribble disagree.

"We still think we're going to change the world," said Tribble, one of a half-dozen Apple staffers selected by the company to briefly reminisce with reporters this week. Tribble started with Apple in 1980 and worked on the original Macintosh team. He added: "We had no idea back then that Apple would grow to the size that it is."

## As egotistical as ever

The company now boasts that more than 1 billion Apple devices - iPods, iPhones, iPads, Macs and Apple Watches - are in regular use around the world. Those products are widely admired and imitated. But Apple depends on the iPhone for two-thirds of its revenue. And after selling a record number of iPhones last year, analysts say sales are leveling off and may even decline this year.

As it enters middle age, Apple may find it difficult to maintain its leadership in the industry. Some experts say it's getting harder to come up with new advances to distinguish Apple's products from those of its competitors. "Apple is still as good as it used to be, but everyone else has gotten better than they used to be," said James McQuivey, a tech analyst with Forrester Research. He cited longtime rival Microsoft, once viewed as an industry laggard, but now credited with pioneering tablet computers with detachable keyboards - a category even Apple is embracing with the business-oriented iPad Pro. By contrast, he noted, Apple's latest iPhone is a downsized version of earlier models. Longtime staffers said Apple still

has the zeal to create revolutionary products. "We've done this more times than anybody else," said Greg Joswiak, a 30-year employee and vice president for product marketing. He listed the iPod, iPhone, iPad, iTunes and the company's online App Store, the new Apple Watch and recent initiatives to create new health-tracking and medical-research apps for the iPhone and Watch.

Apple is widely believed to be exploring new businesses, from electric cars to virtual reality, but analysts

returned in 1997, as the company he co-founded was on the brink of collapse. "There was a time when you were worried about keeping engineers here," said Cheryl Thomas, a vice president for software engineering who joined Apple in 1989.

And in 2000, when the dot-com bubble burst, Joswiak said Jobs refused to cut spending when competitors were tightening their belts. Joswiak said Jobs pledged to "invest in ourselves more than ever before. We then suffered through

that drew criticism from top Justice Department officials and GOP presidential contender Donald Trump. Joswiak said he was proud of Apple for taking what he considers a principled stand.

Apple remains one of the most sought-after brands. BAV Consulting, a firm that tracks brand reputation, said that after reaching a low in 2001, just before the iPod came out, Apple is now in the top 1 percent of American brands. And it's in the top 2 per-



**CUPERTINO:** In this Monday, March 21, 2016, file photo, Apple CEO Tim Cook speaks at an event to announce new products and an update to the Apple Watch at Apple headquarters. —AP

cent of brands "being worth paying more for" - which means it can get away with charging more for its products, according to BAV. Even at 40, the company hasn't lost its passion, Thomas said. She said she wanted to work there since seeing the famous 1984 Macintosh commercial, in which a young woman hurls a hammer at the giant image of a Big Brother figure. The idea of joining what was then a tech upstart didn't sit well with her father, a career IBM scientist, who advised Thomas: "You need to think with your head and not your heart." But Thomas said: "I thought with my heart." —AP

11 straight quarters" of dismal financial returns.

Jobs' death from cancer in 2011 led to the elevation of current CEO Tim Cook, who's intense but softer spoken. Tribble credits Cook with maintaining Apple's focus on quality products, even as Cook has taken his own path in running the company.

Far more than Jobs, Cook uses his prominence to speak out on social issues, from global warming to civil rights and individual privacy. He recently challenged the US government in a high-stakes legal dispute over an encrypted iPhone used by an extremist killer. While

say developing products in those categories could take years. "We want to go into new industries ... and really challenge the status quo," said Divya Nag, a former medical researcher and entrepreneur hired in 2014 to work on Apple's health projects. Always secretive about specific plans, Apple declined to provide Nag's job title. Her resume shows a track record of helping win FDA approval for new medical inventions.

## Rough sailing

Apple's growth hasn't been smooth. Jobs was forced out in the 1990s, leading to a revolving door for chief executives until he

## N KOREA BLOCKING FACEBOOK, TWITTER AND OTHER WEBSITES

**PYONGYANG:** North Korea has officially announced it is blocking Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and South Korean websites in a move underscoring its concern with the spread of online information. The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications announcement was posted this week at the country's main mobile service provider, Koryolink, and other places serving Internet users.

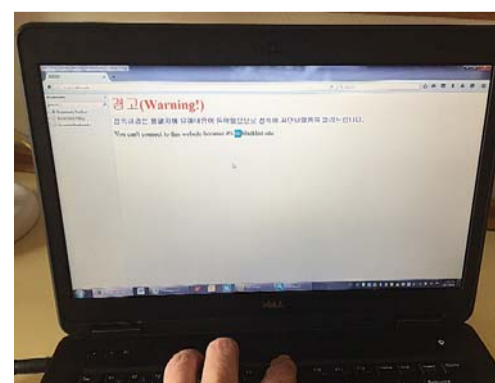
Very few North Koreans have Internet access. Typically they can see only a sealed-off, government-sanctioned intranet. But foreigners had previously been able to surf the Web with almost no overt restrictions, though most likely with behind-the-scenes monitoring of their Internet activities.

The new restrictions will make it more difficult for visitors or the small community of foreign residents in North Korea to post real-time information about the country to the outside world, and will further limit the ability of North Koreans with Internet access to view information about their country posted elsewhere.

The government announcement named YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Voice of America and South Korean media sites as specific examples of what it is blocking "for a certain period of time." It also said gambling and "sex and adult websites" have been blocked. Facebook and Twitter had been informally blocked for months and could not be accessed Friday in a Web search from Pyongyang.

The announcement added that anyone who tries to hack onto such sites, access them in an

"improper" way or distribute "anti-republic data" from them will be subject to punishment under North Korean law. It did not say what the punishment would be. The new North Korean restrictions are similar to Internet censorship in neighboring



**PYONGYANG:** South Korea's Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) website is blocked as North Korea announces new Internet restrictions banning the use of Facebook, Twitter and other websites. —AP

China, which allows more access in general but also maintains strict bans on sites that Beijing deems politically sensitive or socially harmful.

## Internet crazy neighbors

They also mirror some restrictions in South

Korea, which, despite being one of the world's most Internet-crazy countries, also bans North Korean websites and a wide variety of what the government deems to be adult content.

It is estimated that more than 2 million North Koreans now use mobile phones, but with few exceptions access to the Internet is limited to officials, technicians or others who have special permission to use it, usually under close supervision. North Korea decided in 2013 to allow foreigners in the country to use 3G on their mobile phones, which generally require a local SIM card to get onto the Koryolink mobile carrier network.

That opened the door for them to surf the net and to post to social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. More recently, even live-streaming video had been posted using the new Twitter app Periscope. But Pyongyang, looking to maintain control over the flow of news getting out and concerned that local people may have also been finding ways onto the Web, has been quietly experimenting with Internet controls for some time.

In June last year, warnings began appearing on Instagram accounts in North Korea that claimed access to the popular photo-sharing app was being denied for "harmful content." Access to other sites was also denied with a screen notification saying, "Warning! You can't connect to this website because it's in blacklist site." Instagram was not on the new list of officially banned sites and was functioning normally. —AP

## INTERNET ISSUES HINDER STANDARDIZED TESTING

**KANSAS CITY:** The Alaska education department said Friday that it was canceling its computer-based statewide student assessments amid Internet problems at the University of Kansas where the test developer is based. Standardizing testing is on hold in more than a dozen other states because of the problems.

The university's Center for Educational Testing and Evaluation provides general end-of-year assessments for students in Kansas and Alaska. It also offers testing for students with significant cognitive disabilities in those states and 14 others - Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

Issues arose Tuesday when a backhoe severed a major fiber cable. Testing was canceled for the rest of the day before resuming Wednesday but was again suspended Thursday afternoon because of service disruptions. Students also experienced problems Friday morning, causing testing to again be suspended.

Marianne Perie, the center's director, said

the suspension is causing "huge problems," especially for larger districts. "They have very specific schedules about which students can go in which lab at which time and this outage has really messed up their schedule," she said. Alaska cited technical disruptions and concerns with the validity of the test results in canceling its tests for the year.

Federal rules call for state education departments to administer standards-based tests for students in grades three through eight and once in high school, but they also say the tests are to be high quality, valid and reliable and of adequate technical quality, according to Alaska's interim education commissioner, Susan McCauley.

"I do not believe at this point that this assessment meets those federal requirements," McCauley said in an interview. There is no way for the state to come up with a different test that it can administer yet this year, she said. At the University of Kansas, Perie said efforts were being made to move servers off campus, at least until the damaged cable is repaired. She said she hoped the issues would be resolved by Monday. —AP

## JUDGE SAYS CREAMERY'S ALL-NATURAL SKIM MILK ISN'T SKIM MILK

**TALLAHASSEE:** A federal judge agrees with the Florida Department of Agriculture that an all-natural creamery can't label its skim milk "skim milk"

because it doesn't add vitamins to it. So unless an appeals court disagrees, the Ocheesee Creamery will continue to dump perfectly good skim milk

down the drain rather than comply with the state's demand that it sell it as "imitation skim milk." Creamery owner Mary Lou

Wesselhoeft said it upsets her that thousands of gallons of the product are discarded each year, but she won't lie to customers by calling it imitation. "There's so many hungry people out there. You're always told not to waste food, not to throw stuff away, so it is very hard," she said. "We're punished for telling the truth, and that's what's sad." Ocheesee was selling its skim milk for three years before the department said it had to be labeled imitation. The Institute for Justice sued on behalf of Wesselhoeft for the right to be able to sell the product as skim milk. Judge Robert Hinkle sided with the state on Wednesday, saying the government has the right to set standards for milk.

The dictionary definition of skim milk is simply milk with the cream removed. But the Department of Agriculture says under state and federal law, skim milk can't be sold as skim milk unless vitamins in the milk fat are replaced so it has the same nutritional value as whole milk. "We are pleased with the judge's ruling, as this case has always been about ensuring that consumers are aware of the nutritional value of the products they purchase and feed to their families," said department spokeswoman Jennifer Meale.

But Wesselhoeft knows her customers don't want anything "imitation" and labeling her skim milk as such

would confuse them and hurt the whole concept of her business. "The customers knew exactly what they were buying," Wesselhoeft said. "What everybody said was it was the best skim milk they've ever had. 'We can't believe that it is skim milk because it just tastes so much better than the normal skim milk you buy in the store.' It wasn't watery." The creamery needs to remove the milk fat to produce cream and butter, and skim milk is the result. Some people, especially those on low-cholesterol diets, prefer skim milk because it has little fat. While the creamery uses some of the skim milk to produce yogurt, most is thrown out.

The creamery, located about 50 miles west of the state capital, has offered to add to its label that it doesn't add vitamins to the product, but the state hasn't accepted the compromise. It was selling between 100 and 300 gallons of skim milk a week for \$5 a gallon before the dispute. The product made up about 25 percent of its profits. Institute for Justice lawyer Justin Pearson said the decision will be appealed. "Her entire business is based on selling pure, all-natural items and that's exactly why her customers purchase dairy items from her. So the idea of being forced to label one of these all-natural dairy items as imitation is absurd," he said. "It would be disastrous to her business." — AP



**LONDON:** Neil Garner, a milkman for the Milk & More delivery company, works on his daily round in the Watford area, north of London. — AFP

## UNIVERSITY DISAVOWS CHOCOLATE MILK STUDY, RETURNS THE MONEY

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND CITES A RANGE OF PROBLEMS UNCOVERED

**NEW YORK:** The University of Maryland on Friday disavowed its study saying a company's chocolate milk could help athletes recover from concussions, citing a range of problems uncovered by an internal investigation. The university said it is reviewing its research procedures as a result, and deleting press releases about Fifth Quarter's milk from its website. It is also returning \$228,910 provided by the company and a co-op of milk producers.

The moves come after the school faced a backlash for a questionable press release that it issued in December. The release said a preliminary study showed Fifth Quarter's milk helped improve the cognitive and motor functions of high school football players, even after suffering concussions. The announcement sparked criticism because it touted a specific brand, and appeared to underscore the breakdowns in scientific standards and conflicts-of-interest that can come about when companies fund research about their own products.

In July, another university press release had declared that Fifth Quarter's milk outperformed competing products in aiding post-exercise recovery. The details of the study were not made available. The two-part study was funded through a university program intended to boost

Maryland's economy by partnering local businesses with researchers. In a report detailing its internal investigation Friday, the university said it found a "concerning lack of understanding of the basic principles of conflict of interest in research at all levels of the process." It said the study also had too many uncontrolled variables to produce meaningful results. That was particularly troubling because the subjects were students, the report said.

The committee's report also noted serious questions were raised early on by a reviewer about the nutritional expertise of the researcher conducting the study and the study's design. The school said the researcher, Jae Kun Shim, a professor of kinesiology, did not see the comments and did not revise his procedures. It also said that Shim received \$200,000 from Allied Milk Producers, of which Fifth Quarter is a member, to his laboratory for future work. Shim did not declare the gifts as a potential conflict of interest, the report said. The money was separate from the \$28,910 Fifth Quarter provided for the study. The university said any potential sanctions against faculty or staff would be considered confidential personnel matters.

