THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

GCC countries seek unified security legislations



TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2016

First woman leader takes charge in **Indian Kashmir**



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Messi denies tax evasion in Panama Papers scandal





PUBLIC BODIES MOVE TO LAY OFF EXPAT WORKERS

MEASURES SEEK TO BOOST KUWAITIZATION, CUT EXPENSES



Low Tide 04:22 & 16:25

AMIR ATTENDS 'WE ARE ALL KUWAITIS' OPERETTA



KUWAIT: HH the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is greeted by children as he attends a national operetta titled "We are all Kuwaitis" at Bayan Palace yesterday. — KUNA (See Page 3)

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Various ministries and government bodies have started taking measures towards reducing the number of expat employees in order to provide more job opportunities for Kuwaitis and cut expenses in the state's budget. The measures are also meant to handle demographic imbalances that have so far resulted in limiting national manpower in the local market to less than 25 percent.

In this regard, the education ministry has made a list of 450 expat teachers the ministry no longer needs pending terminating their contracts by the next school year. But Al-Qabas newspaper, quoting educational sources, said Education Minister Bader Al-Essa refused to sign the decision to terminate the teachers and instead postponed the issue until next year, bearing in mind that new schools will open soon. Meanwhile, the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) has decided not to accept expat students in its various colleges from the next academic year because those colleges' capacity is only enough for Kuwaitis.

Municipality Director Ahmed Al-Manfouhi has also decided to lay off 400 expat employees with the aim of cutting expenses. Notably, the ministry of social affairs and labor has banned recruiting any expat without direct approval from Minister Hind Al-Subaih. The ministry has also decided to lay off a number of expat employees working on a 'pay for work' basis.

The ministry of communication, which has the least numbers of expat employees, is assessing the performance of some of them to be laid off and substituted by Kuwaitis. Kuwait Petroleum Corp has also instructed its subsidiary companies to sack expat secretaries working in the oil sector and make the ones needed to work through contractors. KPC has informed all CEOs to notify expat secretaries and make them choose between working through contractors or termination.

News

Govt plans KD 2bn sukuk, bond issue

DUBAI: Kuwait's government plans to issue KD 2 billion (\$6.6 billion) of Islamic and conventional bonds to help cover a budget deficit created by low oil prices, Al-Arabiya television quoted unnamed official sources as saying yesterday. The finance ministry has asked the central bank to arrange the issuance, Al-Arabiya said. It did not specify the timing beyond saying the issuance would occur this year. The government has begun drawing down its financial reserves to cover part of the deficit, which it projects at KD 12.2 billion in the current fiscal year that began on April 1. But it also wants to start issuing debt to limit the speed of the drawdown and develop the local financial market. The KD 2 billion issuance will be divided equally between conventional and Islamic bonds (sukuk).

Finmeccanica to finalize **Eurofighter project today**

ROME: Italian defence company Finmeccanica will finalize a multi-billion contract from Kuwait for 28 Eurofighter jets today, two sources close to the deal told Reuters yesterday. Kuwait signed a memorandum of understanding in September to buy the planes, but efforts to close the deal have hit repeated snags and a third source urged continued caution. The 20-year contract is expected to be worth between €7 billion and €8 billion (\$8-\$9.1 billion), with Finmeccanica's share seen at roughly half of the total. The rest is in the hands of a group of companies in the Eurofighter consortium, including planemaker Airbus and Britain's BAE Systems. Finmeccanica Chief Executive Officer Mauro Moretti said in March that the state-owned conglomerate was in the final stages of discussion with Kuwait over the deal and hoped "to conclude in a short period".

UAE court jails 'Hezbollah' trio

ABU DHABI: An Emirati court sentenced yesterday three Lebanese, including a Canadian dual national, to six months in prison for forming a local affiliate of Iranbacked Hezbollah, local media said. The supreme federal court convicted the trio of "forming a group for the terrorist Hezbollah (movement) in the country," Ittihad daily reported, adding that they will be deported after serving their sentences. They "were found guilty of setting up an office of the militant group in the UAE and carrying out commercial, economic and political activities without licenses," the daily Gulf News reported. It named the men as Canadian-Lebanese Suhail Naif Gareeb, 62, and Lebanese nationals Asaad Ameen Qansouh, 66, and Ahmed Ebrahim Qansouh, 30. Their trial opened in early February.

'PANAMA PAPERS' REVEAL OFFSHORE WEALTH

WORLD LEADERS, CELEBRITIES, SPORTS STARS EXPOSED

LONDON/PANAMA CITY: Governments across the world began investigating possible financial wrongdoing by the rich and powerful yesterday after a leak of four decades of documents from a Panamanian law firm that specialized in setting up offshore companies. The "Panama Papers" revealed financial arrangements of global politicians and public figures including friends of Russian President Vladimir Putin, relatives of the prime ministers of Britain, Iceland and Pakistan, and the president of Ukraine.

While holding money in offshore companies is not illegal, journalists who received the leaked documents said they could provide evidence of funds hidden for tax evasion, money laundering, sanctions busting, drug deals or other crimes. The law firm, Mossack Fonseca, which says it has set up more than 240,000 offshore companies for clients around the globe, denied any wrongdoing and called itself the victim of a campaign against

Continued on Page 13



privacy.

REYKJAVIK: Iceland's Prime Minister Sigmundur David Gunnlaugsson speaks during a parliamentary session yesterday, insisting he would not resign after leaked documents allegedly link him to an offshore company. — AP (See Pages 7, 10, 11, 14, 20,

RENEWABLES USE COULD SAVE \$750BN IN MENA

Adnan Amin

KUWAIT: Middle Eastern and North African nations can make a "net benefit" of \$750 billion if they achieve their set targets on the use of renewable energy, a senior official said yesterday. "Almost every country in the (MENA) region has a target for renewable energy from 5-15 percent," by 2030, Adnan Amin, director general of the

International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) told reporters. "If we are able to meet these targets, we will have a net benefit of about \$750 billion for the power sector in the MENA region," Amin said on the sidelines of the sixth MENA (Middle East and North Africa) renewable energy conference.

Amin said the world is looking to double the current share

of renewable energy of 16-17 percent in the global mix to 36 percent by 2030. He said doubling the renewable energy share will help achieve the reduction by half of carbon emissions which would a pre-requisite for limiting global warming to two degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) as decided by the Paris climate change summit. Amin told the conference that global

investments in renewable energy rose by 22 percent last year to a record \$330 billion.

The cost of production of renewable energy has dropped significantly in the past few years, he said. In the past five years, the cost of solar photovoltaic power generation dropped by 80 percent, Amin said. "It is already competitive with natural

gas. There can be further reduction in cost," he said. But Bassam Fattouh, director of Oxford Energy Institute Studies, said the targets set by MENA countries are "very ambitious". He said several challenges hamper renewable energy production in the region, like state monopoly of the power system, a lack of institutional capacity and conventional energy subsidies.

Nearly half of all new installed power generation capacity in 2014 was in renewables - 37 percent wind, a third solar and a quarter hydro, according to the International Energy Agency. Renewables only account for about 20 percent of global electricity generation, and three-quarters of that is hydro. — AFP (See Page 5)

MPS CONTINUE TO REJECT GOVT'S POWER TARIFFS

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Lawmakers yesterday continued to express their total rejection of a government bill to raise power and water charges, saying the proposed increase would certainly harm low and middle income people. MP Madhi Al-Hajeri insisted that there is no way to allow the government charges to pass and impact the finances of citizens. He criticized the government's proposals, saying that it has no strategy to finance the budget deficit due to the fall in oil prices except through harming low income people. Hajeri called on the government to search for other alternatives to meet the budget shortfall away from the "pockets of citizens". The government had proposed two sets of increases - for private homes, a majority of which are owned by Kuwaiti citizens, and for apartments, where the majority of expats live. For private houses, it proposed 5 fils for the first 3,000 kilowatts, 8 fils for between 3,000 and 6,000 kW, 10 fils for between 6,000 and 9,000 kW and 15 fils per kilowatt for consumption above 9,000 kW. For apartments, it proposed 5 fils per kilowatt for the first 1,000 kW, 10 fils for between 1,000 and 2,000 kW and 15 fils per kilowatt for higher consumption.

But the National Assembly financial and economic affairs committee on Sunday proposed major changes only for citizens. It proposed keeping the current rate of 2 fils per kilowatt for consumption of up to 6,000 kW and 5 fils above that. It did not propose any changes for apartments. The government is expected to respond to the committee's proposal tomorrow and the issue is expected to be debated on April 12.

MP Awdah Al-Awdah said the charges issue could strain relations between the government and the Assembly, especially if the government insists on its proposals. He said that if the government does not change its plans, the issue will remain without approval in the Assembly for a long time. The lawmaker said that MPs will not vote unless the issue is in favor of citizens. Previously, a large number of MPs had voiced their rejection of what they called massive fee increases by the government.

In another development, MP Mansour Al-Dhafiri said that the principles of justice and equality in the Kuwaiti constitution call for granting Kuwaiti women married to non-Kuwaitis a housing loan of KD 70,000 like their Kuwaiti male counterparts.

He said that the housing law must be adjusted to treat Kuwaiti women on an equal footing with their male counterparts. The lawmaker said that Kuwaiti women married to foreign husbands should also be given social and children allowances like men.



KUWAIT: Frans Potuyt, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Kuwait launches the new

NETHERLANDS LAUNCHES NEW VISA APPLICATION CENTER

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: The Embassy of the Netherlands yesterday launched a new visa application center in Kuwait City to facilitate the growing number of visitors from Kuwait. Last year, about 8,000 visitors from Kuwait traveled to the country famous for windmills, tulips and cheese. Speaking at the opening of the VFS Global visa center, Frans Potuyt, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Kuwait, said the number of visa applications rose sharply over the last couple of years and the embassy could no longer accommodate the large number of applicants, and wanted to serve and extend the services for everyone.

"Kuwaitis and other nationals' visa applications are growing rapidly, who would like to travel to the Netherlands. Of course we will miss the direct pleasant contacts with all these travelers, but we are confident that VFS and its professional staff will do everything to secure a swift application process," the envoy mentioned. "I hope that we welcome even more friends from Kuwait to our beautiful country," he added.

Kuwait is the seventh country in the Middle East from where applicants can apply for a visa to the Netherlands. The center is located on the first floor of Al-Banwan Bldg on Ali Al-Salem Street in Kuwait City, and services commenced yesterday. "The decision of who gets the visa still lies in our hands. Once you get a Schengen visa, you are getting a visa to most of the countries in Europe. We trust Kuwaitis and they can visit us any time, so I believe that the visa system for Kuwaitis is outdated. Visas for Emiratis have already been removed, so the idea of the requirements for doing so is that home if political settlements are reached the passports must be biometric complitor to rebuild the country," he added.

ant, and I think they are now in the process of doing so," Potuyt said.

More convenient

The Netherlands joins eight other Schengen countries offering visa services at the same center, making it more convenient for travellers planning multiple business or leisure trips abroad to apply at a single location. VFS Global serves a total of 13 client governments in Kuwait, and has operated visa processing services in the country since 2005. The company has partnered with the government of Netherlands since 2006, and serves it in 24 countries with 54 visa application centers globally.

"Our long-standing partnership with our esteemed client government, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, is reflective of the trust they have bestowed on us through this time-honored and successful relationship. We are privileged to further extend our services in Kuwait to them and remain committed to providing comprehensive end-to-end visa services for applicants," said Srinarayan Sankaran, COO Middle East, VFS Global.

Bilateral relations between the two countries are great, according to Potuyt, with a shared trade volume of \$2.5 billion. With regards to the political tensions in the region, Potuyt noted with the moderate role of GCC countries, he hoped that problems in the Middle East will be settled. "We are facing tougher days ahead especially with the solution we all want for the Syrian crisis. I really hope that parties involved will be ready to compromise or give way to solve the crisis. It's very complicated now with IS, but with the will, we shall overcome this. We now have the biggest immigration problem in Europe, is to apply the same with Kuwaitis. One — and I heard many Syrians want to return



KUWAIT: Samir Khader speaks during the training course.

KJA, SKY NEWS ARABIA HOLD TRAINING COURSE

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: Kuwait Journalists Association (KJA), in collaboration with Sky News Arabia, organized a training course in 'visual editorial press' on Sunday at the headquarters of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA). KJA Director Adnan Khalifa Al-Rashed said cooperation between KJA and Sky News Arabia is a beginning of a professional and community partnership between the two sides that seeks the development and qualification of a generation of young Kuwaiti journalists from the private and government sectors.

He added that training young journalists is a priority of the Kuwaiti Journalists Association, which is working to provide all the necessary requirements to inform young people about the technical and professional developments in the field of media and journalism in general, especially to develop the Kuwaiti media's message.

"These specialized training programs are part of a series of activities launched by Sky News Arabia in 2013 aimed at colleges, universities and institutes, as well as media practitioners through advanced levels of programs consistent with the nature of their fields and their specialties," said Nart Bouran, Head of Sky News Arabia. Bouran added that one of the

main goals of Sky News Arabia's initiatives is to contribute to the development of the media industry by providing Arab media with the best experiences, stressing the success of training courses to graduate more than 70 media students and more than 50 specialists in the field of journalism and media in the Gulf and the Middle East.

"Sky News will strengthen partnership with the local media in Arab countries and especially in Kuwait for mutual benefit and supporting our colleagues in the media," he said. "The training course explained the methods that have been used in the media and showed the difference between news, analysis, commentary and investigation and how to present the final article in both voice and image. The course also teaches participants about editorial, monitoring, and analytical skills and summarizing the content of television news broadcasts from various sources," Bouran added.

Samir Khader, Executive Editor of Sky News Arabia, explained how to write professional news stories and deal with the camera in order to familiarize the participants with the media message tools of text and image, and practically showed the best methods of delivery to enable them to make quality sound and picture

CABINET HOLDS WEEKLY MEETING

KUWAIT: The cabinet held its weekly meeting yesterday at Bayan Palace chaired by Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. As the meeting started, the cabinet was informed of a message from Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud inviting His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to attend a summit for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) leaders with US President Barack Obama in Riyadh on April 21, said Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

The ministers were also notified of a message from King Mohammed VI of Morocco to His Highness the Amir, on the distinguished bilateral ties and keenness to bolster them in all fields, as well as promoting the GCC-Moroccan relations. Then, the cabinet was apprised of a message His Highness the Amir received from Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, and President of the European Council Donald Tusk, on a conference on Afghanistan slated for next October in Brussels, minister Sheikh Salman added. The ministerial event will be hosted by the European Union (EU) and the Afghan government.

After that, the cabinet was informed about a message from UN Secretary General Ban Kimoon inviting His Highness the Amir to attend the comprehensive high-level Mid-term Review of the implementation of the Istanbul Program of Action (IPoA) for the Least Developed Countries, due in Antalya, Turkey, in May.

(IBD) Dr Ahmad Mohamed Ali, congratulating His Highness the Amir on the success of the fourth conference for Syrian donors held in London in February. Ali reiterated IBD's readiness to cooperate with the international community to muster more financial resources to fulfill the development needs of the Middle East countries. Meanwhile, Acting Prime Minister and Foreign

Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-

The ministers were given notice of a message

from President of the Islamic Development Bank

KUWAIT: Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah chairs the cabinet's meeting yesterday. — KUNA

Sabah briefed the cabinet on the outcome of the recent visit to Kuwait by Sudan's chief diplomat Ibrahim Ghandour, Sheikh Salman said. The talks focused on means of broadening bilateral ties in all fields, besides issues of common concern.

In the meantime, the cabinet decided to apply e-messaging in all government bodies as of January 1, 2017, replacing paper-messaging. Concluding the customary meeting, the ministers reviewed political developments on the Arab and international scenes. — KUNA



Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah tours a gallery held on the sidelines of the conference.

AMIRI DIWAN MINISTER OPENS CONFERENCE ON LATE SHEIKH ABDULLAH AL-SALEM AL-SABAH

KUWAIT: A conference on the era of the late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah (1950-1965) was held at Kuwait University's Faculty of Arts yesterday under the auspices and in presence of Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah. The National Anthem was played at the onset of the conference, followed by recitation of some verses from the Holy Quran.

Addressing the event, the Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs voiced much thanks and appreciation to the organizers of the conference which handles the political and social aspects of the late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah.

Elaborating on his relationship with the late Amir, the minister said he used to see Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem everyday as he always visited his family at Dasman suburb early morning. He said Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem was a great model for treating children and teens so kindly and moderately. Remembering the sad moment when the late Amir died. Sheikh Nasser said he hurried to have his last look at Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem before his death. Afterwards, Dean of the Faculty of Arts Dr Suad Abdulwahab said the late Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem, who ruled the country between 1950 and 1965 and passed away at 70, is considered the founder of modern Kuwait.

She said this conference should handle everything, not only political or social aspects, about the late Amir who really laid the foundations of the nation. Hailing him as a wise skipper, she said the late Amir efficiently managed to overcome all obstacles and problems the nation faced during his era thanks to his experience

Meanwhile, Head of the Faculty's History Department Dr Abdulhadi Al-Ajmi said his section was so proud of holding this conference on the era of the late Amir Sheikh Abdullah Al-Salem Al-Sabah, during which the country witnessed the creation of governmental and civil establishments, independence and constitution. He said the late Amir's era was actually the golden age of the State of Kuwait.

Dr Aimi expressed much appreciation to the Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs for patronizing and attending this event, stressing Kuwait University's significant and influential role in promoting knowledge and culture in Kuwait by hosting such events. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah (center) attends the conference. — Amiri Diwan photos



Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah is seen during

CONFERENCE FOR OVERHAULING EDUCATION KICKS OFF IN KUWAIT



KUWAIT: Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa (right) and Walid Al-Hasawi, Chairman of the Kuwait Teachers Society attend the conference. — KUNA

KUWAIT: The scheduled 42nd educational conference, themed "Our Educational Curricula And Development Requirements," got underway yesterday with speakers underscoring His Highness the Crown Prince's attention to this vital sector as well as the need to develop it to cope with modern-day scientific advancement.

Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa, in his statement at the opening session of the convention, organized by Kuwait Teachers Society (KTS), praised the event sponsor, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, for dedicating special concern for education and teachers.

Overhauling the education is a feature of civilization, said Dr Essa, also the Minister of Higher Education, affirming that his department is revising the teaching curriculums and seeking to limit methods based on conventional ways such as memorizing and dictating.

Walid Al-Hasawi, the society chairman, boasted of His Highness the Crown Prince's sponsorship of this annual gathering, affirming the approach to examine issues in the sector seriously during the convention. He expressed hope that it would cap with recommendations to advance the education and encourage decision makers map out strategies to face challenges in the field.

Abdulrahim Al-Kandari, the conference's general registrar, said meanwhile that the conference logo was chosen with aim of harmonizing schemes with requirements for technological and scientific development. Other key speakers lauded His Highness the Heir Apparent as well as His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah for spearheading the approach for developing education. Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad was also lauded for earning the UN designation, the "Humanitarian Leader."

The State of Kuwait has repeatedly affirmed the approach to develop education and cope with latest innovations in technology and sciences. Digital methods and tools have been already incorporated in the curricula. — KUNA





KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and top guests attend a National A child kisses His Highness the Amir's forehead during the event. Operetta entitled 'We are all Kuwaitis' at Bayan Palace yesterday. — Amiri Diwan photos

AMIR PATRONIZES 'WE ARE ALL KUWAITIS' NATIONAL OPERETTA



KUWAIT: Under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, a National Operetta entitled 'We are all Kuwaitis' was held yesterday morning at Bayan Palace.

In attendance during the operetta were His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanem, senior sheikhs, Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah and other state officials. The operetta kicked off with the national anthem followed by verses from the holy Quran, to which students from various schools then proceeded to unveil an assortment of portraits depicting nationalistic themes. — KUNA













Scenes from the operetta.







His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is greeted by children.



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and top guests give a round of applause to the performers.









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KUWAIT: A group photo of participants at the 30th GCC airport security officials' meeting yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

GCC COUNTRIES SEEK UNIFIED SECURITY LEGISLATIONS: OFFICIAL

30TH GCC AIRPORT SECURITY MEETING UNDERWAY

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: the Interior Ministry's Acting Assistant Undersecretary for Border Security Major General Faisal Al-Senain stressed that the vision of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz about enhancing GCC states' joint efforts with the aim of boosting GCC security cooperation and capability to protect their citizens would be the main topic discussed to complete setting the unified security legislations to protect GCC societies from various

Speaking during the opening of the 30th GCC airport security officials' meeting held in Kuwait from April 4 to 6, Senain added that the meeting was dedicated to reviewing all airport security plans and programs in collaboration with the Dubai Center for Civil Aviation in order to use a unified code of civil aviation threats that had been prepared by Kuwait.

Senain also stressed that the meeting would discuss various concerns related to airport and passenger security in GCC states and exchanging information about threats to civil aviation as well as international security. Mol's PR and security media manager Brig Adel Al-Hashash said that the goal of the meeting was to coordinate and cooperate with other GCC states on airport security in view of regional security challenges that call for more cooperation and exchanging expertise and views.

Airport project

Minister of Public Works Ali Al-Omair said that the ministry had met with the State Audit Bureau and the Cabinet to settle disagreements about the new Kuwait International Airport project. Speaking during a tour hosted by MP Majed Al-Moussa around Sabah Al-Nasser to examine its problems, Omair stressed that the right decision would be reached for Kuwait's greater good. Commenting on the tour, Omair said that he had seen many problems such as not having a main park in the area because of budgetary problems and some road quality issues. He added that MPW was keen on increasing the maintenance sector's budget to help solve similar problems in various areas.

Commenting on the area's need for more schools of various stages, Omair said that decisions to build new schools were up to the education ministry, but he promised to report the matter to Minister Badr Al-Essa. He also stressed that some of the work done by the Ministry of Public Works had to be coordinated with other bodies such as the Ministry of Interior when it comes to roads. Omair stressed that Farwaniya governorate suffered from many problems for which he apologized, but stressed that the ministry was working on solving them.

Mental assessment

The public prosecution yesterday decided to detain citizen S. D., also known as 'Abu Refaa' for ten days at the central prison pending investigation in state security's accusations of him of slandering His Highness the Amir. The public prosecution also agreed to have the suspect undergo mental assessment tests to determine his mental state, as requested by the defendant's

SEVEN ARRESTED ON PROSTITUTION CHARGES



KUWAIT: This handout photo shows seven women arrested yesterday on prostitution charges.

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Residency detectives arrested a woman for engaging in vice activities. Detectives received information about a Filipina woman who struck suspicious deals through social media, providing her customers with prostitutes. Six more women, Filipinas and Nepalese, were arrested in Hawally. In total, six of the women had article 20 visas issued to domestic helpers, and one had an article 18 visa issued to private sector workers. The women were sent to concerned authorities, and their sponsors were summoned for questioning.

No injuries in fire

Fire broke out in the ground floor kitchen of a Mangaf building. Mangaf, Fahaheel, Mubarak Al-Kabeer and backup fire stations responded to an emergency call reporting the fire. The blaze had started in a makeshift room used to store foodstuff. The fire was controlled before it could spread any further. No injuries were reproted.

KUWAIT KEEN ON SETTING UP UNIFIED ARAB **CUSTOMS UNION: OFFICIAL**

CAIRO: The State of Kuwait is keen on establishing a unified Arab customs union, a Kuwaiti official said yesterday. Walid Al-Nasser, director of Kuwait's Northern Customs, made the remark on the sidelines of the 33rd meeting of Arab Commission for the Unified Customs Tariff at the Arab League's headquarters, in the participation of some representatives from Arab customs bodies. The commission discusses, over three days, observations of Arab countries on the Unified Customs Tariff and means of updating its schedule, he added. A proposal submitted by Egypt on setting a mechanism of negotiation concerning unifying customs duties is discussed by the commission, he noted. He stressed the importance of benefiting from the unified Gulf customs union in setting up a unified Arab one. —KUNA

IRAQI PARLIAMENT APPROVES COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH KUWAIT

Representatives approved, on Monday, an agreement law of economic and technical cooperation between Iraq and Kuwait. The agreement law, singed in June, 2013, aims at boosting cooperation in economic and technical fields, a statement by the Council said. Iraq and Kuwait had signed six agreements on

BAGHDAD: The Iraqi Council of environment, diplomacy, economy, technical and higher education during a visit made by His Highness the Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah in June, 2013. According to Iraqi constitution, all agreements signed with other countries are not considered valid unless they get the parliament's approval. — KUNA





KRCS OFFERS HUMANITARIAN AID TO 730 DISPLACED FAMILIES NEAR IRBIL

IRBIL: The Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has provided humanitarian and relief aid to up to 730 internally displaced families at a refugee camp near Irbil. Kuwaiti General Consul in Irbil Dr Omar Al-Kandari said the fresh help is part of a relief campaign carried out by the KRCS in all parts of Irag's Kurdistan region.

He said the Kuwaiti consulate in Irbil coordinated with the KRCS and Irbil Region's government for presence in the refugee camp which is home to displaced families which have fled ongoing military operations in Nino Governorate. Yesterday's aid campaign involves necessary food supplies that are enough for over 4,000 displaced persons for

one month, the Kuwaiti diplomat pointed out. The KRCS's humanitarian initiative came at the behest of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Kandari added. Kurdistan Region hosts as many as 1.8 million Syrian refugees and displaced persons who have fled ongoing violence in Nino, Saladin, Kirkuk, Diyala and Al-Anbar. —KUNA

DREAMS REMAIN DREAMS



By Talal Al-Ghannam

local@kuwaittimes.net

ood morning my dear and honorable brothers and sisters, and wish all a happy and blessed week. In this article, I would like to talk about so many dreams which we all for sure wish they would become a reality one day before Judgment Day. I for sure believe that all of you will agree with me about these issues because we know that if implemented, life would be more easier and comfortable for citizens and expatriates.

The first dream which we all wish to become real is the opening of clinics 24/7 with all services offered. I do not see why the majority of public clinics close at 12 pm and also closed on weekends where patients would have to go to the area hospital for treatment. I am sure that so many doctors, nurses and staff would like to work extra hours if the incentives are luring. In this case, everybody is satisfied; the staff and the patients being able to be treated soon with all the services rendered around the clock. Kuwait has the facilities, human resources and abundant wealth, so what stops them from doing that?

The second dream which we all wish to become a reality is to see justice being imposed on everyone. I am talking now about many runaways who fled from the torture and mistreatment of their employees and get caught by police at checkpoints. So many of those helpless people are being mistreated and given assurances from their sponsors to settle their legal status, and when they are caught, the sponsors claim filing an absconding case or try to escape the situation rather than standing with that helpless worker. Many of the runaways are also promised by their sponsors to find them suitable jobs and when they are in dire need, the sponsors fail to fulfill their obligations and leave those poor workers to be imprisoned and then deported. As a result, this would shatter their dreams for a decent living to feed their loved ones, kids, fathers and mothers who are eagerly awaiting a single dinar to be sent home to them and for their sons and daughters who are expecting graduation soon.

The bad sponsors must be held accountable for their wrongdoings and have some mercy in their hearts towards those helpless people, who came here to serve them and care for their kids and most importantly, for the welfare of this blessed country. They must understand that Allah Almighty sees and hears every single whisper and one day, they will stand before Him on Judgment Day and would be asked about those workers.

The third dream is to see the traffic department imposing strict measures and regulations against the maniac drivers who constantly bother neighborhoods at dawn with their monsterlike exhausts and those who turn the intersections into a skidding ring during weddings. Those irresponsible youngsters believe that the roads are personal properties of their fathers and they would threaten anyone who approaches them till they are done with this mad and maniac behavior. The police car in many occasion can be seen watching without being able to do anything because those lunatic 'kids' can be aggressive towards policemen and start pelting their vehicles with stones and glass bottles similar to the case that took place recently in Jaber Al Ali area. In the US, such behaviors are considered a serious crime punishable by law and the policemen there do not know what wasta (connection) is or any mediation by a lawmaker, as they are very committed and dedicated to their work when they subdue any criminal using their real muscles: The law. Let us hope these dream would become reality in the near future insha Allah.

Till the next article insha Allah



KUWAIT: Sudanese Foreign Minister Ibrahim Ghandour (left) speaks during the press conference. —KUNA

SUDANESE FM STRESSES DEEP TIES WITH KUWAIT

KUWAIT: Visiting Sudanese Foreign Minister Ibrahim Ghandour said yesterday that his country has deep relations with the State of Kuwait, pointing to mutual cooperation over regional and international issues.

Speaking at a press conference, Ghandour said his visit to Kuwait came at the invitation of First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah for bilateral talks over the current regional and international developments.

He said he had conveyed a letter to His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah from Sudanese President Omar Al-Bashir on cooperative relations between both Arab nations, lauding the outcomes of his talks with Kuwaiti officials.

He added that his visit to Kuwait reflected bilateral cooperation in regional and international forums, noting that he had reviewed with officials of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) existing projects

Ghandour went on to say that he and Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chairman Ali Al-Ghanim agreed to fixed and specific ventures to be provided by Sudan for Kuwaiti businessmen and investors.

Kuwait and other Gulf countries have major investments in Sudan, mainly in the field of sugar, hotels and communications, he said, adding that his country exports fodder to the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait

National unity

On the local situation, the foreign

minister reiterated that his country's policy is based on maintaining national unity, security and stability and promoting economic, social and cultural development. Warning of surrounding security threats posed by several terrorist groups like Boko Haram, Al-Qaeda and the socalled Islamic State (IS), the Sudanese minister said his country is keen to resolve any problems with neighboring countries through "direct dialogue".

On Yemen, he said his country is part of the coalition that seeks to restore legitimacy in this Arab country, hailing Kuwait's efforts to support Yemen's national unity and to put an end to the ongoing conflict there.

Reaffirming Sudan's police of noninterference in others' internal affairs, the minister said his country's security organs are part of an African and Arab network aiming to exchange intelligence in the fight against terrorism.

Reassuring about the current situation in Darfur, the Sudanese foreign minister said there is no rebellion in the region anymore, hailing the recent visit by the Sudanese president to Darfur as a clearcut message of stability. Ghandour highly commended Sudan's relations with China, mainly in the field of oil invest-

On Ethiopia's River Nile dam, the minister said his country is concerned over the dam, noting that Ethiopia has the right to set up development projects over its territories, but they should not negatively affect other Nile partners. The Sudanese foreign minister arrived in Kuwait earlier on Sunday for an official visit to the country. — KUNA

Special Report

FOSTERING RENEWABLE ENERGY DEPLOYMENT IN KUWAIT

By Nada Bedir

his year, Kuwait is hosting the 6th edition of the Middle East and North Africa Renewable Energy Conference (MENAREC) from 4th-6th of April under the patronage of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. The MENAREC conference is an opportunity for high level stakeholders from the region to gather and discuss the challenges they are facing and the potential solutions to achieve a smooth and timely transition towards sustainable energy.

One of the organizers and supporters of the Conference is the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE); an intergovernmental organization based in Cairo, Egypt, that aims to enable and increase the adoption of renewable energy and energy efficiency practices in the Arab Region. I had the privilege to work at RCREEE through my participation last year in the Arab Program for Sustainable Energy Youth. The program aims to equip the youth of the region with the technical and operations skills to pursue careers in sustainable energy. Based on my experience at RCREEE, I would like to shed the light on why energy transition in Kuwait is vital.

Abundant resources

Kuwait is endowed with abundant natural resources, mainly oil products. And despite being ranked as the sixth

reserves, domestic energy demand is growing at a rate of 6-8 percent each year which puts pressure on country's resources in the long run. In 2009, Kuwait became a net importer of natural gas to help meet its energy demand. According to eversheds, an international law firm, Kuwait consumes 552 billion cubic feet per year of natural gas of which about 12 perweather conditions, energy-intensive water desalinization plants, and last but not least, government subsidies of energy which encourage inefficient consumption. Kuwait is also blessed with bright sun and wind making it an attractive destination for investment in renewable energy.

Promoting and developing renewable energy projects in Kuwait can

cent is imported. Also the country needs to increase its installed capacity to 24.5 GW by 2020 to meet the increasing peak demand load. In 2014, the peak demand was very close to the current installed capacity of around 12 GW. This rising demand is due to several factors which

complement conventional power and assist with power generation especially during peak demand periods. There are three key benefits from fostering renewable energy in Kuwait. Firstly, diversifying the energy mix shall ensure Kuwait's energy security in the future. It is also an

country worldwide with proven oil include population increase, extreme opportunity to free up more oil for exports rather than domestic consumption which will increase the country's revenues. Secondly, renewable energy contributes positively to the economy through job creation, attracting investment, and private sector growth. Thirdly, greater use of clean energy resources will allow Kuwait to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and participate in the global fight against climate change.

Ambitious vision

Kuwait has adopted an ambitious vision to generate 15 percent of its total energy needs by 2030. To achieve this target, the government has allocated 100 KM2 in the west of the country to develop large-scale renewable energy projects with a total capacity of 2 GW, Al-Shagaya Renewable Energy Park. This grand project is managed by Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) and the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW). The park shall include a mix of PV, CSP, and wind technologies. The first phase of the park is currently under construction and expected to be completed by the end of 2017. In a joint venture, Spain's TSK Electronica y Electricidad with Kuwait's Kharafi National shall design, construct and operate a 50 MW solar thermal plant in Shagaya and a 10 MW solar PV plant. In addition, Elecnor Spanish Company entered into a joint venture with Al-Ghanim International to design, construct, and operate a 10 MW wind farm.

In addition, to the energy park, there are several projects that are in the pipeline such as the Abdaliya Integrated Solar Combined Cycle Project which will have a total capacitv of 280 MW. The project is expected to be completed by 2017. Also, there is the 10 MW Umm Gudair PV plant that is being developed by Spain's Gestamp Solar after signing a contract with Kuwait Oil Company (KOC). The plant has a capacity of 10 MW and it is estimated to be completed by the end of 2015. When it comes to wind energy, there is the Salmi Miniwind farm that was completed in 2013 with a capacity of 2.4 MW. The farm severs telecommunication towers located in remote areas and the fire brigade station in Salmi.

With all these projects in the pipeline, the focus now should be on implementing projects in a timely manner and also on developing new projects to be able to reach the target of 15 percent in 2030. In addition, while setting a vision/target reflects the government commitment towards renewable energy, the next step would be to develop a comprehensive renewable energy framework with supporting policies and regulations to attract more investments. Currently, Independent Power Producers (IPP) by-laws and Feed-in-Tariff schemes are being studied by the Ministry of Electricity and Water.

KUWAIT TO PRODUCE SOLAR POWER ON HOUSE ROOFS

KUWAIT: Kuwait is planning to boost production of electricity on house roofs through model pilot projects in 150 homes, to be increased to 1,500 in a later stage after 2018, Director General of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) Adnan Shihab-Eldin has said. According to the plans, the cost of a kilowatt of electricity produced through solar energy is 20 fils (65 cent), Shihab-Eldin told reporters as part of the final arrangements for the 6th Middle East and North Africa Renewable Energy Conference (MENAREC-6) that opened yesterday evening.

It is very competitive, compared to the cost of a kilowatt of traditional electricity produced

ONE OF THE AL-SAYER GROUP HOLDING COMPANIES.

through fossil fuels, 30 to 40 fils. Kuwait, in cooperation with Germany, established the first solar power plant in the region in 1984, with one megawatt capacity, he said.

Shihab-Eldin pointed to the various renewable energy projects launched by the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) such as the 70 MW Shagaya complex. He suggested that the government directs part of power subsidy to renewable energy, to raise its share of Kuwait's production of electricity to 15 percent, a target set for 2030.

Remarkable change

Meanwhile, Director-General International

Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Adnan Amin said that the world has witnessed a remarkable change in the alternative power systems over the past three years. He stressed the necessity of paying more attention to alternative energy amid the various crises the world is suffering.

According to Amin, solar power is the cheapest among sources of renewable energy, especially in the Middle East region, in addition to wind power in Egypt and Morocco. Amin said that the world's renewable energy has grown by 17 percent over the past period, and "we believe it will double to 34 percent by 2030." — KUNA



KUWAIT: Director General of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) Adnan Shihab-Eldin (center) attends a preparatory meeting for the 6th Middle

AL-RAE-4th Ring Road - AL-AHMADt Eastern Ahmadi - AL-IAHRA: Industrial Area - SHUWARRH: Al Tilal Showroom FLEET SALES - AL-RAE-fixt. 2102/1/4/6/9



Crime

Report

TWO DIED OF **EXHAUST FUMES**

KUWAIT: The medical examiner's report on the death of an expat woman and her compatriot suggested that the cause of death was asphyxiation from exhaust from the car the pair were in. The two were found dead inside a car in an uninhabited area of old Khaitan. The woman and man were inside the running car, she was 35 and he was 29 years old.

First drowning victim

The first drowning in the summer of 2016 was recorded at Meidan Hawally police station, when a call about an expat drowning in a swimming pool on the sea front. Police and paramedics rushed to the scene, and he was given first aid, but died while on the way to hospital.

ATV death

A 22-year-old citizen was killed when an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) he was driving flipped over while heading to Kuwait City on Jahra road. The body was recovered by the coroner.

Expat reports rape

A British woman, born in 1971, lodged a complaint against an unknown person who raped her. A security source said the expat went to Salmiya police station crying in a hysterical condition, and told officers that an unknown person raped her before escaping. She said she does not know the man.

Security campaigns roundup

General security led by Major General Ibrahim Al-Tarrah continued its activities in Kuwait's six governorates, as a citizen was arrested in the capital, wanted for debts of more than KD 15,000. Four stolen cars were found. In Hawally, two Indians were caught with 20 locally-made liquor bottles, also two others were arrested with 19 bottles, and a third with six bottles. In Ahmadi a citizen wanted to serve a jail sentence was arrested, two cars reported stolen were located, a person with drugs on him was arrested. In Farwaniya, a grocery store that was selling liquor to adolescents was raided and 111 locally made liquor bottles were found on its premises. The raid followed information about the store. In Mubarak Al-Kabeer seven absconders and violators were arrested by back up patrols.

Officers beaten

A military officer was beaten in Adan by a man he knows, and had personal disputes with him. Policemen are investigating. Separately, two citizens, 22 and 21, were detained in Maidan Hawally at the orders of the investigator on drunkenness and insulting a public employee while on duty. A security source said a Lieutenant noticed a car being driven erratically, so he asked the driver to stop but the driver refused and only stopped later after driving for three kilometers. The driver then got out of the car along with his friend and beat the officer.

Attempted stabbing

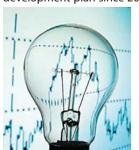
Investigator of Maidan Hawally police station charged a citizen of drunkenness and threatening to kill with a sharp object, and insulting a public employee. A security source said police operations received a call from a woman in a building and when police arrived, they found a man attempting to break into the flat with a knife, with the woman and her son inside. The man attempted to stab the officer while dealing with him and submitted a medical report to that effect. —Al-Rai

NO MORE GENERAL **CONTRACTING COMPANIES**

KUWAIT: Official sources said Minister of Commerce and Industry Yousuf Al-Ali issued a decision to disband the commercial activities categorization committee and rely on international categorization, which means that general contracting and trading companies, the most widespread in the country, will disappear. The committee is chaired by the ministry undersecretary, assistant secretary for companies and commercial licensing affairs, individual companies and commercial licensing, shareholding companies, commercial supervision, legal studies and IT systems directors. The committee is specialized in studying and describing activities and getting the necessary conditions to practice and follow the licensed activities that are up for renewal, and adding, canceling, amending or rejecting any application for commercial activities be it categorized or not with an explanation. Current license owners must adapt their situation according the international code within four years, and this applies to general trading and contracting companies. —Al-Rai

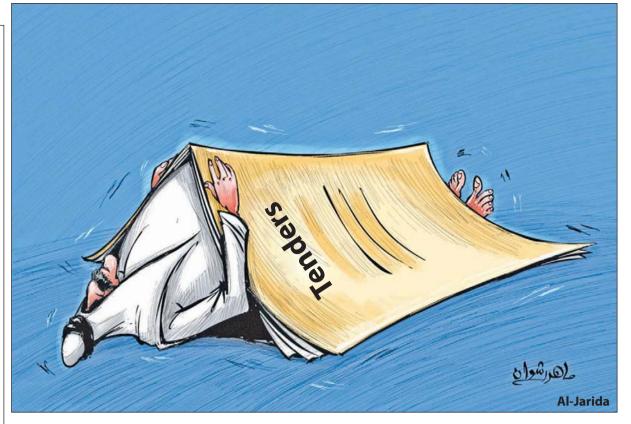
IGNORING TARIFF INCREASE WASTED MILLIONS: REPORT

KUWAIT: Successive governments' ignorance of power tariff increase according to the group system caused the loss of billions of dinars, especially since they were within the development plan since 2002, but the lack of implementa-



tion or discussing them wasted the opportunity of adjusting the power prices' structure. An informed source said a report prepared by the Supreme Planning Council and the Central Statistics Department more than 14 years ago considered the government responsible for not hurrying crucial decisions to prevent any expected squandering of

funds. According to the report, financial calculations showed that possible savings in the first year of implementation in 2003 were nearly KD 65 million, when power subsidies used to be KD 221 million, which means a saving percentage of 38 percent. The source said by the group system, if it was implemented since 2003, government subsidies would have dropped this year to only KD 800 million instead of the KD 2.626 billion paid to subsidize power and water. —Al-Qabas



الانهاء

Al-Anbaa WHAT DO WE WANT?

By Dr Nermin Al-Houti

ach one of us, when we were young, had a goal and wish we aimed to fulfill in the future. When grown up, and that child became a man that felt his reality and surroundings, those wishes changed and goals scattered and the majority became not knowing what they want. Yesterday, when we were children, our dreams were rosy and our goals and wishes surrounding us had much optimism and hope, because there were those who protected us from reality that we did not know much about in our childhood. When we grew up and became part of reality, dreams and wishes changed, as the present

want? And the majority does not know the answer! That is the irony - you ask but do not have the answer. Maybe the lack of knowledge and delinquency are the result of the reality that made the human being not know his goal, as the human surrounding started to have much environmental, intellectual, political and other pollutions and

and future carried the question - what do we

impurities that prevents the individual to not take a breath, so he remains having difficulty breathing all the time. Then it will become difficult for the brain to decide his path because his body and brain and heart breathe much of the negatives that scattered the self and goals, and here the inevitable result will always be in his present and future. Our question: What do we want?

When the reality's pollution, oxidation of brains, and tough hearts became what the majority wants in its wishes and goals, things that are polluted from their life, as we once find those who dig for the other to claim his job, and we find those whose goal is to conspire against others so he becomes the best in his surroundings - so from here and there we find out in the air that is full of negatives that the majority became just poisonous material for the society which increases the pollution of reality. All are asking, and do not know the answer: What do we want?

—Translated by Kuwait Times

الانياء

REQQA BATTLE

By Saleh Al-Ojairi

y the beginning of Sheikh Abdullah bin Sabah I's reign, Kuwait had grown and prospered, which made it many enemies, namely Banu Ka'ab, which developed a desire to conquer it. They did not find any excuse to invade Kuwait but to ask for Sheikh Abdullah's daughter Mariam's hand in marriage for one of their sons.

The proposal was rejected, and knowing this beforehand, they had prepared an army that was sure it would be able to invade and conquer Kuwait. They prepared large barges equipped with all sorts of weapons, but on arrival at Reqqa waters near Failaka Island, the tide was low, which dispersed their fleet and made it immobile because some of the ships got stuck in the muddy seabed.

Having prepared only small ships to meet the enemy, Sheikh Abdullah felt some regret on seeing how big the enemy ships were, and thus sent a messenger carrying a black flag to convey a message to abort the mission and not go to war. However, the messenger did not obey the sheikh's orders and went to the Kuwaiti troops waving the black flag at their faces, saying: "Look at this black flag...Abdullah tells you that your faces are black with disgrace unless you accomplish your mission".

This highly motivated the troops and lifted their morale very high. They attacked the scattered large enemy ships with their swift small dhows that could easily sail in shallow waters and managed to achieve a remarkable victory, that according to observers and historians, was achievable due to several factors including the speed of the small Kuwaiti dhows in shallow waters which enabled Kuwaitis to attack each of the enemy ships separately. The second element was the Kuwaiti troops' decision to attack commanders' ships first to undermine their troops' spirit and morale.

Following this defeat, Banu Ka'ab chieftain Sheikh Barakat thought of repeating his attack but was assassinated while preparing for the next conquest, and when Sheikh Ghaith bin Ghadban succeeded him, he thought it would be wise to call the idea off. Notably, the Banu Ka'ab tribe is one of the most prominent ones dwelling in some areas of Basra in Iraq, but they had a dispute with the Ottoman Empire and had to move to the Ahvaz area.

—Translated by Kuwait Times

SAWABER COMPLEX TO BE DEMOLISHED SOON

NORTHWEST SULAIBIKHAT TENANTS TO SUE HOUSING AUTHORITY

KUWAIT: Director of the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) Bader Al-Wegayyan announced that the Cabinet has made a decision authorizing the demolition of the Sawaber Complex soon and annexing the site to the commercial zone in downtown Kuwait City. In a related development, well-informed sources said that following reports about the sufferings of citizens who were given governmentprovided houses in Northwest Sulaibikhat and complaints about the quality of the material used in constructing the houses, a local law firm offered to represent those tenants in suing the housing authority. Most former tenants in Sawaber were handed over replacement houses in Northwest Sulaibikhat.

The sources added that the law firm asked the concerned citizens to make powers of attorney to sue the housing authority on grounds that it violated the contracts signed with the companies that executed the project by allowing the use of low-quality construction materials. Further, the sources added that a team of the concerned citizens that volunteered to collect the powers of attorney explained that the law firm would file the case free of charge and would only take a percentage of the sums clients would be compensated with if they win the case.

Meanwhile, the deputy resident engineer of the Nortewest Sulaibikhat project Jassim Ashkanani said that the housing authority had formed a committee that examined and approved the material used in constructions at the project site. He also



stressed that the authority's engineers would have never passed the project if it did not match specifications. Ashkanani

stressed that by checking many of the complaints citizens filed, they turned out to be insignificant and do not indicate any viola-

tion of standard specifications stated in the contracts signed with the executing companies. — Al-Rai, Al-Anbaa

FISH PRICES SOAR

KUWAIT: There is a shortage in fish in Kuwait; a country where seafood is most popular, or consumers are increasingly avoiding eating seafood because the price is too high, according to an official. Deputy Chairman of the Board of Kuwait Fishermen Union Jalal Al-Shemmari described the fish market as very "hot" in an indication to high prices, and denied that the decision to ban fishing by cages (qar-

goor) is the reason. Shemmari said the decision was 'random' and made without a study, nor was the opinion of people in the field taken before it was issued. He said agriculture and environment authorities enjoy our support in the field of protecting the environment, but what did they present in solutions to provide food security from fish and guarantee moderate prices for the consumer?

Shemmari said the reduction in the percentage of local fish in the market to 45 percent only is due to several reasons including that the area in which nearly 1,000 boats are



operating is not enough for them, in addition to banning fishing off some islands, military and oil areas, and limiting fishing to an area that is only three miles offshore.

He said PAAAFR implements the laws on licensed fishermen and

ignores more than 26,500 boats, 20 percent of which use illegal equipment for fishing. He demanded that meetings should be held to find solutions and revitalize the market by providing fish at reasonable prices. —Al-Rai

CITIZENSHIP WITHDRAWAL 'NOT SOVEREIGN ACT'

KUWAIT: The cassation prosecution said the interior ministry's decision to revoke the nationality of former MP Abdullah Al-Barghash and his family falls under the administrative judiciary and it is not considered a sovereign act. It rejected the appeals court's decision that cancelled the citizenships' restoration. The prosecution said in its report that it sent to the administrative cassation court which received the contestation of the former MP and his family against revoking their nationality, that the constitution bans immunity of decisions from the judiciary's supervision and guarantees the right of litigation in front of a judge. —Al-Jarida

CENTRAL BANK ARRANGES TO BORROW KD 2 BILLION FROM LOCAL BANKS

KUWAIT: The general debt managing committee formed by the finance ministry gave the Central Bank the green light to arrange for borrowing KD 2 billion for the government, sources said, adding that the banks sought to contribute to this loan are local banks only. This loan will be in dinars and dollars, and its value will be according to market ability and liquidity available at banks, said the sources, adding that the finance ministry does not want to exhaust the banks by applying pressure on the liquidity they have, and this will affect the private sector in turn. The expected the picture will be clearer in the coming weeks after the meeting of the Central Bank with local banks and finding their ability to arrange for and collect a loan of this size. They said it is expected the finance ministry will announce that the budget deficit for 2015/2016 fiscal year that ended at the end of March is about KD 6 billion. —Al-Jarida

Kuwait Times International



Erdogan rejects 'lessons in democracy' from West

Page 12



NORTH KOREANS FLEE TO END UP ADRIFT IN THE SOUTH

 ${\tt QARYATAIN, Syria: Syrian \, soldiers \, celebrate \, their \, victory \, against \, the \, Islamic \, {\tt State \, group \, yesterday.} \, - \, {\tt AP}}$

SYRIA QAEDA SPOKESMAN KILLED

ARMY ADVANCES AGAINST ISLAMIC STATE POSITIONS

BEIRUT: Air strikes have killed several Al-Qaedalinked Al-Nusra Front members including its spokesman and regime forces have retaken a strategic town from the Islamic State group in the latest setbacks for jihadists in Syria. Abu Firas Al-Suri, whose real name was Radwan Nammous, fought against Soviet forces in Afghanistan where he met Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden and the founding father of global jihad, Abdullah Azzam, before returning to Syria in 2011.

TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2016

Suri was meeting with other leading Islamist fighters in an Al-Nusra stronghold in Kafar Jales in northwestern Syria when the raids struck on Sunday. He "was an old time Al-Qaeda member ... He was brought in from Yemen as an ideological counterweight" for rival jihadist group IS, said Pieter Van Ostaeyen, a historian and monitor of jihadist movements. "His death indeed is a blow for Al-Nusra. However, that will not change a lot on the operational level," he added.

Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, a research fellow at the Middle East Forum, a US think-tank, was of the same opinion. Suri "was a very senior member of Al-Nusra, but organizations like Al-Nusra aren't debilitated because they lose a single senior leader", he said. "Their organizational structures are well prepared for targeted assassinations, which are usual business for them."

Human Rights, Suri, his son and at least 20 iihadists of Al-Nusra and Jund al-Aqsa and other fighters from Uzbekistan were killed in strikes on positions in Idlib province. Seven were high-ranking jihadists, the Britain-based Observatory said, adding that the Syrian air force had likely carried out the strikes.

Warning to Al-Nusra?

A temporary ceasefire between government forces and rebels has largely held since Feb 27, but it does not cover Al-Nusra and IS. The break has, in fact, allowed Russia and the US-led coalition that has been bombing IS in Syria to concentrate on their fight against the jihadists. Al-Nusra has generally kept a low profile since the truce brokered by the United States and Russia came into force. But on Friday, the Al-Qaeda affiliate and allied rebel groups pushed regime loyalists out of Al-Eis, a strategic town in the northern province of Aleppo, killing 12 members of the Lebanese Shiite Hezbollah movement.

"It was Al-Nusra's biggest operation since the ceasefire began," Observatory chief Rami Abdel Rahman said. Suri's killing may even be a warning by the regime to Al-Nusra against staging any more offensives in future, Abdel Rahman added. Tamimi disagreed. "One should not over-interpret According to the Syrian Observatory for the timing," he said, adding that assassinations of members of secretive organizations are usually carried out "when a window of opportunity opens". IS has also lost a string of high-ranking members in recent weeks, mainly to strikes by the US-led coalition that launched an aerial campaign against the jihadists in Iraq and Syria in 2014. Last Wednesday, a drone strike near IS's de facto capital Raqa killed Tunisian commander Abu al-Haija, according to the Observatory. Fifteen IS commanders accused of revealing his position have since been executed by the jihadists, and the fate of another 20 men accused of collaborating with the US-led coalition remains unknown. "This is the highest number of executions of security officials by IS," said Abdel Rahman, whose Britain-based group has a wide network of contacts on the ground across Syria.

Recapture of Al-Qaryatain

Also on Sunday, the army seized the town of Al-Qaryatain, one of the last IS strongholds in central Syria, according to state television. IS jihadists withdrew from the town a week after the Russianbacked army and allied militia scored a major victory in the ancient city of Palmyra, which is also located in the vast province of Homs. The recapture of Al-Qaryatain allows the army to secure its grip over Palmyra, where jihadists destroyed ancient temples during their 10-month rule and executed 280 people. —AFP

ICELAND PREMIER IN HOT SEAT

REYKJAVIK: Iceland's prime minister found himself in the hot seat vesterday after the leaked "Panama Papers" revealed he and his wife used an offshore firm to allegedly hide million-dollar investments, sparking calls for his resignation. Financial records published by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists showed that Sigmundur David Gunnlaugsson, 41, and his wife Anna Sigurlaug Palsdottir bought a company in the British Virgin Islands in 2007. He sold her his 50-percent share for a symbolic sum of one dollar at the end of 2009.

