

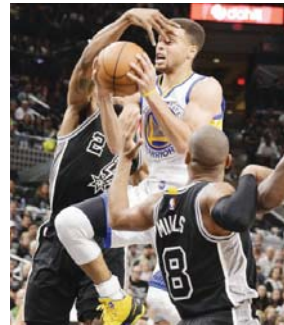
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OIL WORKERS TO STRIKE OVER PAYROLL DISPUTE

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ZEROS...ZEROS...ZEROS



By Badrya Darwish

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It was very interesting to watch the British news yesterday. The major issue was the Panama Papers and the implications for UK Prime Minister David Cameron. The premier released his income tax reports and many politicians volunteered to release their own tax returns. Looking at the numbers and the amounts on those sheets, I laughed my head off. I was looking at thousands. Not millions or billions. These numbers could be the income of any average doctor or engineer or architect or any professional lawyer, leave alone businessmen. Let's say KD 3,000 or £6,000 - and we're talking about the government, members of parliament and leaders.

Imagine guys if these returns were from somewhere in the Arab world? For a minister in the Arab world or a high-ranking government politician, the amounts would be staggering. I think the whole TV screen would be filled with sheets and numbers with dozens of zeros behind them.

The main difference in my mind is what matters is not the money. What matters is that the British politicians answer to the people. And that's why there is transparency and advancement. Of course there is corruption - as in every country - but there is a system to check and balance the leadership, even of the highest ranks, like in Mr Cameron's case. And he's forced to publish his income and tax records in order to answer his critics and keep his seat. That's how corruption is controlled as much as possible. And these countries advance.

It's not only the fault of the politicians, but also of the people - the voters who when voting only think of their own personal interests (wasta) rather than the nation's overall good. Everyone should be answerable to the nation, regardless of his position. That's why we see ministers and lawmakers coming to the parliament as ordinary people and leaving with bulging pockets after a couple of years.

This is the difference between us and the West. And no matter how many anti-corruption offices are opened in the Arab world, we won't see them doing a serious job. I think anti-corruption officers as well as every politician should be transparent with their income and assets. And jokingly, even their wives and families, because quite often corrupt people don't put money in their names, but use their family members'. Corruption has many faces.

conspiracy theories



KUWAIT: (From left) Andrew Brown, Upstream Director of Shell; Jason Bordoff, Professor of professional practice in international and public affairs and Founding Director of the Centre on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University; and Jamal Jaafar, CEO of Kuwait Oil Company, attend the fourth Kuwait oil and gas conference yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT: Kuwait's oil union decided yesterday to begin a "total strike" next week following a dispute with the oil ministry over a new payroll rejected by workers. The decision was taken at an emergency general assembly meeting of the union a day after talks with acting oil minister Anas Al-Saleh broke down without agreement. The union said the strike will start on Sunday, April 17, at all production units in the country.

Discontent among oil workers started after Kuwait, like other oil producers, began taking measures to cut spending in the face of the sharp decline in global crude prices. The government is introducing a new payroll scheme for all public employees and wants to include the 20,000 oil workers, which would mean an automatic cut in wages and incentives. Head of the union Saif Al-Qahtani said that workers presented a number of alternatives during Sunday's meeting with the minister but they were rejected. The union is also protesting plans to privatize part of the oil sector. The wages oil workers receive are significantly higher than other public employees.

Production and exports would not be affected by the strike, a spokesman for Kuwait's national oil company Kuwait Petroleum Corp (KNPC), one of five state-owned companies that will be affected by the strike, said. "If the strike happens we do have a strategy in place to deal with this kind of action where extra staff will be used to run operations" Khaled Al-Asousi, KNPC's Deputy CEO for Support Services said, adding that some oil facilities might be shut down temporarily.

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SAUDI KING ENDS LANDMARK EGYPT VISIT

KING SALMAN RECEIVES RED CARPET WELCOME IN TURKEY

CAIRO/ANKARA: Saudi King Salman yesterday wrapped up a landmark five-day visit to Egypt marked by lavish praise and multi-billion-dollar investment deals, in a clear sign of support for President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi's regime. The monarch's visit came as Riyadh aims to shore up ties with Cairo as it engages in several conflicts in the Middle East and competes with Iran for regional supremacy.