Anne Wylie, a former provost who chaired the university's internal review committee, said she

did not know if the football players were aware they were research subjects. She said "informed consent" forms were not required for the study. She noted the football players were already being given tests to gauge their reactions, meaning the data was being generated independent of the study. Andrew Holtz, who initially brought attention to the study after writing about it for HealthNewsReview.org, said it was extremely unusual for a university to feature a study in a press release without providing the actual research. He said he was troubled by the university's stonewalling when he asked for a copy of the study. In addition to reviewing its internal approval procedures for research, the committee's report recommended that clear distinctions be made between when the university is conducting research, and when it is providing a service to a business or industry. In a letter posted online, the University of Maryland's chief research officer the school had "every reason to believe this was an isolated incident." Fifth Quarter Fresh says its milk comes from "super, natural cows" and has higher amounts of protein, electrolytes, calcium and carbohydrates. The company said in a statement that it was disappointed to learn the university program mishandled the research. — AP



**NEW YORK:** Democratic Presidential Candidate Senator Bernie Sanders speaks at a rally in the Bronx borough in New York City. — AFP

## CLINTON, SANDERS HAVE OPPOSING VIEWS ON BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH

**NEW YORK:** Democratic presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders were on opposing sides of certain types of biomedical research while they served in Congress, differences that have gained notice by scientists and advocates on the forefront of stem cell research. Clinton has pointed to her advocacy for groundbreaking medical research, from her push for more dollars as a New York senator for the National Institutes of Health to her long support for stem cell research that could eventually lead to regenerative medicine.

Sanders, a Vermont senator, has supported stem cell research in the Senate. But advocates within the scientific community cite his voting record in the early 2000s in the House when he repeatedly supported a ban on all forms of human cloning, including one called therapeutic cloning intended to create customized cells to treat disease. "We were looking for signs that he is going to be a supporter of what science and technology can do and I think everyone in the country ought to be worried about that," said Dr. Harold Varmus, the Nobel Prize-winning former NIH director under President Bill Clinton. "I am quite concerned about his stance on these issues," Varmus said. "This is a litmus test."

It was 10 years ago - it's still a test that he failed in the view of many of us," Sanders campaign spokesman Michael Briggs did not respond to requests to comment on the subject. While serving in the House, Sanders voted to ban therapeutic cloning in 2001, 2003 and 2005 as Congress grappled with the ethics of biotechnology and scientific advances. Patient advocacy groups note that Sanders co-sponsored bans in 2003 and 2005 that included criminal penalties for conducting the research and opposed alternatives that would have allowed the cloning of embryos solely for medical research.

Clinton, meanwhile, co-sponsored legislation in 2001 and 2002 in the Senate that would have expanded stem cell research and co-sponsored a bill in 2005 that would have banned human cloning while protecting the right of scientists to conduct stem cell research. Sanders said following a vote in 2001 that he had "very serious concerns about the long-term goals of

an increasingly powerful and profit-motivated biotechnology industry." In a later vote, he warned of the dangers of "owners of technology" who are "primarily interested in how much money they can make rather than the betterment of society."

Some advocates for stem cell research said that overlooked the potential benefits of finding possible cures to Alzheimer's, Lou Gehrig's and other fatal or disabling diseases. "Sanders and (then Republican House Majority Leader Tom) DeLay - some unlikely group - were just unyielding and they were part of the religious right's attempt to shut down this whole critical new frontier of therapy for chronic disease," said Robert Klein, chairman of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine.

"It's fine to say you're for stem cell research but you vote against it and you vote against all therapeutic application, it doesn't mean anything to say you're for it," Klein said. "Fine, he votes for it years later when it's more popular and the pressure is off. We needed leadership then." Embryonic stem cells are master cells that can turn into any tissue of the body and researchers hope one day to harness that power for what's today typically called "regenerative medicine." Initially, they were derived by using leftover embryos from in vitro fertilization clinics. Therapeutic cloning is another method of deriving those cells. Exactly what types of stem cell research to allow, and how to fund it, have been debated not only on the national level but in a number of states including Wisconsin, where researchers played key roles in some early discoveries. Wisconsin holds its presidential primary on Tuesday.

Federal law prohibits taxpayer funding of research that harms embryos so that early work was done with private money. But those types of cells can reproduce indefinitely in lab dishes, "lines" used for a variety of research projects. After much controversy, the Bush administration declared that taxpayer money could be used for research using certain already-created embryonic stem cell lines and President Barack Obama expanded the number that qualify, a move that survived court challenges. — AP



**CONAKRY:** File photo shows a man suspected of being infected with ebola lying dead in the street in Conakry. — AFP

## AS EBOLA FLARES UP, GUINEA PLANS TO VACCINATE CONTACTS OF SURVIVORS

**CONAKRY:** Guinea will soon vaccinate people who have come into contact with more than 500 men who have recovered from Ebola, a senior health official said, the first time it has vaccinated the contacts of survivors. The decision reflects research that indicates Ebola can remain in the bodily fluids of survivors for months. The contacts will include but will not be limited to sexual partners, said Fode Tass Sylla, the spokesman for the West African nation's centre for the fight against Ebola. "We know the virus can stay in the sperm of a healed patient for a certain period of time," Sylla said. "That's why we want to vaccinate the circles of 501 men, to

avoid all risk of spreading the disease."

The vaccinations will begin in the next few days, Sylla said. The centre also plans an awareness campaign to warn mothers who have recovered from the virus against breastfeeding their newborns, he said. One of three countries at the epicenter of the world's worst recorded Ebola outbreak, along with Liberia and Sierra Leone, Guinea was declared free of active transmissions of the virus in December 2015. But it announced eight new cases last month.

There are 10,000 survivors of the deadly hemorrhagic fever in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, according to the World Health

Organization. The WHO said 800 possible contacts of people suffering from Ebola had been vaccinated against the virus in the so-called "ring vaccination" method. That means swiftly vaccinating anyone who has come into contact with an Ebola sufferer and contacts of theirs. More than 1,000 people were under observation. Liberia, which has declared the outbreak over three times, closed its border with Guinea after its neighbor announced its fresh cases. Liberia announced a new Ebola case, a 30-year-old woman who died en route to the hospital, on Friday. It was not immediately clear whether she had traveled to Guinea. — Reuters

## RUSSIAN TOURIST KILLED BY A CROCODILE IN INDONESIA

**JAKARTA:** A Russian tourist was mauled to death by a crocodile in a popular diving site in Eastern Indonesia, an official said yesterday. The body of Sergey Lykhvar was discovered on Tuesday in Raja Ampat islands of West Papua, four days after he was reported missing. Local search and rescue head Prasetyo Budiarto said Lykhvar was reported missing to the authorities last week, one day after he left to snorkel around the remote Minyaifun Island.

Budiarto said that rescuers spotted a large saltwater crocodile trailing behind Lykhvar's body when he was discovered. "We believe he was killed by a crocodile judging from the missing body parts and the extent of his injuries," he said. The 37-year-old normally snorkelled with his

friends and a guide but decided go alone the morning before he was reported missing, Budiarto said. He added that the location where Lykhvar's body was retrieved was quite remote, and dangerous because of the strong currents and sharp rocks.

The Russian tourist's body was later taken to Sorong, about a two-hour boat ride away from Raja Ampat. His body was cremated as per his family's request. "We are still communicating with the Russian embassy, from what I've heard his family would come to pick up his ashes in Indonesia," Budiarto said. The huge Indonesian archipelago is home to a vast array of exotic wildlife, including several species of crocodile. Death by crocodiles is not uncommon in Indonesia but it is rare for foreign tourists to be killed. — AFP

## FDA PROPOSES LIMIT FOR ARSENIC IN BABY RICE CEREAL

**WASHINGTON:** The Food and Drug Administration has urged the food industry to reduce the already-tiny amount of arsenic found in baby rice cereals. The agency proposed a new voluntary limit for the amount of inorganic arsenic - the type found in some pesticides and insecticides - in infant rice cereals to 100 parts per billion, equivalent to recommendations already in place in Europe. It's a very small amount, and around half of infant rice cereals the FDA sampled from retail stores in 2014 are already in compliance.

But the FDA says the guidance is a precaution, as rice cereal is a leading source of arsenic exposure in infants. "The proposed limit is a prudent and achievable step," said Susan Mayne of the FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition. The FDA said parents don't need to stop feeding their infants rice cereal, but officials said they should vary rice with other things like baby oatmeal, barley and multigrain cereals that are also iron-fortified. The agency said rice intake is about three times

greater for infants than adults relative to body weight, primarily due to infant rice cereal.

Gerber, the nation's largest manufacturer of baby rice cereal says it's already in compliance with the FDA's proposed arsenic levels. "We have worked closely with our trusted rice supplier and their growers as well as researchers from agricultural universities to achieve some of the lowest levels of this element in US grown rice," Gerber said in a release issued shortly after the agency's announcement.

Arsenic is naturally present in water, air, food and soil in two forms: organic and inorganic. Organic arsenic passes through the body quickly and is essentially harmless. Inorganic arsenic can be toxic and may pose a cancer risk if consumed at high levels or over a long period of time. Rice is thought to have arsenic in higher levels than most other foods because it is grown in water on the ground, optimal conditions for the contaminant to be absorbed. — AP



Rice grows in a field near Alicia, Ark. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on Friday, April 1, 2016, urged the food industry to reduce the already-small amount of arsenic found in baby rice cereals. — AP

## WOMEN CAN TAKE ABORTION PILL LATER; PARE CLINIC VISITS

### FDA'S APPROVAL REFLECTS EVIDENCE-BASED PROTOCOL

**OKLAHOMA CITY:** Women will be able to take the so-called abortion pill later in a pregnancy and with fewer doctor visits under a new federal label for the drug that undermines several state laws aimed at restricting medical abortions. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) notified the manufacturer of the drug Mifeprex in a letter that the drug is safe and effective for terminating a pregnancy in accordance with the new label.

Also known as mifepristone or the abortion pill, the drug manufactured by Danco Laboratories is used in combination with another drug, misoprostol, to end a pregnancy.

While abortion providers in most states already are using the protocol outlined in the new label, laws in effect in Ohio, North Dakota and Texas prohibited "off-label" uses of the drug and mandated abortion providers adhere to the older protocol approved in 2000. Similar laws in Arkansas and Oklahoma have been on hold pending legal challenges, while a county judge in Arizona ruled in October that state's law was unconstitutional.

Under the new label, a smaller dose of mifepristone can be used up to 70 days after the beginning of the last menstrual period instead of the 49-day limit in effect under

the old label. Also, the second drug in the protocol, which follows a day or two later, can be taken by a woman at home and not be required to be administered at a clinic, reducing the number of office visits a woman must make. "The FDA's approval of a label reflecting a more updated, evidence-based protocol for medication abortion has the potential to expand women's options for safely ending a pregnancy in the earliest weeks," said Nancy Northup, the president and CEO of the Center for Reproductive Rights.

"This label change underscores just how medically unnecessary and politically motivated restric-

tions on medication abortion in states like Texas and Oklahoma truly are, and demonstrates the lengths politicians will go to single out reproductive health care to restrict women's rights." Abortion rights supporters say they expect providers in Ohio, North Dakota and Texas to begin administering the drugs in accordance with the new label within the next few days. Chris France, executive director of Preterm, Ohio's largest abortion provider, said: "We will be implementing the new protocol today."

France said before Ohio's law prohibiting off-label use of the drugs went into effect, between 10 and 15 percent of patients elected for a medication abortion. That number dropped below 2 percent after the law took effect. "Combined with other restrictions in our state, medication abortion has required four in-person clinic visits, making this method too costly and cumbersome for most people," France said. "Now, our providers will no longer be forced to practice medicine mandated by politicians whose goal is to shut us down." Randall O'Bannon, director of research for the anti-abortion group National Right to Life, said medication-induced abortions still are dangerous and have led to at least 14 deaths and thousands of injuries. He says the new protocols serve mostly the interests of the abortion industry by increasing their profit margin by requiring a smaller dose of the drug and reducing the level of staff they have to devote to the patient. "It looks like this benefits the abortion industry and increases their potential customer base and revenues, but it's not clear that anything here makes it safer for women in the long run, and certainly nothing about a chemical abortion makes it any safer for the unborn child," O'Bannon said. — AP



NEW YORK: Kayla Forshey (left) participates in a rally to condemn Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump's remarks about women and abortion in New York. — AP

## FDA: SMALL RISK OF IMPLANT MALFUNCTION FROM SCANS

**WASHINGTON:** Patients with pacemakers, drug pumps and other medical devices face a very small risk of electrical malfunction when undergoing medical scanning, but it shouldn't stop them from getting necessary care, according to health regulators. The Food and Drug Administration said Friday that the risk of serious health problems due to medical scans is "extremely low" and can be further reduced by using lower doses of X-ray radiation. The agency first flagged the issue to health providers in 2008 and posted an update to its website Friday.

FDA regulators have received a small number of reports of fainting, dizziness and seizures among patients with drug pumps who underwent scanning. While there is no evidence of "direct causation," FDA regulators say the X-rays used in CT scans could interfere with circuitry in some medical devices, including both implants and wearable devices. Despite

this risk, the FDA stressed that the potential harm is "greatly outweighed by the clinical benefit of a medically-indicated CT examination."

CT scans use a series of X-ray images from different angles to create a multi-perspective image of bones, blood vessels, organs and other parts of the body. They are often used to screen for internal injuries following accidents or to plan surgeries and radiation treatments. The FDA recommends patients with electronic medical devices notify their physician before undergoing a CT scan. Patients with insulin pumps, which administer a protein for treating diabetes, should bring the controller for their device and backup insulin, in case of pump problems. Scanning technicians can take several steps to decrease CT exposure to medical devices, including: scanning around the device - where possible - and using a lower dose of radiation over a longer period of time. — AP

## INDIA'S ITC TO KEEP CIGARETTE FACTORIES SHUT OVER RULES

**NEW DELHI:** India's top cigarette maker ITC Ltd, part-owned by British American Tobacco, said it was not ready to print bigger health warnings on its packs as mandated by the government and will keep its factories shut until clarity emerges on the new rules. ITC's comments highlight the latest tussle between India's \$10 billion cigarette industry and the government after new rules kicked in on Friday mandating health warnings should cover 85 percent of a pack's surface, up from 20 percent now.