But when he was elected to parliament for the first time in April 2009, as a member of the centre-right Progressive Party, he neglected to mention his stake in his declaration of shareholdings. The issue is particularly sensitive in Iceland, a country marked by the excesses of the 2000s when senior bankers used shell companies in tax havens to conceal their dealings in

risky financial products.

Iceland's big banks collapsed in Oct 2008 after borrowing beyond their means to fund ambitious investments abroad. Before their collapse their liabilities were worth more than ten times Iceland's total GDP. The crash led to an unprecedented financial crisis, a deep recession and a bailout from the International Monetary Fund. Gunnlaugsson insists that despite the financial turbulence he was never tempted to move his money offshore and that his wife paid all her taxes in Iceland.

"She has neither utilized tax havens nor can you say that her company is an offshore company," Gunnlaugsson said on his website, noting that, unlike offshore companies, his wife's company paid its taxes in Iceland. In an interview with Swedish public television SVT recorded last month. excerpts of which were aired in Iceland on Sunday, he became visibly upset

after being repeatedly asked about his wife's company, eventually storming out of the room. "It's like you are accusing me of

something," he declared. Gunnlaugsson, who started out as a journalist and whose father was also a lawmaker, entered parliament in 2009 after the economic meltdown. Elected prime minister in 2013, he was seen as a refreshing change from the political old guard, which was accused of having turned a blind eye to the banks' reckless investments.

Gunnlaugsson's wife Palsdottir, also 41, is the daughter of a businessman who made a fortune from having Iceland's only Toyota dealership. On March 15, before the "Panama Papers" leaks, she took to Facebook to acknowledge the existence of Wintris, the company that she and Gunnlaugsson acquired in 2007 to manage her inheritance from her father. —AFP

FIRST WOMAN LEADER TAKES CHARGE IN INDIAN KASHMIR

JAMMU, India: Mehbooba Mufti was sworn in yesterday as Indian-administered Kashmir's first woman leader, taking over from her father nearly three months after he died in office. India's only Muslim-majority state had been ruled directly from New

Delhi since the death in January of Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, who formed an uneasy alliance with the nationally ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) after a 2015 His daughter, who heads

the moderate People's

Democratic Party (PDP) that

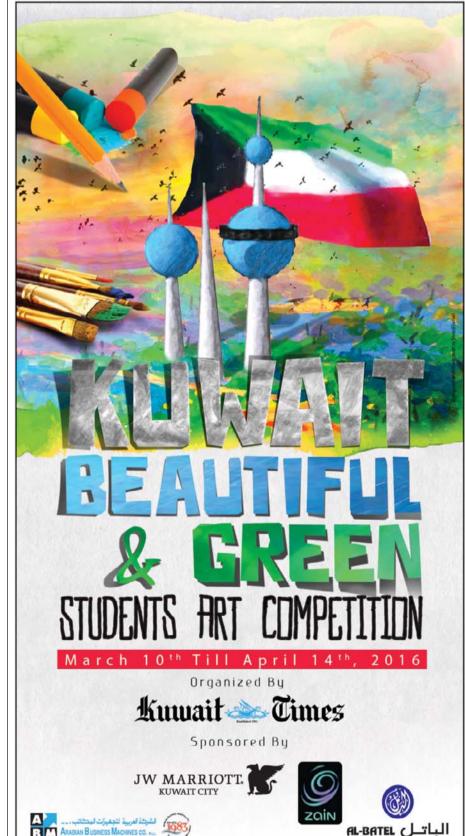
he founded in 1999, had ini-

Mehbooba Mufti tially appeared reluctant to continue the unpopular coalition with the Hindu nationalist BJP. The PDP's main support base is among Muslims in the Kashmir Valley, the epicentre of a separatist insurgency that broke out in 1989,

although the party stops short of calling for independence for the Himalayan region. "Her key task will be to recoup the PDP's credibility among her constituents (Kashmiri Muslims), which is at an all time low, and manage support from Delhi vis-a-

vis economic assistance," political historian Siddiq Wahid told AFP. Mehbooba Mufti reached an agreement at a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi last month, although the terms of their deal have not been disclosed. Her swearing-in takes the number of female chief ministers in India to five, although she is the first woman to serve in the post in the deeply conservative state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Modi did not attend the swearing in ceremony in the state's winter capital, Jammu, but tweeted his congratulations. — AFP



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DJIBOUTI'S STRATEGIC POSITION DRAWS WORLD'S ARMIES

ARTRA, Djibouti: A French warship ploughs through the sparkling waters between Africa and Arabia on a joint training drill with the US that highlights Djibouti's growing strategic role for the world's militaries. On the sun-blasted rocky shores of the tiny Horn of Africa nation, some 500 French troops march alongside 50 US Marines near the town of Arta, wearing full kit in the baking heat. The training, designed to help the two allies work better together, also reflects growing international interest in the former French colony - bordering Somalia, and just opposite Yemen.

Home to only around 800,000 people, Djibouti is now crowded with the military bases of several world powers. Its port guards the entrance to the Red Sea and Suez Canal on one of the world's busiest shipping routes. "This is certainly

the reason why in addition to the French there are today many international forces wanting to establish a presence in Djibouti," said General Philippe Montocchio, the commander of French forces in the country. "There are of course the Americans, the Japanese, the Italians, now the Chinese, and certainly in the near future, the Saudis."

It emerged four months ago that China has signed an agreement with Djibouti for the installation by the end of 2017 of a "naval logistics" base to accommodate up to 10,000 soldiers and serve to secure Beijing's considerable and growing interests in the wider region. The hub will constitute China's first permanent overseas military deployment.

Terror-Fighting HQ

Djibouti is already home to Camp

Lemonnier, the United States' only permanent base in Africa. It is used for covert, anti-terror and other operations in Yemen, as well as the US fight against the Islamist Shebab in Somalia and against Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Washington pays some \$60 million a year to Djibouti for the base. US Major Paul L Croom, a liason officer between the French and US militaries, said the joint drills in Djibouti "just makes sense" as the allies share key security interests in the region, including combating the jihadist threat in Africa.

"Our operability - between the French military and US military - is as important as it's ever been right now, and is only gaining in importance," Croom said. "Everybody knows that a lot of that threat emanates from areas in which the United States and France

have mutual interests." European and other international navies use Djibouti's port as a base in the fight against piracy from neighboring Somalia. These are important - and sometimes dangerous -

With international navies at sea, Somali pirate attacks have dropped off: 176 attacks were recorded in 2011, and none in 2015, according to the EU naval force. And just 30 km across the Gulf of Aden lies war-torn Yemen, devastated by a civil war that has pitched Shiite Houthi rebels - backed by Iran -against an internationally recognized government backed by Saudi-led air strikes.

Islamist groups, including Al-Qaeda's Yemen-based branch, one of the jihadist network's most dangerous franchises, as well as Islamic State forces, have also joined the battle for power in Yemen. "Djibouti is located exactly at the epicentre of all this jihadist movement in the Horn of Africa and the southern part of the Middle East," Montocchio said.

China, beyond its new naval base, is bankrolling major infrastructure projects in Djibouti, including transport links for key markets in neighboring landlocked Ethiopia. "Everybody was surprised: Why China? For Djibouti, there's no question," said Djibouti's Foreign Minister Mahamoud Ali Youssouf. "China's presence, naval or military, is part of the same logic of countries that have the ability to contribute to peace and security in a region which is very troubled." But China's entry into this "Great Game" is a risky bet for Djibouti - it may well unsettle relations with traditional allies, especially the United States. —AFP



BASRA: Iraqi security forces inspect the scene of a suicide car bomb attack in Iraq's second-largest city yesterday. — AP

IS BOMBINGS, MORTAR FIRE, CLASHES KILL 29 IN IRAQ

BAGHDAD: Suicide bombings claimed by the Islamic State group, clashes and mortar fire killed at least 29 people in Iraq yesterday, security and medical officials said. The violence, which hit four different provinces, also wounded more than 70 people, the sources said. The deadliest attack took place in the southern province of Dhi Qar when a suicide bomber blew himself up inside a restaurant that is frequented by Shiite paramilitary militia fighters, killing at least 14 people. Another 27 people were wounded in the attack that targeted a famous restaurant on the main highway that links Baghdad with the southern provinces, a police officer said. Dhi Qar is located about 320 km southeast of the capital.

At around the same time, a suicide car bomber set off his explosives-laden car in a commercial area in the oil-rich city of Basra, killing at least five people and wounding 10 others, another police officer said. Pieces of flesh and debris littered the bloodstained pavement as thick black smoke billowed from the area. The attack also damaged up to 30 cars. The Islamic State group, "after the losses it suffered in western areas, is seeking to move the battle to the southern areas," where many of the forces fighting the jihadists are from, Basra Governor Majid Al-Nasrawi told journalists.

IS overran large areas north and west of Baghdad in 2014, but Iraqi forces backed by US-led air strikes and training have since regained significant ground, most recently in the western province of Anbar, AFP journalists saw three burned bodies at the scene of the Basra attack - two still inside vehicles, and a third on a stretcher. The blast set vehicles alight and damaged buildings in the area, one of the journalists said.

Another suicide bomber struck a joint police and army checkpoint in north Baghdad, while a third attacked pro-government paramilitaries in Mishahada, north of the capital, and a fourth hit militiamen in a restaurant south of the city of Nasiriyah. IS issued statements claiming responsibility for the blasts. The group frequently carries out suicide bombings in Iraq targeting security forces and civilians. IS also launched an attack in the Baghdadi area in Anbar province, west of Baghdad, sparking clashes in which five members of pro-government forces were killed and at least seven wounded.

And mortar fire struck houses in Abu Ghraib, west of Baghdad, killing two people and wounding at least seven. Like the Basra governor, a US army officer said that as IS loses territory, it is increasingly turning to bombings in a bid to stay relevant. The group is "losing its prominence on the battlefield, and so what we've kinda seen recently is a lot more what we call high profile attacks," Captain Chance McCraw told journalists in Baghdad. The jihadists are seeking "to still stay relevant in the media, because that's how they get their message out," McCraw said. A suicide bomber blew himself up following a football tournament south of Baghdad last month, killing more than 30 people. And more than 45 people died in a suicide truck bombing at a checkpoint earlier in March. —Agencies

ERDOGAN REJECTS 'LESSONS IN DEMOCRACY' FROM WEST

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan yesterday lashed out at the West for giving Turkey "lessons in democracy", rejecting mounting US and EU criticism over an alleged clampdown on press freedoms under his rule. "Those who attempt to give us lessons in democracy and human rights must first contemplate their own shame," Erdogan told a meeting of the Turkish Red Crescent in Ankara. US President Barack Obama warned last week that Turkey's approach towards the media was taking it "down a path that would be very troubling".

Erdogan's comments came as local media reported the fresh arrest of five opposition journalists yesterday, without giving details on who they were. Turkey's government has been accused of increasing authoritarianism and muzzling critical media as well as lawmakers, academics, lawyers and NGOs. Two journalists from the leading opposition daily Cumhuriyet face life in prison after being charged with revealing state secrets over a story accusing the government of seeking to illicitly deliver arms to rebels in Syria.

Erdogan met with Obama in Washington last week, and defended press freedom in Turkey, saying some publications had branded him a "thief" and a "killer" without being shut down. "Such insults and threats are not permitted in the West," he claimed. Erdogan yesterday again slammed the Constitutional Court for allowing the two journalists to be released during their trial. The reporters had spent three months in detention until the decision was handed down in February. He said that the Constitutional Court had "betrayed its very existence" with the ruling.

Yesterday, a Turkish court issued arrest warrants for several opposition journalists, five of whom were detained, local media reported. They are accused of violating legal confidentiality by reporting on a corruption scandal which engulfed Erdogan's inner circle in 2013/14 and was centred on the illicit trading of gold with Iran. The reporters are also

accused of belonging to a "terrorist group" the usual official parlance for the grouping run by Erdogan's arch foe Fethullah Gulen who is accused of being behind the graft claims.

'Wild Man of the Bosphorus'

The fresh crackdown comes after Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu told German Chancellor Angela Merkel that he was unhappy about the raft of stories criticizing Erdogan in German media in recent weeks. In a telephone call Davutoglu complained such stories "were incompatible with freedom of the press" and said there should be an end to the publication of such "unacceptable" material, he office said.

German weekly Der Spiegel ran a cover story deeply critical of Erdogan in its latest issue, with a caricature of the Turkish president - whom the magazine called "the wild man of the Bosphorus" -shaking his fist. He looms large over a tiny Merkel, holding an EU briefcase with her head in her hand, while a paper airplane cut out of a newspaper pokes him in the backside. The headline on the story read: "The fearsome friend: President Erdogan's crusade against freedom and

democracy." It is not the first time Germany has irked Ankara with its coverage of Erdogan. Last month Turkey summoned Germany's ambassador to protest a two-minute song lampooning Erdogan that was broadcast on German television. The TV show responded by re-broadcasting the tune "Erdowie, Erdowo, Erdogan" that ridicules the president, and adding Turkish subtitles. The satirical song charges, among other things, that "a journalist who writes something that Erdogan doesn't like/Will be in jail by tomorrow". The row comes as the EU is accused of selling out its principles by offering Turkey visa-free travel and a fast-racked EU membership process, in exchange for help on the migrant crisis. — AFP

BIBI SAYS HE IS WAITING FOR A VISIT FROM ABBAS

SPYMASTER SLAMS NETANYAHU FROM THE GRAVE

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday said he was waiting for a visit from Mahmoud Abbas, after the Palestinian president said he had already proposed such a meeting. "A few days ago, on Israeli television, I heard president Abbas say that if I invite him to meet, he'll come," Netanyahu told reporters at a meeting with visiting Czech Foreign Minister Lubomir Zaoralek. "I'm inviting him again," he said in English. "I've cleared my schedule this week. Any day he can come, I'll be here."

In an interview with commercial TV station Channel 2 on Thursday, Abbas said that he was ready to meet Netanyahu "any time". "And I suggested, by the way, for him to meet," he said in English. Asked what was Netanyahu's response to the offer he refused to answer. "He will tell you," the Palestinian leader said. US-backed peace talks between the Palestinians and Israel collapsed in April 2014 after nine months amid bitter recriminations and mutual blame.

The two men shook hands at a climate summit in Paris in November, but held no significant talks. The last substantial and public meeting between them is thought to date back to 2010, though there have been unconfirmed reports of secret meetings since then. Netanyahu yesterday said that if the two met he would discuss a wave of violence which has left 200 Palestinians and 28 Israelis dead since October, "We have a lot of things to discuss, but the first item is ending the Palestinian campaign of incitement to murder Israelis," he said.

Most of the Palestinians killed were carrying out knife, gun or car-ramming attacks, according to Israeli authorities. But Israeli forces have been also accused of using excessive force in some cases, charges which they have firmly denied. Palestinians and many analysts say frustration with Israel's occupation and settlement building along with the lack of any progress on peace efforts have

"Lack of hope. Lack of trust," Abbas, who has called for peaceful resistance, said in last week's interview as reasons for why the knife attacks have continued. He said that if Netanyahu were to engage in serious peace talks Palestinian attacks would cease. "If he tells me that he believes in the two-state solution and we sit around the table to talk about a two-state solution, this will give my people hope," he said. "And nobody will dare to go and stab or shoot or do anything here or there."

Personal Interests

Meanwhile, a former head of Israeli spy agency Mossad harshly criticized Netanyahu in a posthumous interview published yesterday, accusing him of putting personal interests above national concerns. Meir Dagan, who died aged 71 on March 17, led the Mossad from 2002 through 2010, notably working to thwart Iran's nuclear program while also opposing a military strike against it. He held a series of conversations with a journalist from Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth before his death that were withheld until yesterday.

"I knew a lot of prime ministers," he said. "None of them were saintly types. But they had one shared trait: When they reached the point in which their personal interest intersected with the national interest, the national interest always prevailed. There are only two I can't say that about - Bibi and Barak." Bibi is Netanyahu's nickname, while Barak refers to former prime minister and defense minister Ehud Barak.

Netanyahu and then defense minister Barak were reported to have given the order in 2010 for the military to prepare a strike against Iran, which was never carried out. Dagan strongly opposed such a strike, a position shared by the military's then-chief of staff Gabi Ashkenazi. "Bibi is the worst manager I know," said the former spymaster who suffered from liver cancer and underwent a transplant. "The worst thing is that he's got a certain trait that's kind of like Ehud Barak - the two of them believe that they're the greatest geniuses in the world and that no one gets what it is that they really want." On his opposition to a military strike against Iran, Dagan said that "the working assumption, as if it would be possible to fully stop the Iranian nuclear program by means of a military strike, is incorrect". "That military capacity doesn't exist," said Dagan. "The only thing that can be accomplished is to suspend, and that would be for a defined period of time." Under Dagan's leadership, the Mossad is believed to have assassinated Iranian nuclear scientists, caused explosions at nuclear facilities and used computer viruses to damage uranium centrifuges. The Mossad has never confirmed such operations. Further details of the interviews with Dagan are to be published on Friday, the newspaper said. — Agencies



JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (right) gestures as he speaks during a meeting with Czech Foreign Minister Lubomir Zaoralek at the prime minister's office yesterday. —AFP

TO FLEE LEBANON TRASH, FAMILY HEADS TO SYRIA

daughters plan to do next week, leaving behind their home in Lebanon for neighboring Syria. Their modest two-storey house in the town of Naameh, about 20 km south of the Lebanese capital, directly overlooks the infamous and odorous landfill by the same

"We're going next week. In Syria, there's a possibility I might die. Here, we'll definitely die," Fayyad tells AFP. From his grassy backyard, dozens of large trucks carrying tonnes of waste can be seen - and smelled - lining up to add their load to the "trash mountain". The July 2015 closure of the notorious landfill lies at the heart of Lebanon's trash crisis, which has seen rivers of trash spread across the Mediterranean country, triggering protests nationwide.

Then last month, the government made a controversial decision to reopen it - and this was the last straw for residents like Fayyad. Pulling out a bright blue inhaler, he says his family has been suffering from respiratory problems for months because of the dump. His daughters, whose ages range from just under two to 10 years, all have trouble eating and sleeping. "It's always worse at night than during the day. The whole area is swarming with the same smell and the same sickness." he says. Fayyad says it's become so bad, he's decided to flee across the border to the town of Libeen in southern Syria, a country where a conflict has been raging since 2011.

Costly Medical Bills

The Naameh landfill opened in 1997 and was meant to be a temporary dump, but an alternative site was never opened. For 20 years, the waste generated in Beirut and

NAAMEH, Lebanon: Imagine living near a Mount Lebanon - the country's most poputrash dump so putrid that you would rather lous areas - was dumped in Naameh. The vermove to war-torn Syria. That's what Fayyad dant valley swelled into a trash mountain of Ayyash, his wife Riham and their four young more than 15 million tonnes. Furious residents forced the closure of the site in July 2015, saying it was leading to high cancer rates, skin diseases and breathing problems.

> Uncollected rubbish began piling up around Beirut and its suburbs, emitting a horrible stench that sparked protests in downtown Beirut demanding a long-term solution. After months of political wrangling, Lebanon's cabinet announced a four-year plan to end the waste crisis - and its first step was reopening Naameh for two months. "When the dump reopened, my baby immediately started throwing up again," Fayyad says.

> Fayyad and his Syrian wife, Riham, are both Druze, an offshoot of Islam. Riham estimates that she spends about \$1,000 per month on doctor's visits, inhalers, and other medication for her children. Pointing to her bare finger, she says she had to sell her wedding ring to cover the costs. "I wish my kids would eat food as much as they take medicine," she says. Riham's family hails from Libeen, in Syria's southern Sweida province. That's where she will travel to next week, in the hope that the open plains there will be good for her chil-

Suitcase 'Packed and Ready'

Sweida, the heartland of Syria's Druze minority, has come under attack by jihadists of the Islamic State group but has seen less fighting than other parts of the country. "No, it isn't safe, but I'm forced to leave... I have a suitcase packed and ready on top of the closet," Riham says. Farouk Merhebi from the American University of Beirut says the smell has probably made life incredibly uncomfortable for hundreds living within a one-kilometre radius of the dump.— AFP



NAAMEH, Lebanon: A Lebanese couple point from their balcony in the village of Baawarta at trucks unloading garbage at the Naameh landfill, south of Beirut, on March 30, 2016, —AFP



WASHINGTON: A former Republican presidential candidate, answers questions about his opinions on the presidential candidates, during a news conference on Capitol Hill. —AP

GOP CONGRESS' INCOMPLETE: STALLED BILLS, NO SC NOMINEE

WASHINGTON: Congress increasingly is being defined by what it's not doing this election year. The Senate returns this week with a strong majority of Republicans saying no to any consideration of President Barack Obama's nominee to the Supreme Court. No hearings, no vote and, for some lawmakers, not even a meeting with federal appeals court Judge Merrick Garland.

Republicans, led by Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, insist that the decision on filling the court vacancy rests with the next president after voters have their say in November's election. A bipartisan bill to aid Flint, Michigan, where the city's 100,000 residents are struggling with lead-contaminated water, is being blocked by Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah. He says he wants to ensure that the money is paid for without adding to the deficit. The dispute over Flint has snagged a far-reaching measure on energy.

In the House, where lawmakers return from their break April 12, conservative opposition probably will make it impossible to pass a budget, in what would be a major embarrassment for Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis. A GOP proposal to aid debtstricken Puerto Rico has drawn criticism from House Democrats and conservatives, raising doubts about Congress' ability to resolve the issue.

Neither the House nor Senate has done anything with Obama's request for \$1.9 billion in emergency funding to combat the Zika virus. Republican leaders on the House Appropriations Committee have been going back and forth with the White House budget office and agency officials over whether to reallocate money left over from the 2014 fight against Ebola. The latest Gallup Poll shows public approval of Congress at an abysmal 13 percent. Yet, through a half-dozen state primaries, no incumbent lawmaker has lost. A look at the issues in limbo in Congress:

The fight over Garland

Garland plans to meet with 11 senators in the week ahead, including two Republicans. Democrats are maintaining election-year pressure on the GOP for blocking the usual Senate committee hearings and vote on a high-court nominee. Sens Susan Collins, R-Maine, and John Boozman, R-Ark., are set to sit down with Garland on Tuesday. Collins is one of just two Republicans out of 54 who are open to hearings and a vote on Garland; Boozman is up for re-election this year. Eager to keep the fight in the news, Democrats say there might be 50 more Garland meetings with senators in the coming weeks, and they plan repeated Senate floor speeches on the

Over the Senate's two-week recess, both sides pushed their messages back home, but Democrats were particularly aggressive as senators held news conferences and wrote newspaper columns. Swing-state Republicans facing re-election were top targets, including Sens. Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire, Rob Portman of Ohio and Iowa's Chuck Grassley, the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, responsible for holding hearings on judicial nominees.

Garland has met with just one Republican: Illinois Sen. Mark Kirk. He is embroiled in a difficult re-election fight and has said the Senate should provide rational, adult, open-minded consideration" of Garland, an Illinois native. At least 15 GOP senators have said they are willing to meet Garland, though most oppose letting the confirmation process progress.

Spending

It's been years since Congress approved each of the annual appropriations bills - the 12 measures that fund the budgets of agencies and departments. The new normal is an all-encompassing bill at the end of the year. Republicans leaders such as McConnell want to get the process back on track, and the Senate Appropriations Committee is expected to start with this work during the week of April 11.

It'll be a test for the Senate, and pitfalls await, including potential fights over immigration, environmental regulations, gun rights and display of the Confederate flag. In the House, GOP leaders are still trying to win approval of a broader budget plan that's usually a precursor to action on the spending bills. Chances are iffy at best. The way forward on the appropriations bills is

Puerto Rico

House Republicans unveiled a plan to help financially-strapped Puerto Rico with its \$70 billion debt, but a draft bill by the chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, GOP Rep. Rob Bishop of Utah, was rejected by Democrats, GOP conservatives and Puerto Rican officials.

The proposal would create a five-person board designed to audit the territory's government and create fiscal plans and budget measures - steps Republicans say are necessary for Puerto Rico to get its economy back on track. The board would have the authority to enact the plan if the territory's governor and legislature failed to do so.

The draft would not give Puerto Rico the broad bankruptcy authority it has asked for, but would allow the oversight board to facilitate court-supervised debt restructuring in some cases. The House Republican Study Committee, a group of around 170 conservatives, expressed concerns about those debt restructuring provisions, as did the conservative advocacy group Heritage Action for America. Democrats said the oversight board would be too controlling.

Puerto Rico's government has defaulted on \$37 million in interest on bonds issued by Puerto Rico's Infrastructure Financing Authority, as well as nearly \$60 million in Public Finance Corporation bonds. Gov Alejandro Garcia Padilla has warned there is no money for future payments. Bishop said he will continue to work on the bill to gain consensus.—AP

CLINTON, SANDERS PROMISE TO **INCLUDE LATINOS IN CABINET**

NEW YORK: Democratic presidential hopefuls Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders vowed to nominate Latinos into key cabinet posts in their administrations if elected, according to their answers to a questionnaire organized by

the nation's largest Latino coalition. The 20-question survey was submitted by the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda to all US presidential candidates on Feb 25, but received responses only from the two Democratic contenders and none from the Republicans, according to the results reviewed by Reuters. Latinos and African-Americans have emerged as key voting blocs in the Democratic race for the White House nomination so far, and are likely to play a large role in the outcomes of big contests looming in New York and California.

"From special assistants to cabinet members, Latinos will play a key role in helping to shape my policy priorities and be effectively represented in our agencies," former US Secretary of State and Democratic front-runner Clinton wrote. US Senator from Vermont Sanders promised to make his administration "reflect the diverse make-up of the country... I can think of no place more vital for such diversity than in the cabinet and the Senior Executive Service of the President of the United States of

President Barack Obama has nominated a number of Latinos to cabinet position during his time in office, two of whom are currently serving: Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Julian

Both Clinton and Sanders have already promised comprehensive immigration reform, appealing to Hispanic voters ahead of presidential nominating contests in minority-heavy states. Leading Republican hopefuls Donald Trump and US Senator Ted Cruz of Texas, meanwhile, have promised to tighten up the borders and deport undocumented immigrants.

The responses come as the Democratic contest for the party's presidential nomination is poised to roll into a slate of diverse states - including New York later this month and minority-heavy California in June. The NHLA will use the questionnaires to guide voter engagement ahead of the November election, and to hold the winner to promises made during the campaign, said Hector Sanchez, the chairman of the NHLA. "This is not just a piece of paper that we're going to put out there," Sanchez said. "If they want the Latino vote, they must engage with us." —Reuters

TALENT ACQUISITION... **HEADS UP!**















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TRUMP BACK ON THE 'NEVER A DULL' MOMENT RALLY CIRCUIT

'RIGHT NOW I'M CATERING TO THE REPUBLICANS'

RACINE: Donald Trump wants voters to know his message to the disaffected isn't meant for Republicans alone. The party's presidential front-runner told supporters on Saturday that he's out to bring independents and Democrats behind his cause even though "right now I'm catering to the Republicans."

Contenders in both parties bid for an edge ahead of Wisconsin's primaries Tuesday, none more actively than Trump, who's had a rough week and faces a likely struggle against Texas Sen. Ted Cruz in the state. The Republican race is overshadowed by a persistent effort by Trump's rivals in the campaign and the party to force the nomination fight into the July convention - and by his equivocations on whether he will be loyal to the GOP or bolt for an independent candidacy if he feels mistreated.

In Racine, in the first of his three rallies Saturday, Trump said little to suggest his allegiance with the GOP is cast in stone. He offered the critique that the Republican Party had a "falling-asleep reputation" until his campaign caught fire and brought millions of new voters out to primaries and caucuses.

And he sharply challenged Cruz, who appears to have the advantage in the Wisconsin race. "There's such deception and lying," he said of his rival. The outcome in Wisconsin will help determine whether Trump can seize the Republican nomination without a fight at the convention.

Bitter race

The Democratic race has grown increasingly bitter, too, though it's not matched the GOP contest for raw hostility. Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders were set to attend a Wisconsin Democratic Party dinner.

Their attention will quickly turn to an even more consequential contest, in New York on April 19, where the Democratic front-runner dearly hopes to avoid an upset in the state she served as senator.

Sanders urged rally-goers to come

out in droves today. "Here is the political reality," he told a young and pumped-up crowd on the University of Wisconsin's Eau Claire campus. "If there is a large voter turnout - if work-

independent if Sanders doesn't get the nomination. "Hillary Clinton is a conservative disguised by mildly social policies" he said. "She is a more

of warmonger than just about any-Trump scheduled two afternoon

Bundled up in winter jackets and

gloves, Sanders supporters waited for

hours to hear him. Sophomore Joseph

Lehto said he probably will vote for an



WISCONSIN: Republican presidential candidate, Donald Trump, reads The Snake poem during a rally at Nathan Hale High School. —AP

ing people, many of whom have given up on the political process, if young people come, perhaps for the first time - ... we will win on Tuesday."

"But, if there is a low voter turnout, we will probably lose. So, I am here to ask you all, not just to come out to vote, but to bring your friends, your aunts and your uncles - let us have the largest voter turnout in Wisconsin pri-

rallies Saturday and one in the evening, in Racine, Wausau and Eau Claire. In Janesville, Wisconsin earlier in the week, a man pepper-sprayed a 15-year-old girl as Trump opponents and supporters clashed outside his rally. About 1,000 people attended the rally while about as many protested outside. His first rally Saturday went off without disruption.

Wisconsin has emerged as a proving ground for anti-Trump forces as the front-runner's campaign hit a rough patch. Trump defended his campaign manager after he was charged with battery against a reporter, backtracked from comments that women should be punished for having abortions, encountered a buzz saw of hostile interviews by conservative Wisconsin talk radio hosts and watched Cruz rise in some preference polls in the state.

In an interview Friday, to be broadcast on "Fox News Sunday," Trump left open the question of an independent candidacy when asked about it. "I want to run as a Republican," Trump said. But if he doesn't get the nomination? "I'm going to have to see how I was treated. Very simple."

Cruz has little chance to overtake Trump in the delegate hunt before the convention; Ohio Gov. John Kasich has none. Both hope to deny Trump a delegate majority in what's left of the primary season, forcing the nomination to be settled at a contested convention at which one of them might

Kasich proposed a novel approach to strengthening Social Security at a town-hall gathering with a few hundred people in Burlington, Wisconsin, on Saturday morning. "Set up a tent city" in Washington, he said, and have mass protests along the lines of the Occupy movement that staged longlasting demonstrations in the capital, New York and other cities. "Occupy DC to fix Social Security," Kasich said. Heading into the weekend of campaigning, Cruz told a Milwaukee County GOP dinner that Trump as the Republican nominee would be "a train wreck," quipping: "That's actually not fair to train wrecks." —AP

AUSTRIAN WATCHDOG INVESTIGATES TWO BANKS AFTER PANAMA PAPERS LEAK

VIENNA: Austria's financial markets regulator 40 years, from 1977 until last December, and FMA is investigating whether lenders Raiffeisen Bank International and Hypo Landesbank Vorarlberg followed rules against money laundering after they were named in a massive international data leak. The leaked "Panama Papers" cover a period over almost

allegedly show that some companies domiciled in tax havens were being used for suspected money laundering, arms and drug deals and tax evasion.

Two Austrian media that were among the more than 100 news organizations that jointly

ed a connection between Raiffeisen and a confectionery company owned by Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko. The bank had made a loan of \$115 million to sweets firm Roshen secured against the holdings of a company based in the British Virgin Islands,

investigated the documents' contents report- Linquist Holdings Limited, broadcaster ORF the criminal authorities, he added. and weekly newspaper Falter reported on Sunday. A spokesman for the FMA said yesterday that it was examining whether procedures such as checks on the nature of transactions and those involved in them were adhered to. If necessary, it can report cases to

Raiffeisen said in a statement it had complied with legal provisions on the prevention of money laundering but could not comment on specific cases because of banking secrecy rules. Hypo Landesbank Vorarlberg had no immediate comment. — Reuters



WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: Matteo Renzi, Prime Minister of Italy, arrives for a working dinner at the White House on March 31, 2016. — AFP

ITALY PM MATTEO RENZI TO VISIT IRAN NEXT WEEK

ROME: Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi will travel to Iran next week for a two-day trip that will make him the first major international figure to visit since the lifting of sanctions against Tehran. Renzi's office said in a statement yesterday that the centreleft leader would visit the Islamic Republic on April 12-13, without giving further details of his itinerary.

Italy has led the way amongst European countries in re-establishing economic ties to Iran following the lifting of international sanctions imposed over concerns the country was seeking to develop a nuclear weapons capacity. An accord to lift the sanctions was agreed last year and came into force in January.

Renzi's trip follows Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's visit to Italy and France at the end of January-a trip which resulted in a string of major trade and investment deals being signed between Tehran and the two European countries.

Contracts worth an estimated 17 billion Euros (\$18 billion) were signed in Rome and Rouhani said he hoped that would represent only a start, as he pitched Iran as a safe base for investors looking to get into a regional market of 300 million consumers.

Iran has said it wants European help to modernize and expand its rail, road and air networks as well as seeking investment to boost its manufacturing base, notably in the automobile sector. Italy was Iran's largest European trade partner before the impact of sanctions caused exchanges between the two countries to collapse. — AFP

GREECE SHIPS FIRST MIGRANTS BACK TO TURKEY UNDER EU DEAL

EXPULSIONS PASS OFF SMOOTHLY

LESBOS/DIKILI: Greece shipped over 200 migrants back to Turkey yesterday, the first wave of deportations under a hugely controversial deal aimed at easing Europe's worst postwar migration crisis.

Some 200 migrants-mainly from Pakistan and Bangladesh-sailed on three chartered Turkish ferries from the Greek islands of Lesbos and Chios back across the Aegean Sea, retracing the perilous journey they took on unseaworthy boats in their quest to reach Europe.

EU leaders hope the last-ditch deal with Ankara will discourage migrants from risking the crossing that has claimed 366 lives this year alone and break up the lucrative racket that smuggled about one million migrants into Europe last year.

The surge of migrants has sparked an existential crisis for the 28-nation EU bloc, as members flung up long-shut borders and barbed wire in a bid to push back migrants fleeing war and poverty in Syria, the Middle East, North Africa and the Indian sub-continent. And despite the controversy surrounding the deal, it appears to be reducing the flow. Turkey's Interior Minister Efkan Ala said at the weekend that the numbers crossing had already fallen substantially in the last 10 days to just 300 people a day. But some decided to chance it despite the risk of being sent back, and the Turkish coastguard yesterday blocked a boatload of about 60 mostly Afghan migrants, an AFP correspondent said.

'Stop the dirty deal'

The first wave of expulsions passed off smoothly under a visible police presence, as two boats left Lesbos carrying 136 migrants and one from the island of Chios carrying 66, said Yorgos Kyritsis, the Greek government's migration spokesman.

In the boats the grim-faced deportees sat in rows accompanied by security guards from the EU's Frontex border agency, according to images on Turkish state media who were allowed on board the vessels. They arrived at the Turkish



SCHISTO: A migrant child looks out behind a wire fence of a refugee camp on Monday. — AFP

Aegean resort of Dikili to a heavy security presence on the harbor side and media kept at a distance by metal barriers, according to AFP reporters at the scene. A police helicopter buzzed overhead as officials guided the migrants to tents pitched along the harbor for registration and health checks.

Turkish state media reported that migrants from Sri Lanka, Lebanon, Iran, Egypt, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Afghanistan were among the first wave. Only two were from Syria and they had requested to return for personal reasons, Kyritsis said.

Some activists have branded the deal inhumane and a few dozen demonstrated gathered on Chios to protest against the deportations, chanting "Freedom," according to an AFP photographer. "Stop the dirty deal", "stop deportations" and "wake up Europe" were among the banners brandished in Lesbos against the disputed deal. One German protester, Henrike, said: "I feel sorry for them. I have no idea what will happen to them. It's frustrating and it's sad."

Turkish EU Affairs Minister Volkan Bozkir told HaberTurk television that the non-Syrian migrants would be sent to Kirklareli on the Bulgarian border for checks ahead of deportation to their own countries.

"People who have migrated for purely economic reasons are to be sent back according to the rules," he said. "We will apply to the countries of the illegal migrants. They can be our guests for a while and then bit by bit we will send them back." —AFP

GERMANWINGS VICTIMS' KIN ANGERED BY TRIBUTE TO SUICIDAL CO-PILOT

BERLIN: Families of the victims of last year's Germanwings crash deliberately caused by a suicidal co-pilot expressed outrage yesterday after his parents placed a heartfelt newspaper announcement in his memory.

The parents of Andreas Lubitz, who brought down the A320 flight in the French Alps with 149 other people on board in March 2015, ran the announcement in a local paper thanking friends and neighbors for their support over the loss of their son. Entitled simply "Andreas" and featuring a smiling photograph of the co-pilot, the brief text ends with a message to their son in bold letters: "For you: We miss you very much but you are and will remain in our hearts". They speak of a year "filled with horror and fear" but do not explicitly mention the 149 other people killed in the crash.

Juergen Fischenich, whose son was on board the doomed plane, told the Bild daily that he could understand the Lubitz family's lasting grief. "But to say thank you in public and not mention the other 149 people this person murdered-I cannot express how ignorant and disrespectful that is," he said.

The parents of 24-year-old victim Sebastian S. released an angry statement about the announcement via their lawyer and quoted by Bild. "We can only visit our murdered son at his grave. In the Lubitz family's expression of gratitude they describe their son as a cherished person," they wrote. "One couldn't express our rage in words." Investigators found that Lubitz, 27, had a history of depression and suicidal tendencies and the case has raised questions about medical checks faced by pilots as well as doctor-patient confidentiality.

Lubitz was allowed to continue flying despite having been seen by doctors dozens of times in the years preceding the crash. Several victims' relatives have banded together with plans to take the airline's parent company Lufthansa to court in the United States, arguing that the depressive Lubitz should never have been allowed to fly. — AFP



VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis interacts with faithful as he makes a tour of St. Peter's Square at the end of a Mass for the the Holy Year of Mercy. — AP

UKRAINE POPULIST SEEKS PRESIDENT'S OUSTER OVER LEAKED SECRET ACCOUNTS

KIEV: A populist Ukrainian party leader said yesterday that he would launch impeachment proceedings against President Petro Poroshenko over his use of offshore accounts revealed by the "Panama Papers" leak. The action by Radical Party leader Oleg Lyashko is unlikely to succeed but is certain to add even further pressure on Poroshenko as he struggles to resolve a months-long political crisis that has paralysed the cash-strapped govern-



KIEV: Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko arriving to give a press conference on January 14, 2016. — AFP

ment. A year-long worldwide media investigation into a trove of 11.5 million documents found that the former Soviet state's pro-Western leader had registered a company in the British Virgin Islands that he never disclosed in his income forms.

Poroshenko was travelling to Japan yesterday and issued no immediate comment on documents originally leaked to a German newspaper from Panama's Mossack Fonseca

The president's spokesman did not answer

the telephone when contacted by AFP. None of the three accounts associated with Poroshenko's offshore firm held more than 2.000 euros (\$2,270).But the report said they may have been a haven used by the president to avoid paying taxes on his profitable candy

"Poroshenko was busy setting up an offshore tax haven for his business assets as Ukraine was suffering its worst defeat in Russia's war against Ukraine in the summer of 2014," the report said."Poroshenko's action might be illegal on two counts: he started a new company while president and he did not report the company on his disclosure statements," it added.

Radical Party leader Lyashko-an outspoken populist who holds 21 of the 450 seats in Ukraine's parliament-said he has "initiated the start of impeachment proceedings" against the president. "We demand the creation of a special temporary investigative committee in parliament that would probe (Poroshenko's) secret offshore companies and accounts," Lyashko wrote on Facebook.

Lyashko's efforts are unlikely to get very far because Ukraine still lacks a law spelling out how such impeachment hearings may proceed. They could also only begin after the case is studied by the country's constitutional and supreme courts. Ukraine's prosecutor general's office said it had studied the leaked information and "found no evidence of a crime".

But the accounts' very existence is likely to reflect poorly on Poroshenko's self-proclaimed efforts to erase Ukraine's long history of government graft. Ukraine's 2014 pro-EU revolution was fed in part by deep-rooted frustration with the Russian-backed leadership's alleged use of state funds for self-enrichment and its brazen disregard for the rule of law.

According to the Panama Papers, Poroshenko's financial advisers said the accounts were created to help with the president's sale of his Roshen chocolate businessan asset he had vowed to get rid of when elected in May 2014. —AFP

HOPES FOR VATICAN PROGRESS WITH SCHISMATIC CATHOLICS

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis met with the head of a breakaway group of traditionalist Catholics amid new hopes for progress toward ending a quarter-century of schism. The Society of St Pius X said the 40-minute meeting Friday was cordial, and took place at Francis' hotel-residence because the pope wanted a "private and informal meeting" with its superior, Bishop Bernard Fellay, rather than a formal audience.

In a statement yesterday, the society said its legal status in the church wasn't discussed but that lower-level talks would continue "without haste." The Vatican in 2014 resumed reconciliation talks with the Swiss-based society after doctrinal discussions launched under Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI collapsed. Last year, Francis made an extraordinary gesture by allowing priests of the society, which has no legal status in the church, to hear confessions during his Holy Year

The late Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre founded the society in 1969, opposed to the Second Vatican Council's modernizing reforms, introduction of Mass in the vernacular and outreach to Jews and other Christians. In 1988, the Vatican excommunicated Lefebvre, and four other bishops after Lefebvre consecrated them without papal consent.

Benedict had made reconciling a priority, liberalizing the use of the old Latin Mass which the society celebrates, removing the excommunications and enduring heated criticism when one of the rehabilitated bishops was shown to have denied the Holocaust.

But three years of doctrinal talks collapsed in 2012 after Fellay refused to accept a core set of doctrinal demands required by the Holy See over the society's acceptance of Vatican II. Francis' election initially signaled continued impasse, as the Jesuit pope made clear he cared little for the old Latin Mass, considered traditionalists self-absorbed retrogrades, and was more concerned about spreading the merciful message of the Gospel to society's poor outcasts than resolving thorny theological and canonical

Paradoxically, Francis emphasis on mercy and inclusion, his concern for "peripheral" Catholics and disdain for rigid rules may have allowed for progress. In recent comments, Fellay has signaled new optimism that the group's legal status might be resolved. He said Francis had sent bishops to visit the society's seminaries and headquarters to "see us as we are," and that what had been theological stumbling blocks in the past

were now up for discussion. "Are we really moving forward? I think so. I think so, but it is certainly slow going," Fellay was quoted as saying in a March 4 interview with the society's Dici.org site. The society says it has 590 priests and 187 seminarians in six seminaries around the world, as well as some 600,000 people who attend Mass regularly. — AP

RUSSIAN ENERGY MINISTER SAYS MAY MEET SAUDI COUNTERPART BEFORE DOHA EVENT

NOVOKUZNETSK: Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak said yesterday that he may meet his Saudi Arabian counterpart before a planned oil producers' meeting in Doha on April 17.

Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, will agree to freeze crude oil production levels only if Iran and other major producers do so, the kingdom's deputy crown prince said in an interview with Bloomberg last week.

"If there is such an opportunity, surely we will talk to our colleagues," he said about a possible meeting with his Saudi Arabian colleague. Iran has said it will not join fellow OPEC and non-OPEC members in a plan to be discussed in Doha to freeze oil production to boost prices.

Novak also said he hoped that a common position would prevail at the oil producers' meeting. "I hope that in this case a common position will prevail during the discussions and all sides will come to an agreement,... especially given that Iran has confirmed its participation," he said. — Reuters

INDIAN WOMEN BARRED FROM TEMPLE DESPITE COURT ORDER VOW TO KEEP FIGHTING

MUMBAI: Scores of women who were barred entry to a Hindu temple in western Maharashtra state despite a court order in their favor have vowed to carry on the fight for equal access to places of worship, with the government also backing the court's stand.

A Mumbai court last week said it is the fundamental right of a woman to enter any place of worship that allows men access, and that the state should protect this right. Yet villagers prevented the women from entering the temple, with police dragging away and detaining the activists briefly.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis over the weekend reiterated his support for the court order. "There is no place for discrimination in Hindu culture," he said at a public rally. "We will imple-

ment the honorable high court's decision in true spirit."

The Shani Shingnapur temple in Ahmednagar in western India has barred women for centuries from the inner sanctum that is dedicated to Shani, or Saturn. It is one of a handful of Hindu temples in the country that does not allow women entry.

The fight for equal access for women has sparked similar campaigns in other places of worship and triggered a wider debate on women's rights, with the hashtag #RightoPray trending on Twitter.

The popular Sabarimala Ayyappa temple in southern Kerala state, which denies entry to women of reproductive age, is the subject of a petition in the Supreme Court. A separate group of women is demanding access to a landmark mosque in Mumbai. Trupti Desai, leader of a group

that has led the protest for entry in the Shani Shingnapur temple, said they would file a contempt petition against the state if it failed to do so.

Authorities at the Trimbakeshwar temple in Maharashtra, which is also the subject of protests by women for denying them access, on the weekend said it would not allow men or women to enter the inner sanctum henceforth. —Reuters



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif looks on as he waits for the arrival of President Mamnoon Hussain at the venue of the Pakistan Day military parade on March 23, 2016. —AFP

PAKISTAN PM'S FAMILY HIT BACK AFTER PANAMA PAPERS LEAK

ISLAMABAD: The family of Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif yesterday defended their ownership of offshore companies after they were named in the Panama Papers, one of the biggest media leaks in history.

Revenue generation is particularly sensitive for Pakistan's government, which is receiving a \$6.6 billion bailout package from the IMF and has a tax-to-GDP ratio of 11 percent, among the lowest in the world. The leak, comprising 11.5 million documents from Panama-based law firm Mossack Fonseca, shows how some of the world's most powerful people have secreted their money offshore.

Among those named are three of Sharif's four children-Maryam, who has been tipped to be his political successor: Hasan and Hussain, with the records showing they owned London real estate through offshore companies administered by the firm.

"Nawaz Sharif does not own any company but having companies in the name of his children also raises questions," Umar Cheema of the Center for Investigative Reporting in Pakistan, told AFP. The center is partnered with the Investigative Consortium of Independent Journalists, which spent months poring over the documents before Sunday's online release.

"There are more than 200 Pakistanis which our report has identified, and they include lawyers, lawmakers and some people from the judiciary," Cheema said. Opposition leader Imran Khan called for action against Sharif.

"Our stance vindicated again as Sharif's wealth stashed abroad exposed," he tweeted, adding the country's accountability watchdog, tax authorities and election commission must take action. But Sharif's son Hussain told the country's largest private broadcaster Geo his family had done "nothing wrong".

"Those apartments are ours and those offshore companies are also ours," he said. "There is nothing wrong with it and I have never concealed them, nor do I need to do that. "It is according to British law and laws of other countries that it is a legal way to avoid unnecessary tax via offshore compa-

Hussain said he left Pakistan in 1992 and therefore is not resident, adding Pakistani tax law "says that if you are not staying in Pakistan for more than 138 days, then you are not required to declare your assets". Regarding Khan's call for the National Accountability Bureau to investigate, he said "we voluntarily present ourselves before it or any other judicial and investigative institution in Pakistan". Pakistan's information minister Pervez Rashid also denied Sharif's children had committed any crime.

As prime minister, Sharif has invited investment in Pakistan. But the latest revelations could raise uncomfortable questions about why his family has kept their wealth abroad. A report commissioned by Britain's Department for International Development last year said Pakistan's economy was facing an "existential crisis" stemming from its woeful tax collection rates and inability to finance itself.

Ali Nadir, a financial analyst, said the use of offshore companies was in some cases legitimate. But he added: "I believe political and business leaders will be hard-pressed to take the privacy defense given the worldwide move towards a better track of money, tax evasion, laundering and corruption.

"This may also start more locally focused probes as there are likely to be disclosure issues." The Panama Papers have whipped up a storm of controversy over offshore wealth, ensnaring political leaders, sports figures and underworld members across the globe in the scandal. —AFP

SUU KYI DROPS TWO MINISTERIAL JOBS, TAKES ON SPOKESWOMAN ROLE

VOWS TO RULE 'ABOVE' THE PRESIDENT

Suu Kyi has dropped plans to run two major ministries but will act as spokeswoman for the country's new president, a ruling party official said yesterday. Banned from becoming president by a juntaera constitution, Suu Kyi has cemented control over the country's first civilian-led government in decades by taking on a string of senior roles in the new administration.

She has vowed to rule "above" the president, picking school friend and close aide Htin Kyaw for the role. Lawmakers from her National League for Democracy party are also pressing for a special "state counsellor" position for the Nobel laureate, an appointment that would allow her to liaise between the presidency and par-

Last week the NLD said she would take on four cabinet postsforeign, energy, education and the ministerial position in the president's office. But during a parliamentary session yesterday, the NLD put forward two new names for the energy and education portfolios, according to NLD spokesman Win Htein. "Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will be the spokesperson for the president," he added, without elaborating on the rejig. The move will free up the 70-year-old's already busy day-to-day responsibilities while reinforcing control over her proxy president Htin Kyaw.

Background

Hopes are growing that the newly sworn-in government can accelerate the country's economic and political rejuvenation after nearly half a century of military repression. Suu Kyi's party won a huge mandate at last November's elections. But the constitution effectively hans her from the ton post as it rules out anyone with foreign-born children or spouses from becoming president.

Suu Kyi married and had two sons with a British national. The military also retains control of the key home, defence and border affairs ministries, while 25 percent of parliamentary seats are reserved for unelected soldiers.

The military has already balked at the NLD's plans to make Suu Kyi a "state counselor" with army MPs

YANGON: Myanmar's Aung San in parliament last week saying the move bypasses the constitution. The proposal is likely to sail through the NLD-dominated legis-

Handover of power

Foreign direct investment (FDI) in Myanmar in the fiscal year ending in March grew to nearly \$9 billion, a government official said on yesterday, after a rush of lastminute approvals before the handover of power to Aung San Suu Kyi's administration.

The figure, a record high, rose

million people.

San Myint said FDI rose sharply after a body approving projects signed off on several large deals before Suu Kyi's government took power in April, following an election win last year by her National League for Democracy. "(Projects) pending a long time in the process due to lack of necessary information were expedited before the end of the fiscal year," said San Myint.

Myanmar received \$4.1 billion in FDI in 2013/2014 and that number doubled by the end of last fiscal year as foreign firms won oil

"Foreign direct investment is expected to get a lift from the successful political transition following national elections in November 2015, with investment flowing into newly established special economic zones and rapidly expanding transport, telecommunications, and energy sectors," the bank said.

Growth in Myanmar's investment follows reforms launched in 2012 by former president Thein Sein, a former general who enlisted help from technocrats and global financial institutions to



NAYPYITAW: Aung San Suu Kyi attends the presidential handover ceremony on March 30,

by about \$1 billion compared with and gas concessions and international overhaul an economy that wilted the previous fiscal year, fuelled by investment in the energy, manufacturing and telecoms sectors, San Myint, an official at the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration, told Reuters.

The investment reflects growing, if still cautious, interest in one of Asia's last remaining untapped markets, which has offered tax breaks and export tariff perks to create urgently jobs for its 51.5 tional hotel chains started moving in. Singapore tops the list of foreign investors, the official said, followed by China, Hong Kong and the Netherlands. He said a detailed breakdown was not available as it was still being calculated.

The Asian Development Bank forecast last week Myanmar's economic growth would recover to 8.4 percent in the fiscal year ending March 2017, partly thanks to a pick up in foreign investment.

under sanctions and inept policymaking during five decades of military rule.

The lifting of most Western embargoes has allowed foreign access to sectors from banking, property and tourism to factories, infrastructure, airports and agribusiness. The \$9 billion in FDI is some 27 times the \$329.6 million received in 2009/2010, the year before the military ceded power. —Agencies

BANGLADESH POLICE FIND WEAPONS AFTER BLAST KILLS 2

DHAKA: Police seized grenades, pistols and bullets from a house in a northern Bangladeshi village yesterday, a day after an explosion killed two suspected militants.

Authorities believe the house in the Sherpur area of Bogra district was occupied by members of a banned Islamist militant group, Jumatul Mujahedeen Bangladesh, and that the bomb blast Sunday was an accident, local police chief Mohammed Asaduzzaman said. "We suspect that the home was being used as a den for making bombs," he said.

Witnesses told police the explosion occurred inside the one-story building, but could not identify the two dead men, suggesting they were not local people.

Asaduzzaman said the building's owner, who lives elsewhere, said a man who identified himself as an auto-rickshaw driver rented

the home about five months ago. Police said they could not locate the man after Sunday's blast. A 12-member bomb disposal unit searched the house on Monday and recovered 20 grenades, four pistols and 25 bullets, Asaduzzaman said. The grenades were then defused, he said.

A wave of deadly attacks last year on foreigners, secular writers and members of the minority Shiite and Ahmadiya communities has raised concerns about security in Bangladesh. The Islamic State group claimed responsibility for some of the attacks, but Bangladesh authorities dismissed those claims and instead blamed local militant groups, including Jumatul Mujahedeen Bangladesh.The government insists it has the security situation under control and has arrested several suspects. —AP

MALDIVES RELEASES JOURNALISTS ARRESTED OVER CRACKDOWN PROTEST

MALE: Maldives police have released 16 journalists arrested during a protest against a perceived government crackdown on press freedom on the politically troubled holiday islands, officials said yesterday. The journalists, which the government said were released late Sunday, have been ordered to report to police for questioning over the demonstration held outside President Abdulla Yameen's office in the capital Male. "We were told that we disobeyed police orders and they want to question us further," Zaheena Rasheed, an editor of the private Maldives Independent website, told AFP after she was released.

Police used pepper spray to break up Sunday's protest against the government's move to criminalize defamation, which media fear will be used to stifle freedom of speech. A draft bill proposes heavy fines and jail terms for offenders.

The government said in a statement the demon-

stration was broken up because journalists were gathered in "a high security zone, where protesting is prohibited", adding that the group was detained for 10 hours in total. Political turmoil in the Maldives has dented its image as a peaceful paradise for wellheeled honeymooners. The Indian Ocean nation adopted multiparty democracy in 2008 after decades of autocratic rule, but has faced international criticism over a recent erosion of rights.

Rasheed said the released media met yesterday with US ambassador Atul Keshap, who was visiting from Sri Lanka where he is based. The journalists raised concerns about press freedom in the nation, gripped by turmoil since the toppling of its first democratically elected leader Mohamed Nasheed in February 2012. "Appreciated the opportunity to meet with Maldives journalists arrested during Sunday's protest," Keshap said on Twitter, posting a photo of himself with them. —AFP



PESHAWAR: Pakistani residents cross a flooded street following heavy rain on the outskirts yesterday. —AFP

AT LEAST 55 KILLED IN FLASH FLOODS IN NORTHERN PAKISTAN

ISLAMABAD: Flash floods triggered by heavy rain in Pakistan have killed at least 55 people and rescuers were trying yesterday to help thousands of survivors including some cut off by a landslide in a mountain valley, officials said.

The weather system that brought the unusually heavy rain was expected to move northeast, towards northern India, although more isolated storms were expected in northern Pakistan, the

Meteorological Department said.

Yousuf Zia, a disaster management official in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, said nearly 150 homes had been destroyed and tents and blankets were being distributed to the homeless. "There are 30 people stranded by a landslide in the Kohistan Valley where we have sent a helicopter to rescue them," Zia said. Forty-seven people were killed and 37 injured in Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa, Zia said, while eight people were killed in Pakistani-administered Kashmir, officials there said. Landslides caused widespread damage to roads and communication infrastructure in the Pakistani side of Kashmir, they said. One of the worst-affected districts was the Swat Valley, northwest of the capital, Islamabad, where 121 mm (4.76 inches) of rain fell on Sunday, the Meteorological Department said. —Reuters

Animal activists target China dog meat festival

ing to shut down an annual summer dog meat festival in southern China blamed for blackening the country's international reputation as well as fueling extreme cruelty to canines and unhygienic food handling practices.

Activists from a coalition of groups said yesterday that they will continue press for the festival to be banned as well as legislation outlawing the slaughtering of dogs and cats and the consumption of their meat. While an estimated 10-20 million dogs are killed for their meat each year in China, the June 20 event in the city of Yulin has come to symbolize the cruelty and lack of

BEIJING: Animal rights activists are seek- hygiene associated with the largely Since 2014, the local government has "Psychologically and mentally, they have ranks of dog lovers, are already having an unregulated industry.

Why this needs to stop

Yu Hongmei, director of the VShine Animal Protection Association, said China needs to follow the example of the vast majority of developed nations that have banned eating dog and cat. "China needs to progress with the times," Yu said. "Preventing cruelty to animals is the sign of a mature, civilized society."

Restaurant owners say eating dog meat is traditional during the summer, while opponents say the festival that began in 2010 has no cultural value and was merely invented to drum up business.

sought to disassociate itself from the event, forbidding its employees from attending and limiting its size by shutting down some dog markets and slaughter houses. Still, as many as 10,000 dogs, many of them stolen pets still wearing their collars, are slaughtered for the festival held deep inside the poor, largely rural Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Some are trucked in hundreds of kilometers stuffed six or seven to a crate or small metal cage without food or water. Slaughtering takes place in front of the animals, usually with a club to induce the pain and fear that restaurant owners claim makes their adrenaline-rich meat tastier.

already died many times," said Peter J. Li, Humane Society International's China policy specialist.

Health disadvantages

Dog meat also poses a risk to human health by spreading diseases such as trichinellosis, rabies and cholera, the Humane Society says. Guangxi is already one of China's five worst areas affected by human rabies, and Yulin ranks as one of the top 10 Chinese cities in terms of cases, the organization says.

Activists said rallies held around the country to oppose dog eating, as well as outrage on social media from the growing

effect. Dog meat restaurants have been forced to take the festival indoors and large-scale open air dog meat consumption is no longer seen.

However, a draft animal cruelty law remains mired in China's legislature and prosecution of dog thieves and those violating animal transport laws remains lax, activists complain. Yu Dezhi, secretary general of Animal Protection Power, said he was confident that shifting consumption habits will eventually help build the necessary groundswell against the Yulin festival and dog eating in general. "There is simply no market for dog meat among young people," Yu said. — AP



MURRIETA: Chinese students Tony Lu (L), from Anhui and Henry Li (R) from Wuhan, spend their free time connected to China on their internet devices at their host family's home.—AFP

CHINESE 'PARACHUTE KIDS' FLOCKING TO US SCHOOLS

MURRIETA: Growing up in mainland China, Hailun "Helen" Zhou always knew that she would finish her high school education in America, whatever the cost.

"That's what everybody does," said the 17year-old from Sichuan province who has spent the last two years studying in California and will be graduating this spring. "My father's friends all sent their kids abroad, so that was

Zhou is among a growing number of Chinese teens who are flocking to US high schools, looking for a western education and a competitive edge in gaining admission to US universities and then finding a job back home. But the pursuit of the American dream can quickly turn into a nightmare, experts warn, as many of these so-called "parachute kids" live in the US with little parental supervision and can end up in trouble-and even in prison. "It's a huge industry," said Joaquin Lim, who runs a company that helps place Chinese students in American schools. "The last figure I read put it at 25 billion dollars."

Of nearly one million international students enrolled in public and private institutions in the United States in 2014-2015, about 304,000 — or 31.2 percent-were from China, according to the Washington-based Institute of International Education.

Some 30,000 of those students attended secondary schools, compared to fewer than 1.000 a decade ago. The majority of these "parachute kids" aged between 14 and 19 land in southern California. For the most part, they attend Catholic or Christian schools because of restrictions by the US government on foreign student enrollment at public schools.

In cities such as Murrieta, a rural communitv about 130 kilometers southeast of Los Angeles, the number of Chinese students has ballooned in recent years, bringing welcome cash to the school district as well as host families who care for the teens.

'It's an investment'

"It costs about 50,000 dollars a year for the parents, who are mostly middle class, to send their kids here but they consider it an investment," Lim said. "Three years ago, we had about 40 Chinese students enrolled in high schools in Murrieta and today we have more than 300 and the number keeps growing."

The sleepy town of about 105,000 residents, many of them retirees, is a far cry from China's polluted mega-cities, but most of the teens adjust well to American life, said Renate Jefferson, who oversees the exchange program for the public school district. "What they notice first is the blue sky," she said. "They just

walk around in awe at the blue sky. They think it's beautiful." The students are also baffled by the freedom they enjoy academically and the artistic outlets available to them-a welcome change from the rigorous, numbers-obsessed learning system in China.

"If there is one word to describe life here, it's the word 'free," said Junheng "Carl" Li, 19, who is graduating this year from a Catholic school in Murrieta. "You have a lot of choices and much more freedom to study what you're interested in."

Shady intermediaries, no supervision But many of the "parachute kids" whose

parents rely on shady intermediaries to help them through the bewildering application process are in for a hard landing in America, illequipped to navigate the cultural transition and their newfound independence.

Last month, three Chinese teens enrolled at a private school in Rowland Heights, a neighborhood east of Los Angeles that has a large Chinese diaspora, were given stiff prison sentences for attacking two other teens.

A judge at the preliminary hearing said the case reminded him of 'Lord of the Flies' - the 1954 novel by William Golding about a group of schoolboys stranded on a desert island who turn feral when forced to fend for themselves, local medai reported.

The incident attracted widespread attention in China and prompted soul-searching on the wisdom of sending teenagers to a foreign country with no close parental supervision. "You don't send your child 6,000 miles before verifying the school and who they are staying with," Lim said. "Too often, these kids are thrown into a completely foreign environment and are not prepared to fend for themselves."

Police sergeant Steven Perez, who was involved in the Rowland Heights case, said officers are increasingly finding teens out on their own at night or even living in homes bought by their parents with little or no adult guidance. "You basically have kids who are managing themselves and have no one to answer to," Perez said. "Or you have kids basically renting a room where they are residents and they are not accountable to those people either." Evan Freed, an attorney who represented one of the Rowland Heights teens who was sentenced to 13 years in prison, said the case should serve as a wake-up call to parents that they could be setting their kids up for disaster rather than a bright future.

"As my client told the court-she felt lost, she felt sad that her family wasn't here and that she basically took advantage of the freedom that she had," Freed said. — AFP

N KOREANS FLEE TO END UP ADRIFT IN THE SOUTH

'There are times when I regret it a lot'

SEOUL: A middle-aged man is walking through a quiet Seoul neighborhood when he suddenly stops. He lights a cigarette, cupping his hands to shield the flame from the winter wind, and takes a deep draw, remembering how things used to be. He's a former policeman, a broad-shouldered man with a growling voice and a crushing handshake.

Back where he came from, he says, he was someone who mattered. "In North Korea, people were afraid of me," he says. He says it wistfully, almost sadly, like a boy talking about a dog he once had. "They knew I could just drag them away."

That fear meant respect, and bribes, in the North Korean town where he lived, a place where the electricity rarely worked and the Internet was only a rumor. It meant he could buy a TV, and that he had food even as those around him went hungry. It meant that when he grew exhausted by the relentless poverty and oppression around him, and when relatives abroad offered to advance him the money to escape, he had connections to a good smuggler.

Just over a year ago, that smuggler showed him where to slip across a river and into China, on his way to South Korea. His new home is one of the wealthiest and most technologically advanced nations in the world. It has a thriving democracy and a per-capita income at least 12 times larger than the North's. Seoul is a city of infinite shopping choices, glass-fronted office towers and armies of exquisitely dressed businesspeople. He used to dream of the easy life he'd have here. And what does he think now? "Sometimes, when my work is too hard, I think about my job as a policeman," says the man, who spoke on condition his name not be used, fearing for the safety of relatives who still live in the North. "I didn't have problems with money back then. I ate what I wanted to eat." He pauses, thinking about his decision to leave: "There are times when I regret it a lot."

The risks

Every year, thousands of North Koreans risk imprisonment, or worse, to leave their homeland, many hoping to eventually reach the South. Instead, they often find themselves lost in a nation where they thought they'd feel at home struggling with denre sion, discrimination, joblessness and their own lingering pride in the repressive nation they left behind. Surveys have shown that up to one-third would return home if they could.

Take the former policeman, an increasingly bitter day laborer who now supports his family hauling bags of cement through the sprawling apartment blocks constantly under construction around Seoul. His hands are rougher than sandpaper now. His fingernails are warped. He sleeps most nights in a dormitory near his latest construction site, just outside the city, only occasionally visiting his wife and the rest of his family, who live in a middle-class Seoul neighbor-

"I knew that South Korea was a capitalist country, that it was very rich. I thought that if I can just get there, I can work less but earn a lot of money," he says. He grimaces when he thinks of his naivetÈ.

More than 27,000 North Koreans exiles live in the South, most arriving since a brutal famine tore at the country in the mid-1990s. Government control foundered amid widespread starvation, and security loosened along the border with China. While security has again tightened, nearly 1,300 refugees reached South Korea last year, according to statistics compiled by the Seoul government. For most, the journey required bribing border guards, life underground in China for months or years, and weeks of travel through still more countries.

They left behind one of the most isolated nations in the world, where the ruling family has been worshipped now for three generations, and only a minuscule elite are allowed to make international phone calls. It has no free press or political opposition. While the famine is over, the country remains very poor, with hunger and malnutrition serious problems.

It's a country where jobs are assigned by the government, but where most families now survive by selling everything from rice to car parts in an ever-growing network of markets. Most North Korean refugees come from collective farms or hardscrabble towns near the Chinese border. Few have more than a high school education.

What happens after they escape

Tens of thousands of North Koreans are believed to live underground in China. Some stay permanently, while others slip back into the North after earning extra money. For many, though, the lure of a wealthy, Korean-speaking nation is strong, even if refugees' expectations of the South are often shaped less by reality and more by the bootlegged southern soap operas that are wildly popular in the North.

Those who go find themselves living in one of the most brutally competitive countries in the world, where education is worshipped, toddlers are offered exam-prep classes and a drive for perfection has produced one of the world's highest rates of plastic surgery. "Life in South Korea is competitive," Hong Yongpyo, South Korea's minister of unification, said in a recent speech to a group of defectors. "For you to succeed in this competition, you need to push yourself on your own."

But that can be very difficult. Despite government programs that include an immersive three-month program, along with assistance in getting apartments and jobs, the exiles are immediately marked by their accents and their confusion over everything from checking accounts to job applications. Many are noticeably shorter than southerners because of malnutrition, a serious issue in a country that sees height as a measure of attractiveness and success. When it



SEOUL: Exiled North Korean Gae-yoon Lee poses for a photo at her home. —AP

comes to finding work, they have none of the school or hometown connections that are often key here to getting hired, and many South Koreans dismiss them as lazy and difficult. When they do get jobs, seemingly simple things - such as knowing they need to arrive at work on time - can leave them flummoxed, their pride badly battered. "It has happened so many times: They show up for work for one or two days, then get into a fight with their colleagues and quit," says Ahn Kyungsu, a Seoul-based researcher who has spent years working with exiles.

As a result, they remain far less educated than most South Koreans and have far higher rates of unemployment. Their most common profession is unskilled laborer. Even success doesn't make life easy. Gae-yoon Lee, who was raised on a collective farm, left North Korea in 2010 with only a high school diploma. Six years later, she's a published poet who often writes about her childhood and the famine, and is midway through a degree in Korean literature at one of Seoul's top universities.

A quiet woman with a stylish purse and braces on her teeth, she finds herself intimidated by southerners' intense focus on success. "Even between friends, people are always competing here," says Lee, 30. "It can be really stressful to live here." With an accent that still gives her away as an outsider, she sometimes resorts to pretending she doesn't belong at all. There are times when I'm too afraid to be tagged

as a North Korean," she says. "So when I'm talking to South Koreans, sometimes I'll use a few English words that I remember so that people think that I'm a foreigner just learning to speak Korean. At that moment, really want to be a foreigner." During the first few months after he got to the

South, the former policeman thought he might become a cop again, or maybe join the army. But he's too old to be a police recruit, and he says the army turned him down.

Since then, he's tumbled from one job to the next: He trained to be a welder but quit because he wasn't earning enough. He worked in a food-processing factory for a time but says his bosses refused to give him a raise. "It was because I'm from North Korea," he grumbles. Since then, there have been stints with at least two construction companies. — AP



MANILA: Philippine and US soldiers, along with visiting military attache members, salute as the national anthems of both the US and Philippines are played during the opening ceremony of the annual joint 11-day Balikatan (Shoulder-to-Shoulder) military exercise yesterday. — AFP

US-PHILIPPINE WAR GAMES BEGIN AS CHINA WARNS 'OUTSIDERS'

MANILA: US and Philippine troops began major exercises on Monday as China's state media warned "outsiders" against interfering in tense South China Sea territorial disputes.

The official Xinhua news agency gave the warning as Manila and Washington launched the 11-day Balikatan (Shoulder-to-Shoulder) exercises with a low-key opening ceremony in Manila. US Defense Secretary Ash Carter is to fly to the Philippines next week to observe live-firing of artillery and visit US Navy ships taking part.

Some 5,000 US troops are taking part along with nearly 4,000 Philippine soldiers and 80 from Australia. "The... exercises caps Manila's recent attempts to involve outsiders in (a) regional row," China's official news agency Xinhua said in a commentary. It cited Japan, which sent a submarine on a visit to the Philippines last weekend, and Australia."However, a provocation so fear-mongering and untimely as such is likely to boomerang on the initiators," Xinhua added.

"A big country with vital interests in Asia, the United States should first clarify the targets of its Pivot to Asia strategy, which so far has featured no more than unscrupulous inconsistency between fear-mongering deeds and peace-loving words."

China lays claim to almost all of the South China Sea, despite partial counter-claims by Brunei, Malaysia, Taiwan, Vietnam and the Philippines. In recent years it has built major structures including radar systems and airstrips over reclaimed reefs and outcrops, sparking international concern it could impose military controls over the entire area. The US does not take sides in the territorial disputes but has asserted the importance of keeping sea and air routes open. It has sent US bombers and warships on patrol close to the Chinese construction activity in recent months, infuriating Beijing. Lieutenant-General John Toolan, commander of US Marine Corps forces in the Pacific, told reporters in Manila the exercises would help the allies improve maritime security and maintain regional stability. "Our alliance is strong. The United States is committed to this relationship and these are not empty words.... peace in Southeast Asia depends on our cooperation,"Toolan added.

The exercises come ahead of a decision this vear by a United Nations-backed tribunal on a legal challenge by Manila to China's territorial claims. The Philippines is also preparing to host US troops at five bases under a defense pact born

Vietnam seizes Chinese VESSEL FOR INTRUSION

HANOI: Vietnam's coast guard in a rare move has seized a Chinese vessel for allegedly intruding in its waters, state media reported yesterday. The Thanh Nien newspaper said that the vessel has been towed to the northern port city of Hai Phong, and that the ship, its captain and two sailors, all Chinese, are under the

supervision of Vietnamese authorities. The vessel, disguised as a fishing boat, was carrying 100,000 liters of diesel oil and was intercepted by Vietnamese coast guard near Bach Long Vi island in the Gulf of Tonkin on Thursday, it said. The captain told authorities the fuel was to be sold to Chinese fishing boats operating in the area, it said. Hai Phong coast guard offi-

cials declined to comment yesterday. The newspaper said that in the last two weeks of March the coast guard had chased 110 Chinese fishing boats out of Vietnamese waters. Vietnamís coast guard often warns and chases Chinese seizes them.

fishing boats out of its waters but rarely

Vietnamese fishermen complain they are harassed, attacked and have had their catches confiscated by Chinese authorities while they fishing in the South China Sea. Vietnam is locked in a territorial dispute with China in the South China Sea, which is rich in resources and occupies one of the world busiest sea lanes.

Vietnam, China and Taiwan have competing claims over the Parcel islands which are occupied by China, while the three along with the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei have claimed parts

or all of the Spratly islands. Chinese growing territorial assertiveness in the region including recent massive land reclamation of reefs and atolls in the Spratlys and its increased military actions in the two island chains have raised concerns among neighbors and the United States. —AP



DUBAI: A general view shows Burj Khalifa (center), the world's tallest tower, as the sun sets over Dubai yesterday. — AFP

'Panama Papers' reveal offshore wealth

Continued from Page 1

The Kremlin said the documents contained "nothing concrete and nothing new" while a spokesman for British Prime Minister David Cameron said his late father's reported links to an offshore company were a "private matter". Iceland's Prime Minister Sigmundur Gunnlaugsson could not immediately be reached for comment on the naming of his wife in connection with a secretive company in an offshore haven, which brought opposition calls for him to resign.

Pakistan denied any wrongdoing by the family of Prime Minister Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif after his daughter and son were linked to offshore companies. Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko did not comment on his reported offshore links. Australia, Austria, France, Sweden and the Netherlands were among countries which said they had begun investigating the allegations, based on more than 11.5 million documents from Mossack Fonseca.

Banks came under the spotlight for allegedly helping clients hide their funds offshore. The documents, covering a period from 1977 until last December, were leaked to more than 100 news organizations around the world, cooperating with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), a Washington, DC-based network. "I think the leak will prove to be probably the biggest blow the offshore world has ever taken

because of the extent of the documents," ICIJ director Gerard Ryle said.

Britain's Guardian newspaper said the documents showed a network of secret offshore deals and loans worth \$2 billion led to associates of Putin, including concert cellist Sergei Roldugin, a childhood friend of the president. Reuters could not confirm those details. Putin's spokesman dismissed the reports, saying they aimed to discredit him ahead of upcoming elections. "This Putinophobia abroad has reached such a point that it is in fact taboo to say something good about Russia, or about any actions by Russia or any Russian achievements. But it's a must to say bad things, a lot of bad things, and when there's nothing to say, it must be concocted,

The British government asked for a copy of the leaked data, which could be embarrassing for Prime Minister Cameron, who has spoken out against tax evasion and tax avoidance. His late father, lan Cameron, a wealthy stockbroker, is mentioned in the files, alongside some members of his Conservative Party, former Conservative lawmakers and party donors, British media said.

Jennie Granger, head of enforcement and compliance at HM Revenue and Customs, said the government would examine the information "and act on it swiftly and appropriately". Cameron's spokeswoman declined to comment on whether the leader's family had money invested in offshore funds set up

by his father, saying it was a "private matter". The opposition Labour Party's finance spokesman, John McDonnell, tweeted: "Cameron promised and has failed to end tax secrecy and crack down on 'morally unacceptable' offshore schemes, real action is now needed." The Australian Tax Office said it was investigating more than 800 wealthy Mossack Fonseca clients and had linked more than 120 of them to an associate offshore service provider located in Hong Kong, which it did

Hack

The head of Mossack Fonseca, Ramon Fonseca, has denied any wrongdoing but said his firm had suffered a successful but "limited" hack on its database. He described the hack and leak as "an international campaign against privacy". Fonseca, who was up until March a senior government official in Panama, told Reuters the firm had formed more than 240,000 offshore companies.

The papers also showed the use of offshore companies by Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's family, including his daughter Mariam and son Hussain. Pakistani Information Minister Pervez Rasheed denied any wrongdoing on their part. "Every man has the right to do what he wants with his assets, to throw them in the sea, to sell them, or to establish a trust for them. There is no crime in this in Pakistani law or in international law," Rasheed said.

Media reports also said the leaked data pointed to a link between a member of global soccer body FIFA's ethics committee and a Uruguayan soccer official who was arrested last year as part of a US probe into corruption in the sport. The revelations drew an angry reaction from some quarters. German **Economy Minister Sigmar Gabriel questioned** the morals of the financial world. "The greed of the super-rich is connected to the lack of conscience in the banking and financial sector. Both damage the trust in the rule of law. We should not tolerate the fact that one section of society works hard and sticks to the rules while another section cheats society," he told Sueddeutsche Zeitung.

The British-based Tax Justice Network said too many offshore lawyers, accountants and bankers saw it as their role to shield their clients from financial regulations designed to prevent money laundering, tax evasion and corruption. "Mossack Fonseca has been one of the giants of the offshore world for decades. They had a reputation for extreme secrecy and discretion on their clients' behalf, which needless to say was attractive to many clients engaged in tax evasion, fraud, hiding conflicts of interest, and other white collar crimes," director John Christensen said in a statement.

Panama was one of the most secretive havens in the world, but the international community had done little to force improvements there or in many other jurisdictions, including a network of British overseas territories, it said. The Central American country has declined to sign up to global transparency rules. Austria's financial markets regulator FMA is investigating whether lenders Raiffeisen Bank International and Hypo Landesbank Vorarlberg followed rules against money laundering after they were named in the "Panama Papers". Raiffeisen said it had complied but could not comment on specific cases. Hypo Landesbank Vorarlberg had no comment. Norway and Sweden were looking into allegations their banks helped clients set up offshore companies or accounts.

In Ukraine, lawmakers said parliament should investigate allegations President Petro Poroshenko moved his confectionery business, Roshen, to the British Virgin Islands in Aug 2014 as fighting between Ukraine and pro-Russian separatists peaked. "It is the height of cynicism to open offshore companies at a time when hundreds of our soldiers are dying," leader of the populist Radical Party, Oleh Lyashko, said. Any investigation could lead to Poroshenko's impeachment, he added. A senior official from the General Prosecutor's office said there was no evidence the president had committed a crime.

In Brazil, the O Estado de S.Paulo newspaper said politicians from seven parties were named as Mossack Fonseca clients. They included politicians from Brazil's largest party, the PMDB, which broke away from President Dilma Rousseff's coalition last week, but no politicians from her Workers' Party. — Reuters



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Issues

OFFSHORE EMPIRE OF PUTIN'S FRIEND REVEALS Kremlin Wealth

By Maria Antonova

virtuoso concert cellist who calls President Vladimir Putin a "brother", Sergei Roldugin has flown under the radar while other close friends of the Russia leader openly amassed vast fortunes. But now the "Panama Papers" leaks have put the godfather to Putin's eldest daughter at the head of an offshore empire worth more than \$2 billion and sparked fresh speculation on the Russian leader's personal wealth.

Documents from Panama-based law firm Mossack Fonseca, analyzed by Russian journalists, offer a glimpse into a web of obscure deals between Russian state companies and offshore firms owned by Roldugin that made "tens of millions of rubles per day" over the decade between 2006 and 2015. The firms, just one of which, Sandalwood Continental, funnelled a total of \$2 billion, were managed by individuals linked with Bank Rossiya, according to Novaya Gazeta, whose reporters are part of an international group of journalists poring through the 11.5 million leaked documents.

The companies clinched cheap loans and appeared to make money out of thin air by signing deals with state firms and pocketing hundreds of thousands of dollars in compensation when the deals were broken off. Among the investments made by the firms linked to Roldugin were into yachts and resorts in Russia. One ski resort was reported as the location of the wedding of Putin's youngest daughter

'Like a Brother'

The secretive web of Roldugin's assets appears to be just the latest evidence of how an elite close to Putin has amassed huge fortunes through favorable deals during his time in power. From his former judo sparring partners to ex-KGB comrades, close associates of the strongman leader have become billionaires by winning state contracts in key energy and infrastructure sectors. Beyond his official salary, the extent of Putin's personal wealth has never been revealed, but allegations are rife that he essentially controls the money his friends have amassed.

The United States and European Union have slapped sanctions over Ukraine against close Putin associates, including Bank Rossiya, which the US Treasury identified in March 2014 as a "personal bank" for the Kremlin elite. Up until now, Roldugin, 64, has appeared nowhere on these lists, although he is a close confidant of the Russian leader. In the book "First Person", a collection of interviews published in March 2000, when most of the world had little idea of who Putin was, Roldugin takes centre stage as the Russian president's intimate friend.

A native of Putin's hometown Leningrad - now Saint Petersburg - he met the future Russian leader in 1977 and is the godfather of his oldest daughter Maria. "We were not apart after that," the musician said in one of the interviews for the book. "He is like a brother to me." While Putin headed into the KGB secret service, Roldugin turned to arts and rose to become a respected conductor and cellist working in Saint Petersburg's Mariinsky theatre who last year judged the prestigious Tchaikovsky Competition.

A source in the cellist's circle told Novaya Gazeta that Putin picked a modest man "he could trust without any doubt" for the job of guarding his fortune, comparing him with Prince Myshkin, the kind and simple "Idiot" protagonist of Fyodor Dostoyevsky's novel.

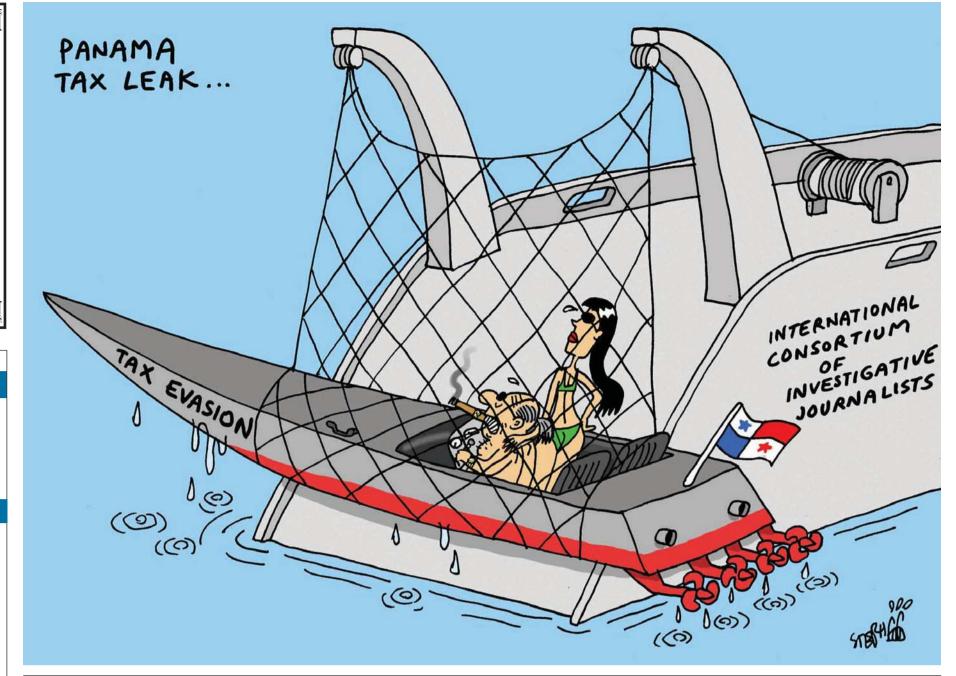
No Russia Fallout

"Putin's idea was to store his personal stolen cash in the most unexpected of places, with the most unexpected of individuals," wrote protest leader Alexei Navalny, who has been looking into cronyism and suspicious state-backed deals for years. He added that the leak from the Panama law firm revealed "not even the tip of the iceberg" of the vast capital amassed by Russia's elite, but even this fraction is "perfectly enough for impeachment."

In Russia, however, there is little likelihood that the revelations will rattle Putin's firm grip on power or dent his reputation. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov slammed the leaks as an attack on the Kremlin strongman designed to destabilize Russia. Asked about Putin's connections with Roldugin, Peskov confirmed he is still a friend of the president but insisted that "Putin has a lot of friends".

"From the outside, Russia's leadership already has an image that is hard to tarnish further," said Nikolai Petrov, who lectures at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow. Inside Russia, public opinion is unlikely to swayed, although some of the elite "may be forced to think about themselves and their prospects". "The main reaction will be that it's a special campaign against Russia," he said. —AFP

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GERMANY-RUSSIA TIES ENTER NEW CHILL

By Paul Carrel and Andreas Rinke

t an hour-long meeting in Moscow on March 23, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov irritated his German counterpart by raising the case of a German-Russian girl who said she was raped by migrants in Berlin earlier this year. After the girl's claims were reported by Russian media in January, Lavrov accused Germany of "sweeping problems under the rug". The Berlin public prosecutor's office, though, said a medical examination had found the girl had not been raped.

That was why Germany's Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier was so upset when Layrov raised the issue again. "I can only hope that such incidents and difficulties, as we had in that case, aren't repeated," he told reporters afterwards. The rape case is indicative of the mutual suspicion that officials from both countries say extends to the highest levels of government. At the root of those tensions lie opposing visions for Europe and the Middle East. Those rival visions have led to clashes at diplomatic negotiating tables, in cyberspace and in the

German and other European security officials accuse Russian media of launching what they call an "information war" against Germany. By twisting the truth in reports on Germany's migrant crisis, the officials say, Russia hopes to fuel popular angst, weaken voters' trust in Chancellor Angela Merkel, and feed divisions in the European Union so that it drops sanctions against Moscow. "Russian propaganda is a danger to the cohesion of our society," Ole Schroeder, German deputy interior minister and a member of Merkel's conservatives, told Reuters.

Russian officials deny their country is mounting a campaign against Germany. "These accusations are atrocious," said one Russian official, who said Moscow is the victim of an "indis-

criminate information war" being waged from Germany. In February, Dmitry Peskov, a spokesman for Russian President Vladimir Putin, denied the Kremlin had exploited the rape case to stir up tensions around immigration in Germany. "We cannot agree with such accusations." Peskov said. "On the contrary, we were keen that our position be understood, we were talking about a citizen of the Russian Federation. Any country expresses its concerns (in such cases). It would be wrong to look for any hidden agenda."

But officials in Berlin say Russia's aim is to muddy what is true and what is not and shake Germans' trust in Merkel. "The idea today is to get disinformation, which means you don't believe anything," Hans-Peter Hinrichsen, a Foreign Ministry official, told a recent meeting on Russia's role in Europe at the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP).

German and European officials say Russia's aim is twofold: To exaggerate the problems the migrant crisis is causing Germany and to push Germany to relax its backing for European sanctions on Russia over Moscow's interference in Ukraine. While EU governments last month extended asset freezes and travel bans on Russians and Russian companies, there is less consensus on whether to prolong more far-reaching sanctions on Russia's banking, defense and energy sectors from July. Both sides agree on one point: relations between the two countries are at their lowest point since the early days of the Cold War.

Bikini Trolls?

Beginning in the late 1960s, the then West Germany pursued a policy of 'Ostpolitik', which encouraged warmer ties with Russia. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the two countries grew even closer thanks to trade and cultural ties. But those ties began unravelling when Vladimir Putin returned as Russian president in 2012, and worsened further after the Ukraine crisis began in late 2013. "All the networks, all the personal ties - they just don't work anymore," said Stefan Meister, at the DGAP.

The accusations of disinformation have spawned a whole new vocabulary. Officials at NATO now talk about the 'weaponization of information' by Russia. Colonel Aivar Jaeski, deputy director at the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, says Russia's campaign against Europe uses "angry trolls" who produce online hate speech, and "bikini trolls" to lure followers and then sow discord and doubt about news events.

Jaeski pointed to a NATO StratCom report on trolling, which says the Guardian newspaper's online edition was targeted "in a troll attack that is considered to have been ordered by the Kremlin" over its reporting on the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 over Ukraine. The Kremlin has repeatedly denied funding or backing online trolls, and has specifically denied any connection with a company based in St Petersburg whose ex-employees have said they were paid to spread disinformation, praise Putin and criticize the West.

A German Campaign?

In the rape case, Russian media reported the German-Russian girl - under German law she can only be identified as Lisa F - had been abducted by 'Arab-looking men' and raped repeatedly over a 30-hour period. Janis Sarts, director of the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, said Russian media continued to report that even after the Berlin authorities said the girl had not been raped. Europe's East StratCom Task Force has collected dozens of examples of Russian reporting on the migrant crisis that it says are clear cases of deliberate disinformation.

German daily Bild reported in March that Germany's foreign and domestic intelligence agencies were warning of increasing Russian interference in German politics. Moscow rejects the idea of any coordinated campaign. One Russian official said there was a German media campaign to paint Russia in a bad light and "demonise" it. The official said that Russian media had formerly been too positive about Germany and were now more objective. "This ends the discrepancy that saw the German media be very critical of Russia and the Russian media paint a very favourable picture of Germany," he said.

Black Box

At the March 23 meeting, the two countries reached an "academic cooperation accord". Both sides also continue to emphasize cultural ties. But repairing political ties may be harder. Germany's Social Democratic Party (SPD) - junior members in Merkel's ruling coalition and the party behind "Ostpolitik" all those decades ago - seems increasingly ready to compromise with Moscow. Sigmar Gabriel, an SDP member and Germany's Economy Minister, said recently that the EU should try to lift sanctions on Russia by this summer.

Merkel, though, has refused to ease the sanctions, insisting that Russia first needs to comply with an agreement to enforce a ceasefire, pull back heavy weapons, exchange prisoners, and hold internationally monitored local elections in eastern Ukraine. German officials say Merkel speaks to Putin more than any other Western leader and recognizes better than most that the Russian leader respects firmness.

But the governments still struggle to understand each other. "The Kremlin is like a Black Box: we have a rough idea of who sits in the Black Box but we have no idea what they are thinking, what they are worried about, what they are thinking for 5-10 years' time," a senior German official said. —Reuters

HOW EUROPE BUILT FENCES TO KEEP PEOPLE OUT

By Gabriela Baczynska and Sara Ledwith

early March, Europe's migration chief Dimitris Avramopoulos squelched through a muddy refugee camp on Greece's border with Macedonia and peered through the barbed-wire topped fence that stands between tens of thousands of migrants in Greece and richer countries that lie to the north. "By building fences, by deploying barbed wire," he said, "it is not a solution." But Avramopoulos has not always preached that message - and his changing views capture the tangle Europe has got itself into as more than a million migrants and refugees have floated in on Greek waters since the start of 2015.

In 2012, when he was Greek minister of defence, Greece built a fence and electronic surveillance system along its border with Turkey. The cement and barbed-wire barrier and nearly 2,000 extra guards were designed to stop a sharp rise in illegal immigrants. The 62-year-old former diplomat was not directly involved in the project. But in 2013 he defended it, telling a news conference the wall had borne fruit. "The entry of illegal immigrants in Greece by this side has almost been eliminated," he said. The official European response to Europe's migrant crisis championed by German Chancellor Angela Merkel last August is for member states to pull together and provide shelter for people, especially Syrians, fleeing war or persecution. But in reality, most members have failed to take their quotas of refugees and nearly a dozen have built barricades to try to keep both migrants and refugees out. The bloc is now trying to implement a deal which would see Turkey take back new arrivals.

The European Union was founded in the ashes of World War Two, in part on a principle of freedom of movement among member states. But since the fall of the Berlin Wall, European countries have built or started 1,200 km of anti-immigrant fencing at a cost of at least Ä500 million, a Reuters analysis of public data shows. That distance is almost 40 percent of the length of America's border with Mexico.

Many of these walls separate EU nations from states outside the bloc, but some are between EU states, including members of Europe's passport-free zone. Most of the building was started in 2015. "Wherever there have been large numbers of migrants or refugees trying to enter the EU, this trend has been followed up by a fence," said Irem Arf, a researcher on European Migration at

rights group Amnesty International.

For governments, fences seem like a simple solution. Building them is perfectly legal and countries have the right to control who enters their territory. Each new fence in Europe has sharply curbed the numbers of irregular immigrants on the route they blocked. For at least one company, fences work. The firm which operates a tunnel between France and Britain says that since a major security upgrade around its French terminal last October, migrants have ceased to cause trouble. "There have been no disruptions to services since mid-October 2015, so we can say that the combination of the fence and the additional police presence has been highly effective," Eurotunnel spokesman John Keefe said. But in the short term at least, they have not stopped people trying to come. Instead, they have diverted them, often to longer, more dangerous routes. And rights groups say some fences deny asylum-seekers the chance to seek shelter, even though European law states that everyone has the right to a fair and efficient asylum procedure. Forced to find another way, migrants and refugees often turn to people-smugglers.

Crowd Control

Greece's border fence was one of the first, and Avramopoulos still defends it. He says Greece built it to divert people towards official crossings where they could apply for asylum. Much of Greece's frontier with Turkey is delineated by a fast-flowing river, the Evros. But there is a 12 km stretch where people used to sneak through on land after making the river crossing in Turkey. The Evros river is a very dangerous river," Avramopoulos told Reuters in his upper floor office suite in February. "Hundreds of people had lost their lives there."

At least 19 people drowned in the Evros in 2010, according to the United Nations refugee agency. Neither the Greek authorities nor Europe's border agency Frontex could provide more data. In practice, rights groups say Greece's barrier - and others including one built by Spain in Morocco - effectively turn everyone away, denying vulnerable people a chance to make their case for protection. This is partly because some new barriers have passport controls like those at an airport. People need travel documents to exit one country and reach the checkpoint of the EU country where they want to seek asylum. Many refugees don't have any papers, so they are automatically blocked.

With barriers come security guards, cameras and surveillance equipment, which all make it harder for people to make their asylum cases. Rights groups have documented many reports of border officials beating, abusing, or robbing migrants and refugees before dumping them back where they came from. This approach, known as push-back, has become an intrinsic feature of Europe's external borders, according to Amnesty

As a solution, some migrants and refugees buy fake papers. Others stow away in vehicles. Or they turn to people-smugglers. Greece's fence had a knock-on effect that continues to ripple through Europe as more countries wall themselves off. More migrants moving through Turkey began to enter Europe across the Bulgarian border, or by sailing to Greece in inflatable dinghies. In the eastern Mediterranean, the International Organization for Migration has recorded more than 1,100 migrant deaths since the start of last year.

Cultural Purity

The EU refuses to fund fences, saying they don't work. As European Commissioner, Avramopoulos has tried instead to persuade fellow member states to show solidarity by offering homes to 160,000 refugees and migrants, mainly from Greece and Italy. As of March 15, just 937 asylum applicants had been relocated. For Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orban, the idea of quotas is "bordering on insanity." Orban opposes a dilution of Europe's "Christian values" by multicultural immigrants and started building fences along Hungary's borders with Croatia and Serbia in late 2015.

Since the ethnic cleansing of the 1990s in the former Yugoslavia, Balkan states have been particularly sensitive to the risks of ethnic and religious conflict. Other countries followed Hungary with fences - even if most said they installed them to control the flow of people, rather than to preserve cultural purity. When Austria started a barrier on its border with Slovenia in Nov 2015, it said it was necessary for crowd management. Then Austria capped the numbers of people it would admit, and how many it would allow through to Germany. By March, all these measures seemed to be having the desired effect: The number of migrants entering Germany from Austria had fallen more than sevenfold.—Reuters

Mesyar Abu Shaibah is the King of Red Bull Car Park Drift





adrenaline-charged and competitive atmosphere, Mesyar Abu Shaibah said: "I won an extremely tough competition against very skillful opponents like Fahad Al Jadei, Mohammed Khorshid and many others". He added: "It was not an easy challenge and I'm truly happy for having ranked the first among all the other drifters".

Like the previous years, the drifters had the added challenge of touching the pendulum square to score extra points with a panel of judges scoring out of 400

in addition to 40 points for the donuts in the box. Judges also kept a watchful eye on car design with 60 points and proximity to the clipping point without hitting it, each accounting for 60 points. experts in motorsports such as Pascal Hayek - Automotive Expert, Nawaf Al Safi - Kuwait International Automobile Club Representative, in addition to Nail Gunn and Nigel Colfer - both are Drifters and Event Organizers.

points, 160 points for drifting skills, 40 for Legendary drifter Abdo Feghali who

car sound and 40 points for tire smoke holds Guinness World Record for the longest vehicle drift has supervised the setup and the qualifier on Thursday, March 31st out of which 12 drifters qualified towards the final the next day. "Drifting as improved in Kuwait quite The judging panel consisted of elite a lot lately, I highly encourage drifters to maintain professional and safe drifting practice. The drifters performed amazingly well and congratulations to the top three winners", he said.

> The audience also enjoyed a Trial Biking Show which Red Bull athlete Brian Capper performed on his motorbike a special appearance that pushed the levels of adrenaline to extremes.

Mesyar Abu Shaibah qualified to the Final Red Bull Car Park Drift to compete along with winners from other countries in the regional final held in Oman this upcoming December.

For more information about Red Bull Car Park Drift 2016 visit www.redbull.com or follow @redbullkuwait on twitter and Instagram.



welve out of the best drifters in town, both amateurs and professionals, participated in the Red Bull Car Park Drift event took place on Friday, April 1st with nearly 2000 attendees around the track. Driving a Nissan 240sx, Mesyar Abu Shaibah was able to take a dominant win against his opponents after a two-hour competition. Alive with excitement and adrenaline, the event was organized by Bassel Salem Al Sabah Motorsport Club, in partnership

Splendidly, Abu Shaibah came as near as possible with the clipping point (pendulum) which gave him an extremely high mark of 356 points. The second place went to Fahad Al Jedei who was driving a Nissan Silvia, notching 351 points while Mubarak Al Rumaidhi rounded the podium scoring 295 points on his Nissan 350Z.

with Nissan, Shop & Ship, Falken Tyres,

Total and Acqua Eva.

When asked about his win in a highly







QUALIFYING FIASCO STALEMATE IS 'MADNESS': MERCEDES BOSS

MANAMA: Formula One's failure to talks at the Bahrain International Circuit ple explanation? Madness." Wolff was vetoed that plan and instead put forresolve problems surrounding the future shape and structure of qualifying has been described as "madness" by Mercedes team chief Toto Wolff.

The Austrian, who has called for the sport to ditch the failed fiasco of 'progressive elimination' qualifying, said he was suspicious that political agendas were now at play that were preventing a switch back to the successful former

Discussing the outcome of Sunday's

which failed to resolve the problems, he said: "All the teams had the same opinion-that we probably need to go back to

"But there are various agendas and this proved that it is not an easy one, so cannot tell you what happens next. Last time I told you, I was totally

Asked if he could explain how such a simple decision-making process had ended up in such chaos, he said: "A simone of the team bosses who met the president of the sport's ruling body, the International Motoring Federation (FIA), Jean Todt and the veteran commercial ring-master Bernie Ecclestone on Sunday. The teams have expressed a unanimous view that the new qualifying format should be dumped and replaced by its predecessor, a wish shared by virtually all neutrals and paddock observers.

Ecclestone and Todt, however,

ward a new complex proposal for aggregate times to be used in qualifying instead of single laps to decide the starting grid. Many paddock observers believe that Ecclestone and Todt want to undermine the power of the teams.

Red Bull team chief Christian Horner, who in Australia had suggested that Formula One should apologise to its fans for the non-entertainment provided by the new system, said he was prepared to look at the new idea.

"The FIA are going to circulate some draft regulations, let's take a look at those and then we will make a decision on the vote," he said. "But after two pretty decent races do we really need to mess around with qualifying?"

The teams are due to meet again with the F1 bosses on Thursday to try and reach a resolution on an impasse that has created a furore on social media with many fans fearful that F1 is becoming ungovernable and a laughing stock. —AFP

ROSBERG LIVING THE MOMENT, REMAINS FEARFUL OF FERRARI

MANAMA: After two successive seasonopening wins, Nico Rosberg is "living the moment" but says he remains fearful of Ferrari following their demonstration of potential in Sunday's Bahrain Grand Prix.

The 30-year-old German leads the embryonic drivers' championship by 17 points ahead of his Mercedes team-mate, defending three-time champion Lewis

That, he says, has given him great satisfaction, but in the wake of his 16th career victory at the Bahrain International Circuit, he was keen to point at the advances made by Ferrari despite their early-season setbacks. "I am not thinking about the season," said Rosberg. "I am going step-by-step. I am just enjoying it at the moment. "I have been very privileged to drive this car and go for wins. When I go to China, I know I am going to fight for the win there as well so it is such a great feeling to have...

"Winning is awesome. Celebrating with the team and getting all those points... It is great to start the season like that, but I am not looking too far ahead, I am living for the moment."

He said he was well aware that Kimi Raikkonen who split the two 'silver arrows' cars and finished second behind him for Ferrari had demonstrated threatening speed on a day when his team-mate Sebastian Vettel had failed to start a race

for the first time following an engine failure. "I was in control," he said. "We were just managing the race, trying to reduce risks strategy-wise, pit-stop wise, and bring the race home. "But at the same time, Kimi showed good pace in the race and we know that Ferrari are super close. So, we need to keep pushing. "They haven't shown what they are able to do yet. That's clear. They have had so many mishaps, which have cost them dearly, so we haven't

seen the real Ferrari yet. "We have to be careful. They are coming on at us and they are strong." Ferrari's potential has been masked this year by difficulties - a strategy call that failed in Australia where Raikkonen retired with turbo troubles, Vettel's reliability problems and Raikkonen's poor start in Bahrain. For Rosberg, Ferrari's problems and Hamilton's two successive opening lap collisions have gifted him two victories and a perfect start to the 21-race season.

Champion Hamilton, who has taken both pole positions so far, departed Bahrain with a smile, however. "I am feeling very chilled," he said. "It is just the start of the season...." Vettel, meanwhile, remains unconcerned by Ferrari's early-season problems. "They are not connected," he said. "Of course, it is frustrating. I saw smoke coming out of my car and we decided to stop - but it is a long season..." —AFP



KANSAS CITY: Salvador Perez #13 of the Kansas City Royals kisses his glove after Yoenis Cespedes #52 of the New York Mets struck out to end the game at Kauffman Stadium on Sunday in Kansas City, Missouri. The Royals won 4-3. — AFP

VOLQUEZ, HOSMER STAR AS ROYALS DOWN METS

KANSAS CITY: Edinson Volquez would rather sit on the bench than stand on the mound on opening day, especially when it happens to be the first game following a World Series triumph.

"I like to enjoy the show," Volquez explained with a grin. "Enjoy the time." He had every reason to enjoy Sunday night's festivities anyway. Given no choice but to start the game by Royals manager Ned Yost, the veteran right-hander responded with six scoreless innings. His bullpen held on through three more shaky frames and Kansas City beat the New York Mets 4-3 in the

first opening-day rematch of a World Series. "I did the best I could," said Volquez, who also started the decisive Game 5 at Citi Field last November. The Mets rallied for three runs off Joakim Soria in the eighth, then put runners on the corners with one out against Wade Davis in the ninth. But the All-Star closer struck out David Wright and Yoenis Cespedes, preserving a nailbiting victory and sending 40,030 fans home in

another celebratory mood. "They're scrappy," Wright said. "We knew that they put the ball in play, they find holes, put together terrific at-bats. They get that lead early and you know the bullpen is coming in. That's their M.O. - good starting pitching, terrific bullpen and a pesky offense. That's exactly what they did tonight."

Volquez (1-0) allowed two hits and three walks in outdueling Matt Harvey, who also opposed him in Game 5 of the World Series. Harvey (0-1) allowed four runs - three earned on eight hits and two walks in 5 2-3 innings.

There wound up being little good about opening night for the NL East champs, still in search of their first championship in three decades. They spent nearly an hour before the first pitch reliving last year's World Series defeat through a steady stream of highlights on the crown-shaped big screen, then had to watch the raising of the championship banner over the Royals Hall of Fame in left field at Kauffman

"It was just strange, the pregame ceremony. I think I would have enjoyed it more if we played another team," Yost said. "For them to relive that, it's a little awkward."

SHODDY FIELDING

Things didn't get a whole lot better for the Mets once the game began.

Cespedes, the Gold Glove outfielder whose shoddy fielding hurt the Mets in the Series, dropped an easy fly ball in the first inning that ultimately led to the Royals' opening run. Kansas City then strung together a couple of singles before Kendrys Morales popped a sacrifice fly to center in the fourth, and Alex Gordon and Omar Infante added two-out RBI singles in the sixth.

Volquez and the Kansas City defense had things well in hand by that point. The right-hander escaped a jam by getting Travis d'Arnaud to ground out in the second inning, then watched first baseman Eric Hosmer make a nice diving stop to escape a sticky spot in the third. All-Star catcher Salvador Perez threw out Michael Conforto trying to steal second base to end the fourth.

The biggest misstep Volquez made may have been fashion-related - he wore his spring training hat with a gold crown over the interlocking "KC" to start the game. He swapped it out for the proper one by the second inning. "Nobody said anything!" he said, grinning again. "Not even in the bullpen."

TRAINER'S ROOM

Mets: Harvey got the start despite having a blood clot in his bladder that led to a minor procedure last week. "When the word 'blood clot' came up, that's severe stuff," manager Terry Collins said. "We started to look at alternative plans and what we might do down the road. Fortunately, it came out he's going to be OK."

Rovals: RF Jarrod Dyson was milling around the clubhouse before the game. He's out a few more weeks with an oblique injury that he sustained in the first game of spring training.

MORE BLING

During the pregame festivities, DH Morales

picked up his Silver Slugger Award, and 1B Hosmer, C Perez and SS Alcides Escobar got their Gold Gloves. The remaining members of last season's team are scheduled to get their championship rings before Tuesday's game.

UP NEXT

Mets: RHP Noah Syndergaard, whose inside pitch to Escobar in Game 3 was a flashpoint of the World Series, takes the mound Tuesday. Syndergaard allowed three runs in six innings in a 9-3 victory that night. Royals: RHP Chris Young started Game 4 of the World Series against New York. He also earned the win in Game 1 when he tossed three scoreless innings in a 5-4, 14-inning victory. — AP

KYLE BUSCH WINS AGAIN FOR WEEKEND SWEEP

MARTINSVILLE: Kyle Busch pulled away on a restart with 11 laps to go and outran AJ Allmendinger to the finish for his first NASCAR Sprint Cup Series victory at Martinsville Speedway, and a sweep of the two-race weekend. Busch, who won for the first time in 31 starts at Martinsville in a truck race on the 0.526-mile (0.846-kilometer) oval on Saturday, dominated in the premier division in bright sunshine but cool temperatures that never let the track get quite as sticky as it normally does. The option to pick the inside or outside line as the leader on the final restart was great for Busch, but not for teammate Matt Kenseth.

MARTINSVILLE: Kyle Busch poses with a second trophy as he celebrates winning the Sprint Cup auto race at Martinsville Speedway on Sunday, in Martinsville. —ap

"That was the key to the race, being able to restart on the bottom like that," Busch said after choosing the inside line, putting Kenseth outside. "We all talked as a group earlier this morning about how we were going to do that and what we were going to do and we all said, with 10 to go, it's pretty much off limits. It was (11) to go, so it was pretty much right on the brink there, so, 'Sorry Matt."

When the green flag flew, Busch sailed off, Allmendinger beat Kenseth to the inside position and Kenseth got shuffled back to 15th. Allmendinger finished second, followed by Kyle Larson, Austin Dillon and Brad Keselowski. "I was kind of hoping we'd stay green the last 120 laps," Allmendinger said. "I figured that wasn't going to happen, but I was praying we had a shot at that because I felt like if that happened, we had a great chance to win the race."