A parliamentary panel last year forced the government to delay the new rules, saying it was assessing how the industry would be impacted. But the health ministry later said the warnings must be adopted on April 1. The panel of lawmakers last month called for reducing the size of warnings to 50 percent to protect the interests of the industry and tobacco farmers. ITC said the health ministry's push to go ahead

with its rule was "contrary to its earlier decision to await the (parliamentary) committee's findings".

"The industry was led to believe that the government would re-notify new health warnings after considering the committee's recommendations," ITC said in its statement. Health ministry officials could not be reached for a comment on Saturday. A senior official had told Reuters on Friday the government was committed to implementing new rules. A leading industry body had said on Friday that cigarette makers, including ITC and its rival Godfrey Phillips India Ltd, which is a partner of US-based Philip Morris International, suspended production as the new policy created confusion. Smoking kills about 1 million people in India each year, BMJ Global Health estimates. The World Health Organization has called the debate on reducing the warnings size in India "worrisome". — Reuters

# CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times  
248 33 199





Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem  
د. فهد علي المخيزيم

استشاري أطفال  
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM



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(From left) Mayor Faisal Al-Waqyan, Rawan Al-Shati, Noor Al-Hudaib, and Redha Al-Shati at Kuwait Times' booth. —Photos by Joseph Shagra



Mayor Faisal Al-Waqyan visits Kuwait Times' booth.



Mayor Faisal Al-Waqyan speaks to Kuwait Times.



Mayor Faisal Al-Waqyan visits Danah's booth.

## BLOOM EXPO RAISES ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS IN KUWAIT

### EVENT HELD AT DAHIYAT ABDULLAH AL-SALEM PARK

By Faten Omar

Kuwait's first environmental awareness event, 'Bloom Expo', was held on Friday at Dahiyaat Abdullah Al-Salem Park with an exciting program of music and performances, and art and planting activities for children. The expo was inaugurated by Mayor of Dahiyaat Abdullah Al-Salem Faisal Al-Waqyan. "We are happy to open this expo to the public, and proud of the effort of young Kuwaitis and their creativity in organizing this expo, and those promoting authentic Kuwaiti products. We seek to hold more expos in parks to support young Kuwaitis,"

Waqyan told Kuwait Times. Bloom Expo was organized by 'Lamah', founded by Noor Al-Hudaib and Rawan Al-Shati. "A lot of families attended the expo and were very interested in what we are offering. The kids had fun in learning how to plant. Others bought and supported Kuwaiti products and involved their children in participating in buying things for charity. You can see a lot of bags around here," they said.

#### Going green

Hudaib and Shati's vision is to encourage people to visit local gardens and raise awareness on going green. Participants in the event exhibited ecofriendly products

and provided information about the environment. The expo included children's art and planting areas with small booths selling food and accessories. A lot of companies also participated in the expo.

"We have two products here - ecofriendly cups made from environmentally-friendly plastic that are excellent at keeping drinks hot or cold, which won't leak or spill. We also have watches of different colors for different causes - for example the pink watch is for cancer, white for children in Africa and so on. For every watch you buy, we will donate an amount to charity," said a member of the One Face team, one of the participants at the expo.

#### Cozy atmosphere

For Salah Zamani, a production designer and owner of the 'Baraka' brand, the expo was an opportunity to display his items in a cozy atmosphere. His booth was an explosion of color and patterns joined artistically together. "I am selling handmade furniture and home accessories made by me. I have colorful trays, printed wooden trays, painted pots and side tables," he said. Kuwait Times sponsored Bloom Expo, which aims to promote environmental awareness and participate in creating a brighter future for Kuwait.



Mayor Faisal Al-Waqyan visits Roach's booth.



Mayor Faisal Al-Waqyan, Rawan Al-Shati, and Noor Al-Hudaib tour the expo.



Mayor Faisal Al-Waqyan, Rawan Al-Shati, and Noor Al-Hudaib visit Bait Abdullah Children Hospice's booth.



Mayor Faisal Al-Waqyan, Rawan Al-Shati, and Noor Al-Hudaib visit Al-Ahli Bank's booth.



Children's playground.



Mayor Faisal Al-Waqyan, Rawan Al-Shati, and Noor Al-Hudaib visit Rice Creamery's booth.



Mayor Faisal Al-Waqyan, Rawan Al-Shati, and Noor Al-Hudaib are seen in front of Danah's booth.



A general view of participants' booths.



Mayor Faisal Al-Waqyan, Rawan Al-Shati, and Noor Al-Hudaib are seen during the tour.



Staff at Danah's booth.



00:20 Parked
01:55 Desperately Seeking Susan
03:40 Monk: Shines: An Experiment In Fear



00:45 I Escaped Jaws 2
01:40 From WAGs To Riches
02:35 Tanked
03:25 Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli



00:35 Prey
01:30 Happy Valley
02:25 Happy Valley
03:20 Casualty
04:20 Stella



00:00 Charlie Rose
01:00 First Up With Angie Lau
02:00 First Up With Angie Lau
03:00 Trending Business



HERCULES ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

08:00 Countdown
09:00 Countdown
09:30 On The Move
10:30 On The Move



00:00 News Update
00:30 Dialogue
01:00 News Update
01:15 China 24

14:30 Dialogue
15:00 News Update
15:15 China 24
16:00 News Update



00:00 Inside China
00:30 Managing Asia
01:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
02:00 Asia Squawk Box



00:00 The Killer Speaks
01:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
02:00 Evil Up Close
03:00 The First 48



00:20 Fast N' Loud
01:10 Gold Rush
02:00 Diamond River Hunters
02:50 Alaska: Battle On The Bay



HERCULES ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

08:00 Countdown
09:00 Countdown
09:30 On The Move
10:30 On The Move



00:05 Who On Earth Did I Marry?
00:30 The Haunted
01:20 Ghost Lab

14:55 Fatal Encounters
15:45 On The Case With Paula Zahn
16:35 Murder Shift



00:20 How It's Made
00:44 How It's Made
01:08 You Have Been Warned
01:55 Stephen Hawking's Grand Design

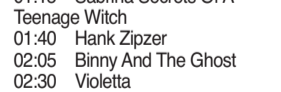


00:30 Crashes That Changed Flying
01:20 Origins
02:05 Chasing Classic Cars
02:05 Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations



HERCULES ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

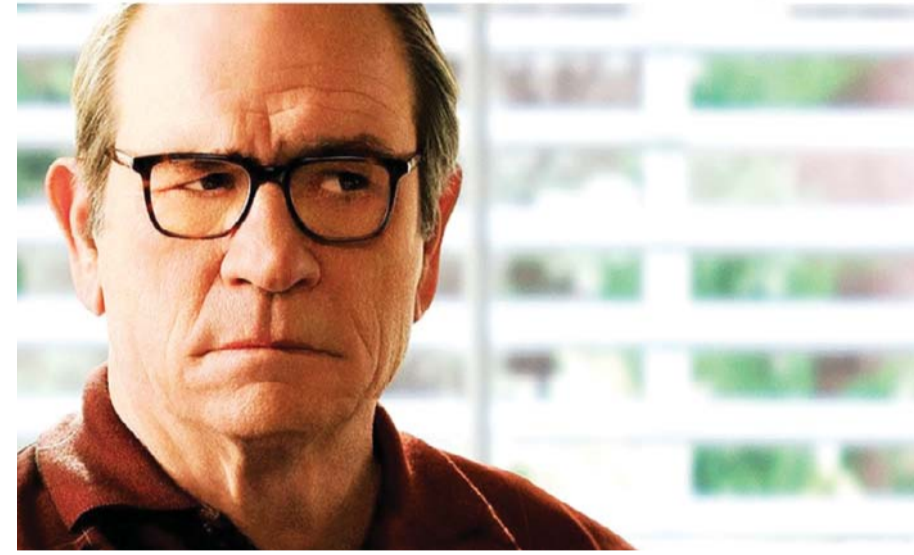
08:00 Countdown
09:00 Countdown
09:30 On The Move
10:30 On The Move



00:00 Violetta
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch



Hope Springs

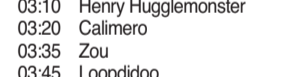


HOPE SPRINGS ON OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

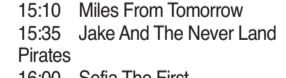
12:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug & Cat Noir
12:45 Fish Hooks
13:00 Austin & Ally



00:05 Art Attack
00:30 Henry Hugglemonster
00:45 Calmerio
01:00 Zou



00:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry
00:55 The Grace Helbig Show
01:25 Keeping Up With The Kardashians



00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Amazing Wedding Cakes

06:00 Boyster
06:10 Super Matrak
06:35 Super Matrak
07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil

00:20 Aussie Pickers
01:10 Storage Wars: New York
01:35 Storage Wars: New York
02:00 Duck Dynasty



00:10 The Chase
01:05 Emmerdale
01:30 Eggheads

12:00 Chopped
13:00 Guy's Big Bite
13:30 Guy's Big Bite
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives



00:20 Aussie Pickers
01:10 Storage Wars: New York
01:35 Storage Wars: New York
02:00 Duck Dynasty



00:10 The Chase
01:05 Emmerdale
01:30 Eggheads

02:00 Coronation Street
02:30 Big Star's Little Star
03:25 Tracy Ullman's Show
03:55 Raised By Wolves



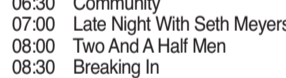
00:10 Eat Street
00:35 Eat Street
01:00 David Rocco's Dolce India
01:25 David Rocco's Dolce India



00:00 About Last Night
00:00 Hope Springs
00:00 Green Card



00:00 Community
00:30 Playing House
01:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore



00:00 Community
00:30 Playing House
01:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore



01:30 Super Rugby
03:30 Super Rugby
05:30 Golfing World
06:30 Gillette World Sport



01:00 This Is PGA Tour
01:30 Aquabike World Championship
02:00 Indy Lights Series

19:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
21:00 Playing House



00:00 Bates Motel
01:00 Quantic
02:00 Rosewood
03:00 Allegiance



00:00 American Heist
02:00 Mine Games
04:00 Batman Unlimited: Animal Instincts



00:00 About Last Night
00:00 Hope Springs
00:00 Green Card



00:00 I Origins
00:00 The Mirror Has Two Faces
00:00 Veronica Guerin



01:15 Ouija
03:00 Fast Girls
05:00 Tinker Bell And The Legend Of The NeverBeast



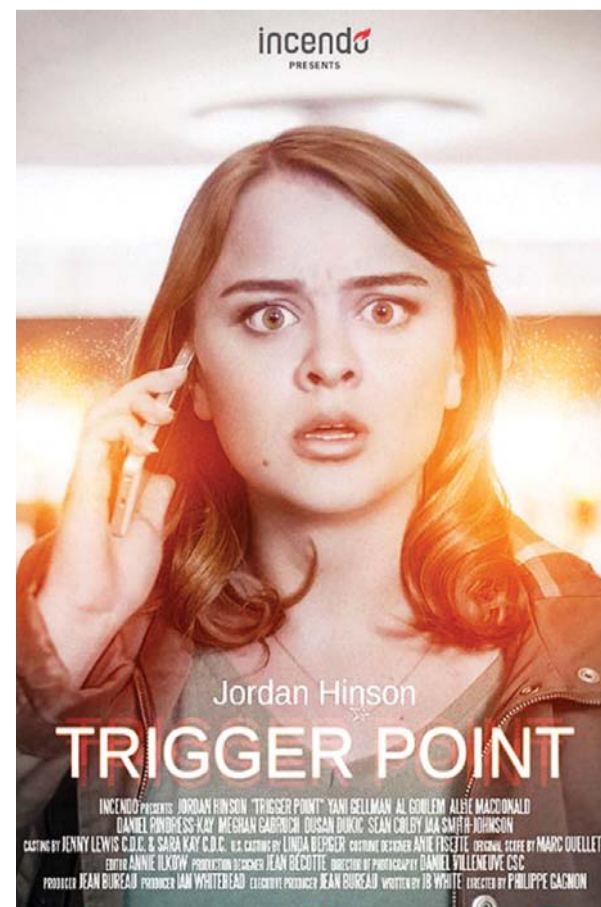
01:30 Super Rugby
03:30 Super Rugby
05:30 Golfing World
06:30 Gillette World Sport



01:00 This Is PGA Tour
01:30 Aquabike World Championship
02:00 Indy Lights Series



00:00 The World Sailing Show
00:30 Gillette World Sport
01:00 Formula-E Championship



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**SHARQIA-1**  
 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE 12:00 PM  
 JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END) 3:00 PM  
 NO FRI-SAT  
 KUNG FU PANDA 3 3:00 PM  
 FRI-SAT  
 KUNG FU PANDA 3 5:00 PM  
 KUNG FU PANDA 3 7:00 PM  
 JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END) 9:00 PM  
 JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END) 11:00 PM  
 JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END) 1:00 AM

**SHARQIA-2**  
 10 CLOVERFIELD LANE 1:15 PM  
 10 CLOVERFIELD LANE 3:30 PM  
 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE 5:45 PM  
 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE 8:45 PM  
 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE 11:45 PM

**SHARQIA-3**  
 HIGH-RISE 12:30 PM  
 HIGH-RISE 3:00 PM  
 10 CLOVERFIELD LANE 5:15 PM  
 HIGH-RISE 7:30 PM  
 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE 9:45 PM  
 10 CLOVERFIELD LANE 12:45 AM

**MUHALAB-1**  
 HIGH-RISE 1:15 PM  
 JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END) 1:30 PM  
 JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END) 3:30 PM  
 HIGH-RISE 5:30 PM  
 JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END) 7:45 PM  
 HIGH-RISE 9:45 PM  
 JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END) 12:05 AM

**MUHALAB-2**  
 10 CLOVERFIELD LANE 11:30 AM  
 KUNG FU PANDA 3 1:45 PM  
 10 CLOVERFIELD LANE 1:45 PM  
 KUNG FU PANDA 3 4:00 PM  
 KUNG FU PANDA 3 6:00 PM  
 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE 8:00 PM  
 10 CLOVERFIELD LANE 11:00 PM  
 JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END) 1:15 AM

**MUHALAB-3**  
 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE 12:15 PM  
 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE 3:15 PM  
 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE 6:15 PM  
 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE 9:15 PM  
 BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE 12:15 AM

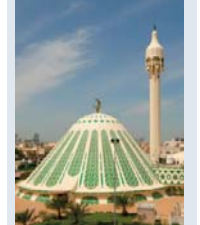
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**CHANGE OF NAME**

Rashida holder of Indian Passport No. Z1845012 293, Saheli Nagar, Zainab Villa, Udaipur, Rajasthan, hereby change my name to Rashida Shoyab Hussain. (C 5154) 28-3-2016

**EMERGENCY 112**

**PRAYER TIMINGS**



**Fajr: 04:16**  
**Shorook 05:36**  
**Duhr: 11:51**  
**Asr: 15:23**  
**Maghrib: 18:07**  
**Isha: 19:25**

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**NOTICE**  
 February 17, 2016

Mr. Usain Khan Mahaboob Khan son of Mr. Mahaboob Khan, resident of 15, State Bank Colony, Villupuram, Tamil Nadu - 605602 and Miss Parveen AmeerJohn daughter of Mr. Ameer John, resident of No. 15, Indira Nagar, Virudhachalam, Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu - 606 001, both Indian national presently residing in Kuwait, have given notice of intended marriage between them under the Foreign Marriage Act, 1969. If anyone has any objection to the proposed marriage, he/she may file the same with the undersigned according to the procedure laid down under the Act/Rule within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.