Several other drivers who pitted before the final restart started in the sixth row, or further back, of side-by-side racing, and while Larson and Keselowski recovered for top-five finishes, others got caught up in traffic and that allowed Dillon to take fourth out of nowhere.

It was the second straight major disappointment at Martinsville for Kenseth. Last spring, he crashed race leader Joey Logano with 46 laps to go, earning himself a two-race suspension. This time, he seemed poised to challenge Busch for the lead with 35 laps to go until a blown tire by Jamie McMurray

caused a caution, bunching up the field. "I was a little worried there toward the end before that last caution came out that Matt was catching me," Busch said. "He was on me pretty good and I wasn't sure that I had enough brake in order to handle the rest of the day, but fortunately we got a yellow

Busch led the most laps at Martinsville since Bobby Hamilton was out front for 378 on

The race also was a lost day for Denny Hamlin, one of the favorites going in and the defending champion. Hamlin was running fifth after 221 laps after overcoming a pit road penalty until his car lost control heading into . Turn 1 and slammed into the wall, sending him to the garage. He never returned, and finished 42nd. —AP



SHANGHAI: This file photo taken on March 9, 2012 shows Noh Jin-kyu (C) of

South Korea leading the pack during the men's 1500-meters final of ISU World

Short Track Speed Skating Championships at the Oriental Sports Center in

Shanghai. South Korea's world-record holding short track speed skater Noh Jin-

Kyu has died at the age of 23 after a battle with bone cancer, his family said yes-

KOREAN CHAMPION NOH

DIES FROM CANCER

SEOUL: South Korea's world-record 2013 but put off surgery to compete in

the 2014 Winter Olympics. He was

unable to take part in the Sochi Games

after breaking his elbow during prac-

his elbow in January 2014, doctors dis-

covered a 13-centimetre long malig-

nant tumour in his left shoulder.

Following the news of his death, there

were immediate tributes from some of

the sport's past and present champi-

ons. "Short Track lost one of the greats

today," tweeted US speed skater J.R.

Celski, a three-time Olympic medallist

and current 500m world record holder.

"So sad to hear about Noh Jin-Kyu. He

will be missed," tweeted Dutch Olympic

champion Jorien ter Mors. — AFP

When Noh underwent surgery for

holding short track speed skater Noh

Jin-Kyu has died after a battle with

bone cancer, his family said yesterday.

He was 23. Noh's sister, speed skater

Noh Seon-Yeong, posted on her broth-

er's Facebook page that he had died

Sunday evening. Noh Jin-kyu rose to

prominence as an 18-year-old when he

won the overall title at the

International Skating Union World

Short Track Speed Skating

Championships in 2011 in Sheffield,

and 3,000 metres the same year-

records that still stood at the time of his

death. Noh was first diagnosed with a

benign tumour in his left shoulder in

He set new world marks in the 1,500

England.

SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO: Spain's biker Marc Marquez of Honda celebrates on the podium after winning the MotoGP race of the Argentina Grand Prix at the Termas de Rio Hondo circuit, in Santiago del Estero, Argentina, on Sunday. — AFP

JAPAN IRON MAN KITAJIMA CLOSES IN ON RIO

TOKYO: Japanese swim king Kosuke Tatsumi Pool. Japan's latest swimming Kitajima turned back the clock at the national championships yesterday, with a devastating display of power to close in on a fifth successive Olympic appearance. The 33-year-old, who captured double gold in the men's 100 and 200 metres breaststroke at the 2004 and 2008 Olympics, flexed his muscles by qualifying fastest for today's 100m final with a time of 59.62 seconds at Tokyo's

sensation Kosuke Hagino, meanwhile, booked his place at this summer's Rio Olympics with an equally convincing victory in the men's 400 metres medley.

A chiselled-looking Kitajima became the first Japanese swimmer to qualify for four Olympics four years ago and demonstrated he was not done yet with another strong swim in his semi-final heat. "I wanted a slightly quicker time," said Kitajima, who nonetheless landed a psychological blow by edging out young pretender Yasuhiro Koseki (1:00.09) and narrowly dipping under the Olympic qualifying time of 59.63. "But it's been a while since I swam 59something. I feel this is a reward for all the hard work I've put in. I'd still like to set a personal best again in the final."

Hagino, who was ruled out of last year's world championships with a bro-

ken elbow suffered after falling off a bicycle, stormed to victory in 4:08.90 to qualify for Rio alongside rival Daiya

"I let a lot of people down last year through my own fault," said Hagino, the reigning Asian champion and bronze medallist at the 2012 London Olympics. "I have to work hard to make it up to everyone," added the 21-year-old. "I'm not happy with that time but I've qualified for the Olympics and I'll look to get some revenge by swimming faster in Rio." Daiya, who retained his world title in Kazan last year in Hagino's absence, had already secured his qualification before the final. In the women's 400m medley, Miho Takahashi qualified for her second straight Olympics, along with Sakiko Shimizu. The Japanese nationals double as the country's Olympic quali-

SAGAN'S SEASON ALREADY FULFILLED

OUDENAARDE: Peter Sagan will be a tough man to beat at Paris-Roubaix next Sunday despite claiming he has fulfilled his season's objectives.

The world champion won his first 'Monument' race by holding off three-time winner Fabian Cancellara at the Tour of Flanders on Sunday. Adding to his world title in Richmond in the United States last September, this was the biggest win of the talented 26-year-old's career and the Tinkoff rider claimed his year is already a

"Another big victory: first the world championships and now this. It's something special because it's with the (world champion's) rainbow jersey that I could win Flanders," said Sagan. "This is my biggest objective in the year from the start: Flanders-Roubaix, and now it's very good."

Sagan will almost certainly go into Paris-Roubaix as the favourite having also won the cobbled classic Gent-Wevelgem a week before Flanders and finished second to Poland's Michal Kwiatkowski two days before that at E3 Harelbeke. So far this season on the cobbles, he's been in a league of his own. Cancellara came into Flanders hoping to become the first man to win the race for a fourth time, but had to admit he'd been bested by a better man. He was clearly disappointed to have missed out on his date with destiny, particularly having joked two days beforehand that he would ask for Belgian nationality if he won.

"Second is not first and it's not history. I didn't win," said the 35-year-old Swiss. "Second was still a big thing. I was quite emotional (on Sunday) morning and I still am now. "After so many tries, finishing second is not bad. I aimed for history but Peter showed (on Sunday) he managed things well: he's a deserved winner." Cancellara, who waved to the crowd as he crossed the finish line 25 seconds behind Sagan, is riding his final season as a professional. He will still have the chance on Sunday to match the record number of Paris-Roubaix victories if he manages to snatch a fourth success there.

DEGENKOLB MISSING

With German reigning champion John Degenkolb still recovering from a training crash in February and missing the entire Spring Classics season, most will likely expect a Sagan-Cancellara battle.

Sagan, though, had no intention of worrying out Paris-Roubaix just yet. "Now I want to have fun after this big week and next week we will think about next week, not now," he said straight after his Flanders win. He spared a thought, though, for two Belgian cyclists-Antoine Demoitie and Daan Myngheer-who died a week before the Flanders race, the biggest in Belgium which is simply known as De Ronde (the Tour). "I want to dedicate this victory for the two guys who died last week, and also to (Tinkoff team-mate) Maciej Bodnar who had a very bad crash (on Saturday) and unfortunately didn't start (Flanders) because he's in hospital," added Sagan.

Paris-Roubaix's line-up will also be without Greg Van Avermaet, the Belgian winner of the Tirreno-Adriatico stage race last month. He crashed innocuously in the first half of Flanders and was taken to hospital with a broken collarbone, showing his frustration as he sat on the Flemish tarmac,

Britain's Team Sky will look to bounce back after ultimately disappointing despite having a seemingly strong squad. Luke Rowe finished fifth and Geraint Thomas was 12th as both came home in the chase group behind Sagan, Cancellara and thirdplaced Sep Vanmarcke. But Kwiatkowski faded badly in the final 20km despite making the initial attack that took Sagan clear of the group of favourites 30km from home. The Pole, world champion in 2014, finished 27th while Ian Stannard paid for an ambitious attack 40km from the finish and came home 32nd. More will be expected from them at the 'Hell of the North'. —AFP

RANCHO MIRAGE: Lydia Ko of New Zealand holds the trophy after the final round of the 2016 ANA Inspiration at the Mission Hills Country Club on Sunday in Rancho Mirage, California. — AFP

KO BIRDIES FINAL HOLE TO WIN LPGA MAJOR AT ANA INSPIRATION

RANCHO MIRAGE: Lydia Ko took advantage of Ariya Jutanugarn's late collapse to win the ANA Inspiration Sunday for her second straight major victory and second LPGA Tour win a row.

The top-ranked Ko hit an 88-yard wedge shot to a foot on the par-5 18th to set up her winning birdie - and an unlikely victory leap into Poppie's Pond. She closed with a 3-under 69 to finish at

"This is an unbelievable moment." Ko said before jumping into the pond. Jutanugarn had a two-stroke lead at 13 under with three holes to play. The 20-year-old Thai player bogeyed all three holes, three-putting the par-4 16th, failing to get up-and-down from a bunker on the par-3 17th and hooking her drive into the water on 18.

"I really get nervous, especially being my first time leading," Jutanugarn said. "Next time, it's going to be so much fun to be there." Charley Hull and In Gee Chun finished a stroke behind Ko, and Jutanugarn ended up fourth at 10 under.

Ko won the final major last season, the Evian Championship in September in France, and took the LPGA Tour event last week in Carlsbad. The 18-vear-old New Zealander has 12 LPGA Tour victories, five last year when she was the tour's player of the year.

"It has always been my dream to play on the

LPGA Tour," Ko said. "For these amazing things to be happening it is unbelievable, but it also motivates me to work harder." Ko had a bogey-free round, also holing a 22-foot birdie putt on the par-3 fifth and a 40-footer on the par-3 eighth. She made three key par saves on the back nine, the first with a 15-foot putt after crisscrossing the par-5 11th. She ran in an 18-footer on the par-4 13th, and a 10-footer on 17.

FIVE-HOLE STRETCH

"Obviously, making those putts on 11 and 13 was crucial, too, but just not knowing anything, I wanted to focus on my game and just what I could control," Ko said. "But on 17, I knew what I needed to do. Something like a miracle needed to happen, so I think 17 was probably the most crucial putt."

Until Sunday, best known for blowing a twostroke lead with a closing triple bogey at age 17 in the 2013 LPGA Thailand, Jutanugarn made four birdies in a five-hole stretch in the middle of the round to move into position for a breakthrough victory that slipped away. She finished with a 71.

"I got a lot of experience from this week," Jutanugarn said. Hull birdied the 18th for a 69 and her best finish in a major." I know I can play well under pressure now when I have to get it going," the 20-year-old English player said. "I'm happy I holed that putt on the last, and I'm proud of myself. It feels great. Lydia hit a great shot into the last, and she should be proud of

Chun also closed with a birdie in a 70. The U.S. Women's Open champion was making her first start after sitting out a month because of a back injury. She was hurt when she was struck by a hard case suitcase that rival South Korean player Ha Na Jang's father dropped down an escalator at the Singapore airport.

Lexi Thompson, the third-round leader, eagled the last hole for a 73 to finish fifth at 9 under. The 2014 winner had three front-nine bogeys and failed to make a birdie. "Just overall tough day," Thompson said. "I struggled today, ball-striking, and the bad ball-striking didn't give me many birdie chances, so I struggled a bit with the putter as well." Michelle Wie, tied for seventh entering the round, shot a 77 to drop into a tie for 36th at 5 over. She's winless since the 2014 U.S. Women's Open and hasn't had a top-10 finish in 31 events. Brooke Henderson shot a 67 for the best round of the day. The 18-year-old Canadian tied for 10th at 7 under and to run her top-10 streak to six events. —AP

BLACKWELL OUT OF COMA

LONDON: Nick Blackwell has woken from the induced coma he was placed in following a British middleweight title defeat by Chris Eubank Jr, the former champion's promoter said yesterday. Blackwell, 25, collapsed shortly after his tenth-round stoppage loss to Eubank Jr at London's Wembley Arena on March 26. He was then taken to London's St Mary's Hospital. Despite a bleed on the skull, doctors decided against an operation and instead placed Blackwell in an induced coma.

They subsequently reduced his medication, with Blackwell waking last Saturday and talking to relatives and friends on Sunday. "It was the outcome everyone had been hoping and praying for; Nick had won his toughest fight yet," said a statement released by Hennessy Sports. "On behalf of Nick, his family, and very close friends, we'd like to thank everyone for their continued support and well-wishes. It has been overwhelming at times and has certainly not gone unnoticed.

"Nick Blackwell won the hearts of over three million (television) viewers on March 26 with an astonishing display of all-action bravery and determination. "In the past week, however, he has humbled millions more. He's a fighter.

He's a warrior. He's a true champion and gentleman." During the fight Chris Eubank senior, the father of the new champion, could be heard telling his son to stop hitting Blackwell's head. "Even in sparring, I tell Junior to stay away from the head because his punching is fast, powerful and dangerous," Eubank, a former middleweight and super-middleweight world champion, later told the BBC. "So most certainly I was saying this to protect the fight-

His ringside instructions were especially poignant as, 25 years ago, Eubank senior stopped Michael Watson in a world title fight that left his beaten opponent with irreparable brain damage and partially paralysed. —AFP



LILLE: People are gathered during the funeral of cyclist Antoine Demoitie, yesterday, in Les Avins. 25-year-old Belgian cyclist Antoine Demoitie died on 27 March in a hospital in Lille, France, after he was hit by a motorcycle following a fall during the Gent-Wevelgem cycling race. —AFP

Unheralded Herman Trumps STENSON TO WIN PGA TITLE

LOS ANGELES: Journeyman Jim Herman held off top 10 players Henrik Stenson and Dustin Johnson to win his first US PGA Tour title at the Houston Open on Sunday and book a Masters berth. Herman, a 38-year-old who was encouraged by Donald Trump to keep pursuing his PGA Tour dream, had five birdies in a four-under 68 including a spectacular chip-in from thick hillside rough at 16 that gave him a one-stroke lead he wouldn't relinquish.

"Sorry for the tears, but I'm really happy," Herman told a post-round interviewer having parred the last for the win after an agonizing wait on the 18th tee.

His 15-under total of 273 gave him the narrow triumph over Stenson, the world number seven from Sweden who endured another in a long line of near-misses worldwide since he won the European Tour's season-ending World Tour Championship in 2014.

In a back-and-forth battle, Stenson had briefly taken the lead with a birdie at 13 and was tied for the lead after a birdie at 15. He had five birdies in a four-under 68 for 274, but narrowly missed an 18-foot birdie attempt at the last that would have at least put him in a playoff.

Herman's victory was his first in 106 starts on the PGA Tour. He was working as a pro at one of Trump's golf courses when the property tycoon turned US presidential hopeful encouraged him to keep pushing his competitive career. Now he's headed to the first major of the year at Augusta National. "Never thought it was possible," said Herman, who wears a Trump logo on

Johnson, ranked ninth in the world, had six birdies to counter a bogey and a double-bogey in a 69 for 275. He was one shot in front of Spain's Rafa Cabrera Bello, whose sparkling seven-under 65 included five birdies and an eagle at the par-four 12th-where his 306-yard tee shot left him a five-foot putt.

For a few moments it looked like Jordan Spieth would mount a challenge as the world number two got off to a hot start in his bid to build momentum heading into his Masters title defence at Augusta National next week. With renewed rhythm on the greens the 22-year-old

Texan birdied five of his first seven holes to charge up the leaderboard, a run that included a 45-footer at the fifth.

But he bogeyed three of his next four, failing to get up and down from the greenside rough at the tough par-three-ninth before poor shots at 11 and 12 — a second shot to the bank of the water hazard at 11 and a driver into the water at 12 — cost him two more strokes and after two more birdies he closed with a double-bogey at 18, where he was in the water again.

Spieth signed for a two-under 70 that left him tied for 13th on 280 in a group that also included five-time major winner Phil Mickelson. — AFP



HUMBLE: Jim Herman of the United States poses with the trophy after his victory at the Shell Houston Open at the Golf Club of Houston on Sunday in Humble, Texas. — AFP

DJOKOVIC SAYS FEDERER'S SLAM RECORD 'IN BACK OF MY MIND'

MIAMI: Winning four of the past five Grand Slam titles has Novak Djokovic thinking about surpassing Roger Federer's record 17 Slam titles, but it's not a major motivation for the world number one just yet. The 28-year-old Serbian star, who captured his 11th Grand Slam crown in January at the Australian Open, won his fourth title of the year on Sunday, beating Japan's Kei Nishikori 6-3, 6-3 in the Miami Open final. Djokovic matched Andre Agassi with a sixth career Miami crown by taking his third in a row, became the all-time ATP

money leader with \$98,199,548, set a maybe can present some kind of distrac- final each of the past two years, would record with his 28th ATP Masters crown and moved to 11th on the all-time match win list with 714. "As I go along in my career and I achieve so much success, especially the last two years, I give myself more opportunities to actually make records," Djokovic said.

So pondering the ultimate mark, an 18th Grand Slam title, is no shocker. "Of course it's in the back of my mind somewhere," Diokovic said, "But I don't have it as a main motivation. Because then things can go a little bit out of control,

tion that I don't need." In the past 23 Grand Slam events contested, Djokovic has 10 titles, seven runner-up efforts, five semi-final losses and one quarter-final defeat. As the ATP season shifts from hardcourts to clay, Djokovic knows he can complete a career Grand Slam and add to his hefty total of major trophies with a triumph in June's French Open final. "Hopefully it ends with a win in Paris," Djokovic said. "That's one of the big goals every year." A trophy hoisting at Roland Garros, where he has lost in the bring Djokovic his fourth Grand Slam crown in a row, giving him possession of all four major titles at once, a "Novak Slam." "I don't think I'll have any difficulty to make transition to the clay courts quickly and swiftly enough," Djokovic said. Djokovic will play at Monte Carlo and plans to play in Madrid and Rome, but more runs to finals might have him reconsider his French Open tuneup plans. "Let's see what happens," he said. "Clay courts are physically most demanding surface, also looking at the big picture, knowing the French Open is the biggest goal I have on clay."

But another huge goal this year is to win at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics. "That's one of the dreams I have and one of the biggest inspirations right now in my career is to win a gold medal at the Olympic Games," Djokovic said.

"To be alongside the top athletes from all the different sports around the world and to dine with them, talk with them, see them perform live, is a unique experience I think every athlete looks forward to every four years." — AFP

ROW ERUPTS AFTER BRATHWAITE WINS WORLD T20 FOR WINDIES

KOLKATA: Carlos Brathwaite hit four consecutive sixes in a last-over thriller Sunday as the West Indies became the first team to win the World Twenty20 Championship twice. But the victory over England at Eden Gardens was marred when a long-running spat between players and the Caribbean board erupted into public. The West Indies went into the last over needing an unlikely 19 against the bowling of Ben Stokes.

Brathwaite astonishingly cleared the ropes four times in a row to fire the Windies to a four-wicket win with two balls to spare. "To see Carlos play like that at his debut World Cup was just tremendous," an emotional West Indies skipper Darren Sammy said afterwards. The gloss was soon taken off the scenes of unalloyed joy for the West Indies, who were also celebrating their women's Twenty20 final victory against Australia earlier, when Sammy gave vent to months-possibly years-of frustration with the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) in a post match interview. Referring to a lengthy and bitter pay dispute that had put their World Twenty20 participation in doubt, the all-rounder said his team felt "disrespected by our board".

"We had a new manager in Rawle Lewis, who has never managed a team before. We had no uniforms, no printing," said Sammy. "The trouble he went through to just get us in this uniform. I got to give credit to the entire team here."

'DISAPPOINTING' WINDIES BOARD

Sammy also thanked Grenada Prime Minister Keith Mitchell for a good luck message received hours before the final and then had a swipe at West Indies cricket chiefs. "I'm yet to hear from our own cricket board. That's very disappointing," said the 32-vear-old.

Several hours later, the board slammed Sammy and apologised for his comments in a statement issued in Antigua and curiously headlined "WICB President has high praises for World Twenty20 Organisers". "The President would like to however apologise for what could be deemed inappropriate, comments made by the West Indies' male captain, Darren Sammy in a postmatch interview and would like to apologise on behalf of the WICB, to the millions of fans who witnessed (sic)," said the statement. "The President has pledged to enquire the reason and will have the matter addressed."

Meanwhile England captain Eoin

Morgan in his post-match interview refused to blame the crestfallen Stokes for the heart-breaking defeat. "It's not his fault, we're all in this together, we enjoy our wins, and the pain will be shared tonight," he said. Marlon Samuels anchored the West Indies' run chase of 156 with an unbeaten 85, including nine boundaries and two sixes, after England had posted 155 for 9 in their 20 overs. After being reduced to 11 for three, Samuels single-handedly kept the Caribbean team in the hunt with his 66-ball

'EVERYONE A CHAMPION'

Brathwaite finished on 34 not out off just 10 balls as the 2012 champions triumphed for a second time.

"Everybody in the West Indies is a champion," beamed Sammy. England's batting hero Joe Root shared the new ball with David Willey and struck with his first ball as Johnson Charles skied a catch to Stokes

Chris Gayle, who had put England to the sword with an unbeaten century in the group stage encounter, then heaved Root to the same fielder in the deep at long-on to trigger wild celebrations.

Willey trapped Lendl Simmons leg before wicket for nought to leave the Windies tottering at 11 for three. Samuels counter-attacked by hitting Chris Jordan for three boundaries in the sixth over and rebuilt by constructing a 75-run partnership with Dwayne Bravo (25).

Willey struck twice in his second spell as the asking-rate grew and England sensed victory before Brathwaite's barrage turned the game on its head at the end of an unbeaten 54-run stand with man-of-thematch Samuels off just 25 balls. "I can't really express how much of a top knock (by Samuels) that was. We couldn't turn back, it was a question of when not if," said Brathwaite. Earlier West Indies' bowlers justified captain Darren Sammy's decision to field first as Samuel Badree and Andre Russell reduced England to 23 for three after 4.4 overs.

Badree bowled Jason Roy for a second ball duck and also accounted for the struggling Morgan for five in his third over.

Root and Buttler rebuilt with a 61-run fourth wicket partnership. After Root departed for 54, David Willey's late cameo of 21 was studded with a boundary and two sixes to give England's bowlers a respectable total to defend. —AFP



KOLKATA: West Indies's captain Darren Sammy poses for a photograph with the World T20 cricket tournament trophy one day after West Indies won the event in the Indian city of Kolkata yesterday. — AFP

ENGLAND POTENTIAL IS FRIGHTENING: MORGAN

KOLKATA: Proud skipper Eoin Morgan has backed England to bounce back from the pain of defeat to the West Indies in the final of cricket's World Twenty20, saying his young side's potential is "frightening".

Speaking after a dramatic last-over defeat, Morgan said England would leave India with heads held high after coming so close to glory, only a year after their firstround exit in the 50-over World Cup.

And as he assessed the prospects of what was one of the youngest teams to have ever played for England, Morgan predicted the best was yet to come.

"This is the beginning of something I hope is going to be special," Morgan told reporters at the Eden Gardens stadium. "We have a great amount of talent to work with. Let's hope we can keep this group of players together for a long time and look to the future."

While eight of the West Indies starting XI are thirty-somethings, none of Morgan's team is over the age of 30 and all can expect to be in contention for the next 50over World Cup, which England are hosting in 2019. The 29-year-old Morgan is the elder statesman in a formidable batting lineup that features the likes of Joe Root, Jason Roy and Jos Buttler who are all aged 25 and yet to reach their prime. "I hope in the future we have a lot more success. Personally, I think we will," said Morgan.

"This side is at the very beginning of its progression. It's actually frightening to think what we can do if we achieve our potential." Under Morgan's captaincy, England have shed their reputation for conservatism in limited overs cricket and have instead been encouraged by their skipper to play "brash and aggressive" cricket.

'SHARING THE PAIN'

That ethos was again on show at Eden Gardens when they refused to go into their shell despite losing three wickets inside the first five overs, with both Root and Buttler taking the attack to the West Indies.

The match was lost in the final over when the normally reliable Ben Stokes was clattered for four sixes in a row by Carlos Brathwaite. Morgan admitted that 24-yearold Stokes was devastated but said the

team was behind him all the way. "We share everything we do, we stick together as a side. — AFP



DENVER: Magnus Paajarvi #56 of the St Louis Blues gets the puck past goalie Semyon Varlamov #1 of the Colorado Avalanche for a goal to take a 2-0 lead in the first period at Pepsi Center on Sunday in Denver, Colorado. — AFP

KANE HAT TRICK LEADS BLACKHAWKS PAST BRUINS

goal lead in the second period before hanging on for a 6-4 win over the Boston Bruins on Sunday. Kane's scoring spree gave him 100 points for the first time in his nine-year NHL career. The win was career No. 800 for Chicago coach Joel Quenneville. Kane, the NHL's leading scorer, was clicking with linemates Artemi Panarin and Artem Anisimov during the club's fourth win in five games. Panarin had a goal and three assists, while Anisimov added a goal and two assists. Jonathan Toews also scored for the Blackhawks, who won't finish lower than third in the Central Division and will avoid a wild-card playoff seeding. Kane's second career regularseason hat trick - both this season - lifted him to 43 goals, the most for a Chicago player since Tony Amonte hit that mark in 1999-2000. He's the first Blackhawk to reach 100 points since Jeremy Roenick had 107 in 1993-94. Patrice Bergeron had two goals and an assist for the Bruins, who remained one point behind Detroit and Philadelphia for a playoff spot.

PENGUINS 6, FLYERS 2

Sidney Crosby, Beau Bennett and Patric Hornqvist scored to help Pittsburgh build an early lead, and the surging Penguins equaled their longest winning streak of the season at six games with a victory over Philadelphia. Crosby scored his 33rd goal and Pittsburgh jumped out to a 3-0 advantage midway through the second period. Carl Hagelin added his 12th and Eric Fehr scored twice in the third period for the Penguins, who won for the 12 time in 13 games. They moved five points ahead of the third-place New York Rangers in the Metropolitan Division. Pittsburgh, in the playoffs for the 10th consecutive season, reached 100 points for the 10th time in team history. Matt Murray stopped 28 shots for the Penguins. Wayne Simmonds matched a career high with his 29th goal, and Jakub Voracek also scored for the Flyers, who remained one point ahead of Boston for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

DUCKS 3, STARS 1

Nate Thompson and Ryan Kesler each scored a short-handed goal, John Gibson made 25 saves and Anaheim defeated Dallas to return to the top of the Pacific Division. Ryan Getzlaf added an empty-net goal as the Ducks moved one point ahead of the Los Angeles Kings. Both teams have four games remaining, including the fifth and final Freeway Faceoff of the season between the rivals Thursday night at Los Angeles. Radek Faksa scored with 1:29 remaining and Antti Niemi stopped 22 shots as Dallas' four-game winning streak ended. The Stars lead St. Louis by two points for the Central Division title and home-ice advantage in the Western Conference playoffs.

BLUES 5, AVALANCHE 1

David Backes started the scoring in a threegoal first period, Anders Nilsson made 19 saves in relief of an injured Jake Allen, and St. Louis beat Colorado as the Avalanche moved to the brink of postseason elimination. Magnus Paajarvi, Colton Parayko and Alex Pietrangelo

CHICAGO: Patrick Kane had three goals and an also scored for the Blues, who are chasing Dallas fans something to cheer about in the club's last ahead of Chicago. Iroy Brouwer added an empty-netter with 2:55 remaining. Matt Duchene scored late for the Avalanche, who maintained their slim playoff hopes with Minnesota's loss to Winnipeg. They trail the Wild by five points for the final Western Conference berth.

JETS 5, WILD 1

Mark Scheifele scored his team-leading 27th goal and Winnipeg beat Minnesota, giving Jets

assist as the Chicago Blackhawks raced to a six- for the Central Division title and trying to stay home game of the season. Minnesota dropped its third straight and squandered a chance to clinch a playoff spot. Chris Thorburn ended a 47-game goal drought for Winnipeg with his sixth of the season. Andrew Copp, Drew Stafford and Blake Wheeler, with an empty-netter, also scored for the Jets. Ondrej Pavelec made 28 saves. Wild center Mikael Granlund scored his 13th of the season. Mikko Koivu picked up an assist to give him 10 points in his last 10 games. —AP

NHL Results/Standings

Chicago 6, Boston 4; Pittsburgh 6, Philadelphia 2; Winnipeg 5, Minnesota 1; St. Louis 5, Colorado 1; Anaheim 3, Dallas 1.

	Western	ı Con	feren	ce			Tampa Bay 45 28 5	217	186	95
	Centra						Detroit 40 28 1	204	216	91
	W	L	OTL	GF	GΑ	PTS	Boston 41 30 8	233	220	90
Dallas	48	23	9		226	105	Ottawa 36 34 9	224	240	81
St. Louis	47	23	9	216	193	103				
Chicago	46	26	7	224	200	99			228	78
Nashville	39	26	14	219	207	92	Buffalo 33 35 1	193	214	77
Minnesota	38	31	11	215	201	87	Toronto 28 39 1	189	229	67
Colorado	39	36	4	208	227	82	Metropolitan Div	sion		
Winnipeg	32	39	8	204	231	72	Washington 55 17 6	5 241	182	116
	Pacifi	c Div	ision				Pittsburgh 46 25 8		194	100
Anaheim	44	24	10	209	185	98	•			
Los Angeles	46	27	5	213	183	97	NY Rangers 43 26 9	225	207	95
San Jose	44	29	6	233	205	94	NY Islanders 42 26 9	214	201	93
Arizona	35	36	7	203	230	77	Philadelphia 39 26 13	203	208	91
Calgary	33	40	6	218	251	72	Carolina 34 29 16	192	216	84
Vancouver	29	36	13	179	225	71	New Jersey 37 34 8	176	200	82
Edmonton	30	43	-	194	239	67	Columbus 31 39 8		242	70
	Eastern	Conf	feren	ce						
	Atlant	ic Div	visior	1			Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are we	orth o	ne poi	int in the
Florida	44	25	9	225	194	97	standings and are not included in t	ne loss	colui	mn (L).

WINDIES FINAL TRIUMPH HAILED AS 'ONE OF THE BEST EVER'

LONDON: Carlos Brathwaite's four consecutive sixes that carried West Indies victory over England in the World Twenty20 final capped what former players and journalists described as one of the sport's greatest matches yesterday.

With the West Indies requiring 19 runs for victory off the last over, the Barbadian needed just four of Ben Stokes' final six deliveries to seal a four-wicket victory at Kolkata's Eden Gardens on Sunday.

"Anyone who was here witnessed one of the great T20 matches. It was won, it was lost, then won, then lost. No side really deserved to lose it," former England captain Nasser Hussain wrote in his Daily Mail column after West Indies chased down England's 155 for nine on a difficult batting surface.

Fellow former England skipper Michael Atherton wrote in The Times: "It was a stunning end to a stunning tournament that showcased the best of the modern game-a game in which England played a full part for once."

The Daily Telegraph described Brathwaite's onslaught as "four balls that stunned the world" with its correspondent Jonathan Liew writing: "It was one of the most remarkable victories ever known. "A match that will resound well beyond the boundaries of this stadium, well beyond the boundaries of Twenty20 as a finish for the ages." While Brathwaite's incredible display of powerhitting allowed the Caribbean side to become the first to win the World Twenty20 title twice, there was plenty of sympathy for England bowler Stokes, who was on the receiving end of the late mauling.

England skipper Eoin Morgan said: "Ben is going to be devastated. Cricket can be a cruel game, it will take its toll over the next couple of days but we share the pain, we share the success." Former Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene, one of the greatest batsmen of recent times, also had sympathy for Stokes saying on ESPN that he was punished by Brathwaite because his deliveries were not quite accurate enough. "But I feel sorry for Ben Stokes-and a lot of the bowlers in this day and age," he added. Meanwhile, former Australian fast bowler Dennis Lillee was full of praise for the victors and their

approach towards Twenty20 cricket. He told ESPN he had written about their batting prowess in his newspaper column before the tournament began and said it was that power that secured victory in the end. "There has never been another six-hitting team like this one, and that turned out to be the clincher," he said. — Reuters

VAN GAAL BACKS UNITED TO SALVAGE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE PLACE

to claim a Champions League place from the wreckage of one of Old Trafford's most difficult seasons in recent memory. Van Gaal's job as manager, in his second campaign at the club, has been the subject of widespread speculation since United's early exit from the Champions League group stage in December.

That failure was compounded by United's defeat in the second-tier Europa League by arch-rivals Liverpool last month. However, van Gaal, who has been tipped to make a summer departure to make way for Jose Mourinho, the former Chelsea manager, will lead his team into next Sunday's game against Tottenham at White Hart Lane in confi-

MANCHESTER: Louis van Gaal is convinced Manchester United are on track dent mood following their 1-0 win over Everton at Old Trafford on Sunday. That was United's fourth win in five domestic league games and left them just a point behind fourth-placed Manchester City, currently occupying the final Champions League spot on offer to English clubs. "I said in the dressing room after the match that it was very important to win today, otherwise the victory against (Manchester) City was worthless," said

> "We keep in touch with City, one point behind, and we keep in touch with Arsenal, five points behind," the veteran Dutch boss added. "We have to play Tottenham (next), not an easy match, but normally we are playing very well against the top teams. If we continue

like that, I am very happy."

Van Gaal has been under fire from critics and fans alike, yet he can make great strides with his young squad in what will be a critical month of April. Home matches against doomed Aston Villa and struggling Crystal Palace offer six points to a team that has grown in stature at Old Trafford in recent weeks, while Van Gaal can steer United into the FA Cup Final by first winning an admittedly tough replay with West Ham and then a Wembley semi-final against

Van Gaal now needs to manage his players wisely at the stage of a season where fatigue can creep in, especially with international demands thrown in as

BLIND FAITH

Daley Blind, who was superb in policing the menace of Belgium striker Romalu Lukaku at Old Trafford, is a case in point. "Daley Blind has played nearly all the matches, so I need to give him rest," said van Gaal. "I don't want to, because he is playing very well. I shall give him two days off, so then he is alright, I think." Anthony Martial, who scored United's lone goal against Everton on Sunday, has also been a willing workhorse in United's cause. "I have already said that Anthony Martial, with his age (20) is an exception, because he has also played every match," said van Gaal. "To play every match then you have to be very strong and consistent, because every week I shall compare

every player with his competitor, so it is fantastic what he is doing."

Everton manager Roberto Martinez, meanwhile, has to ponder a fresh round of criticism from Toffees fans as he prepares for the weekend trip to Watford. Told that many of Everton's 3,500 following at Old Trafford had booed at the final whistle because they were "fed up", Martinez replied: "We all are. You can hear our boos in the dressing room."

Martinez wants to take 12th-placed Everton forward without panicking. "We are a club where there has been a bit of a change of generation," he said.

"A lot of players have come in. Incredible young talent needs knowhow and lessons, and to develop," the Spaniard added. — AFP

BAYERN OUT TO REACH 5TH STRAIGHT SEMIFINAL

MUNICH: Bayern Munich hosts Benfica for the first leg of their Champions League quarterfinal today, aiming to leave the second leg a mere formality in reaching the club's fifth consecutive semifinal.

Confidence is high among Bayern's players and fans of getting past the Portuguese league leader and moving another step closer to repeating the 2013 feat of Champions League, Bundesliga and German Cup victories.

Benfica is bidding to reach the final four for the first time since 1990. "Benfica is a team that you simply have to beat," former Bayern coach Ottmar Hitzfeld said. "I can't imagine that Benfica can put Bayern in danger. Bayern will pass this test with flying colors."

The sides met three times before in European competition. Bayern prevailed on the three occasions. The German powerhouse has won all nine of its previous two-legged knockout ties against Portuguese opposition.

Some things to know ahead of Tuesday's game in Munich:

STEP UP NEEDED

Bayern survived a close shave against Juventus in the previous round on Thomas Mueller's injury-time equalizer and two more goals in extra time to progress in dramatic fashion.

The side will hope to avoid such excitement against Benfica by claiming another comprehensive quarterfinal victory over a Portuguese side at home. At the same stage last season, Bayern defeated Porto 6-1 in Munich to recover from the 3-1 loss in the first leg.

Bayern seemed to be conserving energy in Saturday's 1-0 home win over Eintracht Frankfurt in the Bundesliga. Franck Ribery's acrobatic scissors kick was enough to maintain the side's fivepoint lead but the players will need to step up against the Portuguese league leader. "The quality won't be enough for Tuesday," Bayern chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge said. "We'll have to play much better. We'll need two concentrated outings to then hopefully reach the semifinals."

GUARDIOLA'S MILESTONE

Pep Guardiola will be in charge for his 150th competitive game at the helm of Bayern. The Spaniard so far has overseen 115 victories, 14 draws and 20 defeats since taking over from Jupp Heynckes in

Guardiola, who is leaving at the end of the season to join Manchester City, is bidding to repeat Heynckes' feat of winning the treble in his last season in

Guardiola led Barcelona to 14 trophies in a hugely successful four-year spell but his tenure at Bayern will be judged on success in the Champions League, where semifinal defeats to Real Madrid and former club Barcelona represent his biggest disappointments at the club.

Despite claiming back-to-back Bundesliga titles and being on the verge of leading Bayern to an unprecedented fourth successive league title, Guardiola needs to match the mark set by his predecessor to leave on a high note.

BENFICA'S BOUNCE

After a rocky start to the season under new coach Rui Vitoria, Benfica has found its form in the final third of the season. The players have finally clicked and the team has surged into lead of the Portuguese championship and its first Champions League quarterfinal in four

Benfica overwhelmed fourth-place Braga 5-1 last Friday to keep its twopoint league lead with six rounds to play though it travels to Munich as the underdog in its biggest game of the season.

"We've got past a lot of obstacles this season. Some of them appeared impossible," said Vitoria, who is making his debut in Europe's top-tier tournament this sea-

EYES ON JONAS

Benfica striker Jonas is top-scorer in the Portuguese league with 30 goals in 28 games, earning him a recall to the Brazil team though he hasn't been able to reproduce that form in the Champions League, where he has found the net just

Jonas's partner in attack, Konstantinos Mitroglou, has 17 league goals but may be sacrificed in Munich if Benfica looks to strengthen its defense. Ljubomir Fejsa and Andreas Samaras could form a duo in front of the back four with Argentine playmaker Nicolas Gaitan just behind Jonas. Lisandro Lopez could be back in central defense after a thigh injury but first-choice goalkeeper Julio Cesar is out with a groin injury. — AP



BARCELONA: Atletico Madrid's coach Diego Simeone, front center, controls the ball during a training session at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona, Spain, yesterday. FC Barcelona will play against Atletico Madrid in a Champions League soccer match today. — AP

ATLETICO TOUGHER THAN REAL MADRID, WARNS PIQUE

BARCELONA: Barcelona defender Gerard Pique believes Atletico Madrid pose an even greater threat to his side than Real Madrid, who ended Barca's 39-game unbeaten run in El Clasico on season, it was our goal.

Atletico travel to the Camp Nou today for the first leg of their Champions League guarter-final. but are also Barca's closest challengers in La Liga as they sit six points behind the European champions with seven games to go in La Liga.

"They don't scare us, but they are having an spectacular season. At the moment they are the second best team in Spain, as the league shows," Pique said yesterday.

"It will be more difficult than Saturday because they are a team that sits deep and breaks well on the counter-attack. "In the end it depends on us. If from the first minute we want the ball, move it quickly, the fans are with us like they were on Saturday, and it all comes together, I think we are almost unstoppable.

Often keen to spice up the rivalry between Barca and Real Madrid, Pique had put the hosts in front at the weekend before goals from Karim Benzema and Cristiano Ronaldo turned the game around.

Barca paid homage to legendary former player and coach Johan Cruyff before the game and Pique claimed the Dutch great's legacy had been to turn the rivalry between Madrid and Barca around as the Catalans go in search of a second consecutive treble.

"We need to be confident in ourselves. If we

talk about Cruyff, he arrived in 1988 (as coach) conditions. "It doesn't matter what happened on when I was one-year-old," added Pique. "When he arrived, beating Madrid saved Barcelona's

changed." Indeed, despite a first defeat in six months, Barca are still well-placed to repeat their treble feat as they also face Sevilla in the final of the Copa del Rey on May 22.

WINNING LA LIGA

"The game on Saturday is forgotten. What concerns me is winning La Liga, the Champions League and the Copa del Rey," Pique continued. "Everything is well-set and I am convinced we are going to win. We lost a game, we congratulate them and move on. This team is capable of winning everything.

"We have all the ingredients to play a great game tomorrow." Barca boss Luis Enrique insisted he has "blind faith" in his players and his side's style of play despite being consistently caught out by Real's prowess on the counter-attack even when Barca were leading at the weekend.

Atletico knocked Barca out at this stage of the competition two years ago on their way to the final. However, Enrique has won all six of his meetings as coach against Diego Simeone's men

since taking charge at the start of last season. "Atletico Madrid are a top team with a clear style of play," said Enrique. "That is why they are where they are, competing with Barca and Madrid despite not having the same financial

Saturday, they are an opponent that will make our lives difficult." Enrique is expected to make only one change with Marc-Andre ter Stegen Now we are in 2016 and the roles have replacing Claudio Bravo in goal.

Atletico boss Diego Simeone confirmed Fernando Torres will start up front for the visitors after scoring in a 5-1 rout of Real Betis on Saturday. However, Atletico have big problems at the centre of their normally rock-solid defence.

Diego Godin is expected to shrug of a hamstring injury to start, but with Stefan Savic and Jose Maria Gimenez doubtful, 20-year-old Lucas Hernandez looks set to face Barca's fearsome front three of Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar. —AFP



Matches on TV (Local Timings)

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Barcelona v Atletico de Madrid belN SPORTS 1 HD

Bayern Munich v SL Benfica belN SPORTS 2 HD

21:45

21:45

NIGERIANS IWOBI AND ENYEAMA STAR IN EUROPE

PARIS: Nigerians Alex Iwobi and Vincent card by referee Mark Clattenburg for a high foot teries. He was enterprising in a solid second-half Enyeama had cause for satisfaction with their club performances in Europe at the weekend.

Rising star Iwobi scored the second goal as Arsenal routed Watford 4-0 while a string of fine saves by veteran Enyeama helped Lille triumph 3-

African Footballer of the Year Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang of Gabon ended a month-plus league goal drought by scoring for Borussia Dortmund in a 3-2 win over Werder Bremen.

ENGLAND DIEUMERCI MBOKANI (Norwich)

The Democratic Republic of Congo striker, who was outside the airport terminal in Brussels when two terrorist bombs killed 26 people last month as he was preparing to fly to Kinshasa for an Africa Cup of Nations qualifier, put Norwich 2-1 up in a dramatic 3-2 win over relegation rivals Newcastle that eased the Canaries' fears of the drop when, 16 minutes from time at Carrow Road, he drove into the left side of the area and smashed a powerful shot high into the net.

CHEIKHOU KOUYATE (West Ham)

His dismissal proved the turning point as West Ham's charge towards a Premier League top-four finish was slowed in a 2-2 draw with Crystal Palace. After Damien Delaney had punished a mistake by Adrian to put Palace ahead in the 15th minute, West Ham equalised through Manuel Lanzini and went ahead courtesy of another glorious free-kick from Dimitri Payet. But Senegal international Kouyate was shown a straight red on Dwight Gayle in the 67th minute and eight minutes later Gayle pounced on an error by Angelo Ogbonna to equalise.

ALEX IWOBI (Arsenal)

The Nigerian teenager was on target with the second of the Gunners' goals in a comfortable 4-0 win at home to Watford that kept the north London club's slim title hopes alive. Iwobi struck in the 38th minute at the Emirates Stadium when he got on the end of a low cross toward the penalty spot, where he connected with a firsttime effort that beat Heurelho Gomes.

SPAIN THOMAS PARTEY (Atletico Madrid)

Ghanaian Partey came off the bench to round off Atletico's 5-1 rout of Real Betis with a simple finish in stoppage time to register his first goal

PAPE DIOP (Espanyol)

Senegalese midfielder Diop scored his second goal in as many games with a powerful header from close range as Espanyol edged closer to survival with a 1-1 draw at Malaga.

ITALY KWADWO ASAMOAH (Juventus)

Juve won 1-0 at home to Empoli and Asamoah made a rare appearance off the bench for the champions, the Ghanaian replacing injured defender Giorgio Chiellini on 54 minutes. The lengthy break appeared to charge Asamoah's batdisplay, firing a speculative volley just wide of the upright from the edge of the area, then narrowly missing a possible tap-in.

MOHAMED SALAH (Roma)

Salah was his energetic self for Roma on their way to a convincing 4-1 derby defeat of Lazio that reinforced their Champions League qualifying bid, and led to the sacking of Lazio coach Stefano Pioli. Salah failed to get on the scoresheet but his pace and movement were a constant problem for the hosts in Lazio's final third. The Egyptian forward's best chances of personal glory came in two second-half minutes when he fired a right-footed shot wide from a corner, then was off target again from Miralem Pjanic's deliv-

KALIDOU KOULIBALY (Napoli)

If Napoli end a 26-year wait to win the Serie A title, the defensive qualities of Koulibaly will get a mention in the victory plaudits. But the big Senegal defender had a match to forget as Napoli slipped to a shock 3-1 defeat at Udinese that left them six points adrift of champions and leaders Juventus. He was notably at fault in the 13th minute, barging into Ghana midfielder Emmanuel Agyemang-Badu and earning the hosts a penalty that Bruno Fernandes converted. Algeria defender Faouzi Ghoulam gave away a second spot-kick to Udinese and, although it was saved, Napoli never recovered from Fernandes' second goal on the stroke of half-time and a second-half drive from Cyril Thereau.— AFP



MUNICH: Benfica players warm up during a training session prior to the Champions League quarter final soccer match between FC Bayern Munich and Benfica Lisbon in Munich, Germany, yesterday. Benfica will face Bayern today. — AP

Volquez, Hosmer star as Royals down Mets



Ko birdies final hole to win LPGA major



TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2016

ATLETICO TOUGHER THAN REAL MADRID, WARNS PIQUE

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OAKLAND: C.J. McCollum #3 of the Portland Trail Blazers goes up for a shot against Stephen Curry #30, Brandon Rush #4, and Leandro Barbosa #19 of the Golden State Warriors at ORACLE Arena on April 3, 2016 in Oakland, California. — AFP

WARRIORS REBOUND FROM HOME LOSS TO BEAT BLAZERS

OAKLAND: Stephen Curry scored 39 points and the Golden State Warriors bounced back from their first regular-season home loss in more than 14 months by beating the Portland Trail Blazers 136-111 on Sunday night to tie the mark for the second-most wins in a season. Draymond Green added 22 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists for his 13th triple-double, and Klay Thompson scored 21 for the Warriors, who matched the 1996-97 Chicago Bulls and 1971-72 Los Angeles Lakers with 69 wins. Golden State needs to win four of its final five games to break the record of 72 victories set by Chicago in 1995-96. That chase was dealt a setback Friday when Boston snapped Golden State's record 54-game regular-season home winning streak. Damian Lillard scored 38 points to lead the Trail Blazers, who had their four-game winning streak broken.

CLIPPERS 114, WIZARDS 109

Chris Paul had 27 points and 12 rebounds and Blake Griffin scored six points in his return from a three-month absence to help the Los Angeles Clippers beat the Washington Wizards. Griffin shot 2 of 7 and contributed five rebounds and two assists while playing 24 minutes after missing 45 games because of quadriceps and hand injuries. The team went 30-15 and clinched a playoff spot during his absence. Marcin Gortat scored 21 points and Markieff Morris added 18 for the Wizards, who never led in losing for the fifth time in seven

CAVALIERS 112, HORNETS 103

LeBron James scored 31 points, J.R. Smith matched a season high with 27 and the Cleveland Cavaliers knocked down 16 3-pointers while playing without an injured Kyrie Irving in a win over the Charlotte Hornets. James added 12 assists and eight rebounds and Kevin Love added 25 points for the Cavs, who held off a comeback in the fourth quarter to open a 31/2-game lead over idle Toronto for the top playoff seed in the Eastern Conference. Smith made six 3-pointers and Love had five. Kemba Walker scored 29 points - 21 in the second half - and Marvin Williams added 22 for the Hornets, who got within 96-92 in the fourth before Smith and Love answered with 3-pointers.

ROCKETS 118, THUNDER 110

James Harden had 41 points with nine assists to help the Houston Rockets improve their playoff chances with a win over the Oklahoma City Thunder. With 30 seconds left, Harden stole a pass from Kevin Durant and found Patrick Beverley for a transition dunk to give Houston an eight-point lead and the Rockets held on for an important victory. Durant had 33 points and eight rebounds for the Thunder, who led by six early in the fourth until Harden hit back-to-back 3s to tie the game at 93. Oklahoma City lost for just the second time in the past three weeks and had won nine of its previous 10 entering Sunday.

MAVERICKS 88, TIMBERWOLVES 78

Wesley Matthews hit six 3-pointers and scored 19 points and the Dallas Mavericks topped the Minnesota Timberwolves. J.J. Barea scored 21 points and the Mavericks (39-38) made 14 of 40 3-pointers to overcome 38.6 percent shooting for their fourth straight victory. They forced 18 turnovers and held their opponent under 100 points for the fourth straight game as they push for one of the final playoff spots in the Western Conference. Andrew Wiggins scored 30 points and Karl-Anthony Towns had 11 points, 21 rebounds and nine assists for the Timberwolves. Ricky Rubio had nine points and five assists, but left with four minutes to play after taking a shot to the face.

PELICANS 106, NETS 87

Tim Frazier had career highs with 19 points and 13 assists, Luke Babbitt added 21 points and the New Orleans Pelicans beat the

Brooklyn Nets. Alexis Ajinca added 16 for the Pelicans as the Nets lost their fifth straight game. Sean Kilpatrick led the Nets with 15 points. Henry Sims and Markel Brown each had 12 for the Nets.

JAZZ 101, SUNS 86

Gordon Hayward led five Utah players in double figures with 22 points, and the Jazz boosted their playoff chances with a win over the Phoenix Suns. Rodney Hood added 18 points, Derrick Favors had 17, Trey Lyles 13 and Rudy Gobert 12 for the Jazz, who scored 26 points off 22 Suns turnovers and committed only 10 turnovers themselves. Mirza Teletovic led the Suns with 24 points, and Tyson Chandler added a season-high 21 to go with 18 rebounds. Phoenix has lost six straight.

MAGIC 119, GRIZZLIES 107

Nikola Vucevic scored 25 points off the bench, Victor Oladipo and Evan Fournier added 22 points each and the Orlando Magic topped the struggling Memphis Grizzlies. The Grizzlies, trying to hold onto the fifth seed in the Western Conference, have lost six straight games for their longest skid since November 2009. Orlando, meanwhile, has won three straight games at home and four of its last five. The Magic (33-44) continued their offensive surge that had seen them average more than 118 points in their previous four games heading into Sunday. Memphis was led by Matt Barnes, who had 24 points.

CELTICS 107, LAKERS 100

Isaiah Thomas scored 26 points and Boston clinched a playoff berth while besting Kobe Bryant for the final time with a victory over the Lakers. Jae Crowder added 22 points for the Celtics, who blew an early 17-point lead and survived a tense fourth quarter in their first game since ending the Golden State Warriors' NBA-record 54-game home winning streak. Bryant scored 34 points in his final showdown with the Lakers' historic rival, putting up the second highest-scoring performance of his farewell season. He hit a jumper with 56 seconds left, and Julius Randle's three-point play moments later trimmed Boston's lead to four points. But Bryant missed two late jumpers, and the Celtics secured their eighth playoff berth in nine years.

BULLS 102, BUCKS 98

Jimmy Butler scored 25 points on 10-of-11 shooting, Pau Gasol had 16 points and eight rebounds and the Chicago Bulls held off a second-half surge by the Milwaukee Bucks. Butler had six points and an assist in the final 3:45, when the Bucks had narrowed a 19-point deficit to one at 87-86. Justin Holiday hit a tough jumper from the corner with 1:15 left and later grabbed a defensive rebound on a missed finger roll by Milwaukee's Giannis Antetokounmpo with 43.9 seconds to go. Antetokounmpo scored a career-high 34 points, while Jabari Parker added 24 for Milwaukee.

PACERS 92, KNICKS 87

Paul George returned from an injured ankle to make the tiebreaking jumper with 23.6 seconds left, and the Indiana Pacers beat the New York Knicks to tie for seventh place in the Eastern Conference. The Pacers blew an 18-point lead in the second half against a Knicks team missing its two best scorers, but recovered to join Detroit at 41-36 and stay two games ahead of ninth-place Chicago. George finished with 20 points and nine rebounds, returning to the game midway through the fourth quarter after the Pacers had said he was questionable to play further because of a sore left ankle. Sasha Vujacic scored 21 points for the Knicks, who rested Carmelo Anthony and had fellow starters Kristaps Porzingis and Jose Calderon already out with injuries. Arron Afflalo added 15 points. — AP

MESSI DENIES TAX EVASION IN PANAMA PAPERS SCANDAL

BARCELONA: The family of Lionel Messi denied yesterday that he was involved in tax evasion after the Barcelona star emerged as one of many personalities accused of shady offshore dealings in the Panama Papers scandal.