(Krishan Kumar Pahal) First Secretary (Consular) and Marriage Officer  
 Embassy of India, Kuwait. Ph.00965-22533315

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**Flight Schedule**

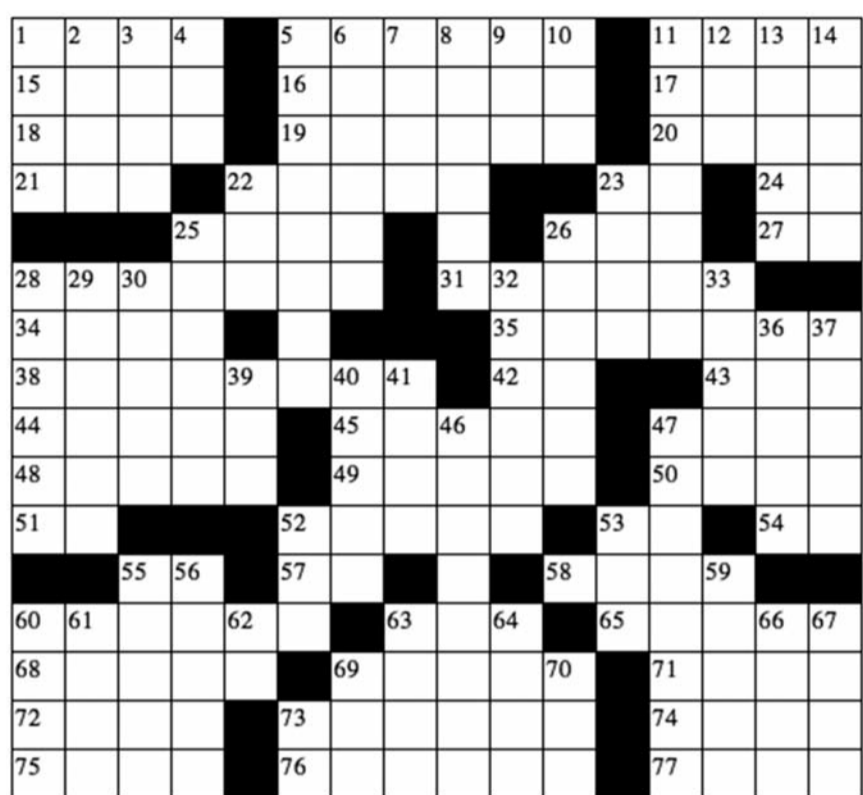
Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page ([www.kuwait-airport.com.kw](http://www.kuwait-airport.com.kw))

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

Arrival Flights on Sunday 3/4/2016					Arrival Flights on Sunday 3/4/2016				
Airlines	Fit	Route	Time		Airlines	Fit	Route	Time	
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	GFA 221 Bahrain	14:20	MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10	SVA 500 Jeddah	14:30	THY	767	Istanbul	14:10
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	KNE 529 Jeddah	14:55	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
JZR	239	Amman	00:50	KAC 742 Dammam	14:55	KAC	773	Riyadh	15:00
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	KAC 788 Jeddah	15:00	KAC	773	Riyadh	15:00
KKK	6506	Istanbul	00:55	ETA 303 Abu Dhabi	15:10	FDB	058	Dubai	15:05
DLH	635	Doha	01:00	OMA 645 Muscat	15:10	KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15	KAC 514 Tehran	15:30	AXB	394	Kozhikode	15:10
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20	ABY 127 Sharjah	15:35	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40	UAE 857 Dubai	15:45	KAC	617	Doha	15:15
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	RJA 640 Amman	16:00	SVA	503	Madinah/Jeddah	15:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	FDB 051 Dubai	16:10	JZR	188	Dubai	15:50
JZR	555	Alexandria	01:45	QTR 1072 Doha	16:15	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
GFA	211	Bahrain	01:50	JZR 787 Riyadh	16:35	KAC	613	Bahrain	16:00
CEB	018	Manila	02:15	KAC 562 Amman	16:55	OMA	644	Muscat	16:10
UAE	853	Dubai	02:25	SYR 341 Damascus	17:00	Istanbul	646	Muscat	16:10
OMA	643	Muscat	02:25	SVA 510 Riyadh	17:15	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
FDB	067	Dubai	03:05	GFA 215 Bahrain	17:30	ETA	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	JZR 177 Dubai	17:45	RJA	641	Amman	16:55
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:15	JZR 777 Jeddah	17:50	FDB	052	Dubai	17:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:15	KAC 678 Muscat/Abu Dhabi	17:50	JZR	266	Beirut	17:10
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:25	QTR 1080 Doha	17:55	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
KAC	544	Cairo	03:30	JZR 483 Istanbul	18:20	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
LMU	510	Cairo	03:40	MSR 620 Cairo	18:30	JZR	238	Amman	17:45
ETH	3403	Addis Ababa/Riyadh	04:00	KAC 786 Jeddah	18:35	SYR	342	Damascus	18:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	04:30	KAC 502 Beirut	18:35	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
QTR	8511	Doha	05:10	RJA 643 Amman	18:35	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
THY	770	Istanbul	05:10	QTR 1087 Doha	18:55	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	05:15	QTR 8512 Doha	18:55	JZR	538	Cairo	18:30
BAW	157	London	06:15	THY 771 Istanbul	19:05	QTR	1081	Doha	19:05
FDB	5061	Dubai	06:40	GFA 212 Bahrain	19:05	JZR	124	Bahrain	19:20
KAC	382	Delhi	07:15	FDB 070 Dubai	19:10	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	07:30	FDB 5062 Dubai	19:10	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:35	BAW 156 London	19:15	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:40	FDB 054 Dubai	19:30	KAC	361	Colombo	19:55
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC 171 Frankfurt	19:35	ABY	124	Sharjah	19:55
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	SVA 513 Riyadh	19:45	MSR	619	Alexandria	20:30
KAC	354	BLR	08:00	JZR 482 Istanbul	19:50	FDB	060	Dubai	20:30
KAC	156	Istanbul	08:00	KAC 787 Jeddah	19:55	KAC	283	Dhaka	20:30
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15	KAC 671 Dubai	20:05	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20	ABY 126 Sharjah	20:15	JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20	ETA 856 Dubai	20:20	DLH	634	Doha	20:50
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	QTR 302 Abu Dhabi	20:25	KAC	353	BLR	20:55
KAC	284	Dhaka	08:25	KAC 117 New York	20:35	KAC	351	Kochi	21:00
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:00	IRC 529 Ahwaz	20:55	KAC	543	Cairo	21:00
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	IRA 664 Shiraz	21:05	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
IRC	528	Ahwaz	09:05	FDB 056 Dubai	21:15	OMA	648	Muscat	21:15
IRA	665	Shiraz	09:10	QTR 1071 Doha	21:20	QTR	1089	Doha	21:45
QTR	1070	Doha	09:25	KAC 677 Muscat/Abu Dhabi	21:25	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
FDB	055	Dubai	09:30	KAC 501 Beirut	21:50	FDB	5054	Dubai	21:55
UAE	873	Dubai	09:40	KAC 513 Tehran	21:55	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	21:55
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC 561 Amman	22:00	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
MEA	404	Beirut	10:40	GFA 214 Bahrain	22:15	UAE	860	Dubai	22:25
JZR	561	Sohag	11:25	KAC 741 Dammam	22:25	KAC	381	Delhi	22:25
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	MEA 405 Beirut	22:40	KAC	301	Mumbai	22:30
SAW	701	Damascus	12:35	KAC 541 Cairo	22:40	KLM	417	Dammam/Amsterdam	22:35
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	UAE 874 Dubai	22:55	GFA	220	Bahrain	23:00
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	KAC 103 London	23:00	KAC	205	Islamabad	23:00
THY	766	Istanbul	13:10	JZR 776 Jeddah	23:00	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05	KAC 785 Jeddah	23:20	JZR	528	Asyut	23:15
KAC	672	Dubai	14:05	JZR 176 Dubai	23:30	KAC	155	Istanbul	23:15
AXB	393	Kozhikode	14:10	JZR 786 Riyadh	23:30	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
FDB	057	Dubai	14:20	FDB 076 Dubai	23:35	KAC	411	Bangkok/Manila	23:25
				PIA 205 Lahore	23:40				

**DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION**

CROSSWORD 1215



ACROSS

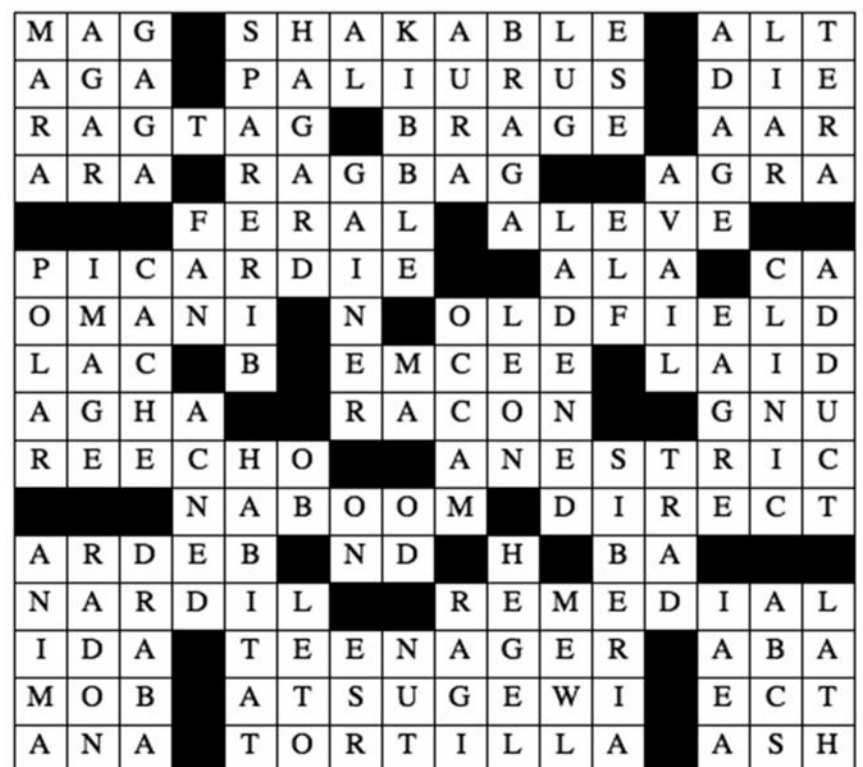
- 1. A French abbot.
5. A vehicle mounted on runners and pulled by horses or dogs.
11. A metabolic acid found in yeast and liver cells.
15. Not easy.
16. Of or relating to or supporting Romanism.
17. Very dark black.
18. In bed.
19. A member of the Semitic speaking people of northern Ethiopia.
20. Small European freshwater fish with a slender bluish-green body.
21. A decree that prohibits something.
24. Being ten more than one hundred forty.
27. The branch of engineering science that studies the uses of electricity and the equipment for power generation and distribution and the control of machines and communication.
28. Inflammation of the nose and throat with increased production of mucus.
31. An insane person.
34. A blue dye obtained from plants or made synthetically.
35. Having sections or patches colored differently and usually brightly.
38. A town in southeastern New Mexico on the Pecos River near the Mexican border.
42. A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
43. A plant hormone promoting elongation of stems and roots.
44. Supporting yourself on your knees.
45. Leaves of the tobacco plant dried and prepared for smoking or ingestion.
48. A spoon-shaped vessel with a long handle.
49. A member of the Siouan people formerly living in the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
50. (Babylonian) God of storms and wind.
51. A radioactive transuranic element produced by bombarding plutonium with neutrons.
54. A silvery soft waxy metallic element of the alkali metal group.
57. A light strong brittle gray toxic bivalent metallic element.
58. Not only so, but.
60. African tree having an exceedingly thick trunk and fruit that resembles a gourd and has an edible pulp called monkey bread.
65. Small terrestrial lizard of warm regions of the Old World.
68. Wild sheep of northern Africa.
71. A Kwa language spoken in Ghana and the Ivory Coast.
72. A river that rises in northeastern Turkey (near the source of the Euphrates) and flows generally eastward through Armenia to the Caspian Sea.
74. Clean or orderly.
75. The general activity of selling.
76. A full supply.
77. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.

DOWN

- 1. According to the Old Testament he was a pagan king of Israel and husband of Jezebel (9th century BC).
2. A small cake leavened with yeast.
3. A submarine gun operated by gas pressure.
4. A doctor's degree in education.
5. A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.

- 6. The 12th letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
7. An ancient Hebrew unit of dry measure equal to about a bushel.
8. An ornamental jewelled headdress signifying sovereignty.
9. A change in the electrical properties of the skin in response to stress or anxiety.
10. The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
11. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
12. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
13. Italian lawn bowling (played on a long narrow dirt court).
14. Administer an oil or ointment to.
22. Seed vessel having hooks or prickles.
23. A complex red organic pigment containing iron and other atoms to which oxygen binds.
25. (Judaism) A chant of praise (Psalms 113 through 118) used at Passover and Shabuoth and Sukkoth and Hanukkah and Rosh Hodesh.
26. One of 7 to 12 sons of Aditi.
29. A genus of tropical American plants have sword-shaped leaves and a fleshy compound fruits composed of the fruits of several flowers (such as pineapples).
30. Depleted of strength or energy.
32. Any member of Athapaskan tribes that migrated to the southwestern desert (from Arizona to Texas and south into Mexico).
33. Submerged aquatic plant having narrow leaves and small flowers.
36. Hungarian choreographer who developed Labanotation (1879-1958).
37. (Irish) Chief god of the Tuatha De Danann.
39. An inflammatory disease of connective tissue with variable features including fever and weakness and fatigability and joint pains and skin lesions on the face or neck or arms.
40. Appearing earlier in the same text.
41. Fallow deer.
46. Of or relating to a caduceus.
47. Any plant of the genus Caragana having even-pinnate leaves and mostly yellow flowers followed by seeds in a linear pod.
52. A gradual decline (in size or strength or power or number).
53. Large brownish-green New Zealand parrot.
55. (statistics) Relating to or constituting the most frequent value in a distribution.
56. Lower in esteem.
59. Australian shrubs and small trees with evergreen usually spiny leaves and dense clusters of showy flowers.
61. A sensation (as of a cold breeze or bright light) that precedes the onset of certain disorders such as a migraine attack or epileptic seizure.
62. A public promotion of some product or service.
63. A door-like movable barrier in a fence or wall.
64. A nearly horizontal passage from the surface into a mine.
66. A flat-bottomed volcanic crater that was formed by an explosion.
67. (prefix) In front of or before in space.
69. A logarithmic unit of sound intensity equal to 10 decibels.
70. One or some or every or all without specification.
73. A person forced to flee from home or country.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

A sensitive relative may need your encouragement. This is a great day for selling yourself and your ideas to others. You will be receiving benefits from a friend as well. You enjoy entertaining guests at home or visiting with friends, but guard against going to extremes in your behavior. Unexpected news may cause a change in plans later this afternoon-but it's all good! Avoid financial risk-taking and extravagance-you should not be spending money today anyway-this is your time to have others spend money on you! It is possible that you will be invited to an interesting and unusual activity this afternoon. You are in for an interesting birthday event. Trust more in your intuitive insights. Romance makes the evening special.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may find yourself going head-to-head with someone older over matters of honesty and integrity. You could fear being deceived or misled, or you could question the motives of authorities. You will work very hard to create a better understanding today, whether it is between you and someone else or in helping to soothe out problems between two other people. This afternoon it will be time to move on to new and different things. Perhaps a movie, or shopping or a sports event is in order. Later today you may want to retire to a favorite pastime. A creative project is quite enthralling and you enjoy doing your best. Something that was really just a hobby could become a source of extra income, especially if you market it yourself.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You are wise to consider your past gains-whether they are monetary or otherwise. Your positive thinking is mirrored in the other people around you. A loved one is encouraging and you are undoubtedly motivated to achieve. This could mean gardening, repairs, errands, etc. This is a high-cycle day for you and you have a lot of positive enthusiasm. Don't forget the sunan lotion. In order to give more time to family matters you may find yourself wanting to retire from a club or organization. Travel may be in your thoughts and the last week of this month would be a perfect time for planning a short trip or vacation. You may not appreciate someone's unrealistic approach to a particular situation-patience. Celebrations are in order for this evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Stay away from procrastination today. True procrastination is not the result of simple laziness-it is sometimes created from an uncertainty in the outcome of a situation. You might want to create a basic to-do list that you can refer to at times like this. As you begin to work down your list, you will pick up speed and complete the tasks much faster than you realize. You may even turn your chores into fun if you have some music or a recorded story to hear. You celebrate your accomplishments today by taking a little trip-perhaps to drive or bicycle around a park or lake. You are coming into a creative and competitive phase soon, one in which you want to be appreciated for what you do and who you are-keeping organized is a good thing.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Your concentration may be on your parents today. The difference in the methods of raising children yesterday versus today's childrearing attitude may be the topic of conversation. Perhaps you are a tutor or a teacher of sorts. It is useful to your professional progress to study these changes and opinions. Conferences, lectures or consultations-all bring opportunities for you to be helped or to help others. You may be sought after for your advice and counsel regarding some very personal and emotional issues at this time. You will have a grasp for understanding issues and the ability to present or communicate well with others. Create a soft atmosphere and try some candle magic, subdued lighting or accent flowers around your place.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You may have an explosion of interest in new healing methods, parapsychology, astrology, tarot, reincarnation, afterlife experiences, etc. You can become quite involved in some sort of healing procedure today. You are curious and inclined to investigate these subjects in order to have a wider scope of self-help tools from which to choose. You may decide to lighten up and be less concerned with the tools and more concerned with the day as it unfolds. You may have some ideas that would aid the health care programs. Do not hesitate to write a member of congress or your legislator and keep notes on your progress and ideas. Today seems to be discovery day and you could discover insights into day-to-day problems that will be of great value later.

WORD SEARCH

Fish 1

Find and circle all of the fish that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a Benjamin Franklin quotation.



- BARRACUDA, BLUEFISH, BONEFISH, BULLHEAD, CATFISH, CHUB, COD, CRAPPIE, CREVALLE, DOLLY VARDEN, DORADO, DRUM, GAR, GRAYLING, GRUNT, HALIBUT, JEWFISH, MACKEREL, MUSKELLUNGE, PADDLEFISH, PARROTFISH, PERMIT, POMPANO, REDFISH, ROOSTERFISH, SALMON, SAND DAB, SAUGER, SHARK, SHEEPSHEAD, SMELT, SNOOK, STURGEON, SUNFISH, SWORDFISH, TILAPIA, TRIPLETAIL, TUNA, WAHOO, WARMOUTH



Libra (September 23-October 22)

It's a good day for reaching agreements with others. You and a friend are on the same wavelength. Your thinking is indeed inspired! Being more involved with neighbors or siblings helps you feel settled into one place and belonging. An agreement or even a compromise about some political issue may come about. Communicating feelings becomes more important as you want to make sure you are very well understood. Out-of-town visitors stay to visit with you and your family for several hours. You need not spend extravagantly for these people; perhaps some popcorn and a little tea would be ideal. Enjoy socializing without going to extremes. Later this evening you can buy a gift for your loved one, who so generously helped you entertain.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

A frank discussion with a close friend that you trust may help you make better sense out of some recent event. This is not gossip but you could come close to involving yourself in gossip-tread carefully. You and your friend could come up with some good ideamaking ideas. If you go cautiously now, you will receive inspirations that will move you along at a faster pace later. This afternoon may be spent in entertaining children. This can be anything from coaching a ball game for your religious group to visiting children in a hospital for some group therapy. You are good with children and may be called upon many times in the future to lend your guidance or just give support. You may be thinking about a new addition to the family soon.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

You may find yourself in a very talkative mood today with neighbors, friends and co-workers alike. You can be very open and invite comments from others that will help you with a new artistic endeavor. You are most persuasive with others in an assortment of ways. You may recognize an opportunity to express your ideas and views. A good conversation is not only inevitable but productive this afternoon. You may find some cultural involvement irresistible tonight. This experience increases your awareness of different expressions of art. You will notice that in absorbing impressions of events-your intuitive abilities are enhanced. This time is good for activities with the opposite sex. A little ice cream for a late night snack might be fun.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

If vague communication exists, you may be the one to set things straight. This is a great time to be with others in a play or work environment. This may be the day you discover just how you want to focus your energies in a volunteer program. You may be sought after as just the person for a particular task. You are at your mental best with sharp ideas and clear thoughts. This is an excellent time to make decisions and take care of mental work. Before we get into the personal and financial parts of the day... Have you laughed lately appreciating the finer things of life is another hallmark of this phase. You are willing to save or invest for longer periods of time in order to have your wishes become a reality. Keep up the good work.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Chores and little favors are the order of this morning. You accomplish a lot. Shift your focus to others today. You will be most persuasive. Push someone else into the limelight. There is a lot of emotional drive now and if this energy is channeled, you can be very influential. You may decide to lend your wisdom and energies to a youth organization. This activity could involve you as a guide, camping coordinator, cook or teacher. The talents you have that are beneficial are money management, job training, acquiring educational funding, pursuing professional goals and goal setting. Invite your co-worker friends to become involved with these young people's activities... It is the youth that will run the country when you retire.

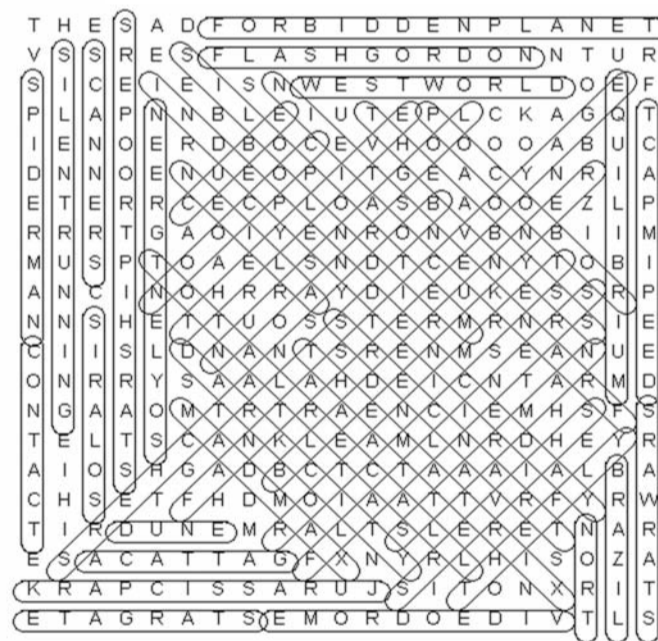


Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may share your faithfulness and devotion by sharing your money and day-to-day practical activities with a loved one. Remember-this satisfies a deep need for security and permanence in your own life. It might surprise you to know that others need your emotional support as much as you need theirs. Money is not the problem with most people; it is what they do with it when they have it. Get busy and plan a getaway for today or tomorrow. Perhaps visiting with relatives or taking a family member to the zoo would be good. Artistic endeavors are encouraged at this time. Spiritual guidance may come to you from a distance. Your emotional barometer regains a balance this evening. You encourage others to share their ideas and viewpoint today.

Yesterday Solution

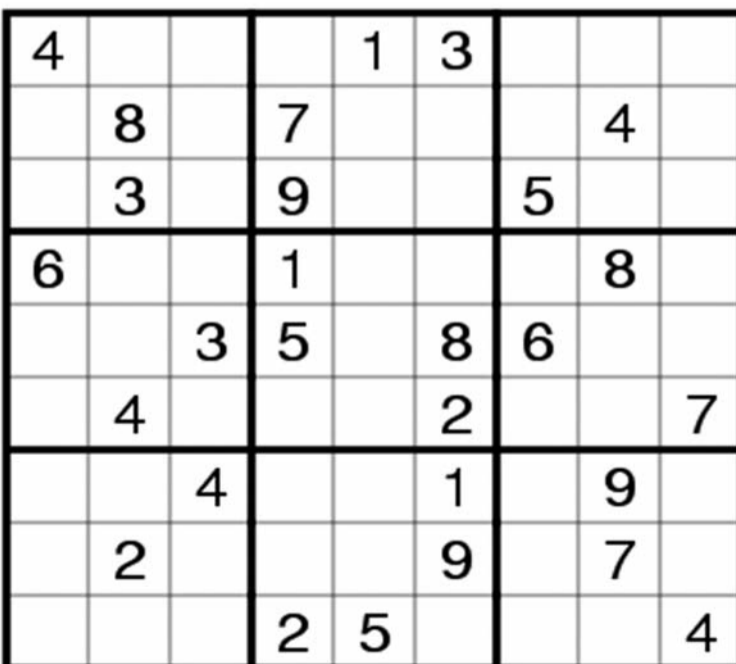
Movies: Science Fiction



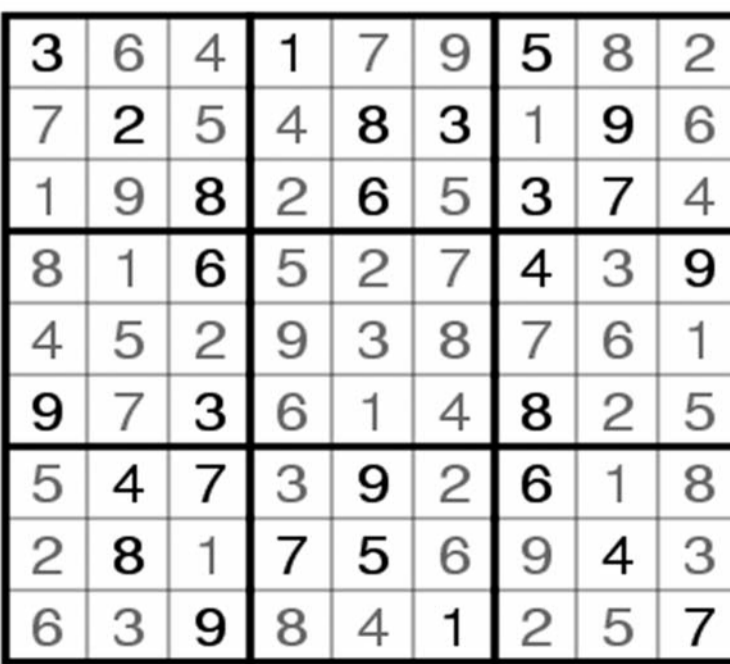
- ALIEN, BLADE RUNNER, BODY SNATCHERS, BRAZIL, COCOON, CONTACT, CUBE, DARK CITY, DEEP IMPACT, DUNE, EQUILIBRIUM, FANTASTIC VOYAGE, FLASH GORDON, FLATLINERS, FORBIDDEN PLANET, FRANKENSTEIN, GATTACA, INDEPENDENCE DAY, JURASSIC PARK, LOGAN'S RUN, MAD MAX, METROPOLIS, ROBOCOPO, SCANNERS, SHIVERS, SILENT RUNNING, SOLARIS, SPYGLINT GREEN, SPIDER-MAN, STAR WARS, STARBUCKS, STARMAN, STARSHIP TROOPERS, TERMINATOR, THE ABYSS, THE FLY, THE MATRIX, THEY LIVE, TOTAL RECALL, TRANCERS, TRON, VIDEOGAME, WESTWORLD