"The Messi family wants to make clear that Lionel Messi has not carried out any of the acts attributed to him, and accusations he created a...tax evasion plot, including a network of money-laundering, are false and insulting," it said in a statement.

The scandal erupted on Sunday when media groups made public a year-long worldwide investigation into a trove of 11.5 million documents leaked from a Panama-based law firm that exposed a tangle of offshore financial dealings by the elite.

Among the accused are close associates of Russian President Vladimir Putin, relatives of Chinese leader Xi Jinping, Iceland's Prime Minister Sigmundur David Gunnlaugsson as well as sports celebrities and screen stars.

Messi and his father are named as owners of a Panama company that had not previously been disclosed during a Spanish probe into their tax affairs. "The Panama company to which they refer to is a totally inactive company that never had any funds or any open current accounts," the Messi family said.

They added that the firm was created by the family's former tax advisers and that everything had since been brought into line where Messi's fiscal situation was concerned. Barcelona published a message of support to their star player on their official website.

"The club supports the arguments which the Messi family published in a statement today," said the Barca statement. "Since the very first moment that the 'Panama papers' which accuse Leo Messi were released, FC Barcelona has sent its affection and support to the player and to his whole family.

"The Club makes all of its judicial means, fiscal and administrative, at the family's disposal in order to make his actions and honour clear in this case."

FRONT COMPANIES

Messi and his father Jorge have been charged with tax fraud in a separate



Lionel Messi

case for allegedly failing to declare 4.16 million euros (\$4.74 million) in taxes related to his image rights between 2007 and 2009 through front companies in Belize and Uruguay.

The pair are accused of ceding the player's image rights to the companies in order to avoid declaring money made from lucrative deals with sponsors in Spain. Their trial in this case is set to begin on May 31 at a court in Barcelona and is expected to run until

Lawyers acting on behalf of the tax office have asked for both defendants to be slapped with prison sentences of 22-and-a-half months. Both father and son have denied the accusations and instead blamed a former financial advisor.

Jorge Messi made a voluntary corrective payment of four million euros in August 2013 which is expected to mitigate any sentence. Even if convicted it is unlikely that either Messi or his father would enter prison as jail terms of less than two years are usually suspended for first-time offences in Spain. — AFP

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US factory data showing decrease in GDP growth

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India's biometric database crosses billion-members

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The offshore accounts used to hide wealth, avoid taxes

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AL SAYER & SONS WIN 'OUTSTANDING CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD'

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LOS ANGELES: This file photo taken on January 24, 2016 shows a Virgin America plane near Los Angeles International Airport. — AFP

ALASKA AIR GROUP TO BUY VIRGIN AMERICA IN \$4BN DEAL DEBATE REIGNITES OVER AIRLINE CONSOLIDATION

NEW YORK: Alaska Air Group Inc is buying Virgin America in a deal worth around \$4 billion, making Alaska the biggest carrier on the West Coast and reigniting the debate over airline consolidation. The proposed merger also would give Seattle-based Alaska a foothold in key airports in New York and Washington DC, increasing the airline's appeal to business travelers.

"Our goal is to be the premier airline for people along the West Coast," Alaska CEO Brad Tilden told investors on a call yesterday morning. In Virgin's hometown of San Francisco, for instance, Alaska currently only flies to Seattle. Following the merger, it also would fly from San Francisco to several key markets including New York, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Chicago, Boston, San Diego, Denver and Washington DC.

The merger pushes Alaska ahead of JetBlue Airways which had also bid for Virgin - to become the fifth largest carrier in the US based on passengers. The combined airline would control 5.5 percent of domestic passengers, compared to New York-based JetBlue's 4.2 percent. By comparison, the four largest US airlines - American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Southwest Airlines and United Airlines - controlled a combined 83 percent of domestic seats in the past year, accord-

ing to an AP analysis of data from Diio, an airline-schedule tracking service.

Winning over customers

Alaska said the deal will add Virgin's 200 daily departures to its existing 1,000 daily flights. The airline currently serves 112 destinations in the US, Canada and Mexico. Both airlines have very loyal followings in their respective hometowns. Virgin quickly won over passengers with its new jets, friendly crews, trendy mood lighting, extensive seatback entertainment systems and meals on-demand. All of that could go away if Alaska chooses to fly a uniform fleet, a decision company executives say they are still debating.

Alaska fliers are just as loyal, loving the airline's compassion. Like other carriers, it charges for bag fees but was the first to add a service guarantee: if a bag doesn't make it to the claim area within 20 minutes, fliers get \$25 off a future trip or 2,500 bonus miles. Virgin America's Elevate loyalty program members will become part of Alaska Air's Mileage Plan. The two loy-

alty programs will remain separate until the acquisition closes. Virgin America got off the ground with support from minority owner Richard Branson and began flying in 2007. It went public in November 2014 with an initial stock offering priced at \$23 per share. Virgin, which turned profitable - barely - in 2013, earned a record \$340.5 million last year. The airline slowed down its rapid growth and got help from low fuel prices. Virgin is being forced to restart that growth this year as it takes delivery of new jets ordered years ago that can't easily be cancelled. New routes often start at a loss.

Loyal Boeing customer

Alaska first approached Virgin about a sale in the fall and pending approval by Virgin shareholders in June and by government regulators - hopes to close by the end of this year. Alaska Airlines will pay \$57 in cash per Virgin America share. That's a 47 percent premium to its Friday closing price of \$38.90. Virgin's shares rose 40 percent in morning trading. The companies put the transaction's value at about \$4 billion, including debt and capitalized aircraft operating leases.

The combined business will be based in Seattle with Tilden as its CEO. It will have about 280 aircraft including regional planes. Alaska has been a loyal Boeing customer for years, fly-

ing almost entirely a fleet of 737s, manufactured just a few miles from its headquarters. Virgin only uses Airbus jets.

The deal marks a shift in the size of consolidations within the airline industry. For more than a decade consolidation swept through the major players, reducing the largest nine carriers in 2005 to four airlines by the end of 2013. The Alaska buyout of Virgin indicates that consolidation has shifted to smaller

While Virgin has experienced growth in Dallas and added new service to Hawaii and Denver, the airline was having trouble getting enough takeoff and landing slots at busy New York airports, where access is restricted by government limits. Its smaller size and schedule made it difficult for the company to compete with bigger carriers for lucrative business travelers.

The deal is anticipated to add to adjusted earnings per share in the first full year, excluding integration costs, and boost annual revenues 27 percent to more than \$7 billion. Alaska Air said that it expects about \$300 million to \$350 million in one-time integration costs. Virgin America Inc.'s stock jumped 40.6 percent yesterday morning, to \$54.70. Alaska Air Group Inc, shares fell 4.5 percent, to \$78.36. — AP



PARIS: In this Sept 17, 2014 file photo, travelers wait at an Air France customer service desk at Paris Charles de Gaulle

FEMALE AIR FRANCE CREW CAN DROP OUT OF IRAN FLIGHTS OVER HEADSCARF

PARIS: Women employees of Air France will be allowed to opt out of working on the resumed flights to Iran so that they can avoid having to wear a headscarf, a company official said yesterday. The airline will appoint a "special unit" to replace those who do not want to fly to Tehran, he said.

"Any woman assigned to the Paris-Tehran flight who for reasons of personal choice would refuse to wear the headscarf upon leaving the plane will be reassigned to another destination, and thus will not be obliged to do this flight," human resources official Gilles Gateau told Europe 1 radio.

Air France is to resume on April 17 its Paris-to-Tehran service, which had been suspended since 2008 because of

international sanctions against Iran over its nuclear ambitions. Unions say company executives sent staff an internal memo regarding flights to Tehran saying that female cabin crew would be required to wear trousers on board with a loose fitting jacket and must cover their hair with a scarf when they leave the plane. The headscarf rule is already in place when flying to certain destinations such as Saudi Arabia. Unions, who held talks with the human resources chief yesterday, argue that an escape clause was already in place for flights to Conakry in Guinea during the Ebola crisis last year and for services to Tokyo following the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster. — AFP

MOST OF GULF GAINS DESPITE WEAKER OIL; EGYPT RECOVERS

Services fell 1.0 percent.

DUBAI: Investors in most Gulf stock markets shrugged off further losses in oil prices yesterday, while foreign buyers helped to lift Egypt's bourse. Riyadh's index recouped most of the previous day's drop and rose 1.4 percent, as local retail investors bought back speculative stocks that they had dumped on Sunday. The insurance sub index jumped 2.3 percent after tumbling 3.5 percent on the previous day.

The petrochemical sector also rebounded, adding 1.5 percent as Saudi Basic Industries, the largest listed petrochemical producer, added 2.0 percent. Almarai, the biggest dairy producer in the Gulf, added 1.0 percent. The company said shareholders had approved a capital increase for the company through an issue of bonus shares. Saudi Airlines Catering added 2.0 percent after the company said it had signed a contract with Saudi Airlines Real Estate Development Co to provide catering and other entertainment services for the Saudia Hotel.

Telecommunications firm Zain Saudi rallied 9.5 percent to 9.20 riyals; Riyad Capital issued a note yesterday affirming its "hold" rating for the stock with a price target of 9.50 riyals. The mean price target of three analysts polled by Thomson Reuters, including Riyad Capital, is 9.25 riyals. "We believe that Zain will be able to strongly grow its subscriber base to reach 12.4 million subscribers in the first quarter of 2016," said the note.

Technical resistance

The Dubai index jumped 2.3 percent to 3,379 points, nearing technical resistance on the March peaks of 3,397-3,421 points as momentum started to build in the latter half of the session, with volume hitting a three-week high. Builders Drake and Scull and Arabtec each rallied over 6.5 percent and attracted 56 percent of total trading volume combined.

Blue-chip companies have been largely dormant for several weeks as local speculative traders continue to steer markets. Emaar Properties rose 2.6 percent in modest volume. Abu Dhabi National Energy Co (TAQA) jumped 13 percent after a 6.1 percent loss on Sunday. Last week the energy company reported a narrower fourth-quarter loss. Dana Gas added 3.9 percent.

ver fourth-quarter loss. Dana Gas added 3.9 percent. But telecommunications firm Etisalat, the largest listed company by market value, dipped 0.5 percent. Its shares will go ex-dividend on Tuesday. Doha's benchmark edged down 0.2 percent in a second day of lethargic trade. Oil rig provider Gulf International

Egypt's main index, which initially fell, ended 0.7 percent higher in modest volume as foreign investors were net buyers, bourse data showed. Stocks preferred by international asset managers rose with Commercial International Bank and Global Telecom Holding, adding 1.7 and 1.3 percent respectively. — Reuters

CLIMATE CHANGE PUTS TRILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AT RISK

OSLO: Trillions of dollars of non-bank financial assets around the world are vulnerable to the effects of global warming, according to a study yesterday that says tougher action to curb greenhouse gas emissions makes sense for investors. Rising temperatures and the dislocation caused by related droughts, floods and heatwaves will slow global economic growth and damage the performance of stocks and bonds, according to the report, led by the London School of Economics. "It makes financial sense to a risk-neutral investor to cut emissions, and even more so to the risk-averse," lead author Professor Simon Dietz, an environmental economist, told Reuters.

A global climate summit in Paris last December set a goal of limiting global warming to "well below" 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial times, while leaving open precisely how this would be achieved. If the rise were limited to 2C by 2100, the study's central scenario put the total of current financial assets that could be damaged at \$1.7 trillion.—Reuters

US FACTORY DATA SHOWING DECREASE IN GDP GROWTH

FACTORY ORDERS FALL 1.7 PERCENT IN FEBRUARY

WASHINGTON: New orders for US factory goods fell in February and business spending on capital goods was much weaker than initially thought, the latest indications that economic growth slowed further in the first quarter.

The Commerce Department said yesterday new orders for manufactured goods declined 1.7 percent as demand fell broadly, reversing January's downwardly revised 1.2 percent increase. Orders have declined in 14 of the last 19 months. They were previously reported to have increased 1.6 percent in January.

The report added to weak consumer spending and trade data in suggesting economic growth moderated further at the turn of the year after slowing to a 1.4 percent annualized pace in the fourth quarter. Estimates for firstquarter gross domestic product growth are currently below a 1 percent rate.

Prices of US Treasuries were trading higher after the data, while US stocks were largely unchanged. The dollar was slightly weaker against a basket of currencies. Manufacturing, which accounts for about 12 percent of the economy, has been pressured by a strong dollar and weak global demand, which have undermined exports of factory goods, as well as efforts by businesses to reduce an inventory overhang.

Investment cuts

The sector has also been slammed by investment cuts by energy firms as they adjust to reduced profits from cheap oil. But the worst of the factory slump appears to be over, with a survey last week showing manufacturing activity expanded in March for the first time in six months.

After gaining about 20 percent versus the currencies of the United States' main trading partners between June 2014 and December 2015, the greenback is flat on a tradeweighted basis so far this year. In addition, the slide in oil prices has slowed. In February, factory orders fell broadly, with orders for transportation equipment tumbling 6.2 percent. Orders for machinery dropped 3.4 percent and bookings for electrical equipment, appliances and components decreased 3.6 percent.

The Commerce Department also said orders for nondefense capital goods excluding aircraft - seen as a measure of business confidence and spending plans - fell by a steeper 2.5 percent in February instead of the 1.8 percent



DUBUQUE, Iowa: In this Wednesday, Feb 11, 2015, file photo, Rick Ring, left, and Corinne Schmitt-Bries attach a panel to a John Deere 1050K Crawler Dozer at John Deere Dubuque Works. —AP

drop reported last month.

Shipments of these so-called core capital goods, which are used to calculate business equipment spending in the GDP report, fell 1.7 percent in February and not 1.1 percent as previously reported. Inventories of factory goods dropped for an eighth straight month, suggesting factories were making progress in reducing the inventory glut. While that could support future manufacturing production, it suggests inventories will again be a drag on eco-

nomic growth in the first quarter.

Weak core capital goods shipments and declining facto-

ry inventories could prompt economists to trim their firstquarter GDP growth estimates. The inventories-to-shipments ratio was 1.37 in February, unchanged from the prior month. Unfilled orders at factories fell 0.3 percent in February, while shipments of manufactured goods, which have declined in 10 of the last 11 months, fell 0.7 percent.

INDIA'S BIOMETRIC **DATABASE CROSSES BILLION MEMBERS**

NEW DELHI: India's biometric database notched up one billion members yesterday, as the government sought to allay concerns about privacy breaches in the world's biggest such scheme. The database was set up seven years ago to streamline benefit payments to millions of poor people as well as to cut fraud and wastage. Under the scheme, called Aadhaar, almost 93 percent of India's adult population have now registered their fingerprints and iris signatures and been given a biometric ID, according to the government. IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad hailed it as "an instrument of good governance" at a ceremony in New Delhi marking the crossing of the one-billion member mark.

Prasad said the initiative, inherited from the previous leftleaning Congress government, had enabled millions to receive cash benefits directly rather than dealing with middlemen. He said the government had saved 150 billion rupees (\$2.27 billion) on its gas subsidy scheme alone-by paying cash directly to biometric card holders instead of providing cylinders at subsidised rates. He also said all adequate safeguards were in place to ensure the personal details of card holders could not be stolen or misused by authorities given access to the database. "We have taken all measures to ensure privacy. The data will not be shared with anyone except in cases of national security," Prasad said. His comments come after parliament passed legislation last month giving government agencies access to the database in the interests of national security.

It was passed using a loophole to circumvent the opposition in parliament, where the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) lacks a majority in the upper house. The way it was passed, as well as the legislation itself, raised concerns about government agencies accessing private citizens' details. Internet experts have also raised fears about the safety of such a massive database, including hacking and theft of details. —AFP



BEIJING: A broken desk is seen at the top of an enclosed conveyer belt at an abandoned chemical factory on the outskirts of Beijing yesterday. China posted its slowest economic growth in a quarter century last year as it grappled with a tough transition away from dependence on heavy industries toward a consumer-driven growth. —AFP

TURKISH INFLATION COOLS TO SEVEN-MONTH LOW

ANKARA: Turkish consumer prices fell in March as volatile food prices declined, taking annual inflation to a seven-month low and raising the chances the central bank will cut interest rates again even though core inflation remains high.

Consumer price inflation declined 0.04 percent month-on-month, the Turkish Statistics Institute said yesterday, contrasting with a Reuters poll prediction of a 0.5 percent rise. CPI was 7.46 percent year on year, the lowest since August, while core inflation, which excludes food prices, declined slightly but remained at over 9.5 percent year-on-year.

"The sharp decline in Turkish inflation in March ...

GOLD 247.540 was driven by a drop in food inflation and masked the fact that core inflation remains extremely strong," said William Jackson of Capital Economics in a note. "Today's data make it more likely that the central bank will follow up its recent interest rate cut with

The central bank cut the upper end of its interest rate "corridor" last month, adding to concerns about political pressure on monetary policy. President Tayyip Erdogan has repeatedly called for lower rates, equating high borrowing costs with "treason". But some economists see stubborn core inflation as evidence the central bank is long overdue for an interest rate increase. —Reuters

another one this month."

News

in brief

Iran oil minister says they will keep up production

DUBAI: Iran will continue increasing its oil production and exports until it reaches the market position it enjoyed before the imposition of sanctions, Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh was quoted by the semi-official Mehr news agency as saying. Zanganeh was speaking at the weekend ahead of an April 17 meeting of OPEC and non-OPEC oil producers in Doha to discuss a possible output freeze to prop up prices, and his comment appeared to further threaten the prospect of an effective agreement at the meeting. On Friday, Bloomberg quoted Saudi Arabia's deputy crown prince Mohammed bin Salman as saying Riyadh would agree to freeze crude oil production levels only if Iran and other major producers did so. A global glut has pulled down oil prices by as much as 70 percent since 2014. However, Zanganeh was also quoted by Mehr as saying that "the agreement between the world's top OPEC and non-OPEC exporters such as Saudi Arabia and Russia to freeze output at January levels is a positive step". On the possibility of his attending the Doha meeting, he said he would certainly attend the meeting "if he had time", Mehr reported. OPEC secondary sources put Iran's current output at 2.93 million barrels per day (bpd). It is working to regain market share, particularly in Europe, after the lifting of international sanctions in January. The sanctions had cut crude exports from a peak of 2.5 million bpd before 2011 to just over 1 million bpd in recent years.

Qatar central bank invites bids for 1.5 bn riyal T-bills

DOHA/DUBAI: The Qatar central bank has invited banks to bid in a 1.5 billion riyal (\$412 million) Treasury bill auction to be held yesterday, a central bank official said. "The auction is for 1.5 billion but it depends on liquidity in the market. If there is a demand for more than 1.5 billion, we might go up - we have to study the bids," said Adel Bakr, assistant director for public debt and banking affairs at the central bank. "This auction it's not a necessity, it's for the banks' sake. We issue this short instrument for liquidity purposes." Bakr did not provide more details on the auction. Banking sources said the bills would be sold in three-, six- and ninemonth tranches, with results to be revealed today. The central bank has cancelled previous monthly T-bill auctions this year after banks bid at high rates following a tightening of liquidity due to low oil and gas prices.

UAE Exchange, Travelex majority shareholders secure \$890m loan

ABU DHABI: The majority shareholders of UAE Exchange and Travelex have closed a \$890 million loan that will be used to support the two foreign exchange companies' growth plans, according to a statement yesterday. The loan, which can be increased by an additional \$75 million at the request of the shareholders, will also be used to refinance an existing bridge facility that was used to acquire Travelex in 2015, the statement said. Centurion Investments, which is part of Abu Dhabi-based KBBO Group, and Indian-born billionaire Bavaguthu Raghuram Shetty, completed a deal to buy Travelex in January 2015 for 800 million pounds (\$1.14 billion). The pair are now the majority shareholders in UAE Exchange and Travelex. Nine banks including Goldman Sachs, Qatar National Bank and Doha Bank backed the loan, the statement said. The companies will continue to operate as two brands but will offer products through both platforms. Growth plans include increasing distribution channels and expanding into new markets, it added.

Russian energy minister meets Saudi counterpart

NOVOKUZNETSK: Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak said yesterday that he may meet his Saudi Arabian counterpart before a planned oil producers' meeting in Doha on April 17. Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, will agree to freeze crude oil production levels only if Iran and other major producers do so, the kingdom's deputy crown prince said in an interview with Bloomberg last week. "If there is such an opportunity, surely we will talk to our colleagues," he said about a possible meeting with his Saudi Arabian colleague. Iran has said it will not join fellow OPEC and non-OPEC members in a plan to be discussed in Doha to freeze oil production to boost prices. Novak also said he hoped that a common position would prevail at the oil producers' meeting. "I hope that in this case a common position will prevail during the discussions and all sides will come to an agreement, ... especially given that Iran has confirmed its participation," he said. —Agencies

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZA	ini Exchange Co).
CURRENCY	BUY SIAN COUNTRIES	SELL
Japanese Yen	2.709	
Indian Rupees	4.599	
Pakistani Rupees	2.887	
Srilankan Rupees	2.082	
Nepali Rupees	2.846	
Singapore Dollar	225.750	
Hongkong Dollar	39.016	
Bangladesh Taka	3.857	
Philippine Peso	6.576	
Thai Baht	8.624	
	GCC COUNTRIES	
Saudi Riyal	80.710	
Qatari Riyal	83.139	
Omani Riyal	786.123	
Bahraini Dinar	803.770	
UAE Dirham	82.403	
A	RAB COUNTRIES	
Egyptian Pound - Cash	34.150	
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	34.456	
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.412	
Tunisian Dinar	151.630	
Jordanian Dinar	426.450	
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.017	
Syrian Lira	2.157	
Morocco Dirham	31.842	
EUROPEAN	& AMERICAN COUNTRIE	S
US Dollar Transfer	302.500	
Euro	347.570	
Sterling Pound	433.630	
Canadian dollar	234.532	

108.040

319.430

235.190

301.300

Turkish lira

Swiss Franc

Australian Dollar

US Dollar Buying

3 Glaili	04.190
UAE EXC	CHANGE CENTRE WLL
CURRENCIES Australian Dollar Canadian Dollar Swiss Franc Euro US Dollar Sterling Pound Japanese Yen Bangladesh Taka Indian Rupee Sri Lankan Rupee Nepali Rupee Pakistani Rupee UAE Dirhams Bahraini Dinar Egyptian Pound Jordanian Dinar Omani Riyal Qatari Riyal Saudi Riyal	TELEX TRANSFER PER 1000 201.91 219.82 306.95 336.85 299.90 431.04 2.67 3.817 4.375 2.083 2.732 2.860 0.08161 0.7970 0.03819 0.4265 0.7788 0.08269 0.07994

Saudi Niyai	0.07994
DOLLAR	CO EXCHANGE CO. LTD
Rate for Transfer US Dollar Canadian Dollar Sterling Pound Euro Swiss Frank Bahrain Dinar UAE Dirhams Qatari Riyals	Selling Rate 303.250 230.325 429.535 339.765 297.075 802.260 82.805 84.020
,	

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

Dittitett	IN EXCIPANCE COM	1741
CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
	Europe	
British Pound	0.423280	0.432280
Czech Korune	0.004714	0.016714
Danish Krone	0.042139	0.047139
uro	0.0338690	0.0346690
Norwegian Krone	0.032317	0.037517
Romanian Leu	0.076909	0.076909
Slovakia	0.009011	0.019011
Swedish Krona	0.033103	0.038103
Swiss Franc	0.308670	0.318870
Turkish Lira	0.101221	0.111521
	Australasia	
Australian Dollar	0.222485	0.233985
New Zealand Dollar	0.201729	0.211229
	America	
Canadian Dollar	0.226335	0.234835
JS Dollars	0.298400	0.302900

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

US Dollars Mint	0.298900	0.302900
	Asia	
Bangladesh Taka	0.003438	0.004012
Chinese Yuan	0.045291	0.048791
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036919	0.039669
Indian Rupee	0.004287	0.004677
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002629	0.002809
Kenyan Shilling	0.002976	0.002976
Korean Won	0.000253	0.000268
Malaysian Ringgit	0.074085	0.080085
Nepalese Rupee	0.002867	0.003037
Pakistan Rupee	0.002682	0.002962
Philippine Peso	0.006500	0.006780
Sierra Leone	0.000073	0.000079
Singapore Dollar	0.220522	0.226522
South African Rand	0.014542	0.023042
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001695	0.002275
Taiwan	0.009242	0.009422
Thai Baht	0.008269	0.008819
	Arab	
Bahraini Dinar		0.002010
	0.795818 0.030675	0.803818 0.035793
Egyptian Pound		
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000191	0.000251
Jordanian Dinar	0.422651	0.430151
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000

0.000150

0.020627

0.001247

0.779294

0.082378

0.079780

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0.148393

0.101221

0.081378

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Lebanese Pound Moroccan Dirhams

Nigerian Naira

Omani Riyal

Qatar Riyal

Saudi Riyal

Syrian Pound

Turkish Lira

UAE Dirhams

Yemeni Riyal

Tunisian Dinar

0.000250

0.044627 0.001882

0.784974 0.083591

0.080730

0.001502

0.156393

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0.001447

CAMBODIA ADOPTS CONTROVERSIAL UNION LAW

yesterday approved a controversial draft law regulating trade unions, to the dismay of labor activists who fear it will curb their ability to protect garment workers — the backbone of the economy.

The government of strongman Prime Minister Hun Sen says the law is aimed at regulating the country's 3,400 trade unions. But unionists and international human rights groups say it will dilute the power of labor groups in a sector still rife with abuse.

Around 700,000 factory workers form the bedrock of Cambodia's \$7 billion textile industry, which supplies brands including Gap, Nike and H&M. Critics have expressed particular alarm at provisions forcing unions to report their finances to the government each year as well as granting authorities further powers to close down labor groups.

"The government wants to restrict our

PHNOM PENH: Cambodia's parliament rights by creating this law," Ath Thorn, president of the Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers' Democratic Union, told AFP. "The law will limit our work... and employers can request for the dissolution of unions or find ways to block unions from protesting," he added.

The draft law still needs approval by the Senate but its passage is a near-forgone conclusion since the upper house is dominated by ruling party lawmakers. Two labor activists were injured yesterday morning during scuffles with authorities outside parliament.

Hun Sen, who has ruled Cambodia for more than three decades and tolerates little dissent, has frequently clashed with unions. Influential garment factory owners want to restrict the number of unions, blaming them for rocky labor relations that they say threatens to undermine a lucrative sector.

Parliament also approved a rare cabi-



PHNOM PENH: A Worker Union member, Suth Chet, 36, center, is beaten by district security personnel during a protest rally at a blocked street near National Assembly. — AP

net reshuffle by Hun Sen, a move he described as a "necessary measure" as he gears up for local polls next year and a general election in 2018. Hun Sen has surrounded himself with a coterie of loyalists who are rarely moved. In total 26 officials were promoted or reappointed to other portfolios while two ministers were removed.

Among those reshuffled were Hor Namhong, Hun Sen's close ally who had been foreign minister for 18 years. He was replaced by telecommunications minister Prak Sokhón, though Hor Namhong will remain a deputy prime minister. Analysts say the reshuffle is an attempt to halt Hun Sen's waning popularity ahead of upcoming polls. "The coming elections are certainly on his mind," analyst Ou Virak told AFP. Opposition politicians accuse Hun Sen's party of rigging the 2013 elections in their favor, a charge they deny. — AFP



NEW YORK: The statue of George Washington on the steps of Federal Hall faces the facade of the New York Stock Exchange. — AP

KASHKARI TAKES ON WALL ST FROM FARM-RICH FED REGION

NEW YORK: From his seat atop the Fed's smallest bank, in a region known for fracking, farming and ranching, Neel Kashkari wants to make sure he's heard well beyond the northern plains. Since becoming president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis this year, the 42-year-old Kashkari has gone on a media blitz, visiting nine major media outlets in two days and creating a Twitter hashtag to promote his view that the biggest US banks should

On Monday, he will host a symposium at his bank in downtown Minneapolis entitled "Ending Too Big To Fail," giving fierce critics of Wall Street's behemoths a platform to present their views. Becoming the Fed's bad cop is the latest ambitious move in a high-flying career that has taken Kashkari from Goldman Sachs Group Inc, to the Treasury Department at the height of the financial crisis to a run for California gover-

"He's trying to swing way above the weight of the Minneapolis Fed. He didn't come from California just to rub elbows with ranchers in Helena," said Dick Bove, an analyst with Rafferty Capital Markets, referring to the capital of Montana, a state in the Minneapolis Fed's region.

Kashkari's critics argue he is using the "too big to fail" issue as a springboard to higher places of authority. He says he's only working toward prudent financial regulation. Kashkari's crusade kicked off with a Feb. 16 speech, in which he compared the aftermath of large bank failures to that of a nuclear reactor meltdown. He told Reuters a few days later that the symposium is intended to come up with a plan to prevent big banks from receiving big taxpayer bailouts, the way they did in 2008. That's a subject he knows intimately.

At Treasury, he ran the Troubled Asset Relief Program, which infused \$700 billion into banks, automakers and insurers. The bailout played an important role in stabilizing the financial system during the crisis, but remains controversial. Kashkari now says "bolder, transformational options" are needed beyond a post-crisis regulation that requires big banks to outline plans to unwind themselves if they fail - known as their "living wills."

Kashkari launched a social media campaign with the hashtag #EndingTBTF to promote his event and encourage the public to contribute ideas. He has amassed 10,300 followers on Twitter, where his retweets of economic news mix with musings on the superiority of Yuengling beer and photos of his dogs.

Media magnet

Kashkari is not the first Fed official even within the Minneapolis Fed - to argue that much more should be done to prevent future bailouts of big banks. Gary Stern, who led the Minneapolis Fed for 24 years, was vocal about the problems created by big banks. Dallas Fed President Richard

Fisher has also called for breaking them up. There are plenty of critics outside the Fed, too. Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders bashes Wall Street at every campaign stop. Even former Citigroup Inc CEO Sandy Weill, who created the so-called "universal" banking model in the 1990s, now says big banks are better off broken up. Kashkari, however, may have more of a knack for bringing mainstream attention to a subject long the purview of policy wonks

and left-leaning politicians. During and after his time at the Treasury, he was the subject of admiring media profiles - including a photo spread in the Washington Post that showed him splitting logs and building a shed at a cabin in rural California. With his clean-shaven head, thick brows and intense gaze, he made it into People Magazine's 2008 "Sexiest Man Alive" issue alongside Prince Harry and actor James Franco.

As the Republican challenger to California Governor Jerry Brown in 2014, he spent a week on the streets of Fresno pretending to be homeless and posted a YouTube video about it. "Up against a hugely popular incumbent, he had to find ways of getting attention," said Claremont McKenna College politics professor Jack Pitney. He lost to Brown by 20 percentage

The son of Indian immigrants, Kashkari earned an MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and joined Goldman Sachs. In 2006, he followed former Goldman CEO Hank Paulson to the Treasury Department, where Paulson served as secretary under President George W. Bush. Between that stint and his gubernatorial run, he spent a few years at bondfund giant Pacific Investment Management

As Minneapolis Fed president, Kashkari oversees a bank with \$35 billion in assets in a region where oil, timber, farming and ranching are among the important industries. Although none of the U.S. banks considered "too big to fail" are based there, Kashkari said his staff highlighted the issue as a top priority. Kashkari's position puts him at odds with peers who have spent years crafting rules to make the financial system safer. In coming weeks, a group of regulators is expected to release the latest information on banks' "living wills."

'Criticize the messenger'

Regional Fed presidents are arguably less influential than their Washingtonbased colleagues. Most vote on monetary policy once every three years, while Fed governors have a permanent vote on the policy-setting committee.

Fed presidents typically have even less sway on regulatory matters. Their bank supervisory powers are largely limited to carrying out policies set by Washington. When Fed presidents have raised alarms on regulatory issues, they have rarely budged national policy.

Ten current and former regulators, bankers and lobbyists who spoke to Reuters said they believe Kashkari's "too big to fail" campaign is motivated by his career ambitions. They asked not to be named because they did not want to damage relationships with Kashkari. In his February interview with Reuters, Kashkari said he had no motive beyond responsible regulation. On Friday, he said critics are trying to distract from the real issues he is address-

ing at Monday's event. "The Wall Street critics can't argue with me on the substance of too-big-to-fail, so they criticize the messenger," he told Reuters in an email. "I welcome their criticisms because they are an implicit admission that I am right." Kashkari has plenty of supporters, too. They believe his experience in banking, regulation and politics makes him a credible advocate. "As a moderate, he may be offering some sort of aid and comfort to the notion of breaking up the banks," said Jim Angel, a professor at Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business. — Reuters

THE OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS USED TO HIDE WEALTH, AVOID TAXES

11.5 MILLION RECORDS FOUND HELD OFFSHORE HOLDINGS

TOKYO: An investigation published by an international coalition of more than 100 media outlets, based on 11.5 million records of offshore holdings, details how politicians, celebrities and other famous people use banks, law firms and offshore shell companies to hide their assets.

The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, a nonprofit organization based in Washington, said an anonymous source provided internal documents from the Panama-based law firm Mossack Fonseca, one of the world's biggest creators of shell companies.

Ramon Fonseca, a co-founder of Mossack Fonseca, said the documents were obtained illegally by hacking but confirmed that many of them were real. He denied his firm has engaged in any wrongdoing. This is a look at offshore accounts and how they are used:

What are offshore accounts? Offshore bank accounts and other financial dealings in another country can be used to evade regulatory oversight or tax obligations. Companies or individuals often use shell companies, initially incorporated without significant assets or operations, to disguise ownership or other information about the funds involved.

Where are most offshore accounts?

Panama, the Cayman Islands and Bermuda are among more than a dozen small, low-tax locations that specialize in handling business services and investments of non-resident companies.

Legitimate uses for offshore accounts:

Companies or trusts can be set up in offshore locations for legitimate uses such as business

finance, mergers and acquisitions and estate or tax planning, according to the global money laundering watchdog, the Financial Action Task Force.

Illicit uses of offshore accounts:

Shell companies and other entities can be misused by terrorists and others involved in international and financial crimes to conceal sources of funds and ownership. The ICIJ says the files from Mossack Fonseca include information on 214,488 offshore entities linked to 14,153 clients in 200 countries and territories.

Efforts to crack down on financial havens:

The Financial Action Task Force and other regulatory agencies publish assessments identifying weaknesses in enforcement of anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing efforts of specific countries and territories. Financial and legal professionals get training on how to spot potential violations, since in some cases lawyers and bankers are unaware they are handling illicit transactions. The EU has stepped up efforts to crack down on tax avoidance by multinational corporations.

Past scandals over offshore accounts:

Banking secrecy laws can obscure offshore financial dealings. But the disclosure of other leaked documents by the ICIJ and other organizations in late 2014 drew attention to sweet tax deals offered by the tiny European country of Luxembourg to multinational companies and ultra-wealthy individuals. In the 1980s, the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, an international bank founded by a Pakistani financier, was implicated in wide-scale money laundering and other illegal financial dealings. — AP



PANAMA CITY: A marquee of the Arango Orillac Building lists the Mossack Fonseca law firm. — AP

AUSTRIAN WATCHDOG INVESTIGATES TWO BANKS AFTER PANAMA LEAK

VIENNA: Austrian regulators are investigating whether two banks named in an international data leak followed procedures to prevent money laundering, one of the firms having attracted attention for its lending to a confectionery company owned by Ukraine's president.

The leaked "Panama Papers" cover a period over almost 40 years, from 1977 until last December, and allegedly show that some companies domiciled in tax havens were being used for suspected money laundering, arms and drug deals and tax evasion. Two Austrian media groups that were among the more than 100 news organizations that jointly investigated the documents' contents identified Raiffeisen Bank International and Hypo Landesbank Vorarlberg as companies named in the trove.

"We are verifying whether the banks did their work thoroughly beforehand," a spokesman for Austrian financial markets regulator FMA said, citing required checks on matters such as the purpose of transactions and people involved. "We are verifying that in the course of an on-site inspection," he said, adding that the FMA can refer matters to the criminal authorities if it suspects wrongdoing. The Austrian news organizations involved in the investigation, broadcaster ORF and weekly newspaper Falter, reported a connection between Raiffeisen and the Roshen Company owned by Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko.

The bank had made a loan of \$115 million to Roshen secured against the holdings of a company based in the British Virgin Islands, Linquist Holdings Limited, ORF and Falter reported.

Raiffeisen said it had complied with legal provisions on the prevention of money laundering but could not comment on specific cases because of banking secrecy rules. There were also limits to its ability to carry out checks, it said in a statement.

"As we are not a government institution, a thorough screening of customers and transactions is not possible," said Raiffeisen, which according to ORF and Falter performed similar transactions involving Linquist and other offshore firms. ORF said Hypo Landesbank Vorarlberg-majority-owned by the province of Vorarlberg, which borders Liechtenstein and Switzerland-was connected to offshore firms through trustees in Liechtenstein and much of the money trail led to Russia.

"At no point have we violated money-laun-

dering stipulations or sanctions, as legal stipulations are taken very seriously and followed very fastidiously in our company," Hypo Vorarlberg said in a statement. The criminal investigations bureau, a branch of the Interior Ministry, and the Austrian prosecutors' office in charge of economic crimes and corruption said they had taken no action so far as there was not enough concrete information. — Reuters

EU BACKS COMMISSIONER OVER WIFE'S 'PANAMA PAPERS' LINKS

yesterday EU climate commissioner Miguel Arias Canete, saying he appeared to have obeyed its rules by disclosing his wife's links with a firm caught up in the "Panama Papers" scandal.

Overnight, a media probe into millions of documents leaked from a Panama-based law firm exposed a tangle of financial dealings by global elites, from aides of Russian President Vladimir Putin to relatives of Chinese President Xi Jinping, sports celebrities and screen stars.

Among others, the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists said Canete's wife, Micaela Domecq Solis-Beaumont, was linked to Rinconada Investments Group, a Panama company registered in 2005. European Commission spokesman Margaritis Schinas, asked about the Panama connection, told reporters that everything seemed to be in order and that Canete had informed the EU's executive arm of his and his wife's business interests when he took up office in 2014. "His declaration appears to be in compliance with the code of conduct for commissioners as it includes all the professional activities and financial interests of the commissioner's wife that would pose a potential conflict of interest," Schinas said

"As far as the company (Rinconada) referred to

BRUSSELS: The European Commission defended in the news is concerned, according to the information given by the commissioner, this company has been inactive for several years before he took office in November 2014," he added. In his latest declaration of interests, dated July 14, 2015, Caneta lists two companies owned by his wife-Agricola Micaela Domecq and NOVA 19 S.L.

> Rinconada is not listed on the document which can be seen on the European Commission's website under the entry for Canete. The Panama law firm at the heart of the document leak, Mossack Fonseca, listed Rinconada as inactive in January 2010, the ICIJ said on its website.

Schinas, asked about the reports about Canete's wife, said the commissioner had informed Commission head Jean-Claude Juncker of the situation at the same time as he had replied to ICIJ journalist questions on the subject. Offshore financial dealings are not illegal in themselves but may be abused to hide assets from tax authorities, launder the proceeds of criminal activities or conceal misappropriated or politically inconvenient wealth. The European Commission has made it a priority to crack down on tax avoidance under Juncker, who was himself snared in charges that he had allowed sweetheart tax deals with major companies during his 19 years as Luxembourg prime minister. — AFP

ASIA TRACK WALL ST GAINS, TOKYO DOWN AGAIN

HONG KONG: Japanese stocks fell for a fifth straight session yesterday as the yen strengthened against the dollar, while most other Asian markets turned positive after a better-than-expected US jobs report. Oil prices fell again after plunging about four percent Friday as Saudi Arabia suggested it could delay freezing output unless other key producers follow suit-fuelling worries about a meeting this month to address a global supply glut.

Wall Street traders provided a perfect lead for their Asian counterparts. All three main indexes rallied Friday after data showed the US economy added more jobs than expected in March while

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KUWAITRE

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172

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100

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940,581

25,994,093

225

225

664,106

162,841

166

38.5

174

285

670

485

100

355

1044.49 -

549 806.73 🛦 7.22

THURAYA

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there was also a modest pick-up in hourly wages. That was followed by a report showing US manufacturing activity increased in March for the first time in six months.

The news was the latest to highlight renewed strength in the world's top economy, but analysts said the Federal Reserve would still not raise interest rates before June at least. "Friday's US labor market report was something of a middling result for markets," Philip Borkin, a senior economist in Auckland at ANZ Bank New Zealand, said in a client note.

"On the one hand it was not really strong enough to suggest inflation pressures are going to run away on the Fed, but on the other, it certainly still showed, together with a rebound in (manufacturing data), that the economy is still performing well overall." With dealers betting that US rates will not rise for some time, the yen pushed up against the dollar, hitting Japanese exporters yesterday. Tokyo's Nikkei — which lost 3.55 percent Fridayended down 0.3 percent. Sydney lost 0.1 percent but the rest of the region turned higher.

Oil extends losses

Singapore gained 0.4 percent, Seoul added 0.3 percent and Wellington put on 0.5 percent. There

were also gains in Manila and Jakarta. Hong Kong, Shanghai and Taipei were closed for a public holiday. In early European trade London added 0.1 percent, while Frankfurt lost 0.1 percent and Paris slipped 0.3 percent.

Asian markets had plunged on Friday, led by Japan after a closely watched survey showed its businesses growing increasingly downbeat about the economic outlook. The yen ticked higher against the dollar yesterday as market-watchers said the greenback would likely not pick up in the near term with the Fed unlikely to lift rates any time soon.

On oil markets both main contracts sank again, with Brent down one percent and West Texas Intermediate 1.2 percent lower. Saudi Arabia's deputy crown prince, Mohammed bin

Salman, suggested to Bloomberg News last week that the kingdom would only freeze output if the move was mirrored by Iran and other major producers.

Prices had been rising in March to levels above \$40 a barrel after Saudi Arabia and Russia agreed to holds talks with other crude majors to address a supply glut. Adding pressure on the black gold, Iran said Sunday that its exports have surpassed two million barrels a day since nuclear-linked sanctions were lifted earlier this year. The OPEC member has the world's fourth-largest oil reserves and has moved ahead with an increase in exports despite global concerns over a supply glut that has seen prices dive from more than \$100 a barrel in mid-2014



TOKYO: A man looks at an electronic stock board of a securities firm. —AP

Global 🗲 **Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report** Monday 04 April 2016 Change Index **Last Closing** High Closing Low Price index 5,201.86 5,218.68 5,197.39 Weighted Index 356.69 354.74 Value (KWD) 11,409,219 -0.19 355.78 KSX 15 836.60 838.57 840.25 833.46 **Number of Trades** -1.97 3,365 Trades MARIN SOKOUK 104 102 1001 104 0.0 34.5 34.0 1245000 42.336 24 34.0 0.0 **IKARUS** 0.0 0.0 49.0 48.0 3,155,610 152,610 48.5 -0.5 IPG 0.0 0.0 310 0.0 90 90 12.947 1.165 90 -2.0 NAPESCO 0.0 0.0 730 0.0 93 92 2,007,855 185,073 26 92 -1.0 **ENERGYH** 44.5 44.0 4,000 178 44.0 1.0 0.0 0.0 365 0.0 38.5 39.0 TAM 39.0 560,112 21,569 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 AREEC 0.0 0.0 102 0.0 0.0 138 0.0 29.0 28.0 1,262,785 36,205 28.5 0.5 2,500 130,713 BPCC 520 44,184 10.0 0.0 84,969 860 485,990 417,951 . 0.0 0.0 0.0 ALQURAIN 192 22.5 314,500 0.0 ALTIJARIA 77 152,375 11,740 12 78 1.0 KCEM 380 13,342 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 REFR 0.0 310 AAYANRI 194,932 12,671 CABLE 102,803 35.986 350 60 0.0 350 0.0 AQAR 0.0 SHIP 142 142 -2.0 ALAQARI 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1 الوطني National Bank of Kuwait NBK Financial Markets **Daily Report** At 02:00 PM Previous Day Global Stock Indices Yearly **Previous Close** Last Price 17,685.09 17,792.75 107.66 0.61 2.11 4,869.84 4,914.54 0.92 -1.85 44.70 2,072.78 S&P 500 2.059.74 13.04 0.63 1.41 6,193.54 47.49 6.146.05 . 0.77 -1.57 9,794.64 9,898.92 104.28 1.06 -9.18 . CAC 40 4,322.24 4,370.39 48.15 1.11 -5.75 . 7,688.34 7,742.75 54.41 . -12.19 Nikkei 225 16,164.16 16,123.27 -40.89 . -0.25 -10.68 1,302.71 1,301.40 1.31 Topix . 0.10 -15.81 20,776.70 20,498.92 -277.78 -1.34 -6.46 Hang Seng 2,835.35 16.86 0.60 -1.83 Straits Times **MENA Stock Indices** 5.207.92 5.201.86 -6.06 -0.12 -7.82 6,126.12 6,208.49 82.37 3.303.23 3.378.54 75.31 2.28 4.83 4,360.19 4,385.47 Abu Dhabi 25.28 0.58 1.23 1,126.29 1,133.64 -7.37 7.35 0.65 10,251.97 10,234.36 -17.61 -1.70 5.488.93 5,562.88 73.95 1.53 1,177.99 1,177.99 0.00 0.00 0.72 2,154.77 2,165.77 11.00 0.51 0.86 . 7,521.20 7,556.21 35.01 0.47 7.35 . 9,307.16 27.51 0.30 4.27 . **Aorocco** 5,439,16 5,435.63 7.87 -3.53 -0.06 Global Currencies Exchange Rate Australian Japanese Currency Saudi Rival US Dollar Dollar Franc **Kuwait Dinar** 3.2982 2.9010 2.3164 3.1689 368,17 4.3260 29.89 Saudi Riyal 0.08117 0.2677 0.2355 0.1880 0.2572 0.3511 US Dollar 0.30320 3.7353 0.7023 0.9608 1.3116 0.8796 111.63 0.34471 Sterling Pound 0.43170 5.3183 1.4238 158.98 1.8682 1.2525 Swiss Franc 0.31557 3.8877 1.0408 0.9152 0.7308 116.22 1.3652 0.0335 0.0117 0.00272 0.0090 0.0079 0.0063 0.0086 0.23116 2.8478 0.6703 0.5353 0.7325 ustralian Dollar 0.7624 85.11 MENA Currencies Exchange Rate **Emirates** Egyptian Dollar Dinar Riyal Riyal Dirham Pound 3.7353 **US Dollar** 3.6270 0.3831 3.6574 8.7700 Kuwaiti Dinar 3.2982 12.3196 1.2337 11.9624 1.2637 12.0627 28.9248 udi Rival 0.2677 0.08117 0.1001 0.9710 0.1026 0.9791 2.3479 Bahraini Dina 2.6734 0.81057 9.9858 1.0243 9.7776 23.4454 9.6963 Qatari Riyal 0.2757 0.08360 1.0299 0.1031 0.1056 1.0084 2.4180 2.6100 0.79136 9.4665 22.8898 **Emirates Dirham** 0.2734 0.08290 1.0213 0.1023 0.9917 0.1048 2.3979 0.03457 0.4259 0.1140 0.0427 0.4136 0.0437 0.4170 Global Interest Rates 1-Week 1-Month 1-Year Cuwaiti Dinar 0.00 1.19 0.90 1.22 -0.37-0.25 -0.13 -0.01 0.58 1.00 Sterling Pound 0.48 0.50 0.74 -0.65 -0.53 -0.81 -0.78-0.72 Swiss Franc 2.07 2.12 2.02 2.00 1.95 Australian Dollar 0.00 0.90 0.90 1.01 1.08 Global Bond Yields 30-Year Country 2-Year 5-Year 10-Year 0.74 1.22 1.77 2.60 -0.48-0.320.14 0.77 0.44 0.85 1.44 2.32 Commodities Yearly **Previous Close** Last Price Index Change

For more information, call Global Investment House on 1 80 42 42, www.globalinv.net

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30

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uwait Oil

Brent West Texas

Gold

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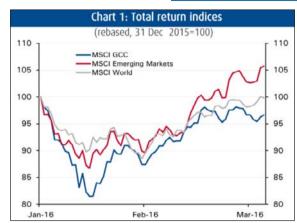
EQUITIES SHARE REBOUND AFTER A WEAK START TO THE YEAR

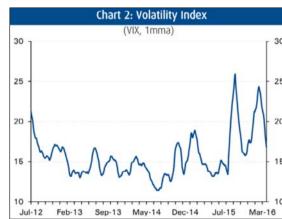
NBK Economic Update

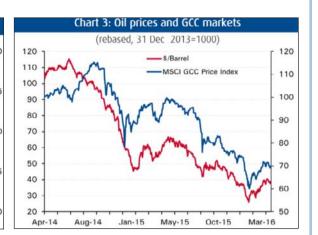
egional markets like most world equities had a weak start to the year but managed to recover ground by the end of 1Q16. Following a dire end to 2015, GCC equities continued to underperform most international peers with the MSCI GCC total return index retreating 3% in 1Q16. Regional markets correlation with oil prices remained high as oil, deficits and economic reforms continued to be key topics for the GCC countries. Total GCC market capitalization stood at \$904 billion at end of the quarter, having shed \$36 billion during 1Q16. Internationally, most equity markets kicked off 2016 on shaky footing before recovering some ground later on in 1Q16.

Encouraging data from major economies (particularly the US) helped in ending the correction that had hit markets in mid-2015 and continued well into January of 2016. Markets were also supported by further soothing/easing from central banks.

The Fed which had been signaling four hikes (25 bps each) in 2016 is now looking for only two hikes. Meanwhile the European Central Bank (ECB) and the Bank of Japan (BOJ) went ahead with more quantitative easing and/or lowering interest rates (in some cases negative). After retreating more than 10% in the first month and a half of 2016 the MSCI World total return index was flat on the quarter. Volatility came off from highs seen in 4Q15 but is still elevated compared to his-







toric levels. Regionally, markets continue to be driven primarily by oil prices. Oil prices dropped further early on in 2016, reaching 12-year lows before bottoming out towards the end of January. Oil prices are now hovering around the 40\$/barrel levels, up 50% from their January bottom. GCC equities kept their close tie to oil prices and when the MSCI GCC total return index bottomed on January 21st it had declined 19% year to date. Indeed, oil prices do raise concerns about fiscal sustainability and growth in regional

While GCC governments have expressed their commitment to support growth in the non-oil sector by sticking to their current development spending plans and maintaining large deficits in the medi-

um term, a prolonged period of low oil prices could force governments to reduce capital spending and benefits, and could put pressure on liquidity. The issuance by the Saudi government of \$28 billion in bonds in 2015 to finance the fiscal deficit served as a reminder of these concerns. Though the first to do so, Saudi is definitely not the exception as all other GCC countries gear up to issue sovereign debt.

GCC equities bounced back together with oil prices towards the end of January. However; performance has since varied among regional peers. Some markets managed to recover all their losses since the start of the year while a few even registered some gains. Dubai was the best performing market and ended the quarter (and ytd) up 6%. Dubai, with a larger for-

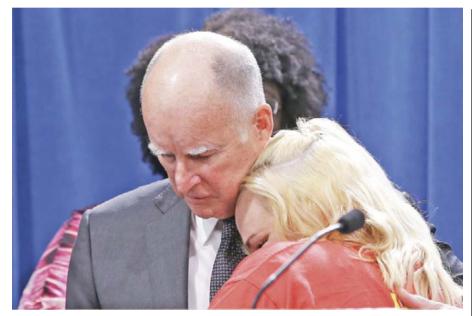
eign investor base, is more susceptible to international factors and markets and thus its rebound was most pronounced, in line with improved international sentiment.

Saudi suffered the most from the decline in oil prices and despite recovering most of its losses since the start of the year it underperformed its peers in 1Q16 ending it down by 10%. Bahrain was the second worst performer and retreated 7%. Kuwait followed, declining by 6% in 1Q16. Even with two acquisitions underway, sentiment remained subdued in a wait-and-see mode.

Market liquidity continues to be low compared to 1Q15. With banks now turning to fixed-income markets to issue Basel III compliant perpetual and other bonds, and sovereigns also turning to capital

markets to help finance their deficits, some liquidity is bound to be directed away from equities. Also, with rates now starting to rise in tandem with US rates, fixed-income assets are becoming more attractive.

Regional markets will continue to be impacted primarily by oil prices. Also, economic data from the major economies will affect sentiment as they have important implications for oil prices and the global outlook. Geopolitics and security concerns should also remain key issues for the region, though those may be abating. Meanwhile; GCC markets will continue to follow up on governments' fiscal and reform plans for the coming years in order to gauge the implications for non-oil growth and business in GCC economies.



SACREMENTO: In this Monday, March 28, 2016 photo, Gov. Jerry Brown is hugged by Holly Dias, a Burger King employee who praised Brown's announcement of proposed legislation to increase the state's minimum wage to \$15 per hour by 2023, during a news conference. — AP

CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR TO SIGN \$15 PER HOUR MINIMUM WAGE LAW

LOS ANGELES: California Governor Jerry Brown on Monday was expected to sign into a law a plan to raise the minimum wage from \$10 to \$15 an hour by the year 2023, making the nation's most-populous state the first to boost pay to that level for the working poor.