Hidden movie: THE ADVENTURES OF BUCKAROO BANZAI ACROSS THE EIGHTH DIMENSION

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



For labor-related inquiries and complaints:  
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



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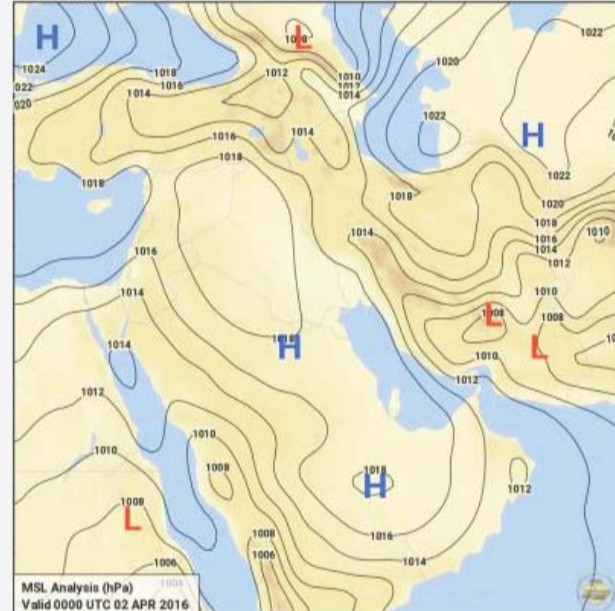
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 02/04/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 27 °C

By Day : Fair with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 12 - 32 km/h  
By Night : Cool with light to moderate north westerly to light variable wind, with speed of 08 - 22 km/h

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
Expected Weather	fair	fair + scattered clouds	clouds to increase + scattered rain	clouds/rain to decrease
Min Temp °C	12	13	16	19
Max Temp °C	29	30	30	28
Wind Direction	variable	variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly	south easterly	south easterly
Wind Speed km/h	06 - 20	06 - 28	15 - 40	10 - 32

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C	Max °C
KUWAIT CITY	17	27
KUWAIT AIRPORT	11	27
ABDALY	10	26
BUBYAN	12	27
JAHRA	14	27
FAILAKA ISLAND	14	27
SALMIYAH	18	25
AHMADI	17	25
JAL ALIYAH	12	26
QAROH ISLAND	19	23
UMM AL-MARADEM	19	24
NUWAISIB	13	28
WAFRA	10	28
MANAGISH	12	25
SALMY	10	25
MUTRIBA	11	27

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	27
Min Temp (°C)	12
Max Rel Hum (%)	57
Min Rel Hum (%)	13
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	57 NW
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

Sunrise	05:37
Sunset	18:07

Prayer Times

Fajr	04:17
Sunrise	05:37
Zuhr	11:52
Asr	15:23
Sunset	18:07
Isha	19:25



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	Plastic Surgeons
Dr. Abidallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
General Practitioners	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaezem	22636920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Rafea	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Paediatricians	Endocrinologist
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarouf	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gujare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
Dentists	
Dr. Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abidallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abidallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

Family Doctor	Psychiatrists	Gynaecologists & Obstetricians
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047	
Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0	
Dr. Adrian arbe	23729596/23729581	
Dr. Verginia s. Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321	
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539	
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami	25343406	
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272	
Dr. Salem soso	22618787	
General Surgeons		
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044	
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148	
Internists, Chest & Heart		
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939	
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300	
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004	
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515	
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446	
Dr. Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3	

Physiotherapists & VD	Rheumatologists:
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
Internist, Chest & Heart	
DR. Mohammed Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC	
Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Consultant Cardiologist	
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center	
Te: 2575077	
Fax: 25723123	

Psychologists /Psychotherapists	Soor Center Tel: 2290-1677 Fax: 2290 1688	info@soorcenter.com www.soorcenter.com	Kaizen center 25716707	Noor Clinic 23845955	William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677 Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677
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## Madonna 'doesn't mind' her son hanging out with the Beckhams

The 'Material Girl' hitmaker - who is currently locked in a bitter custody battle with her ex-husband Guy Ritchie over their 15-year-old son - is pleased he is spending some time with Brooklyn, Victoria and David Beckham. A source told The Sun newspaper: "Madonna can't cope with the fact she doesn't know who Rocco is hanging out with. She is hearing rumours through friends in London about what he is up to and the fact that he is spending a lot of his time with a bunch of entitled little monsters. But the one person who she doesn't mind him hanging around with is Brooklyn Beckham. "She admires the way he has been raised and likes the fact that David and Victoria have been taking care of Rocco. As

much as she hates Guy she accepts that, even though he is her ex's best pal, David is a good family person. Brooklyn has been a great influence on Rocco too." Meanwhile, Brooklyn has reportedly been giving advice to Rocco amidst the custody battle and is like a "surrogate big brother" to him. A source said at the time: "The boys have been friends for years and Brooklyn's always acted like a surrogate big brother for Rocco, who idolises him in return."

## Adele is keeping The Vamps awake all night



James McVey has revealed the 'Hello' hitmaker's tour party kept him and his bandmates - Brad Simpson, Connor Ball and Tristan Evans - up with their "loud" celebrations. James said: "We haven't seen her show yet but Adele was staying at the same hotel as us the other day. It was her tour party that kept me awake all night - it was loud." However, the 'Can We Dance' hitmakers are much more selective when it comes to celebrating when they're on tour. The 21-year-old singer added to the Daily Star newspaper: "We tend to pick the nights we party. The mini-bar is safe but in London we will have a few drinks with friends and family. "Backstage it's all protein shakes, coffee, ginger and lemon. Nothing diva-ish apart from Haribo sweets. And we like to huddle and rub chins together before stage time." Meanwhile, the boy band previously revealed their fans are much crazier in the UK, recalling the time one of them snuck into their hotel room. Tristan said: "We've had fans from both countries jump in front of our van, which is quite extreme, but in England a fan actually got into our hotel room. That was pretty weird as Connor and James were naked at the time!"



## Kim learns a lot from Kylie Jenner

The 'Keeping Up With The Kardashians' star insists there is no rivalry between herself and her younger stepsister but admits some rumors leave her frantically reaching for her phone to ask her sisters if they're true. Writing on her official website, she said: "Kylie and I laugh so hard at this all the time, because people always want to pit us against each other, thinking we have similar careers. I think it's amazing - there's no one else I would want to be in the same business with than my sister. She teaches me so much, and I teach her so much, and we're both so close that it's just funny. "Sometimes I hear a rumor and I'm like, 'Wait, is that true?! What's really going on? I need to call my sister.' But with this one, that has never been the case. We are just so supportive of each other, and that's really what it is." Meanwhile, the 18-year-old television personality previously hit back at claims she is "in competition" with Kim, 35, because they're "completely different" people. Kylie said: "People always put me and Kim in a competition, or [they say] I'm trying to be Kim, or I'm trying to steal Kim's throne. I think people forget that me and Kim are sisters. We're not in a competition. We're completely different people. "Kim inspires me. She's one of my biggest inspirations. That's not a secret! I look up to my sister. I don't think that's like, a weird thing? We have a lot of love for each other."

## Grande was told to 'not ever give up' by Gloria Estefan

The 'Break Free' hitmaker was just six or seven-years-old when the legendary musician heard her singing karaoke on a cruise and encouraged her to follow a career in music. Speaking on British chat show Alan Carr: Chatty Man, she recalled: "I was on vacation with my family and I was doing karaoke and it was a terrible song choice. We were on a cruise and I decided to sing 'My Heart Will Go On' from 'Titanic.' Really dark choice, but I was only six or seven so I didn't know what I was doing. "After I was done somebody came up to me and was like, 'Gloria Estefan would like to speak to you.' I was like, 'Are you serious?' and my brother was like, 'Are you f\*\*\*ing serious?' and we went together to go say hi to her. She was like, 'I just want to let you know that you are so talented and do not ever give up.' It was crazy." Meanwhile, the 23-year-old singer previously admitted she is terrified something might happen to her voice. She shared: "One of my big fears is something happening to my voice because vocal chords are fragile little things."

## Yasmin Le Bon makes good use of her library

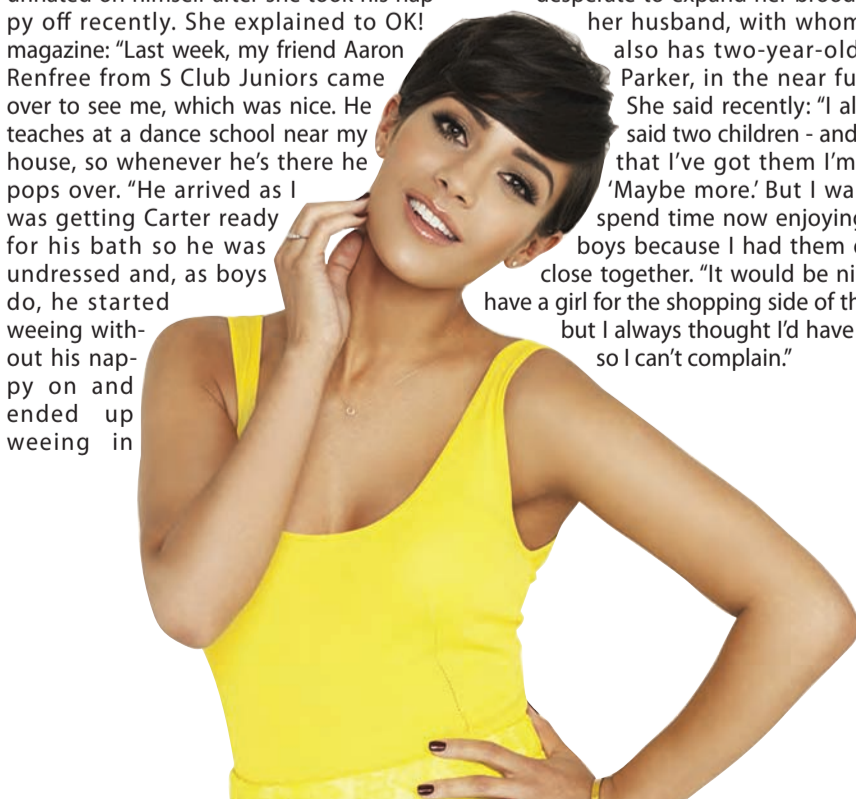


The 51-year-old model - who has daughters Amber, 26, Saffron, 24 and Tallulah, 21, with her husband Duran Duran's Simon Le Bon - has revealed the family love having nights in together. She said: "Our library at home is our pub/club. Simon will be playing the guitar, the girls will be singing, Tallulah will be playing some wicked tunes, while the pug will be sneaking off with the edibles and I will be trying to beat my friend Jade at backgammon." When she's not busy hanging out with her friends and family at home, Yasmin likes the "banter and friendly faces" of The Wellington in Knightsbridge, London. When asked about her favorite London club, she added to London's Evening Standard magazine: "I go to The Wellington in Knightsbridge for the friendly faces and the banter. I love Annabel's cozy but dressed-up fun. The food is delicious and you can have a boogie." And whilst Yasmin loves to spend time with her family, she admits she never asks them for their opinions on what she's wearing because they're "far too honest". She shared previously: "I never ask my children or Simon what they think of how I look before leaving the house. Being family, they're far too honest. I've learnt the hard way. And Simon's only opinion is that I look lovely. He knows whatever he says, I will do entirely the opposite thing. He's worked that out."

## Frankie Bridge's baby son peed in his own mouth

The Saturdays singer may be surrounded by boys in her house with her two sons and husband Wayne Bridge but she has admitted she's still learning about their habits as she was left stunned when little Carter, seven months, urinated on himself after she took his nappy off recently. She explained to OK! magazine: "Last week, my friend Aaron Renfree from S Club Juniors came over to see me, which was nice. He teaches at a dance school near my house, so whenever he's there he pops over. "He arrived as I was getting Carter ready for his bath so he was undressed and, as boys do, he started weeing without his nappy on and ended up weeing in

his own mouth - that was nice! "I didn't realize what was happening but Aaron was laughing so much and had to tell me! I was like, 'Oh no! No wonder he's kicking off so much.' But, although she's still adapting to her boys' habits, the 27-year-old singer is desperate to expand her brood with her husband, with whom she also has two-year-old son Parker, in the near future. She said recently: "I always said two children - and now that I've got them I'm like, 'Maybe more.' But I want to spend time now enjoying the boys because I had them quite close together. "It would be nice to have a girl for the shopping side of things, but I always thought I'd have boys so I can't complain."



## Mirren thinks building a house with her husband strengthened marriage

The 70-year-old actress has been married to Taylor Hackford since 1997 and, although they've had their ups and downs over the years, she believes their marriage became indestructible after they built their own home in Salento, Italy because it forced them to lean on one another. Asked what the secret is to a long-lasting marriage, she explained: "You build houses together. If anything's going to make you divorce, it'll be building a house together. If you get through that, that's a huge triumph." But the couple have not only just reached milestones together, they have also learnt a lot from one another and are grateful to have someone in their life who brings out the best in them. She told OK! magazine: "We're very different but I've learnt a huge amount from him, including returning phone calls. If he gets a phone call, he returns it immediately. He's one of those detail-orientated people. I admire him very much. But then, it's a two-way street. I'm sure he's also learnt things from me."



## Richards says the Rolling Stones 'defy gravity'

The 72-year-old musician - who is part of the legendary rock group with Mick Jagger, Ronnie Wood and Charlie Watts - doesn't believe in getting old and says his bandmates are "moving better than ever". He said: "That's a concept younger people have about older people. It's incredible. I mean I've watched that guy [Mick] every night, man and he's moving better than ever. "It depends how life treats you and how you're feeling because, I mean, so far, physically the Stones are incredibly blessed, strong constitutions that defy gravity." And it isn't just physically that Keith believes The Rolling Stones are strong but says they are also as "solid" when it comes to their band and its staying power. He added to The Sun newspaper: "We're probably more solid than ever. I'm look-

ing forward. We've always managed to cross generation. The ages of the audiences in South America and Cuba was amazing. I mean what can I say? We've survived without any collateral damage. "It's an amazing journey and I can't think if anything that would have happened differently or that's we could have affected. I mean nobody wishes Brian [Jones] was dead but there's nothing else. Also, I must say the resilience of this band, all the c\*\*p that's happened to us so many times, doesn't stop the fact that we will keep going. Just as long as we're here, it's not even a point of honour. It just a case of what else are you going to do?"

## Taron Egerton says he wants to be like Leonardo DiCaprio

The 26-year-old British actor has now starred in two successful movies, 'Kingsman: The Secret Service' and 'Eddie the Eagle', and is aware his celebrity status is on the rise. Although Taron isn't adverse to the perks of

being a movie star he isn't sure if he wants to completely embrace the Hollywood lifestyle. Discussing how he is handling the fame game, he said: "Well, a part of everyone wants to be Leonardo DiCaprio, don't they? But then a big part of me recognizes that I'm a very private person - someone who really likes to go to the pub and get silly with my mates. I don't want to worry about maintaining an air of decorum that's not natural to me." Taron - who stars alongside Hugh Jackman in 'Eddie the Eagle' in which he plays real life British Olympic ski jumper Eddie Edwards - admits his working life can make him lonely because of all the travelling he has to do. The young heartthrob has got used to living in hotels but he is looking forward to settling down and having a family one day, once he finds the right girl. Taron - who is being tipped to play a young Han Solo in a 'Star Wars' spin-off film - told The Guardian newspaper: "Yeah (I get lonely). Massively. I don't want to start getting my little violin out, but travelling across the world constantly and staying in hotels is tough, man. I think it's probably easier if you have a partner, but I've been single for three years now. I find the lack of structure difficult, but it's a very first-world problem. Part of me looks forward to a time when I have a family and a partner and I take less of my nourishment from social occasions. Having a little unit around me will make my working life easier, because it is quite lonely otherwise."



## Azalea had to rush her pet Bulldog to the vets

The 'Team' rapper noticed her beloved mutt wasn't acting like her usual self and so took her to see a doggy doctor in Los Angeles. The veterinarian decided to give Space Jam an X-ray to check what was wrong and discovered she had eaten an odd item. Iggy - who also has another Bulldog Jelli - took to her Twitter account to share a photo of the X-ray with her 6.1 million followers in a bid to see if any of them could tell her what the object was. She tweeted: "Not sure what it is, but space jam ate it. and now its stuck inside her. (sic)" Iggy was asked by her

followers if Space Jam would require surgery to remove the item or whether nature would take its course and it pass through her system, but she didn't offer an answer. Having a sick dog has rounded off a miserable past few days for the 25-year-old pop star. Earlier in the week, Iggy had to suffer the indignity of a video leaking online which showed her fiancée Nick Young admitting to his Los Angeles Lakers teammate D'Angelo Russell that he cheated on her. She is yet to directly comment on his comments in the footage.

## Delevingne went through a 'rough patch of self hatred'

The 'Paper Towns' star insists she hasn't quit modeling in favor of acting but turned to movies to help her "learn how to not pick apart my every flaw". In a series of posts on Twitter, she wrote: "Can we just set the record straight ... I never said I was quitting modeling. I do not blame the fashion industry for anything ... I suffer from depression and was a model during a particularly rough patch of self hatred ... "I am so lucky for the work I get to do but I used to work to try and escape and just ended up completely exhausting myself ... I am focusing on filming and trying to learn how to not pick apart my every flaw. I am really good at that ... Okay.... Rant over. Just wanted to clarify and word vomit a little (sic)" Meanwhile, the 23-year-old model and actress previously revealed she hates when people compliment her professional pictures as they are "50 per cent make-up, Photoshop, the photographer, stylist and everyone else". She explained: "When people say, 'You look really good in that picture', I'm like, 'Well, it's 50 per cent make-up, Photoshop, the photographer, stylist and everyone else'. I'm lucky I get to do that and that's fun, but everyone has a bad day. It gets annoying sometimes, especially when you're eating or in the bathroom. Or the gym - that sucks."



## Frances Cobain is on 'great terms' with her mother Courtney Love

The 23-year-old visual artist - who recently called time on her marriage with Isaiah Silva - is reportedly enjoying a better relationship with her mother since she filed for divorce. A source told PEOPLE magazine: "They're on really great terms at the moment. Courtney wants the best for Frances and is hoping this will be a clean and straightforward divorce process. "The whole money aspect was one of [Courtney's] biggest worries all along for Frances." Meanwhile, it was previously revealed that Frances wed in secret, without even telling her mother about the nuptials. A source said at the time: "Frances is totally loved up with Isaiah, but she's never been one to broadcast it to the world. She only invited a close circle of friends to the party, and then phoned her mum afterwards to tell her the good news. "Courtney and Frances have had a strained relationship over the years, but after tons of fall-outs they actually get on quite well now." Courtney is sad she wasn't there but she totally understands that Frances is her own person and she's happy to let her do her own thing. Plus, Isaiah is a really nice guy."



## Schumer doesn't think her fame will last

The 'Trainwreck' star isn't sure her career will last much longer and has joked it is down to her "behavioral issues". Speaking to journalists at Comedy Central's presentation in New York, she quipped: "Do you guys know that I'm really famous now? I think it's gonna last another six months. Obviously, I've got behavioral issues. "I didn't know what being famous would be like. You can imagine, and then it actually really blows. You're like, 'Boo-hoo', and yes, I'm very rich now. Very rich. But now, I get to have things like: If I walk down the street in New York, people going, 'Oh my god, I never do this, but would you [expletive] my brother?'" Meanwhile, the 34-year-old comedian previously admitted she doesn't find fame "fun". She explained: "I'm, like, newly famous, and it turns out it's

not fun. Did you guys know that? You're, like, you know that I'm just now learning that my dreams have been a sham, and that it's actually not great and it just only comes with pain. "We all know it's going to last another three months because that's how it works. I'm already burning bridges like it's already f over. I'm telling you, this is the last time I'll ever be onstage. The next time you see me, I'll be the girl in the elevator, like, do you want to go see the 'Sleep No Less?'"



## Goulding's childhood was based on survival

The 'Love Me Like You Do' hitmaker is aware things could have gone very differently for her because of her background and admits she sometimes feels she could "easily go back into that world". She shared: "A lot of my early childhood was based on survival, so it seemed like I'd be taking the piss if I screwed up. I just couldn't afford to fish up. My best friend is in a ... well, I guess it's an asylum. He did a lot of acid. It changed his brain. "I saw firsthand what it would have been like if I'd taken another route - and my childhood really was perfect for that route. I still feel like part of me is that girl, that I could easily go back into that world of wanting to be out of myself." However, the 29-year-old singer is thrilled with her "pretty phenomenal" success especially when she considers the life she has come from. She added to The Guardian newspaper: "I feel like I could change the world. But sometimes the response I get makes me think: 'Oh - they've figured it out. They've figured out that I'm nothing special.' I sometimes feel like I'm going to get found out - like I'm just a normal girl. "I have people thinking I'm f\*\*\*ing amazing and then other people thinking I'm crap, and it's really hard to believe you're good when that keeps happening. But there are occasional moments when I feel like what I've achieved is pretty phenomenal, considering my background."



Fans of the rock band Guns N' Roses wait outside the Tower Records building on the Sunset Strip trying to buy a ticket for an impromptu performance tonight at the nearby Troubadour, April 1, 2016, in West Hollywood, California.



Guns N' Roses fan Paul Hebert displays his wristband. — AP photos

## Guns N' Roses reunite early at LA club

The long-awaited Guns N' Roses reunion got off to a surprise early start Friday, with the band playing a show at a small Los Angeles club where the rock legends were first noticed. Before a lucky 500 fans packed into the Troubadour in West Hollywood, singer Axl Rose and guitarist Slash performed for the first time together in public for more than two decades.

Videos posted online showed the 54-year-old Rose still with flowing blond hair but without his once constant bandana-singing alongside Slash in his trademark top-hat over his black curls. "You know where you are?" Rose yelled in his soaring voice in the signature line of "Welcome to the Jungle," according to one segment shot by a fan-a technology that did not exist in the band's glory days.

Social media posts said that Guns N' Roses started the show with "It's So Easy," an energetic song with a bad-boy attitude that has frequently been the band's opener. Years of rumors of a Guns N' Roses reunion

came to fruition earlier this year when the band was announced as headliners for the Coachella festival, which will take place later this month in the California desert. The band has since announced a full tour at arenas but had suspiciously left off any date in their native Los Angeles.

### Mad scramble for tickets

Guns N' Roses early Friday announced the show for the evening. Some fans online initially thought that it could be an April Fools' Day prank, but the band soon confirmed that tickets would be available only in person and one each at a "retro" price of \$10.

A long crowd of fans, some wearing Guns N' Roses T-shirts, quickly converged for a chance to buy tickets near the Troubadour at the designated sale site in the building of defunct Tower Records, now a store of guitar maker Gibson. The strategy appeared to hinder scalpers, whose inflated prices have long infuriated artists.

Dozens of fans who could not score a ticket waited outside the venue late at night hoping to still hearing the music. The Troubadour's calendar had previously listed, cryptically, "Girl Rock (school) — showcase," as its attraction for Friday, with a sketch of a student playing a guitar.

The Troubadour, with a capacity of 500, is legendary in music history as it helped launch the careers of artists ranging from Elton John to James Taylor. Members of The Eagles met for the first time at its bar. Hollywood in the 1980s became the epicenter of heavy metal, and Guns N' Roses landed a contract with Geffen Records after a show at the Troubadour. The result of that deal, 1987's "Appetite for Destruction," remains the best-selling debut album ever, with fans drawn to Rose's range and raw anger coupled with Slash's intricate guitar playing.

road and the tension between Rose and Slash, last played together in 1993 in Buenos Aires. Rose later continued Guns N' Roses with other lineups, all the while receiving lucrative offers to reunite.

The band on Friday also announced details of the North American tour, which will all be in stadiums-a far cry from the intimate Troubadour. The main leg of the "Not in This Lifetime Tour" will begin on June 23 at Ford Field in Detroit, home to the National Football League's Detroit Lions, and run until August 22 in San Diego.

Guns N' Roses have only announced three shows outside the United States-April 19 and 20 in Mexico City and July 16 in Toronto. In the band's heyday, Guns N' Roses played to raucous welcomes around much of the world including Europe and Japan. — AFP

### Lucrative tour years in making

But Guns N' Roses, notorious for their antics on the



Rihanna is seen at 2016 Black Girls Rock! at New Jersey Performing Arts Center. — AP photos



Laurny Hill is seen at 2016 Black Girls Rock!

## Rihanna, Shonda Rhimes, Clinton appear at Black Girls Rock!

Pop star Rihanna and TV mogul Shonda Rhimes were among the honorees at this year's Black Girls Rock! event, where Hillary Clinton made an appearance and told the audience "my life has been changed by strong black women leaders." The Friday night event was taped at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark. The special will air on BET on Tuesday.

The Democratic presidential candidate earned cheers when she called black women "change makers and pathmakers and ground shakers."

"There are still a lot of barriers holding back African Americans and black women in particular, so a gathering like this filled with so many powerful, strong women is a rebuke to every single one of those barriers," Clinton said. "All of our kids, no matter what zip code they live in, deserve a good teacher and a good school, a safe community and clean water to drink."

Clinton spoke before introducing Beverly Bond, who founded Black Girls Rock! in 2006. Another who earned loud applause was Rihanna, the final honoree of the night. "Thank you so much for celebrating us in a world that doesn't celebrate us enough," she said onstage.

"The minute you learn to love yourself you will not want to be anybody else," the Grammy-winning singer and fashion trendsetter added. "Role model is not the title they like to give me ... (but) I think I can inspire a lot of young women to be themselves and that is half the battle." The Barbados-born singer also thanked her mother and grandmother for being strong black women and excellent role models.