The bill marks the culmination of a deal Brown brokered with labor leaders and state Democratic leaders and puts California, home to one of the world's biggest economies, at the forefront of US states and cities that have moved to surpass the federal minimum wage, which has remained at \$7.25 an hour since 2009.

Both houses of California's state legislature approved the measure on Thursday, fast-tracking the measure two days after the deal was announced by Brown, a popular Democrat. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, also a Democrat, that same day announced a proposal to gradually raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour in parts of that state.

Raising the minimum wage has cropped up on many Democratic candidates' agendas ahead of the November elections in the hopes

it could help mobilize voters to the polls. Democratic presidential hopeful US Senator Bernie Sanders has called for raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2020. The California measure heads off two competing ballot initiatives that lacked a provision to allow the governor to suspend increases in hard economic times, a deal-breaker for Brown. With polls showing strong support for those measures at the ballot box, Brown emphasized that a version passed by the legislature would allow lawmakers to amend it if needed over time instead of going back to voters to request amendments in expensive and uncertain campaigns.

Moderate Democrats and most Republicans complained that it was being rushed through, and would disproportionately harm businesses in poorer parts of the state, where the cost of living is not high enough to warrant such a dramatic wage hike. Fourteen states and several cities began 2016 with minimum wage increases, typically phasing in raises that will ultimately take them to between \$10 and \$15 an hour. — Reuters

'KAMCO' RANKED FIRST IN KUWAIT FOR MANAGING ISSUANCES OF FIXED INCOME INSTRUMENTS

KUWAIT CITY: KAMCO Investment Company, a leading investment management company with more than USD 11 billion in assets under management, and winner of World finance "Best Investment Management Company in Kuwait 2015 Award, was ranked among the top 15international lead managers and book runners in GCC and MENA Bonds, and the first in Kuwait according to Bloomberg's EMEA fixed income league tables for the first quarter of 2016. The rankings, based on actual funds raised during the first quarter of 2016, accounted for the total volume and market share of all transactions executed during the period.

Bloomberg's quarterly fixed income league tables ranked KAMCO as the tenth in the GCC and the thirteenth in the MENA region for managing the issuance of bonds and sukuks. KAMCO's total volume for all transactions executed during the first quarter reached a market share of 2.46% in GCC and 2.01% in MENA.

KAMCO's Chief Investment Officer, Mr Khaled Fouad, said, "This is yet another representation of KAMCO's prominent position in the local and regional market.

We have strategically positioned ourselves in the market to become one of the preferred choices for the governmental and private sectors. We continue to build on the trust extended by our clients and investors alike. We keep increasing our level of expertise and investment in our debt capital market franchise reaffirming our position as a strong market leader."

"Our Investment Banking and Wealth Management teams played key roles in successfully executing each transaction during the first quarter of 2016. On behalf of KAMCO, we would like to recognize each team's level of commitment and persistence, as evinced by Bloomberg's EMEA fixed income league tables. We, as KAMCO, will continue to seek various opportunities to attract local and regional investors to support the local bond market and

economy as a whole," added Mr. Fouad. Mr Omar Zaineddine, Senior Vice President



Khaled Fouad, KAMCO's Chief Investment Officer

and head of the Investment Banking department at KAMCO, emphasized that the department will spare no effort to ensure that all parties involved are satisfied. He also highlighted the advantages of bond issuances towards the local and regional economy, stimulating domestic and foreign investment.

During the fourth quarter of 2015 and the 1st quarter of 2016, he mentioned that KAMCO partook in three pivotal issuances with some of the largest local and regional banks, which included the National Bank of Kuwait, Kuwait Finance House, and Burgan Bank. Mr Zaineddine also stated that in collaboration with the Wealth Management team at KAMCO, the investment firm is expecting in the future to become more involved in both the governmental and private sector issuances.

According to Bloomberg's rankings, it is worth mentioning that the National Bank of Abu Dhabi was placed first in terms of the total transactions market share in the GCC. HSBC Bank followed in second place, JP Morgan in third, BNP Paribas came in fourth with Citi Bank, Bank ABC sixth, Emirates NBD PJSC seventh, Sharjah



Omar Zaineddine, KAMCO head of the Investment Banking department

Islamic Bank and Dubai Islamic Bank eighth.

Bloomberg's ranking based on the MENA region placed the National Bank of Abu Dhabi at the top of the list during the first quarter of 2016. Morgan Stanley came in second, HSBC Bank third, JP Morgan ranked fourth, Citi Bank came in fifth, BNP Paribas sixth, Emirates NBD PJSC seventh, Societe General eighth, Bank ABC ninth, Sharjah and Islamic Bank and Dubai Islamic Bank both placed in tenth, followed by Nomura in twelfth.

During the first quarter of 2016, KAMCO acted as one of the Joint Lead Managers for the Burgan Bank KSCP's KWD 100 million, subordinated Tier 2, Basel III - compliant bonds. KAMCO was also one of the lead managers in Kuveyt Turk's Tier 2 capital-boosting sukuk worth USD 350 million issuance.

Bloomberg's corporate bond database consists of more than 1.9 million active securities including convertible bonds and preferred securities - along with more than 4.1 million matured, called or retired bonds, covering over 24,000 unique issuers across more than 130 countries and 100 different currencies.

EUROZONE JOBLESS RATE FALLS SLIGHTLY, OUTLOOK UNCERTAIN

BRUSSELS: The Eurozone unemployment rate improved only marginally in February, official data showed yesterday, stoking concerns the economy could be slowing after only a modest recovery. Analysts said that while the economy is holding up despite recent financial market volatility and concerns over the outlook for China, job gains may not be enough to help it get it through the current soft patch.

The Eurostat statistics agency said unemployment in the 19-nation Eurozone fell to 10.3 percent in February, a four-and-a-half year low, from a revised 10.4 percent in January. The January figure was originally given as 10.3 percent last month and analysts had expected the February jobless rate to come in unchanged at 10.3 percent.

Unemployment hit a record high 12.1 percent during the worst of the debt crisis.

Unemployment hit a record high 12.1 percent during the worst of the debt crisis. Jennifer McKeown at Capital Economics said yesterday figures "suggest the labor market remains in reasonable health although it is still too weak to generate any real inflationary pressure." Inflation-a key reflection of consumer demand-has bounced along the bottom for months, way short of the European Central Bank's target of near 2.0 percent.

"Looking ahead, survey evidence suggests that the Eurozone's labor market recovery is beginning to slow," McKeown added. The ECB launched a massive stimulus program in early 2015 but to little apparent effect and last month added even more unprecedented measures in an effort to get the economy

back on track. The ECB at the same time cut its Eurozone growth forecasts for 2016 and 2017 to 1.4 percent and 1.7 percent, from the previous 1.7 percent and 1.9 percent, respectively. More damaging still, it slashed its inflation estimates to just 0.1 percent from 1.0 percent for this year and to 1.3 percent from 1.6 percent for 2017.

Eurostat said there were 16.63 million jobless in the Eurozone in February, down 39,000 from January. The EU unemployment rate was unchanged at 8.9 percent in February, it said. The lowest jobless rates were in Germany, 4.3 percent, and the Czech Republic on 4.5 percent while the highest were in debt-laden Greece at 24 percent and Spain with 20.4 percent. Howard Archer at IHS Global Insight said that while Eurozone unemployment fell for a 15th consecutive month, "it is notable that the decline of 39,000 was the smallest drop since May 2015. "This stokes concern that recent slower Eurozone growth and softer business confidence could now be increasingly weighing down on the labor market,"

Archer said in a note.
On the positive side, the improvement might encourage the consumer to spend more, which will be crucial if Eurozone growth is to be able "regain momentum over the coming months after stuttering recently." The Eurozone economy grew 0.3 percent in the last three months of 2015, unchanged from the previous quarter but down on the 0.4 percent gain of the second quarter and 0.6 percent in the first. — AFP

IMF CHIEF DENIES THREAT TO PULL OUT OF GREEK BAILOUT

ATHENS/WASHINGTON: International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde denied on Sunday that IMF staff would push Greece closer to default as a negotiating tactic on a new Greek bailout deal, which she said was "still a good distance purp."

Lagarde said in a letter to Greece's prime minister that the debt talks should continue despite damage from reports of a leaked transcript suggesting that IMF staff may threaten to leave the bailout to force Furgingan landers to offer more debt relief.

to force European lenders to offer more debt relief.
"Any speculation that IMF staff would consider using a credit event as a negotiating tactic is simply nonsense," Lagarde wrote to Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras. "My view of the ongoing negotiations is that we are still a good distance away from having a coherent program that I can present to our Executive Board," Lagarde wrote, adding that such a deal must put Greece on a path of robust growth and gradually restore debt sustainability.

Tsipras' office said on Sunday that he had demanded that Lagarde clarify the IMF's stance after Internet whistleblowing site WikiLeaks published what it said was the transcript of a March 19 conference call of three senior IMF officials.

The officials were discussing tactics to apply pressure on Greece, Germany and the EU to reach a deal in April. They were quoted as discussing a threat that the fund might not participate in Greece's third bailout program as a way to force EU creditors, especially Germany, to reach a deal on debt relief before Britain's June referendum on whether to stay in the European Union.

EU/IMF lenders are due to resume talks on Greece's fiscal and reform progress in Athens on Monday, aiming to conclude a bailout review that will unlock further loans and pave the way for negotiations on long-desired debt restructuring.

Review adjourned

The review has been adjourned twice since January due to a rift among the lenders over the estimated size of Greece's fiscal gap by 2018, as well as disagreements with Athens on pension reforms

and the management of bad loans. The Greek government interpreted the leak as revealing an IMF effort to blackmail Athens with a possible credit event to force it to give in on pension cuts which it has rejected. In his letter to Lagarde, Tsipras "expressed his concern about the credibility of the negotiations after the leaks," an official at his office told Reuters. Lagarde said in her response that "the IMF conducts its negotiations in good faith, not by way of threats, and we do not communicate through leaks." She reiterated her view that if fiscal surplus targets were lowered for Greece, then more debt relief would be needed. German government and finance ministry representatives declined to comment on the leaked transcript.

Germany has in the past said the IMF is an important player in the Greek rescue but it does not support the debt relief demanded by the IMF. Some German officials also say that they believe there are different views on Greece within the IMF. German Chancellor Angela Merkel is due to meet Lagarde in Berlin on Tuesday. The purported conversation on the conference call involved Poul Thomsen, head of the IMF's Europe department, Delia Velculescu, leader of the IMF team in Greece, and IMF official Iva Petrova. They discussed whether Greece could apply more austerity as a condition for receiving more aid ahead of big debt repayments in July and voiced frustration at the European Commission's reluctance to side with IMF pressure on Athens. — Reuters



PARIS: International Monetary Fund Managing Director Christine Lagarde (L) and China's central bank governor Zhou Xiaochuan attend an all-day high-level seminar on the international financial architecture with G20 finance ministers and central bank governors at the French Economy ministry on March 31, 2016. — AFP









AL SAYER & SONS WIN 'OUTSTANDING CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD'

KUWAIT: In recognition of its outstanding continuous performance over eight years in a row, Toyota Motor Corporation recognized Mohamed Naser Al Sayer and Sons (MNSS) one of the Al Sayer Group Holding Companies as an appreciation of the impressive successes and continuous outstanding achievements, by bestowing 'Outstanding Customer Service Award' for the 8th consecutive year during a special ceremony held at The Convention Centre, Shuwaikh.

The event was attended by Yoshiro Nobe General Manager, Overseas Service Division, Masayuki Fukumori Project General Manager, Field Operations in the presence of Mubarak Naser Al Sayer Chief Executive Officer, Paul Reynolds Chief Operating Officer, Ibrahim Al-Fouzan Business Director Group Service Division along with Management Officials from MNSS.

Crediting Mohamed Naser Al Sayer on this achievement Yoshiro Nobe General Manager, Overseas Service Division said "Everybody has successfully worked under the leadership of Mr. Mubarak Naser Al Sayer towards this outstanding achievement, dedicated to accomplish the desired group goals and the best results to reflect the success of the strategy by providing excellent customer service.

MNSS has firmly rooted KAIZEN culture which is TOYOTA's DNA everywhere and has learned a lot of them. We believe that you will keep providing the best service to customers in Kuwait, exceeding their expectations to stay one of the most recognized distributors in the world. Wish for you growing success."

On this occasion Mubarak Naser Al Sayer, CEO Al Sayer Group said "Today we marked yet another milestone in the history of Al Sayer Group and MNSS. Eight times in a row



we have won the Outstanding Customer Service Award from Toyota Motor Corporation, which also puts us among the top 7 distributors in the World. This is a testimony of our strong and consistent team efforts towards building a true culture of customer care. Congratulations to Group Service and Spare Parts team members for your direct and indirect contributions for this remarkable achievement".

According to Paul Reynolds COO Al Sayer Group "Customer satisfaction influence potentially constitutes to be a vital element for successful after sales operations, hence immense focus in this area goes into winning this Award. Not just to win it, but because by winning we are

also contributing in a major way to achieve best results for Al Sayer Group in the region by working hard to run a sustainable business. He also reminded the importance and strength of Customer Care skills in the present competitive

Ibrahim Al Fouzan, Business Director, Group Service Division said "This year MNSS achieved the highest rating among other Toyota Distributors across the globe. So I would like use this opportunity to congratulate all our team members from service &parts Division for their hard work and commitment. I also appreciate our central functions including Technical & Warranty Department,

Customer Relation Department, Technical Training Department& Field Operations for their valuable contribution for this remarkable achievement."

For Al Sayer Group business units, 2016 is the year to push the boundaries of customer service. It is the year to transform customer service and imbibe values of guest hospitality, considering every customer as a guest and making them feel at home while visiting any Al Sayer facility. Board of Directors and Management has encouraged all employees of the Group to work towards building a culture of hospitality within all the divisions and departments.

THE LONGINES EQUESTRIAN COLLECTION: A TRIBUTE TO THE BRAND'S PASSION FOR THE EQUESTRIAN WORLD

KUWAIT: As a token of its long-running passion for equestrian sports and its attachment to its lady customers, Longines is launching a new line with shapes and materials inspired by iconic elements of the equine world. Boasting a decidedly bold design, the various models of this collection remain true to the elegance that characterizes the winged hourglass brand. The Longines Equestrian Collection has been created as an allegory of the equestrian world. Longines' history and the history of equestrian sports have been intertwined for over a century. It was therefore natural for the brand to dedicate a collection to this passion. The various models of The Longines Equestrian Collection are linked by their references to the equine world. Shapes and materials derive their inspiration from symbolic elements of this environment, like a sublime echo of the world of horse lovers. Longines thus celebrates the elegance of riders and their mounts.

Arches on racetracks evoking horseshoes, stirrups acting as supports to follow their horse around the high jump course, fine leather of saddles: All these strong images are found in the bold

KUWAIT: As a token of its long-running passion for equestrian sports and its attachment to its lady customers, Longines is launching a new line with shapes and materials inspired by iconic elements of the equine world. Boasting a decidedly bold design, the various models of this collection remain true to the elegance

The models evoking the arch are available in four sizes - 23 mm, 26 mm and 30 mm and 34 mm - while watches drawing their inspiration from the stirrup come in three sizes, 23.50 mm, 26.50 mm and 30 mm. Their steel cases house a quartz movement and each of these watches also comes in a diamond-set version. The polished black lacquer and mother-of-pearl dials are adorned with diamond indexes, while the silver-colored flinque dial features Roman numerals and the silver-colored sunburst dial Arabic numerals. The stirrup-shaped model with a mother-of-pearl dial is also available in an even more dazzling version, decorated with a double row of diamonds. All the watches in this collection are fitted with overstitched leather straps matching the rider outfit.

PARIS TELECOM STOCKS DIVE AS ORANGE STALLS BUYING RIVAL

PARIS; Stocks in French telecoms companies fell sharply yesterday after market leader Orange said talks to purchase the rival network owned by industrial group Bouygues had failed. The company said that "after in-depth discussions, the Board of Directors of Orange has concluded that an agreement regarding a possible consolidation with Bouygues Telecom has not been reached.

"The decision has therefore been taken to end the discussions with Bouygues that have been ongoing since" January, Orange said in a statement Friday. Shares in Orange fell 5.2 percent in morning Paris stock exchange business yesterday, Bouygues fell 15.8 percent, Iliad, parent company of the Free operator, dropped 13.5 percent and Numericable-SFR 12.2 percent.

"There was much expectation surrounding the talks by the four operators," said HPC trader Xavier de Villepion. "It was in their interest to reach a conclusion." Deutsche Bank's recommendation for Orange shares went from "neutral" from "buy", while Berenberg now calls Bouygues a "sell" from its previous "neutral" call.

Sources said that the valuation of the two companies was one of the main sticking points in the talks and would have resulted in the number of mobile operators in France dropping to three-a number that many analysts believe is all the French market can bear, instead of the current four. Another was the risks that the deal would be blocked by competition authorities over concerns it could lead to higher prices for consumers.

Big players

Bouygues chairman Martin Bouygues told daily Le Figaro's online edition that three of France's big players had wanted the merger to succeed but the fourth, whom he did not name, had put a spanner in the works. "There were four of us around the negotiating table, but only three of us wanted to make it work,"

he said in remarks published yesterday. "Clearly one the players had the ambition to get the most while paying the least, with the option of pulling out," he said.

Asked whether he meant Free chairman Xavier Niel, Bouygues said: "Everyone is entitled to their own interpretation." The two companies announced publicly in January they were holding talks, the second time they have considered a tie-up, and the fifth attempt in two years to consolidate the market where operators have been slashing prices to capture customers.

"...Orange will pursue the deployment of its strategic plan, launched in 2015, that is focused on investment in very high-speed broadband networks and providing an unmatched customer experience," said the company, adding its financial targets remain unchanged. The deal would have seen considerable concentration of the market as Orange held 38.8 percent of the market at the end of last year, with Bouygues Telecom in third position with 16.3 percent.

A considerable portion of Bouygues Telecom's network was expected to be immediately sold off by Orange to the other two operators in the market in order to alleviate competition concerns. The French state, which still owns 23 percent in Orange, the successor to the national phone operator, played a key role in the outcome of the talks, according to one source.

"The state wanted Orange shares to be valued at a price much higher than at the market" and imposed conditions that were likely to be difficult for the Bouygues group to accept, said the person familiar with the talks. "It got so complex that it failed," said another source. "We ended up with a monster of a deal that contained too large uncertainties concerning competition and in the end Bouygues found it too risky." Martin Bouygues told the Figaro that he was "not worried" about his company's future. "The company is perfectly viable in a four-player market," he said. — AFP



This undated photo provided by Tesla Motors shows the new Model 3 car.— AP

TESLA UP 276,000 MODEL 3 ORDERS IN JUST THREE DAYS

SAN FRANCISCO: Orders for the much-hyped Tesla Model 3, a cheaper version of its electric car aimed at the mass market, have surged to 276,000 in just three days, company founder Elon Musk said Sunday. Orders are piling up fast and exceeding the expectations of the company for its Model 3 — which will have a base price of \$35,000 — even though it won't be available until late next year.

Amid reports of queues to snap up the vehicle, Musk tweeted: "276k Model 3 orders by end of Sat." And in a subsequent tweet added: "A Model 3 order gives you priority in your geography, so, even though the total count is high, ordering early will make a big difference locally."

With the Model 3, a compact sedan unveiled Thursday, Tesla aims to show it can appeal to the general public and produce cars en masse. The base price is half that of Tesla's luxury Model S and the Model X, which start at \$70,000. Musk said Thursday that orders had passed 115,000 worldwide and hinting that demand was outstripping expectation later tweeted: "Definitely going to need to rethink production planning..." — AFP

GERMAN CAR SALES STAGNATE IN MARCH

FRANKFURT: New car registrations in Germany, a key indicator of demand in Europe's top economy, stagnated in March, but largely as result of statistical effects related to the timing of the Easter holidays, data showed yesterday.

A total of 323,000 new cars were registered last month, unchanged from the figure for the same month in 2015, according to data compiled by the carmakers' federation VDA. Nevertheless, "a 12-month comparison of the March data is not really meaningful because the Easter holidays last year fell in April, while in this year they fell in

March," said VDA president Matthias Wissmann.

"In addition, there was one more working day in March last year. That means we should wait for the two-month comparison in April," Wissmann said. Taking the first three months of the 2016 as a whole, new registrations were up four percent at 791,500 over the same period a year earlier, VDA calculated. The timing of the Easter holidays also left its mark on production with seven percent fewer vehicles rolling off the production lines in March, VDA said. Exports were down eight percent at 396,300 vehicles in March, it added. — AFP

KASPERSKY LAB RELEASES SECURITY FOR WINDOWS SERVER APPLICATION

DUBAI: Kaspersky Lab has unveiled new damage across the whole network. version Kaspersky Security for Windows Server application, which has been developed specifically for high performance corporate servers. The new Kaspersky Security for Windows Server provides costeffective, reliable, scalable security for shared file storage, with minimal impact on resources. The solution's Anti-Cryptor technologyis designed to protect IT infrastructure from cryptomalware.

As the complexity of corporate IT infrastructure increases, the need for reliable, multi-layered cyber security, which protects business servers, also grows. A comprehensive approach to security is becoming essential for businesses, as a single infected file anywhere in a corporate network can spread rapidly, causing untold Cryptomalware, for example, can infiltrate and encrypt an entire network - including its backups - within minutes. This can bring entire business operations to a halt and leave a business without the ability to restore its critical data.

Appropriate dedicated server security helps to protect critical corporate data and eliminate the danger of malware penetrating the backup copies of files. With this in mind, Kaspersky Lab has updated its security application for servers; using all of its expertise and intelligence to provide customers with reliable security against the latest malware threats.

The solution's new features make the security of corporate servers even more flexible, and easy to manage.

The solution identifies and scans critical areas of a business's corporate servers for malware, helping to strengthen those areas of the operating system that are most exposed to infection. For example, scanning Autorun files can help prevent malware from launching during system startup and can detect any hidden processes. To help protect businesses from unknown and advanced threats, Kaspersky Security for Windows Server includes Application Startup Control. This provides customers with unprecedented security, using configured rules to allow or block the startup of executable files, scripts, and installation packages, or the loading of program modules onto servers. The solution leverages Anti-Cryptor technology, which is unparalleled on the market and based on a patented Kaspersky Lab algorithm. This uses behaviour analysis to detect and protect shared folders from encryption activitypreventing a business from being locked out of its own files, and being forced to pay a ransom for their 'release'.

Another technology uses by the solution is malicious host blocker. If any malicious activity is detected through Real-Time File Protection or Anti-Cryptor activities, access to shared network folders is immediately restricted to a secure server, protecting files from damage by any malicious third parties.

A Kaspersky Lab Head of Endpoint Product Management, Konstantin Voronkov, commented, "Cryptomalware is a big issue in the business world. Today, many cybercriminals are using it to earn so

called "fast money", because it's easy to implement and commit a cybercrime like this. No business wants to lose its sensitive data, so a lot of victims end up paying for their data to be decrypted straight away. But cybercriminals don't always stick to their side of the bargain and decrypt data after payment. That's why it's important that businesses use appropriate security solutions, back up sensitive data and increase security awareness among employees, instead leaving themselves exposed to this unfair game. You will be safer with a proactive security strategy in place, than if your business is being held at ransom." The application available as a part of Kaspersky Security for File Server, Kaspersky Endpoint Security for Business and Kaspersky Security for Storage.



Hannes Liebe, Chief Operating Officer, SAP MENA.

Hany Hussein, Regional VP, **Channels & Alliances Middle East**

HUAWEI, SAP AND SEIDOR **ANNOUNCE JOINT INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP**

DUBAI: Huawei, a global information and communications technology provider announced a regional joint innovation partnership with global enterprise software provider SAP and Seidor MENA, a systems integrator that provides ICT consulting services.

Huawei's collaboration with SAP and Seidor MENA will focus on establishing a technical alliance to provide a comprehensive Internet of Things (IoT) and Big Data solution that will digitally transform the region's enterprises, offering more agility and allowing them to run more efficiently.

The development of the loT industry, including the utilization of Big Data, is widely considered to be the fourth industrial revolution, following those driven by the steam engine, electricity and information technology. IoT solutions have the power to address world challenges for everything from connected transportation and emergency services to energy management, by seamlessly connecting physical objects into the information network.

The synergy between the three ICT companies will allow customers to benefit from Huawei's expertise in providing hardware and infrastructure solutions, SAP's wide application software portfolio and Seidor Mena's technology consulting services. The digital transformation event was recently hosted by Huawei, SAP and Seidor MENA, under the theme 'The Internet of Things Meets Big Data'. The event demonstrated the three ICT leader's innovation partnership through a series of sessions alongside success stories that will be presented by an end-user. The sessions addressed the role that the partnership will play to drive the IoT era using predictive analytics, reliable robust hardware infrastructure and strong consulting capabilities to help implement digital transformation.

CAPABILITIES

At the event Huawei, SAP and Seidor MENA have organized a series of program sessions that will demonstrate how each of their strengths and capabilities add significant value when combined, allowing them to offer a unique holistic IoT and Big Data solution for businesses in the Middle East.

Hany Hussein, Vice President of Partners & Alliances from Huawei Middle East said: "Huawei values our new win-win partnership with SAP and Seidor MENA, which allows us to offer a truly unique IoT and Big Data for regional enterprises looking to streamline their business processes. With our expertise in ICT hardware infrastructure, Huawei is committed to collaborating with SAP's application software solutions and Seidor MENA's consulting services so that we can market our combined capabilities to develop differentiated IoT and Big Data solutions. This innova-



Ignacio Ruiz de Eguilaz, Managing **Director at Seidor MENA.**

tion partnership is designed to help local enterprises across different sectors deploy new technologies easily and quickly, making them more efficient and allow them to save bottom line costs."

The joint innovation partnership follows previous successful collaborations between Huawei and SAP, which saw the companies integrate Huawei's ICT infrastructure and connectivity solutions with SAP HANA Cloud Platform, SAP applications and analytic tools. This initial partnership focused on developing agile manufacturing, smart energy and transportation solutions with SAP HANA Cloud Platform.

SIMPLIFY BUSINESSES

Hannes Liebe, Chief Operating Officer, SAP MENA, said: "With the rise in Smart Cities and hyper-connected mega-events, the Middle East region is posting strong demand for cloud-based IoT solutions that can harness the power of real-time insights to simplify business operations, drive government innovation, and transform daily lives. By combining Huawei's ICT infrastructure, the SAP HANA platform for real-time Big Data analytics, and Seidor's regional expertise in systems integration, we are joining forces to deliver global best practices to support the Middle East's digital transformation."

System's Integrator, Seidor MENA, provides SAP's comprehensive next generation platform technology services covering consulting, infrastructure, implementation, development, and maintenance of applications. Its SAP practice is pillared by twenty-five industry solutions tailored for the small and medium busi-

ness (SME) sector in the Middle East. "We are thrilled to team up with Huawei and SAP to simplify our clients business and keep them a step ahead from competition. This partnership will add very strong value proposition in digital transformation and making business run simple," said Ignacio Ruiz de Equilaz, Managing Director Seidor MENA.

AFFORDABLE MODEL 3 IS TESLA'S BIGGEST TEST YET

DETROIT: The promise of an affordable electric car from Tesla Motors had hundreds of people lining up to reserve one. Tesla planned to unveil its Model 3 Thursday night at its Los Angeles design studio. It doesn't go on sale until late 2017, but potential buyers could reserve one with a \$1,000 deposit at Tesla stores starting Thursday morning.

Long lines, reminiscent of the crowds at Apple stores for early models of the iPhone, were reported from Hong Kong to Austin, Texas, to Washington. At a starting price of \$35,000 - before federal and state government incentives - the Model 3 is less than half the cost of Tesla's previous models. The car is expected to have a range of at least 200 miles when fully charged, about double what drivers get from competitors in its price range, such as the Nissan Leaf and BMW i3.

Robin Santucci got the sixth spot in line when he arrived at the Santa Monica, California, Tesla store at 3:45 a.m. Thursday. By 9 a.m., he estimated there were 200 people in line.

Santucci has admired Tesla for years. When he got his current car, an electric Fiat 500, he made sure the lease would run out at the end of 2017 so his next car could be the Model 3.

"The design of every other car they've put out is beautiful," said Santucci, who works in digital advertising and lives in West Hollywood. Santucci added that he didn't want to wait too long to order a car because the federal tax credit of \$7,500 will sunset once Tesla sells 200,000 vehi cles in the U.S. That's likely several years away, but customers like Santucci want to be sure they qualify.

The Model 3 is the most serious test yet of 13-year-old Tesla's ability to go from a niche player to a fullfledged automaker. It could be the car that finally makes electrics mainstream - or customers could be scared off by Tesla's limited number of stores, chargers and service centers. Either way, the Model 3 is already changing the industry, spurring competitors to speed development of electric cars and improve their battery range.

Tesla didn't release details about the car before the event. Right now,



HAWTHORNE: People sit at computers where they can reserve one of the cars before Tesla Motors unveils the Model 3 at the Tesla Motors design studio, in Hawthorne, Calif. —AP

Tesla sells two vehicles: The Model S sedan, which starts at \$71,000, and the Model X SUV, which starts around \$80,000. But a lower-priced car has been a longtime goal of Tesla CEO Elon Musk. In a 2006 blog post, Musk said Tesla planned to build "a wide range of models, including affordably priced family cars" in order to speed the world toward a solar-powered

The Model 3 puts Tesla within reach of millions more customers. Last year, only 2.1 percent of new cars purchased in the US cost \$75,000 or more, but 35 percent - or 5.5 million cost \$35,000 or more, according to TrueCar. The Model 3 is a critical part of the money-losing automaker's plan to increase sales from around 85,000 this year to 500,000 by 2020.

But Tesla faces several hurdles. US buyers remain skeptical of electric cars, and low gas prices haven't helped already anemic sales. Sales of

new electric vehicles grew 6 percent in the US last year, but they still remain less than 1 percent of the overall vehicle market, according to IHS Automotive. Tesla also faces growing competition from big, deep-pock-

Here's what we know about the

WHEN WILL IT GO ON SALE? Tesla has said it expects to start Model 3 production at its Fremont, California, factory at the end of 2017. But the company has a history of delays. The Model X, which went on sale last fall, was initially due to go on sale in early 2014. Musk said last month that the Model 3, unlike the Model X, is designed for "ease of manufacturing." Still, some analysts are doubtful. Morgan Stanley auto analyst Adam Jonas thinks Tesla won't start building the Model 3 until the

WHO ARE ITS COMPETITORS? General Motors is set to start selling

the Chevrolet Bolt electric car at the end of this year, a full year before the Model 3. The Bolt will have 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. Musk said last month he's not worried. He thinks the Model 3 will compete most directly with small luxury cars like the Audi A4 and the BMW 3 Series.

HOW DID TESLA MAKE THE MODEL 3 LESS EXPENSIVE?

Cheaper batteries. Tesla previously assembled its battery packs with battery cells made in Japan by Panasonic Corp. But Tesla and Panasonic are building a massive, \$5 billion factory in Nevada which will supply batteries for the Model 3. Tesla says the scale of the factory will lower the cost of its battery packs by 30 percent. —AP

SOLAR FARM DEVELOPERS TARGET NEW YORK WITH LEASE OFFERS

ALBANY: Less than a year after New York banned fracking, dashing the hopes of farmers who had hoped to reap royalties from natural gas leases, the commercial solar industry is courting landowners for energy production.

Buoyed by Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo's renewable energy plan and the extension of the 30 percent federal tax credit in December, solar companies in recent months have blanketed rural areas with mailings seeking leases on farmland for solar arrays spanning 20 acres or more. While some farmers welcome the opportunity to earn up to \$2,000 an acre annually for the next 20 years or so, some agricultural advisers, community leaders and lawyers are urging caution.

"These are complex business transactions masquerading as lottery tickets," said Chris Denton, a southern New York lawyer who helped landowner groups negotiate oil and gas leases during the Marcellus Shale gas rush in 2009. "There are unexamined risks and environmental impacts. That's why landowners are banding together again to formulate leases that will protect their interests."

Manna Jo Greene, environmental director for the nonprofit Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, said the developing solar boom is welcome but only if it's done right. While a solar development is a beneficial use for a former landfill, it might not be appropriate for prime farmland, she said. And there are many guestions concerning zoning, agricultural tax benefits, effects on farm operations, and the eventual decommissioning and dis-

posal of the solar components. "A lease promising \$20,000 or \$40,000

a year is tempting to farmers who are struggling," said Greene, who is also an Ulster County legislator. "But we're trying to get the word out to be cautious and not let a developer strip them of their

property rights." The Cuomo administration's initiatives aimed at promoting local renewable energy generation, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and generating 50 percent of the state's energy from renewable sources by 2030 are bringing solar developers to the state. One company, Santa Monica, California-based Cypress Creek Renewables, has mass-mailed lease offers to hundreds of upstate landowners.

"We expect to have operational projects in every utility load distribution zone in New York by the end of 2017," said Cypress Creek spokesman Jeff McKay. The company already has operational sites in North and South Carolina, Texas, Indiana, Missouri, Minnesota, Oregon and Georgia, he said.

SOLAR INDUSTRY GROWING

"New York's solar industry is growing



CATAWBA COUNTY: This Sept 30, 2015 aerial photo provided by Cypress Creek Renewables, shows a commercial solar farm built on farmland by Cypress Creek Renewables in Catawba County, NC. Less than a year after New York banned fracking, dashing the hopes of farmers who had hoped to reap royalties from natural gas leases, the commercial solar industry is courting landowners for energy production. —AP

Department of Public Service spokesman Jon Sorensen. He said that the state doesn't have figures on solar leasing activity but that energy and agriculture agencies are developing information to help farmers make leasing decisions.

"It's happening so fast, it's caught people off-guard," said Elizabeth Higgins of the Cornell Cooperative Extension in Ulster County

Several New York towns, including the Orange County town of Goshen, have enacted moratoriums on new solar farms to allow officials to consider any zoning changes that might be necessary.

A similar solar boom has been going on in North Carolina for about four years, driven by state-mandated rules for utility power purchases that favor solar developers. At least 200 commercial solar farms have been established in North Carolina, mostly around 5 megawatts but ranging to up to 80 megawatts, said Tommy Cleveland of North Carolina State University's Clean Energy Technology

Objections similar to those being raised in New York were raised in North Carolina. "There has been concern about taking prime land out of farm production," he said. "In the last two years, we've installed more than any state other than California, and it's still only a tenth of a percent of our farmland."

For some farmers in New York, the leases could mean salvation. Marginal land could become productive, and prime cropland could produce income without labor and other costs during a 20-year lease, with the potential to one day return to crop production. —AP

MAKERS TOOK BIG PRICE INCREASES ON WIDELY USED US DRUGS

'Companies have complete control over pricing in the US'

NEW YORK: Major drug companies took hefty price increases in the US, in some cases more than doubling listed charges, for widely used medications over the past five years, a Reuters analysis of proprietary data found. Prices for four of the nation's top 10 drugs increased more than 100 percent since 2011, Reuters found. Six others went up more than 50 percent. Together, the price increases on drugs for arthritis, high cholesterol, asthma and other common problems added billions in costs for consumers, employers and government health

Extraordinary price hikes by two small companies, Turing Pharmaceuticals and Valeant Pharmaceuticals International Inc, drew new attention to drug costs. Turing expected to book \$200 million by raising the price of Daraprim, an antiparasitic used for a rare infection, by 5,000 percent, according to company documents released by Congressional investigators. Routine price increases by bigger players may draw less attention, but they add up. Sales for the top 10 drugs went up 44 percent to \$54 million in 2014, from 2011, even though prescriptions for the medications dropped 22

At the top of the list was AbbVie Inc,

percent, according to IMS Health data.

which raised the price of arthritis drug Humira more than 126 percent, Reuters found. Next were Amgen Inc and Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd, which raised prices for arthritis treatment Enbrel and multiple sclerosis drug Copaxone by 118

The increases help explain federal data showing overall spending on drugs rose faster than doctor visits and hospitalization over the past five years. Reuters based its analysis on the top 10 drugs, according to 2014 sales figures from IMS, and on proprietary pricing data provided by Truven Health Analytics. Reuters used commonly prescribed approved indications. Reuters shared its method and findings with the eight companies that sell the top 10 drugs; none disputed the findings. In general, drug companies said they set prices to recoup investments in failed drugs, support new research and development efforts, and pay for clinical trials to broaden the use of approved drugs. Also, they said, medications prevent costly hospitalizations.

Some of the companies noted that

Reuters' analysis of list prices failed to capture negotiated discounts and rebates information they closely guard. In a few cases, companies offered a limited view into proprietary prices. Amgen, for instance, told Reuters that, after most discounts, the average sales price for a dose of Enbrel is at least \$200 less than list.

And, while Reuters found arthritis drug Remicade went up almost 63 percent, Johnson & Johnson spokeswoman Caroline Pavis said average selling price increases were closer to 5.4 percent per year. For GlaxoSmithKline Plc's Advair asthma drug, Reuters found a 67 percent increase. But spokeswoman Jenni Ligday said that, with discounts and rebates, prices actually fell during the period. Even after discounts, pharmacy benefit managers told Reuters they pay annual price increases on top medications of up to 10 percent. By comparison, the US consumer price index rose an average of 2 percent annually over the last five years. Dr Steve Miller, chief medical officer of top US pharmacy benefit manager Express Scripts Holding Corp, said the current level of drug price increases was "not

New focus

Drug prices have been a hot topic on the presidential campaign trail and in Congress since Turing hiked Daraprim and Valeant imposed triple-digit price increases on two heart drugs.

Adding to the political pressure is the practice among employers and insurers of passing increases onto consumers. Patricia Calopietro, 70, said she once paid \$20 for a three-month supply of Nexium. AstraZeneca Plc raised the list price of the acid reflux drug nearly 50 percent over the past five years, and Calopietro's insurer pushed her out-of-pocket share up to \$250. She switched to a cheaper medicine but doesn't like how it works.

"How can I pay something like that? I'm 70 years old, and I'm on a fixed income," said Calopietro, a retired sales manager for the US Army & Air Force Exchange stores from Lorton, Virginia. Leading drugmakers say price hikes by Turing and Valeant are outliers. "Our industry invests on average 20 percent of our revenues into research and development. It's a fundamentally different business model," said Robert Zirkelbach, a spokesman for industry lobby Pharmaceutical Research

HISTORIC DENGUE VACCINE

PROGRAM LAUNCHED IN PHILIPPINES

and Manufacturers of America, or PhRMA.

Sanofi SA, Teva, Amgen, J&J and AstraZeneca, which all have top 10 drugs, said they offer assistance to low income consumers. AstraZeneca spokeswoman Abigail Bozarth said the company sets prices based on market conditions, "a common practice across the industry." Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center oncologist Peter Bach said patients would be better served if drug prices reflected value, instead of bargaining power. Pharmaceutical "companies have complete control over pricing in the US," he said. By Bach's estimate, increases last year on just one drug, Amgen's Enbrel, added up to \$1 billion to care costs. In a statement, Amgen spokeswoman Kristen Davis questioned Bach's estimate, saying it is impossible to infer revenue growth from list price increases because of other factors, including rebates and discounts.

Davis said Amgen prices reflect research and development costs of \$33 billion over a decade. Rebates and discounts bring the average sales price for a weekly dose of Enbrel to \$704.23, down from its list price of \$932.16, she said. —Reuters



PRAGUE: A cat being held by a customer at the cat cafe Kocic Kavarna. — AFP photos

CZECH CAT CAFE BOOM PAIRS SOOTHING STROKES WITH JAVA JOLTS



PRAGUE: A cat sitting on a bed at a cat cafe Kocic Kavarna.

PRAGUE: NOX sniffs curiously at a cup of creamy Vienna coffee and a plate of chocolate cake, then leaps off the table into the lap of a young woman, an afternoon visitor to Prague's oldest cat cafe. The jet-black cat is one of eight that Kockafe ("kocka" being Czech for "cat") has acquired from a Prague animal shelter to help its customers feel cosy and relaxed. "Cats radiate calm and purring is very pleasant, people simply like it," says Jana Parizkova, a 25-year-old tourist guide who opened the cafe in the Czech capital along with her mother and sister.

"Cats bring people together - guests who don't know each other have something to talk about, which is great," she tells AFP, surrounded by cats leaping on the bar or resting by the window. Already popular in Japan, Taiwan, and other parts of Asia and Europe, cat cafes are booming across the Czech Republic, with a dozen having popped up since the summer of 2014. "My wife and I opened the cafe a year ago. We had seven cats at home and now we have nine here," says 45-year-old Ivan Herak, a former manager, who runs one of the four cat cafes in tourist-magnet Prague. Unlike Parizkova, Herak relies on British marbled cats, which he breeds himself.

"I need cats that like being caressed, that aren't afraid of people, while cats from a shelter are often easily frightened," Herak says, stroking a big tomcat with a bell on his collar and calling him "Darling." At the Kockafe, Parizkova has taken several stray cats off the street, including a kitten she found outside her cafe on the day it opened, and allows guests to adopt its felines. "A cafe isn't an ideal place for a cat that's why we have cats from a shelter, their experience is so terrible that they find the cafe OK," she says with a smile.

But she admits it is difficult to find cats suitable for cafe life. The felines must be "completely relaxed and composed in order to handle the bustle here." Among the Kockafe's customers, Karolina Brabcova has taken a kitten home, while her friend Lucie Kubrova, a student, already has a cat but still frequents the cafe to soak up its unique atmosphere. "Cats make it far more pleasant - you don't just gulp down your cup of coffee and leave; instead, you sit, play with the cats and spend more time here," Kubrova says over a plateful of pizza, graciously ignored by Nox and his peers.

Herak says about 80 per cent of the people who come to his cafe already have cats of their own at home.

"They are cat lovers, they know the cats will be on the table and curious about their plates, so to speak, but they don't mind." But he adds some clients find the idea of pairing coffee and cats unappealing. "When we opened the cafe, a lady in her sixties came over and asked if we really sold meals made from cat meat. That, you've got to admit, was shocking." — AFP

combat the sometimes deadly disease. Several

hundred children aged 9-10 queued in front of government health workers at a public school in eastern Manila for the injections, capping a 20year, 1.5-billion-euro (\$1.8 bn) effort by French drug manufacturer Sanofi to develop the vaccine. "We are the first country to introduce, adopt and implement the first-ever dengue vaccine

MANILA: The world's first public dengue vaccination program was launched in the Philippines yesterday as nurses began injecting the first batch of a million children with a French drug to

public school settings," said Philippine Health Secretary Janette Garin. The Philippines had in December approved the vaccine, the first to be licensed globally to combat the mosquito-borne disease for people aged between nine and 45. Zelin Joice Carungay, aged nine, cried briefly as she and her classmates

fell in line for the vaccine on teacher's orders. "I'm terrified of needles but they told us we need it to

through the public health system and under

avoid dengue," the girl told reporters. "In the end it felt nothing more than an ant's bite," the

relieved child said afterwards. Dengue or haemorrhagic fever, the world's most common mosquito-borne virus, infects an estimated 390 million people in more than 120 countries each year, killing more than 25,000, according to the World Health Organization. Symptoms are often mild but more than two million people annually develop more serious symptoms-which can involve severe headaches, pain behind the eyes, a rash, pain in the joints, muscles or bones and leaking blood vessels.

Asia is home to some 70 percent of cases worldwide. In the Philippines 200,000 cases were



MANILA: A nurse shows vials of the anti-dengue vaccine at Parang Elementary School in

reported in 2013, according to Sanofi. The company said the vaccine should prevent eight out of 10 dengue hospitalizations and up to 93 percent of severe haemorrhagic dengue fever cases. "This initiative sends a strong message to the rest of the world that dengue vaccination is a critical addition to integrated disease prevention efforts," Sanofi said in a statement. Sanofi's two-decade effort to develop the vaccine included 25 clinical studies in

15 countries. This saw 29,000 volunteers receive a vaccine that, aside from the Philippines, has also been registered in Mexico, Brazil and El Salvador, according to Sanofi. Of 17,000 people who were injected with the vaccine in the Philippines in February as part of the clinical study, just 27 developed side effects, proving it was an effective vaccine, Health Undersecretary Vicente Belizario told reporters. — AFP





YIACO MEDICAL COMPANY INTRODUCES NEW RETAIL PHARMACEUTICAL CONCEPT

KUWAIT: In line with YIACO Medical YIACO continues to evolve and as part of Company's new strategic direction, the healthcare leader recently inaugurated its latest new scale model pharmacy featuring a brand new look and expanded pharmacy care services with an aim to enhance the retail experience of its customers.

The newly opened YIACO pharmacy is located in Arabia Mall in the Eqaila district. "We are thrilled to have this opportunity to introduce our integrated pharmacy services and healthcare expertise to our customers across Kuwait" commented Dr Bader Alzaid Al-Taraji, CEO of YIACO Medical Company.

"The way our customers engage with

our strategic plan, we continue to listen and respond to their needs.

Our efforts to innovate our pharmacy care services by going beyond the traditional pharmacy experience offer our customers with expanded wellness options and increased access to healthcare" commented Dr. Mohammed Barham, COO of YIACO Medical Company.

Dr Mahdi Mashharawi, Retail Pharmacies Manager, explained that the new YIACO pharmacy also includes a wellness and education corner that will also allow customers to seek advice and receive more educational insight from highly qualified pharmacists. Designed by an award winning international design agency, the new look adopts new design shelving and retail displays which ensures a seamless and easy to navigate flow cycle for customers encouraging visits which promote precaution and wellness in a much warmer and friendly environment. Over the past 60 years, YIACO Medical Co. has grown to be one of the largest healthcare networks in Kuwait, and caters both medical products & services to the private and public sectors. One of YIACO's greatest milestones since 1953 is having one of the largest pharmacy chain in Kuwait.



TESTOSTERONE MAY LOWER HEART ATTACK RISK IN OLDER MEN

MIAMI: Older men with clogged arteries who took testosterone therapy seemed to have a lower risk of heart attacks than men who did not take the hormone, a study suggested Sunday. Testosterone is currently considered risky to the heart, and the US Food and Drug Administration mandated last year that manufacturers of all approved testosterone products add labels to describe these dangers, which include heart attack and stroke.

The methods of the study were observational-one of the weakest kinds of scientific research-but its authors said the results should lead to more rigorous trials on the hormone therapy in the future. The study by Intermountain Medical Center Heart Institute in Salt Lake City included 755 men, aged 58 to 78, with severe coronary artery disease and low testosterone. Those who did not take testosterone as part of their follow up were 80 percent more likely to suffer a heart attack, stroke, or death from a cardiovascular event in the next three years. After a year, 64 patients who were not taking testosterone supplements suffered major adverse cardiovascular events, compared to 21 taking testosterone.

After three years, 125 patients not on testosterone therapy patients suffered major adverse cardiovascular events, compared to 60 patients receiving the hormone. The findings were presented at the American College of Cardiology conference

"Although this study indicates that hypo-androgenic men with coronary artery disease might actually be protected by testosterone replacement, this is an observational study that doesn't provide enough evidence to justify changing treatment recommendations," said cardiologist Brent Muhlestein, co-director of cardiovascular research at the Intermountain Medical Center Heart Institute. "It does, however, substantiate the need for a randomized clinical trial that can confirm or refute the results of this study." — AFP

HEALTH & SCIENCE



NAAMEH, Lebanon: A general view shot taken on March 30, 2016, shows trucks dumping their load at the Naameh landfill, just south of the Lebanese capital, Beirut. — AFP photos



NAAMEH, Lebanon: Lebanese schoolgirls play in their garden in the village of Baawarta as trucks are seen in the background unloading garbage at the Naameh landfill.

TO FLEE LEBANON'S TRASH CRISIS, FAMILY HEADS TO SYRIA

'THE SMELL IS WORSE BECAUSE IT'S BEEN THERE FOR SEVEN TO EIGHT MONTHS

NAAMEH, Lebanon: Imagine living near a trash dump so putrid that you would rather move to war-torn Syria. That's what Fayyad Ayyash, his wife Riham and their four young daughters plan to do next week, leaving behind their home in Lebanon for neighboring Syria. Their modest two-storey house in the town of Naameh, about 20 kilometers (12 miles) south of the Lebanese capital, directly overlooks the infamous and odorous landfill by the same name. "We're going next week. In Syria, there's a possibility I might die. Here, we'll definitely die," Fayyad tells

From his grassy backyard, dozens of large trucks carrying tons of waste can be seen-and smelled-lining up to add their load to the "trash mountain." The July 2015 closure of the notorious landfill lies at the heart of Lebanon's trash crisis, which has seen rivers of trash spread across the Mediterranean country, triggering protests nationwide. Then last month, the government made a controversial decision to reopen it and this was the last straw for residents like Fayyad. Pulling out a bright blue inhaler, he says his family has been suffering from respiratory problems for months because

His daughters, whose ages range from just under two to 10 years, all have trouble eating and sleeping. "It's always worse at night than during the day. The whole area is swarming with the same smell and the same sickness," he says. Fayyad says it's become so bad, he's decided to flee across the border to the town of Libeen in southern Syria, a country where a conflict has been raging since 2011.

Costly medical bills

The Naameh landfill opened in 1997 and was meant to be a temporary dump, but an alternative site was never opened. For 20 years, the waste generated in Beirut and Mount Lebanonthe country's most populous areas-was dumped in Naameh. The verdant valley swelled into a trash mountain of more than 15 million tons. Furious residents forced the closure of the site in July 2015, saying it was leading to high cancer rates, skin diseases and breathing problems. Uncollected rubbish began piling up around Beirut and its suburbs, emitting a horrible stench that sparked protests in downtown Beirut demanding a long-term solution. After months of political wrangling, Lebanon's cabinet announced a four-year plan to end the waste crisis-and its first step was reopening Naameh for two months.

"When the dump reopened, my baby immediately started throwing up again," Fayyad says. Fayyad and his Syrian wife, Riham, are both Druze, an offshoot of Islam. Riham estimates that she spends about \$1,000 (around 880 euros) per month on doctor's visits, inhalers, and other medication for her children.

Pointing to her bare finger, she says she had to sell her wedding ring to cover the costs. "I wish my kids would eat food as much as they take medicine," she says. Riham's family hails from Libeen, in Syria's southern Sweida province. That's where she will travel to next week, in the hope that the open plains there will be good for her children.

Suitcase 'packed and ready'

Sweida, the heartland of Syria's Druze minority, has come under attack by jihadists of the Islamic State group but has seen less fighting than other parts of the country.

"No, it isn't safe, but I'm forced to leave... I have a suitcase packed and ready on top of the closet," Riham says. Farouk Merhebi from the American University of Beirut says the smell has probably made life incredibly uncomfortable for hundreds living within a one-kilometer radius of the dump. Before the crisis began, trash trucks would dump between 2,800 to 3,000 tons of waste per day in Naameh, says Merhebi, who is AUB's director of environmental health, safety and risk management.

"Now it's about 8,000 to 9,000 tons. The operations almost tripled because they're playing catch-up with the trash that had accumulated," he says. "The waste that has accumulated in streets has fermented, so the smell is offensive... The smell is worse because it's been there for seven to eight months." But the long-term health effects of the dump on the surrounding area remain untested.

Merhebi is part of a team at AUB hoping for funding to complete research in the area "to test the surface water, ground water, and some samples of the soil as well as samples of ambient air." But Fayyad and his family say they cannot wait. "Riham's family said they were thinking of coming to Lebanon," he says. "But we told them, 'do you want to die here from the smell?" — AFP

MEGA INDIA-BACKED COAL PROJECT AWARDED AUSTRALIA MINING LEASES

SYDNEY: A controversial India-backed giant coal project near Australia's Great Barrier Reef was Sunday awarded mining leases, but developer Adani said it would not commit to a final investment decision until legal challenges against it were resolved. The Queensland state government said the Aus\$21.7 billion (US\$16.7 billion) project to build one of the world's biggest mines was awarded three leases. "This is a major step forward for this project after extensive government and community scrutiny," Oueensland Premier Annastascia Palaszczuk

said in a statement. "Stringent conditions will continue to protect the environment, landholders' and traditional owners' interests, and our iconic organization. The organization, the Great Barrier Reef." The state government added that the mining leases at Carmichael in the Galilee Basin were estimated to contain 11 billion tons of coal. Adani welcomed the announcement, saying the leases gave the Indian conglomerate certainty and the firm had the "clear aim of commencing construction in calendar year 2017" pending the finalization of some second-tier approvals. But the company slammed legal challenges by conservationists, which along with the need for state and federal consent, has seen the approvals process stretched to some six years.

"(The) conclusion of second tier approvals and resolution of politically-motivated legal challenges is the company's principal focus, prior to a final investment decision being made," an Adani spokesman said in a statement. "Having previously sought to progress to the construction phase in 2015, Adani is keenly aware of the risks of proceeding on major works in advance of the conclusion of these matters." The awarding of the leases came two months after state authorities gave the project environmental approval subject to some 140 conditions.