"Hopefully one day I'll be raising my own little black girl who rocks," she said. Others did just that: Rhimes, the creator

behind TV hits "Grey's Anatomy," "Scandal" and "How to Get Away with Murder," brought her daughter to the event "to sit in a room with you and feel the energy that's here."

"Because she and you are the ones who count, the ones who matter," said Rhimes. "It's the minute someone starts giving you awards, you are more history than future. But your slates are blank, your paths are clear and your stories are whatever you decide they're going to be."

Grammy-winning R&B singer Monica brought her daughter onstage at the end of her performance. Other performers include Brandy, Andra Day, Jazmine Sullivan, Marsha Ambrosius, Corinne Bailey Rae and Imani Uzuri.

Gladys Knight, who performed a medley of her hits as the audience stood up and danced, was also honored. "It is the best award, the greatest trophy that I've ever received," she said. "More than a Grammy. More than so many other awards that I've gotten that I appreciate." Other honorees included Black Lives Matter founders Patrisse Cullors, Alicia Garza and Opal Tometi; "The Hunger Games" actress Amandla Stenberg, who has received praise for being vocal about cultural appropriation; and Danai Gurira, the "Walking Dead" actress and playwright behind Broadway's "Eclipse," starring Oscar winner Lupita Nyong'o, who also attended Black Girls Rock!

Debbie Allen, Kelly Rowland, Cissy Houston, Erykah Badu, Tatyana Ali and Teyonah Parris also attended. Tracee Ellis Ross, star of ABC's "black-ish," hosted the event and kicked it off with a hilarious and impressive dance number, channeling Rihanna, Beyonce, Queen Latifah, Chaka Khan, Janet Jackson and her mother, Diana Ross. — AP

## George Clooney slams 'completely fabricated' Hello magazine interview

George Clooney has slammed Hello Magazine for posting a fabricated "exclusive" interview with him, claiming that he never talked to the publication for the article. Hello later apologized for running the interview, which it had obtained from an independent agent.

"Hello Magazine has printed an EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW with me that has been widely picked up and reprinted. Outlets like Vanity Fair, Marie Claire, The Sun and The Evening Standard have all printed my exclusive interview and credited Hello Magazine," Clooney said in a statement on Friday.

Though being misquoted as an actor is not uncommon, he explained, entirely fabricated articles take it to a new, "disturbing" level. "The problem is that I have not given an interview to Hello Magazine and the quotes attributed to me are not accurate," Clooney added. "In my experience, being misquoted is not unusual, but to have an 'exclusive interview' completely fabricated is something new. And a very disturbing trend."

The Hello Magazine article in question, which was titled "George Clooney Reveals Wife Amal Clooney's Most Attractive Feature," has since been pulled from the publication's website. The falsified statements include Clooney supposedly telling Hello that he and his wife "have a rule whereby we are never apart for more than a week."

Hello Magazine said in a statement that the publication is "dismayed" by Clooney's claims. "Hello Magazine and the Hello Group are very dismayed by Mr George Clooney's statement that an interview with him that was published by the Hello Group is not authentic," the statement reads. "The Hello Group bought the interview in good faith from a respectable independent agent, Famous, with whom it has dealt for many years and the agency and its writer were both credited at the end of the article in Hello Magazine as is customary. Purchase was on the unquestionable understanding that the interview and material were correct and accurate in all respects."

In the meantime, the Hello Group can only express its deepest respect for both Mr Clooney and his wife, Amal, and its sincere commitment to respectable and accurate journalism. "The magazine released a statement hours later after discovering that the interview was 'culled together from a series of interviews that took place over a period of time.'"

"Hello Group has established that the interview it bought from the Famous agency had, in fact, been culled together from a series of interviews that took place over a period of time, and many of the quotes attributed to Mr Clooney were never made by him."

Hello Group bought the material in good faith from a trusted independent agent, who assured us it was an authentic one-to-one interview with Mr. Clooney, which we now accept was not the case. We are shocked and disappointed to discover that the representations that were made to the Hello Group at the time of purchase of the material were not, in fact, true.—Reuters



This image released by Paramount Pictures shows Austin Amelio, Tanner Kalina, Forrest Vickery, Tyler Hoechlin and Ryan Guzman in "Everybody Wants Some." — AP

## Linklater recreates fun of the 80s in 'Everybody Wants Some!!'

Director Richard Linklater remembers the year 1980 as a breezy, fun and raunchy time. It was also the end of an era - the last gasp of the "utter hedonistic abandonment" of the 1970s before the conservative cultural backlash of the new decade was to take hold.

But the college freshman of his latest film "Everybody Wants Some!!" didn't know that. The draft was long over. "Just Say No" hadn't yet been introduced. In the fall of 1980 at a small Texas college, everything was still a party - especially in the long weekend before classes start.

And it's in that concentrated, heightened weekend that Linklater chose to set the film, which follows the bro philosophers of the college baseball team around as they mine every bit of fun out of those precious, responsibility-free days with sex, drugs, alcohol and everything in between. The film, now playing in New York and Los Angeles, expands nationwide in the coming weeks.

In movie time, "Everybody Wants Some!!" is set only four years after its predecessor, Linklater's last day of high school cult classic "Dazed and Confused." In real time, 23 years separate the two semi-autobiographical films. Those two decades didn't really change how Linklater felt about that period in his life, though. "It's like running into an old friend who you haven't seen in a while. The conversation picks up right there," Linklater said.

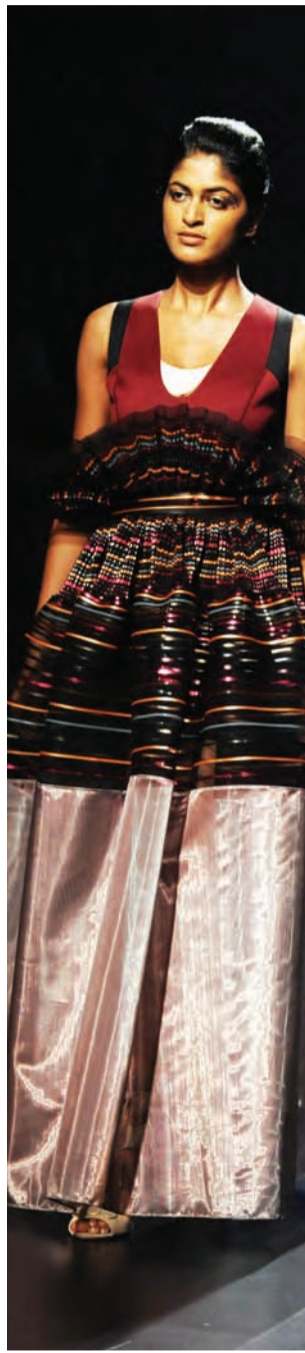
### Cultural vocabulary

The 55-year-old "Boyhood" director was mainly struck by how much younger the cast was than him now - and how the idea of asking a girl to dance at a disco was just not in the cultural vocabulary of his millennial actors. As in "Dazed and Confused" and its then-unknown cast of now notables like Matthew McConaughey, Linklater populated this cast with under the radar actors like Blake Jenner, Wyatt Russell, Ryan Guzman and Tyler Hoechlin.

Linklater drew on both people he knew and many of his experiences to craft the characters and situations. Without spoiling the fun of discovery, let's just say that some of it is not too far removed from the antics of "Animal House" and other college comedies. "Almost all of it really happened in some way or another," Linklater said.

Wild abandon aside, the heart of the movie is the baseball team, and the nutty characters who fill out the roster - from the "weirdo" pitchers to the hot shot batters - and how they bicker, bond and compete on and off the field. Linklater played college ball for only one year before health reasons forced him off the field, but he remembers everything about that time and those teammates. "Everybody Wants Some!!" is a love letter to that bond.—AP

# India FASHION WEEK



Models showcase the creations of designers Amit Aggarwal and Payal Singhal during Lakme India Fashion Week in Mumbai. — AFP photos



A Saudi man leads camels as he heads back home from a training center on April 1, 2016 near the city of Tabuk, located some 1500km northwest of the capital Riyadh. — AFP



The western wall of King Tutankhamun's burial chamber at his tomb at the Valley of the Kings in Luxor, Egypt. — AP photos



One of Egypt's famed King Tutankhamun's golden sarcophagus is displayed at his tomb in a glass case.



Radar scanning experts scan a wall at King Tutankhamun's burial chamber.



Egyptian Antiquities Minister, Khaled El-Anani, speaks during a press conference outside King Tutankhamun's tomb.

## Secret Tut chamber?

### Egypt calls experts to examine evidence

**E**gypt on Friday invited archaeologists and experts from around the world to examine new data from new, extensive radar scanning conducted on King Tutankhamun's tomb to explore a theory that secret chambers could be hidden behind its walls.

The open invitation to a conference in Cairo in May, issued by the antiquities minister at a news conference just outside the tomb, aims to bring broader scientific rigor to what so far have only been tantalizing clues.

The new exploration was prompted by a theory by British Egyptologist Nicolas Reeves that undiscovered chambers lie behind the tomb's western and northern walls and that they likely contain the tomb of Queen Nefertiti, one of pharaonic Egypt's most famous figures - whose bust, on display at the Berlin Museum, is a much storied symbol of ancient beauty.

Preliminary scans whose results were announced last month suggested two open spaces with signs of metal and organic matter. Egypt's archaeologists announced Friday they completed more extensive scanning, sponsored by National Geographic, and the results must now be analyzed.

#### 'Truth and reality'

If chambers - whether containing Nefertiti's tomb or not - are discovered behind the western and northern walls covered in hieroglyphs and bas-reliefs in Tut's tomb, it would likely be the biggest discovery in Egyptology since Howard Carter first discovered the king's 3,300-year-old burial chamber and its treasures in 1922. Antiquities Minister Khaled el-Anani, who was appointed to his post last week, counselled caution.

He said Egypt's "scientific credibility" and the preservation of its antiquities were at stake, adding, "We will rely only on science going forward. There are no results to share at the current stage, but only indications. We are not searching for hidden chambers, but rather we are scientifically verifying whether there are such rooms." "We are looking for the truth and reality, not chambers."

Another radar scan will be carried out at the end of the month. It will be done vertically from atop the hill above the tomb, using equipment with a range of about 40 meters. Harvard University Egyptology professor Peter Der Manuelian, who is not involved in the project, said the Valley of the Kings is "notorious for containing fissures, cracks" that complicate interpreting the scans. "So the more scans we do, and from different angles and directions, inside and outside the tomb, the better," he said.

Even if the spaces are rooms, they could be undecorated small rooms for holding embalming materials, he said - or, more dramatically, "the beginning of a larger floor plan." "We'll have to be patient. In the meantime, kudos to Nick Reeves for pointing out the presence of these anomalies and for sharing them with the world."

Reeves' theory was prompted by the unusual structure of Tut's tomb. It is smaller than other royal tombs and oriented differently. Furthermore, his examination of photos uncovered what appear to be the outlines of a filled-in doorframe in one wall.

#### Following the evidence

He has speculated that Tutankhamun, who died at age 19, may have been rushed into an outer chamber of what was originally Nefertiti's tomb. Nefertiti was one of the wives of Tut's father Akhenaten, though another wife Kia is believed to be Tut's mother. "We have a theory, and now what we're trying to do is test it. And, I, if I am right, fantastic, if I am wrong, I've been doing my job, I've been following the evidence trail, and seeing where it leads," Reeves said.

El-Anani said Egyptologists and Valley of the Kings experts will discuss on May 8 the findings of the

Tutankhamun's tomb small, or do we have only a portion of a larger tomb?"

The latest scans were carried out over 12 hours along five different levels of the walls, producing 40 scans. The data will be analyzed by US-based experts, but the results would not be known for at least another week.

#### Golden opportunity

"Technology is beginning to open doors that were permanently locked, or seemed permanently locked or maybe we did not know it existed," said Terry D. Garcia, chief science and exploration officer



The north wall of King Tutankhamun's burial chamber.

scans in a previously scheduled conference devoted to King Tut to be held at Egypt's new national museum near the Giza Pyramids outside Cairo. There, they can discuss the findings. The outcome, he said, will guide what course of action Egypt takes.

The Valley of the Kings was one of the main burial sites for ancient Egypt's pharaohs, located among the desert mountains across the Nile River from Luxor, the site of the monumental temples of Thebes, one of the pharaonic capitals. Tut's was the most intact tomb ever discovered in Egypt, packed with well-preserved artifacts. But he was a relatively minor king ruling for a short period at a turbulent time.

Nefertiti was the primary wife of the Pharaoh Akhenaten, who unsuccessfully tried to switch Egypt to an early form of monotheism. Akhenaten was succeeded by a pharaoh referred to as Smenkhare. Reeves believes Smenkhare and Nefertiti are the same person, with the queen simply changing her name during her rule. Not long after Tut died in 1323 BC, his family was overthrown by a general, ending the 18th Dynasty that had been in power for 250 years.

John Darnell, professor of Egyptology at Yale University, said Tut's tomb is "somewhat anomalous due to its small size ... But the question is: Was

for National Geographic. "It is creating a revolution ... and it is going to result in the 21st century being the greatest in exploration in the history of mankind and we are just scratching the surface."

The mystery is also a golden opportunity for Egypt to boost its deeply damaged tourism industry by drawing world attention to its wealth of pharaonic antiquities. But any benefit from the discoveries may be slow coming, with Egypt still facing turmoil, including a deadly fight against Islamic militants in the Sinai.

Pharaonic sites were once Egypt's main draw. But cities like Luxor have suffered heavily from the plunge in tourism. Now, visits to Egypt's beaches have also been devastated since the crash of a Russian airliner in October over the Sinai Peninsula that killed all 224 people onboard. Russia said it was downed by an explosive device and suspended all flights to Egypt. Britain suspended all flights to Sharm el-Sheikh, the Egyptian Red Sea resort from which the doomed aircraft took off shortly before it crashed.