Conservationists have argued the megamine would threaten the heritage-listed Great Barrier Reef, the world's biggest coral reef ecosystem. Adani faces two legal challenges-one from an indigenous group and another mounted by an environmental Australian Conservation Foundation, slammed the decision and said its case in the Federal Court would be heard next month. "By granting a licence for this massive coal mine the Palaszczuk government is bowing to the demands of big polluters, not listening to the needs of the people," the foundation's chief executive Kelly O'Shanassy said in a statement.

Researchers say the reef is currently experiencing the worst bleaching on record in its pristine north, with few corals escaping damage.

The biodiverse site is also threatened by climate change, which conservationists said causes the bleaching, as well as farming run-off, development and the coral-eating crown-of-thorns starfish. — Reuters

D, DEPRESSION AIDS THE HEART FIXING VITAMIN

MIAMI: Taking steps to recover from depression and boost vitamin D levels may improve heart health, according to new research out Saturday. The findings were contained in two studies presented at the American College of Cardiology conference in Chicago. The first focused on depression, a known risk factor for heart attack, stroke and even death. Researchers at the Intermountain Medical Center Heart Institute in Salt Lake City studied a registry of more than 7,500 people, and found when depressed patients get effective treatment, they can lower their risk of heart damage to the same level as a person who never suffered from depression.

"Our study shows that prompt, effective treatment of depression appears to improve the risk of poor heart health," said Heidi May, a cardiovascular epidemiologist with the Intermountain Medical Center Heart Institute. However, those who remained depressed had higher rates of heart problems-at a rate of about six percent, compared to around four percent of people without depression. "The key conclusion of our study is: If depression isn't treated, the risk of cardiovascular complications increases significantly," May said.

A second study, also led by May, focused on two measures of vitamin D, which when too low can predict the likelihood of heart attack, stroke, heart failure or death. Some 4,200 people aged 52 to 76 were studied. Most already had coronary artery disease (70 percent) and one quarter were diabetic. For doctors who treat these patients, the most

important measures of vitamin D are known as total vitamin D and bioavailable vitamin D, since both were "the most accurate in predicting harmful cardiovascular events," said the

"Our study found that low levels of both total vitamin D and bioavailable vitamin D appear to be associated with poor cardiovascular outcomes," said May. "And evaluating usable vitamin D could mean the difference on the amount of vitamin D prescribed, if it's prescribed at all." May added that more research was needed to examine Caucasian and African-American patients, since these groups are known to be affected differently by vitamin D. — AFP

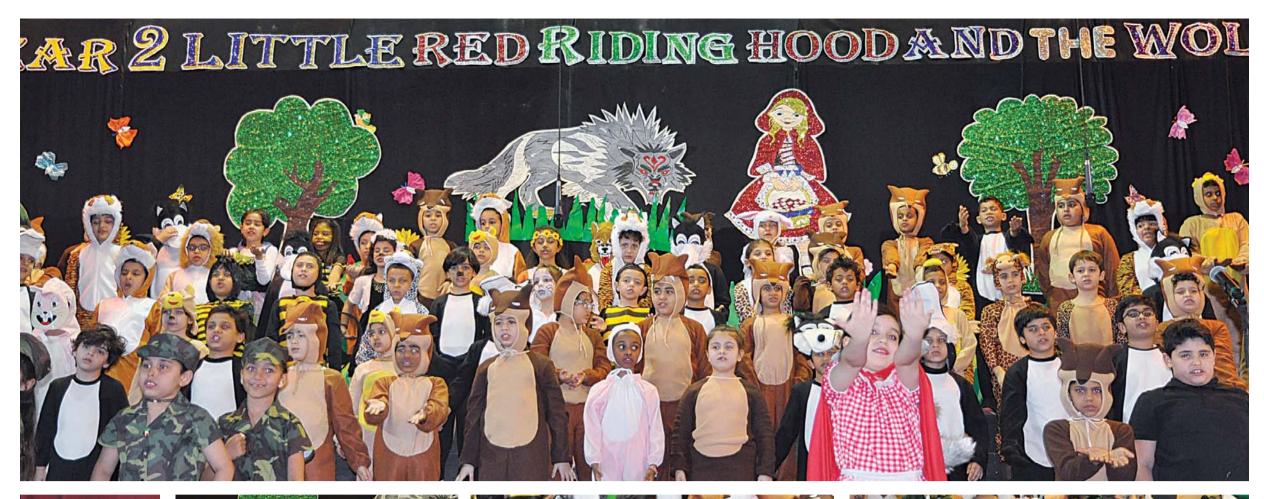


SEVILLE, Andalusia, Spain: Anti bullfighting demonstrators shout slogans and hold placards as they protest during a demonstration in Sevilla against animal abuse and bullfighting. — AFP



Kuwait 🗻 Times 248 33 199

























KNES PERFORMS 'LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD AND THE WOLF'

he Year 2 pupils of Kuwait National English School performed Roald Dahls Red Riding Hood, a 'howlingly hilarious musical' to an entranced audience recently, 22nd March 2016. The musical tells the tale of Little Red Riding Hood, though with a few unexpected twists. The wolf, a rather foreboding creature was played by Hassan.

Little Red Riding Hood herself, played by

Mariam and Amal, was not the shy little girl we have come to expect and had the audience mesmerized as she fought the wolf, then rescued Grandma from his belly! All Year 2 pupils were given the opportunity to

participate in either singing or acting and were superb in their roles.

The school Director, Madame Chantal Al Gharabally, highlighted the importance of respecting fundamental human values. She also warned children against the dangers of bullying. She congratulated the Music Department and the Year 2 teachers for this spectacular production. Parents were elated with the top performance of their children.







AL-MUNAYES GENERAL TRADING HONORS MOMS AT 4TH ANNUAL 'LOVE YOU MOM' FESTIVAL

I-Munayes General Trading Est announced its participation in the 4th annual "Love You Mom" Festival at The Avenues Mall and Gate Mall during March 18-21 in an effort to engage with the community following the re-launch of Al-Munayes Tea Bags, its new-look brand

of 100% Pure Ceylon tea.

The event, which attracted the participation of a wide range of companies, saw Al-Munayes Tea honor mothers with special gifts at its booth, offer free sampling

questions about the product.

of Al-Munayes Tea to visitors and answer

"Our participation in 'Love You Mom' was an excellent opportunity to extend our thanks and appreciation to mothers everywhere with special gifts which were prepared just for the occasion," explained Mr Salah Al-Munayes, Deputy General Manager of Al-Munayes General

Trading Est.

Comprised of 100% pure Ceylon tea, Al-Munayes Tea Bags was recently relaunched into the market featuring a new look and packaging in order to highlight its superior quality, better preserve its freshness and maximize appeal with its

target audience. Moreover, it is a purely 'Natural' product without any additives or preservatives making it a healthy choice for consumers of all ages. Al Munayes General Trading Est was established in 1947, and remains loyal to its founding principles.









LANDMARK GROUP HOSTS 9TH ANNUAL BLOOD DONATION DRIVE

andmark Group, one of the largest value retail shopping chains in Kuwait recently conducted its 9th annual Blood Donation drive in association with Kuwait Central Blood Bank (KCBB). The annual campaign is a reflection of the Group's commitment and work in line with its social responsibility program that aims to provide services and assistance to society. 150 plus donors, which are Landmark employees and customers reached out to the commitment of Saving Lives. The Blood Donation drive was held at Centrepoint Avenues. Commenting on the company's annual initiative Mr Saibal Basu, Chief Operating Officer, Landmark Group Kuwait said. "We thank KCBB for their support towards the 9th Blood Donation Campaign,

which serves the local community and helps in raising awareness about society related humanitarian initiatives and activities. We are always keen and committed to organizing the blood donation campaign on an annual basis. This year's blood donation campaign witnessed huge success especially with the increasing number in participation from our staff. We are grateful to them for continuously showing great interest in supporting such noble causes. We take very seriously our role in the private sector towards community welfare."

The blood donation drive is part of a multifaceted plan developed by Landmark Group to address vital health and safety issues in Kuwait. As one of the highest forms of humanitarian services, voluntarily blood donation can play a vital role in saving someone's life. There are also potential health benefits for the donor, as it can reduce the risk of heart attacks and cancer.

Staff members from all departments and branches across Kuwait were invited to participate in the blood donation drive. The campaign, which was supervised by a team of specialized doctors, generated a tremendous response from the employees. Landmark Group strongly believes in being an integral part of the Kuwaiti society, the campaign conducted for the seventh consecutive year is a part of the Group's continuous efforts to highlight the principles of corporate social responsibility and support patients in need.



HTC FORMS REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP WITH MOHAMED HAMAKI

TC, the global innovator in smart mobile devices and technology appoints popular Arab Singer and Egyptian pop culture icon Mohamed Hamaki, as its social media brand ambassador, and he will work with the consumer electronics brand to establish music and sound quality as the brand's defining competitive differentiator. He will also bring unique experiences to HTC users and enthusiasts across the MENA region, giving HTC and Hamaki fans the opportunity to create brilliant memories.

Mohamed Hamaki said: "HTC is a premium global brand that prides itself on sound quality and design innovation as its competitive differentiation, and this is why I see a strong link between the brand and myself. It is a privilege to partner with the brand that pioneered the art of truly understanding the critical need for a great audio experience on smartphones. I look forward to creating a strong sense of engagement with the fans of HTC across the region, with brilliant, unique experiences not only through music but also through their ground breaking camera technology."

As social media brand ambassador for HTC across the MEA region, Hamaki will partner

with the brand to further amplify HTC's launch campaigns in the region with his online community. He will work with HTC to offer experiences to both his and HTC's social media fans, which include exclusive access to behind-thescenes at Hamaki's concerts or music video shoots, and VIP tickets to his live concerts. He will also commit time to participate in live online chats with fans from across the region, presented by HTC.

Neeraj Seth, Head of Marketing, HTC MEA,

said: "Hamaki has built on his efforts and suc-



cess to become an instantly-recognizable musician from the Arab world. HTC appreciates the 'challenger' spirit that he has built his success on, and we are happy to collaborate with him in a long term strategic partnership to offer our users and fans the opportunity to

icon. Using the universal and language-agnostic platform of music and sound, which is also HTC's strongest pillar and advantage, Hamaki and HTC will create matchless premium opportunities and memories for the Arab world."

With over 122 million views on YouTube, 11 million fans on Facebook, and nearly 2 million

interact more closely with this contemporary

With over 122 million views on YouTube, 11 million fans on Facebook, and nearly 2 million followers on Twitter, Mohamed Hamaki is a true icon in a region where youth constitute a large and influential demographic of the population. Hamaki's releases and concerts are eagerly awaited by fans across the region, and his notable accomplishments include Best Singer and Album at the Middle East Music Awards 2013, and Best Middle East Act at the MTV Europe Music Awards 2010.

HTC prides itself on the superior audio experience available through all its smartphones, and has prioritized innovation in this area as most people use their smartphone as their primary music device. HTC's BoomSound(tm) with Dolby(tm) Surround and integrated amplifiers bring out the best in the music playback experience, with a dynamic range of sound.

MARINA HOTEL KUWAIT TRAINS INTERNS IN COLLABORATION WITH LOYAC

arina Hotel Kuwait collaborated with Loyac Internship Program 2016 to host students for an extensive training program which lasted eight weeks. During this time, the interns Mariam Abdullateef Faraj and Razan Saleem A Issa understood the fundamentals of working in a hotel and acquired hands-on

knowledge of key functions across the various

departments of the hotel with a focus on the Front Office and Housekeeping Departments.

Mr Nabil Hammoud, General Manager of Marina Hotel, highlighted the importance of the internship programs, stating, "We are very pleased to partner with Loyac year after year. We at Marina Hotel believe in the importance of supporting the young generation and in paving



the way for them to begin their career and successful future. Over the past five years we have been supporting LoYAC as we want to give eager and talented minds the opportunity to understand and practice the business essentials of the hospitality sector."

"Students will get firsthand experience of being part of a team and that helps them develop in character, confidence and prepare them in the future. We are lucky to have the opportunity to host such talented and ambitious students and wish them all success in their careers" further concluded Mr Hammoud.

This annual initiative by the Marina Hotel in association with Lothan Youth Achievement Center (Loyac) reflects the hotel's proactive contribution to the development of the youth. The internship program at Marina Hotel encouraged interns to gain practical work experience in areas that strengthened their aptitude.

The interns were allotted tasks and provided with hands on experience of a professional ambience with its daily functionalities. They gained invaluable insight into work-life and environment, while benefitting from a professional service orientation. At the end of their internship period, the interns were assessed and given feedback on their performance by their direct mentor. This collaboration is an annual internship program which offers college, university and high school students the opportunity to acquire first-hand experience in the hospitality industry.

APPEAL FOR INFORMATION ABOUT KUWAITI RESISTANCE FIGHTERS

To whom it may concern

This is an appeal on behalf of Marshal Byiers, a Scottish gentleman who lived in Kuwait during the 1980s. While here, he lived with his family in Fahaheel city, more specifically, in a building owned by Khalif Al-Fulaij.

Marshall worked for a company called EW Sable, and was trapped in Kuwait during the Iraqi invasion. He was held hostage by the Iraqi forces for a brief period of time. He was eventually put in contact with members of the Kuwait Resistance by Larry Banks at the British Embassy. While Mr Byiers never met the resistance fighters in person, they spoke over the phone and they provided him with food, cigarettes, and a small radio at great personal risk to them self. The men who knew him would likely be in their 50s now. His personal friend was a Kuwaiti gentleman names Sami Al

Dabbous, who we're having trouble locating.
After the war, Marshall returned to Scotland.
We are a group of filmmakers who are currently working on a documentary that narrates
Marshall's story, and, after 26 years, we are flying him back to Kuwait for the first time, for what will probably be quite an emotional closure to his

Marshall would really like to meet the person that helped him during the Iraqi occupation. Marshall is due to arrive to Kuwait on April 4-9. The documentary tells his story and we would like the opportunity to tell the story from the side of the man who helped him. If you or anybody else has any personal history with this story or anybody involved in it, please contact us at the following email Hamadaam@vcu.edu or phone number (965) 6668-0061.

GULFNET FORMS DISTINGUISHED PARTNERSHIP WITH PALMS HOTEL

ontinuing its outstanding progress in the information and communication technology (ICT) field, Gulfnet has concluded an agreement with The Palms Beach Hotel & SPA to provide the hotel with the latest hospitality technology related to ICT package with high speed Internet connectivity. This partnership positions Gulfnet as a leader in the field of technical services related to the hotel industry, especially since The Palms Hotel is considered one of the prominent hotels in Kuwait. Furnished with

the latest technology, the fact which boosts the strength and stance of the company in this sector, Gulfnet provides the Hotel with passive and data network system, IP telephony, IP CCTV, IP hotel TV, guest room management system, and public address sound system, ensuring high quality services for the Hotel's guests and residents. This remarkable and outstanding project, equipped with the latest technology, will enable Gulfnet to achieve sustainable competitive advantage in the Kuwaiti market.

The Bernie Mac Show

Mad Love Living With Fran

Jimmy Fallon 21:00 Hot In Cleveland

00:00 Bates Mote

Quantico

Rosewood

Allegiance

Quantico

Covert Affairs

Coronation Street

Coronation Street

Heroes Reborn

Heroes Reborn

Supergirl Better Call Saul

02:00 Mega Shark vs. Mecha

Crimson Tide

Crimson Tide

Northmen: A Viking Saga

OM MOVIES HD

COMEDY

00:00 Down And Out In Beverly

02:00 Romy And Michelle's High

The Other Sister

12:00 Romy And Michelle's High

The Other Sister

18:00 Sweet Home Alabama

That Awkward Moment

OVIN MOVIES

01:00 Carrington 03:00 The Man Who Would Be

A Secret Promise

The Silent Storm

The Horse Whisperer

Happiness

Memories

Memories

Where Angels Fear To Tread

Where Angels Fear To Tread

The Devil Wears Prada

School Reunion 04:00 My Father The Hero

10:15 My Father The Hero

School Reunion 14:00 Down To Earth

The Prince

Biker Bovz

Betrayed

Biker Boyz

20:00 Heatstroke

21:45 47 Ronin

OM MOVIES HID

The Voice

Castle

00:00 The Frozen

Covert Affairs

Heroes Reborn The Ellen DeGeneres Show

01:00

02:00

04:00

06:00

08:00

09:00

10:00

12:00

18:00

21:00

22:00

Shark

03:45

07:45

09:45

14:00

16:00

08:00

07:15

10:30

Modern Family 19:30 I Hate My Teenage

20:00 The Tonight Show Starring

21:30 The Nightly Show With Larry

OJA FIRST HD

Good Morning America

The Ellen DeGeneres Show

The Ellen DeGeneres Show

Live Good Morning America

The Ellen DeGeneres Show

Late Night With Seth Meyers

16:30

17:00

18:00

Daughter

Fathers have just one problem

with raising their daughters.

They grow up.

амс

01:10 Restoration 03:05 Road House 05:00 The Beautiful Country Lords Of Dogtown 07:00 The Beast Of Hollow Mountain

10:00 Saved! 11:30 Race For The Yankee

13:20 The Magnificent Seven The Beautiful Country The Apartment George Washington 19:30



00:45 Shark Attack File 01:40 From WAGs To Riches Tanked 03:25 Echo And The Elephants Of

Amboseli 03:50 Echo And The Elephants Of

Amboseli 04:15 Gator Boys 05:02 Treehouse Masters 05:49 From WAGs To Riches

06:36 Meet The Orangutans Meet The Orangutans America's Cutest Pets From WAGs To Riches 08:15 Treehouse Masters Tanked 10:05 11:00 America's Cutest Pets

Bondi Vet 12:25 Bondi Vet From WAGs To Riches 12:50 Gator Boys Treehouse Masters 14:40

Tanked

15:35

23:50

00:45

Echo And The Elephants Of Amboseli 17:00 Echo And The Elephants Of

Amboseli 17:25 River Monsters 18:20 Gator Boys

19:15 Tanked Running Wild 20:10 21:05 Treehouse Masters Gator Boys

> BBC **FIRST**

Gator Boys

River Monsters

Prey Undercover 01:35 02:30 Silent Witness 03:25 Casualty 04:20 Stella Father Brown 06:00 Eastenders

06:35 Casualty 07:30 The Paradise 08:15 Doctor Who 09:10 Casualty 11:00 Father Brown Stella 11:55

The Paradise 12:45 13:45 Doctor Who 14:35 Casualty 15:30 The Paradise 16:15 17:10 Doctor Who

18:35

Father Brown 19:05 Ripper Street 21:00 Ripper Street Silent Witness 22:00 Father Brown

Doctors

Bloomberg

00:00 Charlie Rose First Up With Angie Lau 02:00 First Up With Angie Lau Trending Business 03:00

Trending Business 05:00 Asia Edge Bloomberg West 06:00 Charlie Rose

China 24 16:00 News Update Global Business 17:00 News Update 17:15 World InSight 18:00 Asia Today Culture Express 18:30

14:30 Dialogue 15:00 News Update

19:00 News Update 19:30 The Heat Africa Live 20:00 21:00 Global Business 21:30 Dialogue News Update 22:00 22:15 China 24 News Undate

23:15 World InSight

Inside China 00.00 00:30 Managing Asia U.S. Squawk Alley 02:00 Asia Squawk Box 04:00 Asia Street Signs Fast Money: Half Time Report 07:00 Capital Connection

Squawk Box Europe Europe Street Signs Worldwide Exchange 11:00 12:00 U.S. Squawk Box Squawk On The Street 16:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
Fast Money: Half Time 18:00

U.S. Power Lunch 20:00 U.S. Closing Bell

crime &investigation network

00:00 The Killer Speaks 01:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos Crime Stories Gangsters: America's Most 04:00 The Killer Speaks

Crime Stories
Monster In My Family Britain's Biggest Heists 07:00 Crime Stories 09:00 Surveillance Oz Steven Seagal: Lawman Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook 11:00 After The First 48

The FBI Files 13:00 Monster In My Family Crime Stories 14:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook 16:00 Britain's Biggest Heists

After The First 48 18.00 The FBI Files Monster In My Family 19:00 Crime Stories 21:00 The First 48 What The Killer Saw

> Discovery HD

00:20 Fast N' Loud Gold Rush Diamond River Hunters Alaska: Battle On The Bay Extreme Collectors Storage Wars Canada Garage Gold How Do They Do It? 05:00 Outback Truckers 06:00 Wheeler Dealers 06:50

Gold Rush

Garage Gold

Storage Wars Canada

08:30

11:25

Fast N' Loud Extreme Collectors Storage Wars Canada Garage Gold 00:30 09:45 How Do They Do It? 10:10 Chasing Classic Cars 00:45

Calimero Loopdidoo Art Attack 01:15 Diamond River Hunters Alaska: Battle On The Bay 01:30 Henry Hugglemonster Extreme Collectors 02:05 Calimero

02:20 Zou



47 RONIN ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

14:20 Outback Truckers

Wheeler Dealers

Chasing Classic Cars How Do They Do It?

Men, Women, Wild

So You Think You'd

Superhuman Showdown

Storage Wars Canada

The Island With Bear Grylls

The Island With Bear Grylls

Bear Grylls: Mission Survive

Fast N' Loud

Garage Gold

23:30 Wheeler Dealers

15:10

18:30

19:20

21:00

22:40

Survive?

08:00 Countdown 09:00 Countdown On The Move

10:00 On The Move The Pulse Bloomberg Surveillance 13:00 Bloomberg Surveillance 14:00 Bloombera Go Bloomberg Go

16:00 Bloomberg Go Bloomberg Markets
Bloomberg Markets: 17:00 18:00 European Close

19:00 Bloomberg Markets Bloomberg Markets 20:00 Bloomberg Markets Bloomberg Markets What'd You Miss?

NEWS

00:00 News Update Dialogue News Update 00:30 01:00

China 24 02:00 The Heat 02:30 News Update 03:00 Global Business 04:00 News Update News Update 05:00 Dialogue 06:30

News Hour Global Business 07:00 08:00 News Update 10:30 Sports Scene

Global Business 11:00 News Update 12:30 Culture Express 13:00 Africa Live

DISCOVERY

00:20 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman You Have Been Warned Space Pioneer Eco-Tech 03:29 04:16

Mythbusters You Have Been Warned Space Pioneer Building The Biggest How Do They Do It? How Do They Do It? 06:37 07:23 Mythbusters 08:08 Eco-Tech

Building The Biggest Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman You Have Been Warned Space Pioneer

Building The Bigges

11:53

02:30 Loopdidoo Art Attack Henry Hugglemonster 03:20 Calimero 03:35 Zou 03:45 Loopdidoo

04:00 Art Attack Henry Hugglemonster 04:35 Calimero 04:50 Zou Loopdidoo 05:00 05:15 Art Attack 05:35

Henry Hugglemonster Calimero 05:50 06:00 Zou Loopdidoo 06:20 Art Attack 06:35

The Hive

07:10 Zou 07:25 Loopdidoo 07:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse 08:05 Sofia The First 08:30 Goldie & Bear 08:45 Jake And The Never Land Pirates Sheriff Callie's Wild West 09:10

Doc McStuffins Sofia The First 10:00 Goldie & Bear 10:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons 11:00 Miles From Tomorrow Special Agent Oso 11:40 The Hive Handy Manny Jungle Junction 11:50

12:15

12:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse 13:00 Sofia The First Miles From Tomorrow 13:50 Jake And The Never Land 14:15 Sheriff Callie's Wild West

00:00 Violetta 00:45 The Hive Sabrina Secrets Of A 00:50 Teenage Witch 01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch Hank Zipzer 02:05 Binny And The Ghost 02:30 Violetta 03:15 The Hive 03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch 03:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch

12:38 Mythbusters

With Morgan Freeman

14:10 Eco-Tech

21:15 Eco-Tech

23:35 Mythbusters

15:44

16:31

17:18

18:05

18:50

19:15

19:40

22:00

22:45

13:23 Through The Wormhole

Space Pioneer

Eco-Tech

Mythbusters

Food Factory

Food Factory

Space Pioneer

20:25 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman

Food Factory

Food Factory

Space Pioneer

Da Vinci's Machines

Building The Biggest

04:10 Hank Zipzer Binny And The Ghost 05:00 Violetta 05:45 The Hive 05:50 Mouk 06:00 Lolirock Sofia The First 06:25 06:50 Gravity Falls 07:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir Jessie

08:05 Shake It Up Shake It Up Hannah Montana 08:30 09:20 Hannah Montana Girl Meets World 09:45Girl Meets World 10:35 A.N.T. Farm A.N.T. Farm 11:00 Jessie

11:50 Jessie 12:15 Whisker Haven Tales With The Palace Pets 12:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir 12:45 Fish Hooks 13:10 Austin & Ally 13:35 Austin & Ally

Liv And Maddie Cars Toons Liv And Maddie 14:30 Dog With A Blog Dog With A Blog 15:45 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir Violetta The Next Sten 17:00

Austin & Ally Dog With A Blog 18:15 Best Friends Whenever **Gravity Falls** 19:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir

Violetta 20:45 Good Luck Charlie 21:10 Good Luck Charlie H2O Binny And The Ghost 22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch Sabrina Secrets Of A

Teenage Witch Hank Zipzer 23:35 Binny And The Ghost

00:05 Art Attack

Henry Hugglemonster

06:00 Boyster Super Matrak Super Matrak 06:35 07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil K.C. Undercover Supa Strikas 07:50 08:15 Annedroids Kirby Buckets 09:10

Mickey Mouse Clubhouse

Jake And The Never Land

Miles From Tomorrow

15:10

15:35

Pirates

17:15

17:40

18:05

18:30

19:00

Pirates

19:30

20:00

20:30

21:00

21:25

22:20

22:50

23:20

23:35 Zou

23:50

16:00 Sofia The First 16:25 Jungle Cubs

Aladdin

Gummi Bears

Goldie & Bear

Sofia The First

Goldie & Bear

Sofia The First

Jungle Cubs

Gummi Bears

Lilo And Stitch

Henry Hugglemonster

Aladdin

Zou

Loop

Calimero

Miles From Tomorrow

Miles From Tomorrow

Jake And The Never Land

Lab Rats: Bionic Island Guardians Of The Galaxy 09:35 Rocket Monkeys Ultimate Spider-Man 10:25 10:50 Boyster 11:20 Pair Of Kings 11:45 12:10 Pair Of Kings 12:35 Lab Rats: Bionic Island 13:00 Lab Rats 13:30 Phineas And Ferb Phineas And Ferb 14:20 Kickin' It

14:45 Kickin' It Guardians Of The Galaxy Rocket Monkeys Guardians Of The Galaxy 15:40 16:05 Star vs The Forces Of Evil 16:30 Kirby Buckets 16:55 Gamers Guide To Pretty 17:25 K.C. Undercover 17:50 Supa Strikas

18:15 Lab Rats: Bionic Island 18:40 K.C. Undercover 19:05 Cars Toons Annedroids Phineas And Ferb 19:35 Kirby Buckets 20:00 Gamers Guide To Pretty

Much Everything 20:55 K.C. Undercover 21:20 Pickle And Peanut 21:45 Lab Rats 22:10 Mighty Med Disney Mickey Mouse 23:00 Programmes Start At

6:00am KSA

00:00 Sex With Brody 00:30 Fashion Bloggers 00:55 The Grace Helbig Show 01:25 Kourtney And Khloe Take The Hamptons 02:20 E! News 03:15 WAGs 04:10 WAGs 05:05 WAGs 06:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians

06:55 Keeping Up With The Kardashians 07:50 Style Star 08:20 E! News Giuliana & Bill 10:15 Giuliana & Bill 11:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills 11:35 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills 12:05 E! News 13:05 House Of DVF 14:05 Fashion Bloggers

Kardashians 16:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians 17:00 Giuliana & Bill 18:00 Botched 19:00

14:30 Fashion Bloggers

15:00 Keeping Up With The

20:00 Christina Milian Turned Up 21:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians 22:00 Fashion Police

MY FATHER THE HERO ON OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

23:00 Live From The Red Carpet Specials 11:05 Eggheads 11:35 Come Dine With Me Couples 12:30 Who's Doing The Dishes?

10:15

13:25

13:50

14:45

18:45

Couples

22:50

02:55

03:50

05:40

06:35

08:25

09:20

13:00

14:00

15:00

17:00

18:00

20:00

20:50

Couples

Raised By Wolves

Keep It In The Family

The Chase: Celebrity

Emmerdale

Eggheads

15:35 Come Dine With Me

Coach Trip

19:35 Come Dine With Me

Emmerdale

00:10 Dirty Rotten Survival

Dawn Of Humanity

I Wouldn't Go In There

Cesar To The Rescue

World's Deadliest Animals

Don't Tell My Mother

Don't Tell My Mother

Cesar To The Rescue

World's Deadliest Animals

Dirty Rotten Survival

Python Hunters

Kung Fu Motion

Evacuate Earth

11:10 Underworld, Inc.

12:05 Locked Up Abroad

Wicked Tuna

Yukon River Run

Underworld, Inc.

Evacuate Earth

Underworld, Inc.

Python Hunters

Locked Up Abroad

00:10 Tales From The Bush Larder

Locked Up Abroad

Access 360 World Heritage

Access 360 World Heritage

people **E**

Tales From The Bush Larder

HE

"A TOUR DE FORCE FOR TWO

OF OUR GREAT AMERICAN ACTORS.

- Philip David Marton, THE HIPPINGTON POST

THE JUDGE ON OSN MOVIES HD

ROBERT DOWNEY JR. ROBERT DUVALL

David Rocco's Dolce India

01:00 Primal Survivor

Coronation Street

Who's Doing The Dishes?

NATIONAL

GEOGRAPHIC

CHANNEL [1]

16:30 Home Fires

18:20 Emmerdale

20:30 Home Fires

21:25 Hiding

17:25 Hiding

Coronation Street

Keep It In The Family

The Doctor Blake Mysteries

GÉRARD DEPARDIEU



00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 01:00 Amazing Wedding Cakes 02:00 Mystery Diners 02:30 Mystery Diners

03:00 Man Fire Food 03:30 Man Fire Food Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 04:30 Diners Drive-Ins And Dives Iron Chef America 05:00 Chopped

07:00 Man Fire Food 07:30 Man Fire Food Chopped 09:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To

Basics 09:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To The Kitchen 10:00 Anna Olson: Bake 11:00 11:30 12:00 Anna Olson: Bake Chopped

The Pioneer Woman 13:00 13:30 The Pioneer Woman Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 14:00 14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 15:00 Man Fire Food 15:30 Man Fire Food

16:00 Chopped The Kitchen Anna Olson: Bake 17:00 18:00 Anna Olson: Bake 18:30 19:00 Chopped 20:00 Iron Chef America Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 21:00 21:30

Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives 22:00 Man v Food Man v Food 23:00 Man Finds Food 23:30 Man Finds Food

HISTORY.

Aussie Pickers 00:20 Storage Wars: New York Storage Wars: New York Ice Road Truckers 01:35 02:00 02:50 Ax Men American Restoration 03:40 Pawn Stars

04:30 The Curse Of Oak Island 05:00 Mountain Men Swamp People 06:00 06:50 07:40 Ax Men Shipping Wars 08:30 American Restoration American Restoration 09:45

Lost In Transmission Counting Cars 10:35 11:00 Counting Cars The Curse Of Oak Island American Pickers 11:25 12:15 13:05 Storage Wars 13:30 13:55 Storage Wars Storage Wars 14:20 Storage Wars

15:35 Shipping Wars 16:00 Mountain Men 16:50 Swamp People 17:40 Ice Road Truckers 18:30 The Curse Of Oak Island 19:20 American Pickers Pawn Stars 20:10 20:35 Pawn Stars 21:00 Ax Men

Swamp People

Aussie Pickers

14:45

21:50

Us

22:40 Mankind The Story Of All Of 23:30 Ax Men LLV®

CHOICE 00:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials

01:05 Emmerdale 01:30 Eggheads 02:00 Coronation Street Keep It In The Family 02:30 Tracey Ullman's Show 03:55 Raised By Wolves The Doctor Blake Mysteries 04:20 Come Dine With Me

06:10 Who's Doing The Dishes? Eggheads Tracey Ullman's Show

David Rocco's Dolce India Tales From The Bush Larder Eat Street 02:40 Eat Street 03:05 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of

03:30 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia 03:55 A Marriage Of Flavours Baking Good, Baking Bad Baking Good, Baking Bad 04:20 05:10 Eat Street

05:35 Eat Street Ariana's Persian Kitchen 06:00 Ariana's Persian Kitchen David Rocco's Dolce India David Rocco's Dolce India Tales From The Bush Larder 08:05 Eat Street Eat Street 08:30

08:55 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia 09:20 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of

09:45 A Marriage Of Flavours Baking Good, Baking Bad 10:10 Baking Good, Baking Bad 10:35 11:00 Fat Street 11:25 Eat Street 11:50 Ariana's Persian Kitchen 12:15 Ariana's Persian Kitchen **Great Escapes** Great Escapes 13:05 13:35 Mega Food14:30 David Rocco's Dolce Vita

14:55 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia 15:25 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia 15:50 Chefs Run Wild 16:20 Glamour Puds

16:45 Glamour Puds Tom's Istanbul Delight 17:15 Valentine Warner Eats 17:40 Scandinavia 18:10 Ariana's Persian Kitchen 18:35 Ariana's Persian Kitchen

19:05 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of Australia 19:30 Lyndey Milan - Taste Of

Australia 20:00 Chefs Run Wild 20:25 Glamour Puds Glamour Puds 20:50 Tom's Istanbul Delight 21:15 Valentine Warner Eats Scandinavia

22:05 Ariana's Persian Kitchen 22:30 Ariana's Persian Kitchen **Great Escapes** 22:55 23:20 Great Escapes Mega Food

NAT GEO 00:20 The Pack Secret Life Of Predators 01:10

Fatal Attraction 03:45 Shane Untamed Hunter Hunted 04:40 Fatal Attraction 05:35 06:30 Shane Untamed 07:25 Hunter Hunted Killer Shrew 09:15 Dangerous Encounters

Hooked

02:00

10:10 Wild 24 Yukon Vet 12:00 Monster Fish World's Deadliest 12:55 Search For The Giant Octopus

14:45 Dr Oakley: Yukon Vet How Human Are You? 16:35 **Shadow Hunters** 17:30 Wild 24 Yukon Vet 19:20 20:10

Dr Oakley: Yukon Vet Shadow Hunters 21:50 Wild 24

17:00 How Human Are You? Yukon Vet

23:30 Monster Fish OM FIRST HD

COMEDY 00:00 Parks And Recreation Hot In Cleveland 01:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore 01:30 Married The Big C Man Seeking Woman 02:00 02:30 Mad Love

The Goldbergs
Two And A Half Men 03:30 04:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon 05:30 My Name Is Earl The Bernie Mac Show Community Late Night With Seth Meyers 06:30 07:00 Two And A Half Men 08:30 My Name Is Earl

Mad Love 09:00 The Grinder 10:00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine 10:30 Community The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon 12:00 The Bernie Mac Show

Two And A Half Men 13:00 My Name Is Earl 13:30 Community The Goldbergs 14:30 15:00

The Grinder Brooklyn Nine-Nine 16:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore

OM MOVIES HD 01:00 Ride 03:00 McFarland, USA

05:15 Left Behind

07:15 Tarzan 09:00 Veronica Mars 11:00 Salinger Persecuted 13:15 15:00 Son Of Batman

16:30 Paddington 18:30 The Judge 21:00 Dawn Patrol 23:00 Deliver Us From Evil

OM SPORTS 1

00:30 PGA Tour Special 01:30 PGA Tour Highlights

Gillette World Sport Live NHL 05:00 Golfing World 09:00 AFL Premiership Highlights

Super Rugby Golfing World NRL Premiership 10:00 13:00 AFL Premiership Highlights 15:00

PGA Tour Highlights Top 14 Highlights
Gillette World Sport 17:00 17:30 Golfing World NRL Full Time

19:00 World Rugby 19:30 20:00 Top 14 Highlights Gillette World Sport 21:00 Players Championship 2015 Official Film

22:00 The PGA Tour Champions

Highlights

OM SPORTS 2 HD

This Week In WWE Live WWE Raw Top 14 Highlights 03:00 Darts UK Open Top 14 Highlights PGA Tour Highlights Gillette World Sport

WWE Experience WWE Afterburn This Week In WWE 15:00 **WWE Raw**

18:00 NHL WWE Raw 23:00 Indy Car Highlights

ON SPORTS 3 HD

00:00 AFL Premiership Highlights 01:00 Top 14 Highlights 01:30 The World Sailing Show

02:00 Ping Pong World Championship 03:00 Wuxi Marathon 06:00 Inside Sailing
06:30 The World Sailing Show

Super Rugby 09:00 Golfing World 10:00 Ping Pong World Championship 11:00 Inside Sailing

Trans World Sport 13:00 Europro Tour 14:00 Golfing World The Weber Cup

11:30 The World Sailing Show

16:00 Super Rugby 18:00 AFL Premiership Highlights PGA Tour Special Golfing World NRL Full Time 20:00 21:00

World Rugby 22:00 Super Rugby

CLASSIFIEDS

Kuwait Times

SHAROIA-1

TUESDAY, APRIL 5, 2016





KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (31/03/2016 TO 06/04/2016)

SHARQIA-1		HIGH-RISE
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	12:00 PM	HIGH-RISE
JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)	3:00 PM	HIGH-RISE
NO FRI+SAT KUNG FU PANDA 3	3:00 PM	HIGH-RISE
FRI+SAT	3.00 FW	FANAR-2
KUNG FU PANDA 3	5:00 PM	EDDIE THE EAGLE
KUNG FU PANDA 3	7:00 PM	KUNG FU PANDA 3
JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		KUNG FU PANDA 3
JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		KUNG FU PANDA 3
JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		KUNG FU PANDA 3
, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,		EDDIE THE EAGLE
SHARQIA-2		EDDIE THE EAGLE
10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	1:15 PM	
10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	3:30 PM	FANAR-3
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	5:45 PM	JU ON: THE GRUDGE
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	8:45 PM	JU ON: THE GRUDGE
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	11:45 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMA
		JU ON: THE GRUDGE
SHARQIA-3		JU ON: THE GRUDGE
HIGH-RISE	12:30 PM	JU ON: THE GRUDGE
HIGH-RISE	3:00 PM	JU ON: THE GRUDGE
10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	5:15 PM	
HIGH-RISE	7:30 PM	MARINA-1
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	9:45 PM	JU ON: THE GRUDGE
10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	12:45 AM	KUNG FU PANDA 3
MUHALAB-1		KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3
HIGH-RISE	1:15 PM	JU ON: THE GRUDGE
JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		JU ON: THE GRUDGE
JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		JU ON: THE GRUDGE
HIGH-RISE	5:30 PM	JO ON. THE GRODGE
JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		MARINA-2
HIGH-RISE	9:45 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMA
JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		BATMAN V SUPERMA
,		BATMAN V SUPERMA
MUHALAB-2		BATMAN V SUPERMA
10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	11:30 AM	BATMAN V SUPERMA
KUNG FU PANDA 3	1:45 PM	
10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	1:45 PM	MARINA-3
KUNG FU PANDA 3	4:00 PM	10 CLOVERFIELD LAI
KUNG FU PANDA 3	6:00 PM	NO FRI+SAT
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	8:00 PM	KUNG FU PANDA 3
10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	11:00 PM	FRI+SAT
JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)	1:15 AM	HIGH-RISE
		10 CLOVERFIELD LAI
MUHALAB-3	12.15.014	HIGH-RISE
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	12:15 PM	10 CLOVERFIELD LAI
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	3:15 PM	HIGH-RISE
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	6:15 PM	AVENUES 1
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	9:15 PM	AVENUES-1
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	12:15 AM	KUNG FU PANDA 3 KUNG FU PANDA 3
FANAR-1		KUNG FU PANDA 3
HIGH-RISE	12:45 PM	KUNG FU PANDA 3
HIGH-RISE	3:00 PM	KUNG FU PANDA 3
THATTMIJE	2.00 F.M	NONG LO FANDA 3

•				
	HIGH-RISE	5:30 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE	10:45 PM
			BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE	10:45 PM
	HIGH-RISE	8:00 PM		
	HIGH-RISE	10:30 PM	AVENUES-2	
	HIGH-RISE	12:45 AM	EDDIE THE EAGLE	1:30 PM
			EDDIE THE EAGLE	3:45 PM
	FANAR-2		LONDON HAS FALLEN	6:00 PM
	EDDIE THE EAGLE	1:00 PM	EDDIE THE EAGLE	8:15 PM
	KUNG FU PANDA 3	1:45 PM	EDDIE THE EAGLE	10:30 PM
	KUNG FU PANDA 3	3:45 PM	EDDIE THE EAGLE	12:45 AM
	KUNG FU PANDA 3	5:45 PM		
	KUNG FU PANDA 3	7:45 PM	AVENUES-3	
	EDDIE THE EAGLE	9:45 PM	10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	12:15 PM
	EDDIE THE EAGLE	12:15 AM	10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	2:30 PM
			10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	4:45 PM
	FANAR-3		10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	7:00 PM
	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	9:15 PM
	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	11:30 PM
	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	3:45 PM	TO CLOVENTILLED LANE	11.50 FW
	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		AVENUES-4	
	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	1:00 PM
	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		KUNG FU PANDA 3	3:15 PM
	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)	12:45 AM		
			KUNG FU PANDA 3	5:30 PM
	MARINA-1		Special Show "KUNG FU PANDA 3"	5:30 PM
	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	7:30 PM
	KUNG FU PANDA 3	3:00 PM	10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	9:45 PM
	KUNG FU PANDA 3	5:00 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	12:05 AM
	KUNG FU PANDA 3	7:00 PM		
	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)		AVENUES-5	
	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)	11:00 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE	1:00 PM
	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)	1:00 AM	Special Show "BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE"	1:00 PM
			KUNG FU PANDA 3	2:00 PM
	MARINA-2		BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE -3D	4:00 PM
	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE	12:15 PM	Special Show "KUNG FU PANDA 3"	5:00 PM
	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE	3:15 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE	7:00 PM
	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE	6:15 PM	Special Show "BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE"	7:00 PM
	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE	9:15 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	10:00 PM
	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE	12:15 AM	10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	1:00 AM
	MARINA-3		360°- 1	
	10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	1:15 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE -3D	1:00 PM
	NO FRI+SAT		KUNG FU PANDA 3	2:00 PM
	KUNG FU PANDA 3	1:30 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE -3D	4:00 PM
	FRI+SAT		BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE	7:00 PM
	HIGH-RISE	3:30 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE -3D	10:00 PM
	10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	5:45 PM	HIGH-RISE	1:00 AM
	HIGH-RISE	8:00 PM	The state of the s	
	10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	10:15 PM	360°- 2	
	HIGH-RISE	12:30 AM	MY LITTLE PONY: EQUESTRIA GIRLS - FRIENDSHIP GAMES	12:30 PM
			MY LITTLE PONT: EQUESTRIA GIRLS - FRIENDSHIP GAMES	2:15 PM
	AVENUES-1		MY LITTLE PONY: EQUESTRIA GIRLS - FRIENDSHIP GAMES	4:15 PM
	KUNG FU PANDA 3	11:30 AM	MY LITTLE PONY: EQUESTRIA GIRLS - FRIENDSHIP GAMES MY LITTLE PONY: EQUESTRIA GIRLS - FRIENDSHIP GAMES	4:15 PM 6:00 PM
	KLINC ELLDANDA 3	1.45 DM	INIT LITTLE POINT: EOUESTRIA GIRLS - PRIENDSHIP GAMES	O:UU PIVI

1:45 PM

4:00 PM

6:15 PM

MY LITTLE PONY: EQUESTRIA GIRLS - FRIENDSHIP GAMES

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 5/4/2016

BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE

BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE

VETTAH- Malayalam



ACCOMMODATION

Sharing accommodation available in Jabriya block 10 str. 9 beside Jabriya Indian School, 1 big room + 1 medium with balcony suitable area. Tel: 55030515, 55983570. (C 5155) 5-4-2016



Contact Us: 00968-98457638 Email: Info@Eigllcoman.Com

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr:	04:13
Shorook	05:34
Duhr:	11:51
Asr:	15:23
Maghrib:	18:08
Isha:	19:27





Arrival Flights on Tuesday 5/4/2016

Flight Schedule

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

6:00 PM

7:45 PM

7:45 PM

10:45 PM

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

	Arrı	val Flights on Tuesday 5/4/2016		KAC	6/2	Dubai	14:05		Arri	ival Flights on Tuesday 5/4/2016		IHY	/6/	Istanbul	14:10
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	AXB	393	Kozhikode	14:10	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	FDB	057	Dubai	14:20	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05	PAL	669	Dubai/Manila	14:45
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10	GFA	221	Bahrain	14:20	BBC	144	Chittagong/Dhaka	00:10	KAC	773	Riyadh	15:00
JZR	239	Amman	00:20	SVA	500	Jeddah	14:30	JAI	574	Mumbai	00:25	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:05
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	KNE	529	Jeddah	14:55	MSR	615	Cairo	00:30	FDB	058	Dubai	15:05
FDB								FDB				KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
	069	Dubai	00:55	KAC	788	Jeddah	15:00		072	Dubai	00:30				
KKK	6506	Istanbul	00:55	OMA	645	Muscat	15:10	MSC	404	Asyut	00:55	FBA	832	Al Najaf	15:10
DLH	635	Doha	01:00	ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:10	KLM	411	Amsterdam	00:55	AXB	394	Kozhikode	15:10
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15	ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35	MSC	416	Sohag	01:05	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
												KAC	617	Doha	15:15
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20	UAE	857	Dubai	15:45	THY	773	Istanbul	01:40	KAC	741	Dammam	15:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40	FDB	051	Dubai	15:50	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:00				
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	JAD	301	Amman	15:55	THY	765	Istanbul	02:45	SVA	501	Jeddah	15:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	RJA	640	Amman	16:00	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
												KAC	613	Bahrain	16:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	QTR	1072	Doha	16:15	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:55	OMA	646	Muscat	16:10
UAE	853	Dubai	02:25	JZR	325	Al Najaf	16:15	UAE	854	Dubai	03:45				
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	CLX	784	Luxembourg	16:30	OMA	644	Muscat	04:00	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
FDB	067	Dubai	03:15	THY	6676	Istanbul	16:35	KKK	6505	Istanbul	04:05	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
												JAD	302	Amman	16:35
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	KAC	562	Amman	16:55	FDB	068	Dubai	04:05	RJA	641	Amman	16:55
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:15	KAC	680	Muscat	16:55	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10	FDB	052	Dubai	17:00
QTR	1076	Doha	03:25	SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15				
KAC	544		03:40	GFA		*.		QTR	1077	Doha		QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
		Cairo			215	Bahrain	17:30				04:35	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
LMU	5101	Cairo	04:00	JZR	177	Dubai	17:45	LMU	5111	Cairo	05:00	JZR	238	Amman	17:45
THY	6376	Istanbul	05:05	JZR	777	Jeddah	17:50	JZR	560	Sohag	05:00	THY	6677	Istanbul	18:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	MSR	620	Cairo	18:30	RJA	643	Amman	06:25				
												SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	KAC	786	Jeddah	18:35	QTR	1087	Doha	06:30	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	06:15	KAC	774	Riyadh	18:35	THY	6376	Dubai/Istanbul	06:35	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:25	KAC	502	Beirut	18:35	THY	771	Istanbul	06:45	CLX	785	NBO	18:30
BAW	157	London	06:40	KAC	742	Dammam	18:50	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50				
												JZR	538	Cairo	18:30
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15	KAC	618	Doha	18:55	FDB	070	Dubai	07:05	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30	KAC	542	Cairo	18:55	JZR	164	Dubai	07:15	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	07:35	KAC	104	London	19:00	FDB	5062	Dubai	07:55	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:40	KAC	166	Paris/Rome	19:05	BAW	156	London	08:25				
												KAC	361	Colombo	19:55
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	UAE	875	Dubai	19:05	FDB	054	Dubai	08:30	ABY	124	Sharjah	19:55
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:50	GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05	KAC	171	Frankfurt	08:40	KAC	283	Dhaka	20:30
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	FDB	063	Dubai	19:10	SVA	513	Riyadh	08:50	FDB	060	Dubai	20:30
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KAC	354	BLR	08:00	KAC	614	Bahrain	19:10	KAC	513	Tehran	09:15	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15	ABY	123	Sharjah	19:15	KAC	671	Dubai	09:30	JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20	JAI	572	Mumbai	19:35	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:30	KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:45
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20	KAC	674	Dubai	19:45	KAC	619	Doha	09:30	DLH	634	Doha	20:50
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	FDB	059	Dubai	19:50	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45	KAC	343	Chennai	20:55
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00	DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:05	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50	KAC	353	BLR	20:55
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	MEA	402	Beirut	20:15	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:00	KAC	351	Kochi	21:00
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	OMA	647		20:20	KAC	101	London/New York	10:00	KAC	543		
						Muscat								Cairo	21:00
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	MSR	618	Alexandria	20:30	FDB	056	Dubai	10:40	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
IRA	675	Lar	09:40	QTR	1088	Doha	20:35	IRA	674	Lar	10:40	OMA	648	Muscat	21:15
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	FDB	5053	Dubai	20:55	QTR	1071	Doha	10:45	MSR	607	Luxor	21:30
IRC	6507	Shiraz	09:50	ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:05	IRC	6508	Shiraz	10:50	QTR	1089	Doha	21:45
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	UAE	859	Dubai	21:15	KAC	501	Beirut	11:00	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40	ALK	229	Colombo	21:20	KAC	561	Amman	11:20	FDB	5054	Dubai	21:55
MEA	404	Beirut	11:00	KLM	415	Amsterdam	21:25	KAC	165	Rome/Paris	11:25	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	21:55
						Frankfurt	21:50		679			ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
JZR	561	Sohag	11:25	KAC	172			KAC		Muscat	11:25				
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30	QTR	1082	Doha	21:55	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35	KAC	381	Delhi	22:25
JZR	165	Dubai	11:50	GFA	219	Bahrain	22:00	MEA	405	Beirut	12:00	UAE	860	Dubai	22:25
NIA	151	Cairo	12:20	ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10	KAC	541	Cairo	12:05	KLM	415	Dammam/Amsterdam	22:25
														Mumbai	22:30
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25	UAE	874	Dubai	12:10	KAC	301		
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30	PIA	239	Sialkot	22:35	RBG	554	Alexandria	12:10	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	22:55
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	THY	764	Istanbul	22:55	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:15	KAC	205	Islamabad	23:00
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	JZR	185	Dubai	22:55	JZR	324	Al Najaf	12:50	GFA	220	Bahrain	23:00
KAC	620	Doha	13:10	MSC	403	Asyut	23:00	KAC	785	Jeddah	13:00	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
THY	766	Istanbul	13:10	JZR	239	Amman	23:20	FDB	076	Dubai	13:10	KAC	155	Istanbul	23:15
KAC	514	Tehran	13:45	JAI	574	Mumbai	23:20	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
FBA	831	Al Najaf	13:50	MSR	614	Cairo	23:30	NIA	152	Cairo	13:20	KAC	411	Bangkok/Manila	23:25
		-												Sialkot	
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05	FDB	071	Dubai	23:35	MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30	PIA	240		23:35
								MSR	611	Cairo	14:00	KAC	203	Lahore	23:40

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CROSSWORD 1217

Kuwait Times

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ACROSS

- 1. A licensed medical practitioner. 4. Relating to the abomasum (the fourth compartment of the stomach of rumi-
- 12. Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- 15. Any of various coarse shrubby plants of the genus Iva with small greenish flow-
- 16. Of or relating to or characteristic of Lebanon or its people.
- 17. A depression in an otherwise level surface.
- 18. A unit of absorbed ionizing radiation equal to 100 ergs per gram of irradiated material.
- 19. Of or like a cecum.

nants).

- 20. Affect with wonder.
- 22. The state of being behind in payments. 24. A New England state.
- 26. South American armadillo with three
- bands of bony plates. 27. Any of a class of organic compounds containing the cyano radical -CN.
- 29. A radioactive element of the actinide
- series. 30. Any of various edible seeds of plants of
- the family Leguminosae.

 33. A public act of violence by an unruly
- 37. A category in some early taxonomies.
- 39. Socialist who wrote The Communist Manifesto with Karl Marx in 1848 (1820-
- 41. Oval reproductive body of a fowl (espe-
- cially a hen) used as food.
- 42. The capital of Western Samoa. 43. A federation of North American labor
- unions that merged with the Congress of Industrial Organizations in 1955. 44. A federal agency that supervises carriers
- that transport goods and people 46. (usually followed by `to') Naturally dis-
- posed toward. 47. (Greek mythology) The brother of Jocasta
- and uncle of Antigone who became king of Thebes after the fall of Oedipus.
- 49. 10 grams. 51. 100 ngwee equal 1 kwacha.
- 53. Covered with paving material.
 55. A polypeptide antibiotic (similar to baci-
- tracin) obtained from a soil bacterium. 57. The highest level or degree attainable.
- 59. Support consisting of a place to rest the foot while ascending or descending a
- stairway 60. A woman hired to suckle a child of some-
- one else. 63. A silvery ductile metallic element found primarily in bauxite.
- 65. Somewhat soft. 69. West Indian tree having racemes of fra-
- grant white flowers and yielding a durable timber and resinous juice. 72. Being nine more than ninety.
- 74. The dialect of Malay used as the national language of the Republic of Indonesia or
- of Malaysia 75. One of the five major classes of immunoglobulins.
- 76. One of the 4-year intervals between Olympic Games.
- 79. The ratio of the distance traveled (in miles) to the time spent traveling (in
- hours) 80. Small cubes with 1 to 6 spots on the faces.
- 81. A river in northeastern Brazil that flows generally northward to the Atlantic
- Ocean 82. (in Scotland or Ireland) A mountain or tall

DOWN

- 1. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
- 2. The organ that bears the ovules of a flower. 3. A genus of Pyralidae. 4. Verse in the meter used in Greek and Latin
- poetry consisting of strophes of 4 tetra-
- 5. The hair growing on the lower part of a man's face.
- 6. Excessively fat.
- 7. (British) A waterproof raincoat made of rubberized fabric.
- 8. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods. 9. Sottish sailor who was put ashore on a deserted island off the coast of Chile for five years (providing the basis for Daniel Defoe's novel about Robinson Crusoe) (1676-1721).
- 10. A very poisonous metallic element that

- has three allotropic forms.

 11. A unit of length of thread or yarn.

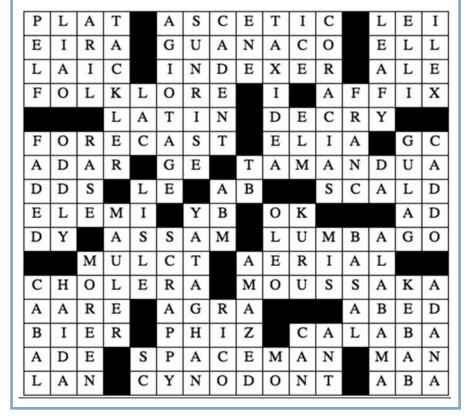
 12. (Babylonian) A demigod or first man.

 13. An ancient Egyptian city on the west bank of the Nile opposite Cairo.
- 14. Someone who copies the words or
- behavior of another. 21. South American plant cultivated for its large fragrant trumpet-shaped flowers.
- 23. Related on the mother's side.
- 25. Any of various devices for taking hold of
- 28. Submerged marine plant with very long narrow leaves found in abundance along North Atlantic coasts.
- 31. The capital of Nationalist China.
- 32. Decisively defeated in combat.
- 34. (in writing) See below.
- 35. A viewer who gives a flirtatious or lewd look at another person.

 36. A committee in the executive branch of
- government that advises the president on foreign and military and national
- 38. A fragment broken off from the edge o face of stone or ore and having at least one thin edge. 40. lons are accelerated along a linear path
- by voltage differences on electrodes along the path.
- 45. The Palestinian uprising (beginning in 1987) against the Israeli occupation of
- the West Bank and Gaza Strip. 48. A member of the Siouan people formerly
- living in the Missouri river valley in NE
- 50. (informal) Fortitude and determination.
- 52. The distance around a person's body. 54. A metric unit of length equal to one hun-
- dredth of a meter. 56. African tree having an exceedingly thick trunk and fruit that resembles a gourd
- and has an edible pulp called monkey 58. (Akkadian) God of wisdom. 61. (New Testament) The sages who visited
- Jesus and Mary and Joseph shortly after Jesus was born.
- 62. On or toward the lee. 64. Trace the shape of.66. A metrical unit with unstressed-stressed
- syllables. 67. A rare chronic progressive encephalitis
- caused by the measles virus and occurring primarily in children and young adults.
- 68. German chemist who was co-discoverer with Lise Meitner of nuclear fission
- 70. An early form of modern jazz (originating around 1940). 71. A flat wing-shaped process or winglike
- part of an organism.

 73. An accountant certified by the state.
- 77. A period of time containing 365 (or 366)
- 78. Being one more than one.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK

Aries (March 21-April 19)

Your animated interest in life and the life around you is optimistic and gives everyone who is around you a sense of optimism. You may look to review what you have and have not accomplished this year but interruptions of work seem to take control. Take notes of your goals and when you are with a trusted family member or a trusted supervisor, you will be able to ascertain exactly where you want to go next. You are strong in mind and body and are capable of much more than you think. In the workplace, you are able to sift through and find the shortest distance to an excellent outcome. Keep up the good work . . . With new resolve, you become generally optimistic about your prospects-at home or work



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Probing discussions before work may have you realizing that some changes are coming in the workplace-you may have also seen a press release. Fresh insight comes to you through mass media-broadcasting, publishing, advertising-giving you a whole new perspective. You will make discoveries of how this affects you. For now, proceed as usual with your day. A change in chairman or president may be in the works, but should not change the way in which you work. Pay careful attention to the details today, especially if you work with legal matters. Be clear in your communications. You will learn new ways to handle everyday matters. There is harmony and ease in creative expression this evening. Let your light shine. Be ready for love.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Things are happening and the future of your career may depend on just how much you want to help the company for which you work to expand and grow. Decisions about financial advancement may come into play. Good fortune and luck surround you. It is easy for you to make correct decisions, find the right path and move forward where career and success are concerned. Life's problems seem manageable and easy to solve. Reserve, self-confidence, self-reliance and humility will be your best attitudes over the next few months and will encourage success. Enjoy laughter with others this afternoon. This is a delightful time to enjoy your support system: family and those who give you nourishment and encouragement.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

Be aware of the distractions at work. This is one of those times when it is better to sell than to buy. This applies to material things, but extends to social and romantic relationships as well. This afternoon you will make the effort to improve the channels of understanding and appreciation between friends. It could be time now to clear up any past misunderstandings. This afternoon, take some time to enjoy some lighthearted, after work get-together with your friends. Stay open to the ideas of others. There is a need for new information, with fresh opinions and alternative ideas in order to fine-tune your goals. You and your family could join a recreation center-enjoy doing different things together regularly



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Taking time to enjoy this April day before work may find you feeling upbeat and setting the mood for a positive day, all day long. This could mean an early morning walk or run for about fifteen minutes out and fifteen minutes back home. At work you may feel that you have just improved your talents to think clearly and perhaps above and beyond the usual. Where finances are concerned, moderation is the key. Of course, you will not want to obligate your finances until you know all the details and today, there are several opportunities to improve your odds. Partnerships are far more exciting than you thought. You are attracted to some unusual associates-listen and learn. You may be introduced to a new romance later today.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

Other people may encourage you to make decisions prematurely today. Do not hesitate to delay decisions until you have had time to give important matters your full attention. Hastily conceived plans might seem attractive in the heat of the moment but might not look so smart when you have checked out the details. This afternoon you have enough interest in what you are doing for sustained work that allows you to coordinate or organize your life. You can bring into fruition particular projects or results from some psychological development. Be wise in your urge for independence. You are coming into a time of experimenting with new concepts. Having fun with the young peopl around you this evening can be quite enjoyable.

WORD SEARCH

Musical Instruments 1

Find and circle all of the musical instruments that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message

C	Α	Т	Н	0	U	K	U	L	Е	L	Ε	M	U	R	D	G	R
C	0	K	S	Y	D	R	U	G	Y	D	R	U	Н	1	U	E	Α
P	1	R	R	В	Α	L	Α	L	Α	1	K	Α	D	1	Т	0	Т
E	E	Т	Ν	Α	R	Н	D	0	В	Н	W	G	Т	Н	R	В	1
٧	0	Ν	Т	Е	Т	0	Н	Ν	Α	Е	Ε	Α	Α	R	0	0	S
-1	P	S	Ν	E	Т	Ν	U	R	R	R	R	С	0	Т	М	C	C
В	1	Α	Т	Y	R	E	P	D	1	0	Α	Н	C	E	В	0	Н
R	C	C	R	L	W	Ν	Р	D	М	В	Н	L	М	U	0	Ν	1
Α	C	Α	Α	L	М	Н	0	1	Α	E	Α	Н	Α	S	Ν	G	M
P	0	R	М	E	U	0	1	S	Р	R	L	L	C	0	E	A	Е
Н	L	Α	Z	В	1	F	Α	S	1	G	0	0	1	N	Т	1	S
0	0	M	1	W	Ν	S	L	Ν	Т	D	Α	D	D	U	E	C	Т
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OLLECEMAELGNAIRTAD ACCORDION CONGA BAGPIPE CORNET BALALAIKA COW BELL BANJO **DIDGERIDOO** BASS DRUM BODHRAN **EUPHONIUM** CABASAS FLUTE FRENCH HORN CHIMES **GUITAR**

HARP

CITTERN

CLARINET

HURDY-GURDY SAZ LAOUTA SITAR MANDOLA TARKA MARACAS TRIANGLE MELODICA MIZMAR OBOE PENNYWHISTLE PICCOLO.

TROMBONE UKULELE **VEENA** VIBRAPHONE VIOLIN XUN

Libra (September 23-October 22)

✓ You may discover exciting career opportunities. Your innovative ideas can gain the support of those in positions of control and responsibility. Your mind is shrewd and practical as well as original. It's a good time to begin new projects or a new job. You can also make progress if you are currently working today. It's a good time for approaching those in positions of power and authority with your creative ideas. You feel efficient and comfortable with your colleagues and friends. Your happy emotional outlook makes you popular. It's a good time for romantic and marriage relationships. This is a favorable time for family gatherings. Family relationships improve. Take it easy in the evenings this week-there is much work ahead for this next week.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

It's a good time to resolve any difficulties that keep you from your goals. You will see improvements in many areas of your life . . . You appropriately feel honor and pride. After your workday has ended, you and your friends may decide it has been too long since everyone gathered in a group and had fun together. You will help plan a get-together for the near future. This may mean a camping trip or sports competition or any number of things that create an opportunity to gather and get caught up on each other's life situation. You may even see this as a reunion of sorts. Avoid impulsive gambling or speculation for now. You may be prone to romantic infatuations; careful. You have the opportunity to make responsible choices; listen first.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Jumping into the flow of work today should be an easy challenge. Change is on the horizon, however, and you can see it coming. You are coming into a time of experimenting with new concepts and putting aside the old and learning new methods of working. Progressive people and idealistic groups or concepts play a more important role in your life. A neighborhood crime watch or community organization meeting is planned this evening. You could be really interested in the political things that are going on in your city; there are places to volunteer your talents. The process of future planning is successful and meets everyone's idea of what they wanted for future changes in the neighborhood. Compromising and cooperation bring positive results.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

It takes diplomacy, tact and patience to negotiate some strong feelings during an afternoon meeting. Acting on impulse without sufficient regard for risks can create harm. Slow down and really think about what you are saying-you will see positive results. After work, you may enjoy spending some time at the library. Family members have a difference of opinion about religion and you help to find some research and viewpoints for discussion. You may find yourself searching for the deeper meaning of life and how it relates to you. Your no-nonsense nature comes under review and you learn to be more spiritual and yielding to other people. This evening you will enjoy joking around with the young people in your family or neighborhood.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

A new sense of self, a more assertive personal style and a more dynamic approach to life are the hallmarks of this time. Work challenges move along better than usual. Doubts fade into the background and you are encouraged to do research. Rather than just accepting that which you have been taught you would begin to seek answers from more than one intelligent source. Getting the facts and making sure that people get correct information can make all the difference in the world-and any shortcomings in these areas can raise some real problems. Relaxing with your friends and joking around in positive ways are part and parcel of what makes up this evening. You could be included in some team competition tonight.

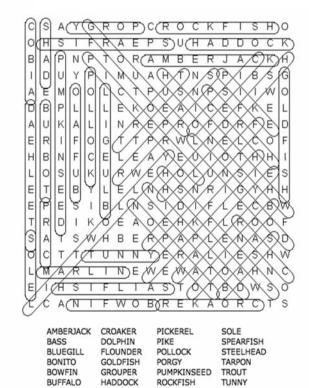


Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may decide to find work that is less stressful this year. You may not make this change right away but instead you stay aware and alert to any changes that look positive. You may prefer to look for work that has more rewards mental ly than monetarily. At least there will be less pressure this year to earn top money. Becoming an independent contractor may be more appealing for now. This is a long-time process that you will not want to change overnight, but you will feel that inner determination. Avoid changes that you know could cause stress on your physical body. It's time for action; your destiny is in your hands. This evening you may decide to relax a bit and play some computer games with a young person in your family.

Yesterday Solution

Fish 2



Hidden sentence: A COUNTRYMAN BETWEEN TWO LAWYERS IS LIKE A FISH BETWEEN TWO CATS

ROCKFISH

SAILFISH

SHEEFISH

SNAPPER

SHAD

TUNNY

WALLEYE

WEAKFISH

WHITEFISH

YELLOWTAIL

HADDOCK

LINGCOD

MARLIN

PERCH

HOUNDFISH

BURBOT

CARP

CHAR

CISCO

Daily SuDoku	

3 5	8		2					
5			8		4			
		6		3		2		
			9				7	8
4								8
4 2	3				6			
		5		9		6		
			4		8			5
					5		3	7

Yesterday's Solution

5 6 8 8 5 3 6 9 4 2 3 8 5 6 4 9 8 2 6 9 5 4 3 8 2 9 6 4 9 3 6 5 8 7 4 9 5 8 3 6 7 2 6 3 8 4 5 9 1 3 6 5 9 8 4

Sabah Hospital

Amiri Hospital

Chest Hospital

Adan Hospital

Ibn Sina Hospital

Al-Razi Hospital

Kaizen center

Rawda

Adaliya

Khaldiya

Shamiya

Shuwaikh

Nuzha

Qadsiya

Dasmah

Shaab

Qibla

Mirqab

Sharq

Salmiya

Jabriya

Bayan

Mishref

Sabah

Jahra

W Hawally

New Jahra

West Jahra

South Jahra

North Jahra

North Jleeb

Ardhiya

Firdous

Omariya

N Khaitan

Fintas

Bneid Al-Gar

Ayoun Al-Qibla

Maidan Hawally

Abdullah Salem

Industrial Shuwaikh

Kaifan

Physiotherapy Hospital

Maternity Hospital

Farwaniya Hospital

Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital

INFORMATION

For labor-related inquiries and complaints:

Clinics

24812000

22450005

24843100

25312700

24849400

24892010

23940620

24840300

24846000

24874330/9

25716707

22517733

22517144

24848075

24849807

24848913

24814507

22549134

22526804

24814764

22515088

22532265

22531908

22518752

22459381

22451082

22456536

22465401

25746401

25316254

25623444

25388462

25381200

22630786

24810221

24770319

24575755

24772608

24775066

24775992

24311795

24884079

24892674

24719048

24710044

23900322

Call MSAL hotline 128 **Hospitals**

PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan	Fahaeel Makka St	23915883
	Abu Halaifa	Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd	23715414
	Danat Al-Sultan	Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1	24575518
	Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 92	24566622
Capital	Ahlam	Fahad Al-Salem St	22436184
	Khaldiya Coop	Khaldiya Coop	24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa	Farwaniya Block 40	24734000
	Ferdous Coop	Ferdous Coop	24881201
	Modern Safwan	Old Kheitan Block 11	24726638
Hawally	Tariq	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St	25726265
	Hana	Salmiya-Amman St	25647075
	Ikhlas	Hawally-Beirut St	22625999
	Hawally & Rawdha	Hawally & Rawdha Coop	22564549
	Ghadeer	Jabriya-Block 1A	25340559
	Kindy	Jabriya-Block 3B	25326554
	Ibn Al-Nafis	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St	25721264
	Mishrif Coop	Mishrif Coop	25380581
	Salwa Coop	Salwa Coop	25628241

STATE OF KUWAIT

DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



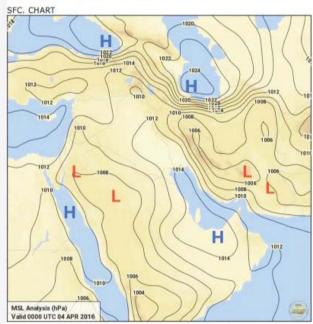
Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630 Fax: (+965) 24348714 www.met.gov.kw



Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours Issued 04/04/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 28 °C

By Day: Sunny with variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear By Night : Fair with light to moderate south easterly to light variable wind, with speed of 08 - 30 km/h and some high clouds will appear



F	our-Day	Forecast

	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	3	*	*	*
Expected Weather	sunny + scattered clouds	partly cloudy to cloudy+ scattered rain might be thundrey at times	clouds to decrease gradually	sunny
Min Temp °C	15	17	17	16
Max Temp °C	30	28	28	31
Wind Direction	south easterly	south easterly	south easterly to easterly	variable
Wind Speed km/h	10 - 32	15 - 40	12 - 35	08 - 20

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

no	warnings or weather watches
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MIN °C REC	Max °C EXP
18	27
14	28
11	30
14	24
16	30
16	26
19	23
19	23
14	28
19	24
19	24
14	27
14	30
15	28
15	28
13	30
	REC 18 14 11 14 16 16 19 19 14 19 19 14 15 15

Recorde	d Yesterday at Kı	wait Airport
Max Tem	28	
Min Tem	11	
Max Rel	66	
Min Rel H	15	
Max Wind and Direct	28 S	
TOTAL R	AINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm
*	Sunrise	05:34
0	18:08	
Prayer T	imes	
Fajr	04	:13

Prayer Times	
Fajr	04:13
Sunrise	05:34
Zuhr	11:51
Asr	15:23
Sunset	18:08
Isha	19:26



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists				
Dr. Abidallah Al-Mansoor	25622444			
Dr. Samy Al-Rabeea	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-Daaory	25731988			
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166			
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426			
General Practition	ners			
Dr. Mohamme Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123			
-				
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312			
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem	24719312 23926920			
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem	23926920			
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem Dr. Kathem Maarafi	23926920 25730465			
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem Dr. Kathem Maarafi Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	23926920 25730465 25655528			
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem Dr. Kathem Maarafi Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	23926920 25730465 25655528 24577781			
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem Dr. Kathem Maarafi Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Refae	23926920 25730465 25655528 24577781			
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem Dr. Kathem Maarafi Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Refae Urologists	23926920 25730465 25655528 24577781 25333501			
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem Dr. Kathem Maarafi Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Refae Urologists Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	23926920 25730465 25655528 24577781 25333501 22641534 22639955			
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhazeem Dr. Kathem Maarafi Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Refae Urologists Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	23926920 25730465 25655528 24577781 25333501 22641534 22639955 Ii 22616660			

Dr. Leons Joseph

Psychologists

/Psychotherapists

66703427

Soor Center

Tel: 2290-1677

Fax: 2290 1688

Plastic Surg	eons
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
Family Doc	tor
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
Psychiatri:	sts
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
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DrAdrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliytami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
General Surg	eons
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Bash	er 25327148
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Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

info@soorcenter.com

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Paediatricians				
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898			
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300			
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444			
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099			
Dr. Snaa Maaroof	25713514			
Dr. Pradip Gujare	23713100			
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Dr. Mohammed Salam				
Bern University	23845955			
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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			
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Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875			
Gastrologists				
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464			
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030			
Dr. Foad Abidallah Al-Ali	22633135			

Kaizen center

25716707

Noor Clinic

23845955

	Endocrinologist				
_	Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330			
	Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari 25658888				
	Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr 25329924				
	Physiotherapists & VD				
	Dr. Deyaa Shehab 25722291				
	Dr. Musaed Faraj Khamees	22666288			
	Rheumatologists:				
1	Dr. Adel Al-Awadi 25330060				
	Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290			
	Internist, Chest & Heart				
	DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210			
	Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCPC, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology				
	Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667			
	Consultant Cardiologist				
	Dr. Farida Al-Habib	2611555-2622555			
	MD, PH.D, FACC				

William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677

Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677

Lesotho

Libya

00218

00266

Zimbabwe

INTERNATIONAL CALLS		2004		
CALL.)		D	
Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370	
Albania	00355 00213	Luxembourg Macau	00352 00853	
Algeria Andorra	00213	Macedonia	00389	
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261	
Anguilla Antiga	001264 001268	Majorca Malawi	0034 00265	
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060	
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960	
Australia Austria	0061 0043	Mali Malta	00223 00356	
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692	
Bahamas Bahrain	001242 00973	Martinique Mauritania	00596	
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230	
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269	
Belgium	00375 0032	Mexico Micronesia	0052 00691	
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373	
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377	
Bermuda Bhutan	001441 00975	Mongolia Montserrat	00976 001664	
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212	
Bosnia Botswana	00387	Mozambique Myanmar (Burma)	00258 0095	
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264	
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977	
Bulgaria Burkina	00359	Netherlands Netherlands Antilles	0031	
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687	
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064	
Cameroon Canada	00237	Nicaragua Nigar	00505 00227	
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234	
Cayman Islands Central African	001345 00236	Niue Norfolk Island	00683 00672	
Central African Chad	00236	Norfolk Island N. Ireland (UK)	00672	
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850	
China Colombia	0086 0057	Norway Oman	0047 00968	
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092	
Congo	00242	Palau	00680	
Cook Islands Costa Rica	00682 00506	Panama Papua New Guinea	00507 00675	
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595	
Cupaus	0053 00357	Peru	0051 0063	
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Philippines Poland	0048	
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351	
Denmark Diego Garcia	0045 00246	Puerto Rico Qatar	001787 00974	
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040	
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007	
Dominican Republic Ecuador	001809	Rwanda Saint Helena	00250	
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869	
El Salvador England (UK)	00503	Saint Lucia Saint Pierre	001758 00508	
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784	
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684	
Estonia Ethiopia	00372 00251	Samoa West San Marino	00685 00378	
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tone	00239	
Faroe Islands	00298 00679	Saudi Arabia	00966 0044	
Fiji Finland	00358	Scotland (UK) Senegal	00221	
France	0033	Seychelles	00284	
French Guiana French Polynesia	00594 00689	Sierra Leone Singapore	00232	
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421	
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386	
Georgia Germany	00995 0049	Solomon Islands Somalia	00677 00252	
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027	
Gibraltar Greece	00350 0030	South Korea Spain	0082 0034	
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0034	
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249	
Guadeloupe Guam	00590 001671	Suriname Swaziland	00597 00268	
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046	
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041	
Guyana Haiti	00592 00509	Syria Serbia	00963 00381	
Holland (Netherlands)		Taiwan	00886	
Honduras Hong Kong	00504 00852	Tanzania Thailand	00255 0066	
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228	
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676	
Iceland India	00354 0091	Tokelau Trinidad	00690 001868	
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216	
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090	
Iran	0098 00964	Tuvalu Uganda	00688 00256	
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380	
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates		
Ivory Coast Jamaica	00225 001876	United Kingdom Uruguay	0044 00598	
Japan	0081	USA	001	
Jordan Kazakhstan	00962	Uzbekistan Vanuatu	00998 00678	
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582	
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084	
Kuwait Kyrgyzstan	00965 00996	Virgin Islands UK Virgin Islands US	001284 001340	
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044	
Latvia Lebanon	00371	Yemen	00967	
Liberia	00961 00231	Yugoslavia Zambia	00381	

00263

Music & Movies



(From left) Hong Kong actor Michael Ning, Chinese actress Jessie Li, Taiwanese actress Elaine Jin and Hong Kong actor Aaron Kwok poses after winning the Hong Kong actor Aaron Kwok pose after winning the Best Supporting Actor and New Performer, the Best Best Actor award for his movie Port of Call'. Actress, the Best Supporting actress and Best Actor awards for their movie 'Port of Call' during the Hong Kong Film Awards in Hong Kong. — AP photos





Hong Kong director Raman Hui, left, holds up his trophy after receiving the Best New Director award for his movie 'Monster Hunt' from Hong Kong actor Andy Lau, right.



Hong Kong producer Andrew Choi, foreground, raises the trophy after winning the Best Film award for his movie 'Ten Years'.



Hong Kong movie producer Andrew Choi, fourth left, and director Ng Ka-leung, third left, pose with members of the cast and crew after winning the Best Film award for their movie 'Ten Years'.

Chinese media ignore win of film about Hong Kong's future

ainland Chinese media ignored a film festival award by 'Ten Years," a collection of five shorts that depict a aloomy future for Beijing-ruled Hong Kong, where freedom of speech has all but disappeared. "Ten Years" won out over the favorite, crime thriller "Port of Call," in the best film category at Sunday's Hong Kong Film Festival. "Port of Call," which won seven awards, had been nominated in 13 categories and

by "Ten Years," with at least one entertainment site omitting it from its list of winners. Online site Tencent, which often broadcasts film ceremonies, put up videos of other winners accepting

Made on a shoestring budget, "Ten Years" became a surprise hit with Hong Kong audiences for its dystopian view of the former British colony in 2025. In one story, "Dialect," a taxi driver "Ten Years" just one. Mainland media failed to mention the win struggles with a Mandarin proficiency requirement, reflecting

nervousness among Cantonese-speaking residents about the influx of mainlanders. Another segment has a woman who sets herself on fire in support of independence for Hong Kong - a once-unthinkable cause now advocated by a number of groups. "What this award represents is so much bigger than the film. This award means that there's still hope for Hong Kong," said executive producer Andrew Choi.

"Port of Call" was still a big winner, sweeping the acting cate

gories and earning best screenplay and cinematography awards. Michael Ning was named best supporting actor and best new performer, to take two trophies alongside co-stars best actor Aaron Kwok, best actress Jessie Li and best supporting actress Elaine Jin. Hong Kong director Tsui Hark won best director for his 3D adventure film "The Taking of Tiger Mountain." — AP



File photo shows Hong Kong actor Jackie Chan during a press conference at a cinema hall in Bucharest. — AFP



File photo shows Indian Bollywood actor Amitabh Bachchan speaking during the start of the 21st Kolkata International Film Festival in Kolkata. — AFP

Film stars in spotlight after Panama Papers leak

ollywood's Amitabh Bachchan and martial arts movie star Jackie Chan are among celebrities who featured yesterday in a massive leak of documents, some of which reveal hidden offshore assets. Bollywood legend Bachchan, simply known as the "Big B" in India, was appointed director of at least four shipping companies registered in offshore tax havens and set up 23 years ago. The authorized capital of these companies ranged from just \$5,000 to \$50,000 but they traded in ships worth millions of dollars, according to the Indian Express newspaper.

The Express is among more than 100 media groups which have investigated a massive leak of 11.5 million documents from Mossack Fonseca, a Panama-based law firm with offices in 35 countries. Bachchan, who has long since resigned from the companies and has not commented on the documents, is not the only member of his famous family named in the leaks. His daughter-in-law, actress Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, was also director and shareholder of an offshore company, along with members of her family, before it was thought to have been wound up in 2008, according to the newspaper.

The media adviser of the former Miss World winner has rejected the documents as "totally untrue and false". As with many of Fonseca's clients, there is no evidence that the Bollywood A-listers used their companies for improper purposes and having an offshore entity is not illegal. But the documents, naming more than 500 Indians including real estate tycoons in Fonseca's list of offshore companies, foundations and trusts, come at a sensitive time in India.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has vowed to crack down on the "menace" of so-called black money-vast sums stashed abroad to keep them secret from Indian tax authorities. Hong Kong film star Jackie Chan has also been revealed to have at least six companies represented by Fonseca's firm, though he too may have used the companies legitimately for business purposes rather than for tax avoidance. The stash of records was obtained from an anonymous source by German daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung and shared with media worldwide. The documents, from around 214,000 offshore entities, cover almost 40 years. — AFP



One Direction star Zayn Malik is finding renewed success in his own right, with his solo debut album opening at number one in both the United States and Britain. — AFP

Zayn tops charts in post-One Direction debut

ne Direction star Zayn Malik is finding renewed success in his own right, with his solo debut album opening at number one in both the United States and Britain. The 23-year-old, who now simply calls himself Zayn, has gone racier as a solo artist with a sexual image that would have been out of the question for his former boy band. His album 'Mind of Mine,' sold 157,000 copies or the equivalent in downloads or streaming in its first week in the United States, Nielsen Music said late Sunday.

Zayn becomes the first British male solo artist to debut at number one on the benchmark US Billboard chart with his first album. George Michael went to number one in 1988 with iFaith,î his blockbuster solo debut after disbanding the pop duo Wham!, but he did not do so in his first week. 'Mind of Mine' also debuted at number one in Britain, where Zayn edged out fellow homegrown star Adele on the Official Albums Chart released Friday. Zayn released iMind of Mineî on March 25, the anniversary of his abrupt and at time acrimonious departure from One Direction amid a global tour.—AFP

Favreau gives 'Jungle Book' a girl-power makeover

ne of the best-loved animated films of all-time, "The Jungle Book" boasted iconic songs and a cast that ensured it would be revered as a milestone in Hollywood history. But for all its virtues, Disney's 1967 version of Rudyard Kipling's tale of an orphan raised by wolves lacked the one thing you'd be sure to find in the jungle-the female of the species. "I thought it was a little gender biased. I have two daughters, and the world is different now," says Jon Favreau, who directs the big budget live-action remake which hits US theaters on April 15. The veteran director set about putting things right by bringing on board Tinseltown A-lister and regular collaborator Scarlett Johansson to give villainous, and very male, snake Kaa the feminine touch.

"I liked the character of this mother figure who is welcoming and also menacing. I thought that there was something interesting psychologically about that," Favreau told AFP. The 49-year-old, who directed the "Iron Man" and "Avengers" movies, also hired Oscar-winning Lupita Nyong'o to upgrade the role of she-wolf Raksha, who has a bit-part in the 1967 film. The 3D remake of the "The Jungle Book" employs photorealistic CGI in perhaps the most visually stunning yet of Disney's growing stable of animation-tolive action remakes, which includes box office smashes "Maleficent," "Cinderella" and "Alice in Wonderland." It stars American newcomer Neel Sethi, 12, as "Mowgli," the man-cub forced to abandon his jungle home for a journey of self-discovery, guided by stern panther Bagheera and free-spirited bear Baloo.

Athleticism

Favreau plucked the youngster from around 2,000 children who auditioned to play Mowgli. Sethi, whose scenes sprinting through the forest and swinging from vines required the athleticism of a gymnast, was studying for his black belt in Tae Kwon Do at the time. "I'd never thought about acting before. I was in a dance class and the teacher heard about the role and said I'd be really good for it," Sethi told AFP. "So I auditioned. I went to LA and two weeks later we started filming." The young debutant and his female co-stars are joined by a glittering male cast featuring Ben Kingsley, Christopher Walken, Idris Elba and Bill Murray, who is famously selective about the roles he takes.

"The hardest part of the movie was trying to get Bill Murray on the phone for the first time," said Favreau, who cast the 65-yearold comic actor in the role of Baloo the bear. "I sent letters, I sent artwork. I'd done it on other movies, I'd reached out to him before, and never heard from him. So when I got the call back from him, that's when my whole world lit up."

While "The Jungle Book" was the only animation for which Walt Disney hired well-known voice actors, Favreau describes himself as the kind of director who draws inspiration from an all-star cast. "When I cast Robert Downey Jr, all of a sudden 'Iron Man' became very clear to me," he told AFP. "In this case, when Bill Murray came in as Baloo my blood pressure dropped. I knew that I had a great opportunity here to make a wonderful film."

Dreaming of Mowgli

Born two months before Disney's death in 1966, Favreau found fame early in his career as the writer and star of 1996 cult comedy "Swingers." His memories of the impresario's last movie are sketchy, but he remembers dreaming of Mowgli driving in his parents' Toyota in downtown Manhattan. "I also remember it being scary to me. I remember the snake hypnotizing the boy felt very scary. I look at it now and it seems silly," he told AFP. Awardwinning composer John Debney, whose father Louis was used by Walt Disney in the mid-1930s, provides a score reminiscent of the 1967 film but, unlike the original, the new version is not a musical.

There are snippets of the classic songs from the 1967 film, such as "Bare Necessities" and "I Wanna Be Like You," but fans will have to wait for the closing credits for a full-on sing along. Favreau said he reined in the musical numbers because he felt a more flamboyant approach would have undermined the sense of danger in his film, which is much more adult in tone than the original. "You want to make a movie that's appealing to all audiences, and around the world, and I think the original was more of a children's movie," he told AFP. "Although people remember it fondly, if we had done a live action version of it, I think it would have felt a little redundant." — AFP



A screen grab from the 1967 film 'The Jungle Book' - a version of Rudyard Kipling's famous tale. — AFP

Awards



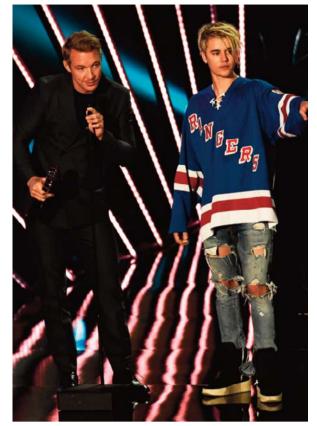
Taylor Swift, left, accepts the award for best tour as Justin Timberlake looks on from right during the iHeartRadio Music Awards at The Forum. — AP photos



Justin Timberlake presents the award for



Taylor Swift accepts the award for best



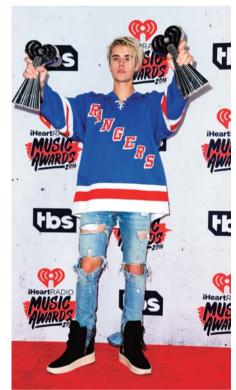
Diplo, left, and Justin Bieber accept the award for dance song of the year for Where Are U Now.



Justin Bieber performs "Love Yourself" and "Company" on stage.



Fetty Wap poses in the press room with the award for best new artist.



Justin Bieber, winner of the awards for male artist of the year and dance song of the year for 'Where are U Now,' poses in the

Swift thanks 'boyfriend Adam' at iHeartRadio Awards

or the second year in a row, the iHeartRadio Awards became the iHeartTaylorSwift show. Not only did Swift claim three prizes, including album of the year, but her bestie and her boyfriend took home trophies, too. Swift, who swept the awards last year, won the first and last prize Sunday night - female artist and album of the year. In between, she claimed best tour honors for her star-studded "1989 World Tour," thanking boyfriend Calvin Harris (real name: Adam Wiles) from the stage. "For the first time, I had the most amazing person to come home to when the spotlight went out and when the crowds were all gone," Swift said. "So I want to thank my boyfriend Adam for that."

Harris won dance artist of the year. Gomez took the "biggest triple threat" award. Bono and the Edge from U2 accepted the show's Innovator Award, presented by last year's winner, Pharrell Williams. "The thing that might be the most innovative about our band is we are a real band," Edge said. "We are still in our high school band." Song of the year went to Adele for "Hello." She accepted via video from a performance in Birmingham, England. Other winners at the fan-voted show included Fetty Wap (best new artist), Pitbull (Latin artist of the year) and Chris Brown (R&B artist of the year). All three men also performed during the show.

Brown thanked "everybody who supported me through all the worst times in my life and the positive times in my life." "I tend to not have a filter sometimes, and I go off on a lot of people," said Brown, who has been dogged by legal troubles since pleading guilty to felony charges in 2009 for beating then-girlfriend Rihanna. "But the music stays the same." There were as many performances as awards presented during the three-hour show, hosted by Jason Derulo and broadcast live on TNT and TBS from the Forum in Inglewood, California. Justin Bieber was the first to perform, showing off his new dreadlocks during a mash-up of "Love Yourself" and "Company." He returned to the stage twice as a winner, claiming male artist of the year and sharing in the dance song of the year award with Diplo and Skrillex for "Where Are U Now."

Bieber thanked his fans for standing by him through what he described as "tough times." "It's just about our growth and learning," he said. Meghan Trainor performed her new single, "No." Demi Lovato sang the heart wrenching "Stone Cold" while Brad Paisley accompanied her on guitar. Iggy Azalea unveiled her new song, "Team." Zayn Malik made his solo awards-show performance debut, performing "Like I Would" from his new album, "Mind of Mine." Other performers included DNCE, The Weeknd, show host Jason Derulo and Maroon 5, which was named duo or group of the year. — AP

Winners

Album of the Year: 1989 - Taylor Swift Song of the Year: "Hello" - Adele

Female Artist of the Year: Taylor Swift Male Artist of the Year: Justin Bieber

Best New Artist: Fetty Wap

Hip Hop Artist of the Year: Drake **R&B Artist of the Year:** Chris Brown

Dance Artist of the Year: Calvin Harris

Latin Artist of the Year: Pitbull

Triple Threat: Selena Gomez -Singer/Actor/Dancer

Hip Hop Song of the Year: "Hotline Bling"

R&B Song of the Year: "Earned It" - The

Alternative Rock Song of the Year:

"Stressed Out" - Twenty One Pilots Best Collaboration: "Uptown Funk" - Mark

Ronson featuring Bruno Mars

Best Tour: Taylor Swift

Rock Song of the Year: "Heavy Is The Head" - Zac Brown Band featuring Chris

Cornell

Country Song of the Year: "Buy Me A

Boat" - Chris Janson

Dance Song of the Year: "Where Are U Now" - Skrillex & Diplo with Justin Bieber **Best Lyrics:** "Fight Song" - Rachel Platten Best Fan Army: Justin Bieber - Beliebers **Alternative Rock Artist of the Year:**

Best Duo/Group of the Year: Maroon 5 **Rock Artist of the Year:** Foo Fighters

Twenty One Pilots

Country Artist of the Year: Luke Bryan

Latin Song of the Year: "El Perdon" - Nicky Jam & Enrique Iglesias

Regional Mexican Song of the Year:

'Levantando Polvadera" - Voz de Mando **Regional Mexican Artist of the Year:**

Banda Los Recoditos **Best Cover Song:** "Uptown Funk" - Fifth

Harmony, Jasmine V, Jacob Whitesides and Mahogany Lox covering Mark Ronson featuring Bruno Mars

Best Song from a Movie: "Til It Happens To You" - Lady Gaga (The Hunting Ground) Most Meme-able Moment: Taylor Swift's "Crazy Girl" with Running Mascara (from

"Blank Space" video) — Reuters



Calvin Harris accepts the award for dance



Selena Gomez accepts the award for triple threat for her career as a singer, actress,



Diane Warren poses in the press room with the award for best song.



Nicky Jam winner of the award for latin song of the year for 'El Perdon'.



Bono, left, and The Edge of U2, winners of the innovator award pose in the press room.



Bono, left, and The Edge of U2 accept the innovator award as presenter Pharrell Williams looks on at right.



Meghan Trainor performs 'No' on stage.



Host Jason Derulo appears onstage during the iHeartRadio Music Awards.

Awards



Recording artist Jason Aldean accepts the Entertainer Chris Stapleton accepts the award for album of the of the Year award onstage during the 51st Academy of Country Music Awards at MGM Grand Garden Arena. — AP/AFP photos



year for 'Traveller'



Chris Stapleton poses in the press room with the awards for album of the year for 'Traveller', new male vocalist of the year, male vocalist of the year and song of the year for 'Nobody to Blame'.



Chris Stapleton, left, and his wife, Morgane Stapleton, perform 'Fire Away'.

Aldean wins top award, Stapleton cleans house at ACM Awards



Miranda Lambert accepts the award for female vocalist of



Miranda Lambert poses in the press room with the awards for female vocalist of the year and vocal event of the year for 'Smokin and Drinkin'.

ason Aldean beat Luke Bryan and Miranda Lambert for entertainer of the year at the Academy of Country Music Awards - a first for the singer after earning nominations for the top prize over the years, while Chris Stapleton cleaned house in other categories. Aldean also won over Garth Brooks and Eric Church on Sunday at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas. "I was just starting to think this one wasn't in the cards for me," Aldean said onstage near the end of the threehour show, which aired on CBS. "This is one of the best nights of my professional career."

Stapleton had an even better night. It was a repeat of the recent Grammy Awards and last year's Country Music Association Awards. Stapleton took home six awards, including album, song, male vocalist and new male vocalist of the year (he won twice for album and song of the year as the artist and songwriter-producer). Stapleton also shined with an impressive performance of the song, "Fire Away." His special guest this time wasn't Justin Timberlake, but his wife, Morgane, who sang next to her all-star hubby. The criticallyacclaimed singer-songwriter was humbled and shocked as he won the most awards of the night.

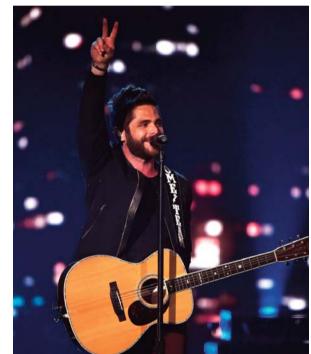
"You got to be kidding me. I thought for sure we were going to be girl-crushed on this one," Stapleton said onstage after winning song of the year for "Nobody to Blame" and beating Little Big Town's mega-hit "Girl Crush." Other top moments from the show included Dolly Parton partnering with Katy Perry for "Coat of Many Colors" and "Jolene." "Y'all finally got me in a pair of boots," Perry said onstage, sporting a bright pink and yellow country-flavored get-up. Parton wore a 2016 sparkly version of the famous coat she said "represents a very special time in my life" and was part of last year's NBC TVmovie about her childhood, "Dolly Parton's Coat of Many Colors." She won the Tex Ritter Award for films that honor country music.

Musical heroes

Eric Church also had a special moment when he paid tribute to rock icons like David Bowie, The Eagles' Glenn Frey, Lemmy Kilmister of Motorhead and former Stone Temple Pilots frontman Scott Weiland. Bryan introduced Church and said the performer was a big fan of vinyl records and was set to pay tribute to "four of his musical heroes." Church performed the track, "Record Year," and intertwined the late performers' songs into his performance.

Tim McGraw's performance was also a highlight: As he sang "Humble & Kind," a diverse group of people joined him onstage, from children to adults of every race. Some even dressed in clothes representing their backgrounds, and others wore clothes representing their occupation. Other performers include Lambert with ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons and Keith Urban, Sam Hunt, Kenny Chesney, Little Big Town with Trombone Shorty and Kelsea Ballerini, who sang with pop singer Nick Jonas. Carrie Underwood earned loud applause after singing "Church Bells." She was nominated for female vocalist of the year, but lost to Miranda Lambert, who won the honor for record-setting seventh time.

"I love to see here tonight a bunch of new country girls up here shining and singing their great songs that they wrote themselves," said Lambert, who also won vocal event of the year for "Smokin'and Drinkin'" with Little Big Town. "I'm really excited for women in country music, and I'm glad to be here as one of them." Lambert was referring to breakthrough singers like Ballerini, who won new female vocalist of the year,



Recording artist Thomas Rhett performs onstage.

and Cam, who was nominated for six awards and sang her Grammy-nominated hit, "Burning House," at the ACMs. They represent a small number of women who performed Sunday. In typical fashion of the last few years - at country awards shows and country radio - the night was dominated by the

Waiting backstage

Other winners included Little Big Town, Florida Georgia Line, Church, Old Dominion and Thomas Rhett, who took home single record of the year for "Die a Happy Man." Blake Shelton, who didn't host this year's ACMs like usual with Bryan, joined his former co-host to open the show with a performance, taking the spot of new co-host Dierks Bentley. Bentley was waiting backstage to jump into the performance before Shelton took his microphone to perform "Huntin', Fishin' and Lovin' Every Day" with Bryan. "The Voice" coach followed the collaborative performance with his own, of his recent single "Came Here to Forget."

After the performance, the hosts told a string of jokes, including one about country singers in the audience taking credit for the breakthrough career of leading nominee Chris Stapleton, who has written hits for dozens of country stars. Stapleton's six of seven wins ties him with Brooks and Faith Hill for most wins in a night at the ACMs. Presenters on Sunday included Kiefer Sutherland, who is working on a country album; British actor Tom Hiddleston, who portrays Hank Williams in biopic, "I Saw the Light"; Miss America Betty Cantrell; and singers Kacey Musgraves, Darius Rucker, Martina McBride and Jake Owen. — AP



Thomas Rhett accepts the award for single record of the year for 'Die a Happy Man'.



Kelsea Ballerini, poses in the press room with the award for new female vocalist of the year.



Brian Kelley, left, and Tyler Hubbard of Florida Georgia Line, perform 'Confession'.



(From left) Recording artists Keith Urban, Miranda Lambert and Billy Gibbons perform



Recording artists Nick Jonas (left) and Kelsea Ballerini perform onstage.

Awards



Sweet of Little Big Town, perform 'Stay All Night', with Trombone Shorty, background center right.



Jimi Westbrook, foreground from left, Kimberly Schlapman, Karen Fairchild and Phillip Little Big Town, winner of the award for vocal group of the year, and vocal event of the year for Smoking' And Drinkin', pose in the press room.



Brian Kelley, left, and Tyler Hubbard, of Florida Georgia Line, pose in the press room with their awards for vocal duo of the



Recording artist Carrie Underwood performs on stage.



Old Dominion performs on stage.

Winners

Entertainer of the Year Jason Aldean Album of the Year Chris Stapleton, Traveller Song of the Year

"Nobody to Blame," Chris Stapleton **Single Record of the Year**

"Die a Happy Man," Thomas Rhett Male Vocalist of the Year

Chris Stapleton Female Vocalist of the Year Miranda Lambert **Vocal Duo of the Year**

Florida Georgia Line **Vocal Group of the Year** Little Big Town New Male Vocalist of the Year

Chris Stapleton New Female Vocalist of the Year

Kelsea Ballerini New Vocal Duo or Group of the Year Old Dominion

Video of the Year "Mr Misunderstood," Eric Church — Reuters



Hosts Luke Bryan, left, and Dierks Bentley appear on stage.



Dolly Parton, left, and Katy Perry perform 'Coat Of Many



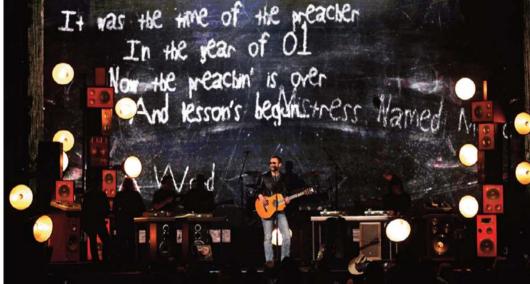
Kiefer Sutherland presents the award for female vocalist of the year.



Dolly Parton accepts the Tex Ritter award.



(From left) Singers Whit Sellers, Trevor Rosen, Matthew Ramsey, Brad Tursi, and Geoff Sprung of Old Dominion, winners of New Vocal Duo or Group of the Year.



Eric Church performs on stage.



Keith Urban performs 'Wasted Time' on stage.



Nicole Kidman, left, and Keith Urban arrive at the 51st annual Academy of Country Music Awards.



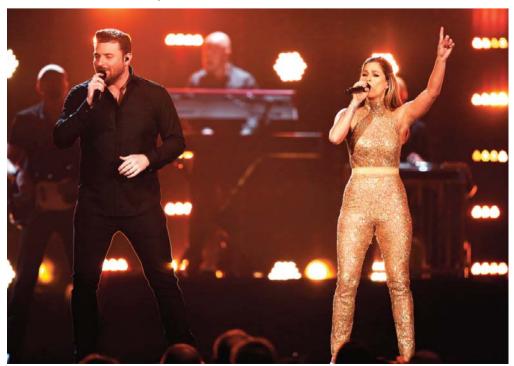
Jake Owen, left, and Betty Cantrell present the award for single record of the year.



Nancy O'Dell presents the award for male vocalist of the year.



Eric Church performs 'Record Year' on stage.



Chris Young, left, and Cassadee Pope perform 'Think of You' on stage.



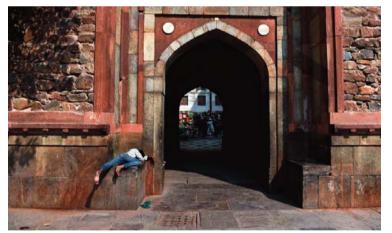
Tom Hiddleston presents the award for entertainer of the year.



A man takes part in the International Fireworks Fair in Indaparapeo municipality, in Michoacan State, Mexico. — AFP



The remains of an illegally-constructed building that has been demolished are seen near the tomb of Atgah Khan in the Nizamuddin area.



An Indian Muslim sleeps at the entrance to the 16th century tomb of Chausanth Khamha (64 pillars) in the Nizamuddin.



An Indian laborer stands amidst ongoing construction inside the Zamait Khana Mosque at the Dargah of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya in the Nizamuddin area.



An Indian man sits inside the tomb of Atgah Khan in the Nizamuddin area A tomb at Mehrauli Archaeological Park in New Delhi. of New Delhi.

Squatters barrier to protecting Delhi's ancient monuments

n the crypt of a 16th-century nationally protected tomb in New Delhi, a family is busy preparing a meal in their brightly painted kitchen that boasts a fridge and electricity. New Delhi, where emperors ruled for at least 2,000 years, is rich with ancient tombs, shrines and forts which are packed into almost every suburb of the Indian capital. But the city is also teeming with millions of desperately poor and homeless and with land at a premium, the ancient monuments have become valuable homes, making removal of so-called squatters a tough battle.

"There are far too many monuments and not enough resources. That means they are neglected and open to abuse and occupation," Delhi conservationist A.G.K Menon said. "Nobody occupies the Taj Mahal because it's looked after, but that's not the case for other precious monuments." Deep inside Delhi's packed Nizamuddin neighborhood, past the goats and snack vendors, the family of Sufi musicians has lived in the vaults of the Atgah Khan tomb, built in 1566, for generations. There are cupboards, rugs and aqua-coloured paint on the walls. "We are connected to the shrine. We have a duty to be here," said one woman, whose nephews perform at the nearby Nizamuddin Dargah, adding that they have not been asked to leave.

One floor up, a string of small homes have been built against the perimeter walls of the striking red sandstone and marble tomb, making any substantial conservation work difficult. Three months ago, men armed with sledge hammers and welding equipment started demolishing one of the occupied homes. Official warnings against undertaking extensions that might encroach on the tomb had gone unheeded, according to neighbors, forcing the destruction. But the 18-member family has defiantly continued to live in the ruins, setting up beds in the rubble, and hanging laundry from the now-exposed rafters. "If somebody thinks we are going to leave this place, they are very mistaken," said 75-year-old Shamama Khan who insists her family bought the land on which they built decades ago. Squatters-or encroachers as they are called in India-are just one of the many headaches facing conservationists as they endeavour to preserve the city's monuments.

'Heritage a burden'

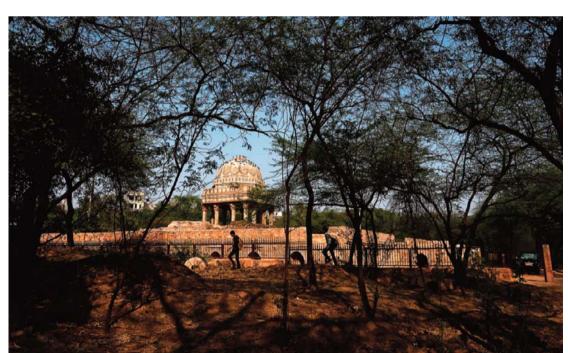
More than 1,000 listed heritage sites are scattered in Delhi, where Mughal emperors and other rulers rose and fell for hundreds of years, before the British later moved in, with thousands more spread across India. But only 176 of those in Delhi are protected by the top government-funded Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) whose funds are limited. Cash-strapped city and state bodies are responsible for some, while others are not protected at all, and are

crumbling under the strain of the ever-expanding city of more than 16 million people.

Some have disappeared altogether under developers'

"It's a full-time job to protect the ones we have," ASI joint director general R.S Fonia told AFP when asked if more should be added to its list. At a sprawling archaeological park across town, Menon and his team from uments are being used as seats around a campfire and few tourists are seen.

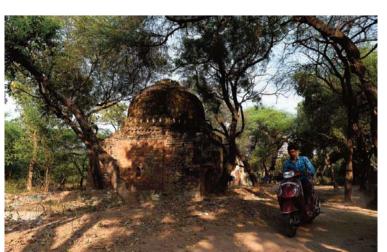
Ratish Nanda, a noted conservationist, and his team including of craftsmen and architects have restored several monuments inside Nizamuddin, including a 14th-century step-well considered holy by Muslim pilgrims. The Aga Khan Trust for Culture, of which Nanda is chief executive, is also credited with restoring the stunning World



A tomb at Mehrauli Archaeological Park in New Delhi. — AFP photos

INTACH, a non-governmental conservation organization, have worked hard to restore some of the 100-odd monuments dating back to the 11th century. INTACH received government funding to carry out the restoration work, but says the authorities failed to maintain the monuments after they were handed back.

"It is a waste of public money," says Menon, whose organization took legal action to try to force the authorities to act. The High Court last month ordered the Delhi Development Authority to erect a wall around parts of the park, spread over 80 hectares (200 acres), to keep out squatters. But a squabble over who owns the different monuments, and therefore should protect them, is ongoing. Inside the park meanwhile, broken blocks from monHeritage-listed Humayun's Tomb, built in the 1560s for Mughal emperor Humayun, to which tourists flock. But Nanda says it's a constant struggle to convince a myriad of authorities, local communities and other stakeholders of the need to work together to preserve the past and treat their heritage as a valuable resource. "We don't understand the economic potential of our heritage. We could live off our heritage if attitudes changed and we decided to properly restore and protect our past. We are sitting on a gold mine," he said. "Instead we treat our heritage as a





An Indian man stands beside the baoli or step-well in the Nizamuddin area.