The visit also highlights Saudi Arabia's firm support for Egypt's fight against the jihadist Islamic State group, which has spearheaded a brutal insurgency in the Sinai Peninsula since the ouster of Islamist president Mohamed Morsi in 2013. "The other mission that we should work on together is the fight against extremism and the fight against terrorism," King Salman said on Sunday in an address to the Egyptian parliament. Yesterday, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from Cairo University. In its citation, Cairo University said Salman was a "global and pivotal figure with massive influence in the Arab and International

arenas" and praised his support for Egypt and the university.

He later flew to Turkey where he was met by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The visit aims at tightening increasingly close ties between the two overwhelmingly Sunni Muslim allies, receiving a lavish welcome that underlined the strength of relations. The king was welcomed at Ankara airport by a delegation personally led by Erdogan, in an unusual break from protocol and showing the importance Turkey attaches to the visit.

Over the past five days, King Salman and Sisi signed a slew of multi-billion-dollar investment deals that included a plan to build a bridge over the Red Sea connecting Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Egypt also agreed to demarcate its maritime borders with Saudi Arabia by officially placing two islands in the Straits of Tiran in Saudi territory. The agreement provoked an immediate backlash in Egypt, with thousands of Twitter users accusing Sisi of selling the islands.

Continued on Page 13



CAIRO: Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud holds hands with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi before leaving Cairo yesterday. — AFP

News

in brief

Dubai issues fatwa against wi-fi theft

DUBAI: Dubai's top religious authorities said that stealing wi-fi from your neighbor would not be proper Islamic conduct. That's according to a religious edict - known as a fatwa - from Dubai's Islamic Affairs and Charitable Activities Department. It was available online on the department's website yesterday as a response to a question asked by an anonymous reader. The edict says: "There is nothing wrong in using the line if your neighbors allow you to do so, but if they'd don't allow you, you may not use it." The fatwa matches others issued by other regional clerics in recent years.

US issues Saudi travel warning

WASHINGTON: The United States yesterday updated its warning for American citizens planning to travel to Saudi Arabia, less than two weeks before President Barack Obama is due there. Obama is to visit the kingdom on April 21 for a tense summit of Saudi Arabia and the other five Gulf Arab states at a time of crisis. "There continue to be reports of threats against US citizens and other Westerners, as well as locations frequented by them," the US State Department said. The statement warns that both Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group are planning attacks in the kingdom. "Possible targets include housing compounds, hotels, restaurants, shopping areas, international schools and other facilities where Westerners congregate," it said.

WORLD TIGER COUNT RISES FOR FIRST TIME IN 100 YRS

NEW DELHI: The number of wild tigers across the globe has increased for the first time in more than a century thanks to improved conservation efforts, wildlife groups said yesterday. Deforestation, encroachment of habitat and poaching have devastated tiger populations across Asia, but countries with the big cats are working to increase their numbers. Data compiled by the WWF and the Global Tiger Forum show that the global population of wild tigers has risen to an estimated 3,890 from an all-time low of 3,200 in 2010.

"For the first time after decades of constant decline, tiger numbers are on the rise," Marco Lambertini, director general of WWF International, said in a statement. It is the first time the number of the endangered cats has gone up since 1900, when there were 100,000 tigers. India is home to more than half of the world's tiger population with some 2,226 tigers roaming its reserves across 18 states, according to the last count in 2014.



In this photograph taken on Dec 21, 2014, a Royal Bengal Tiger pauses as it walks through a jungle clearing in Kaziranga National Park, some 280 km east of Guwahati in India. — AFP

Russia, Bhutan and Nepal also saw higher tiger numbers in their latest surveys. However, experts cautioned that the numbers may be partly down to improved data gathering, with the inclusion of new sample areas and upgraded survey techniques as well as enhanced protection efforts. Bangladesh registered a severe decline from 440 tigers in 2010 to 106 in 2015, though conservationists say this may have been due to an over-esti-

mation of the population six years ago. There has been a rapid fall in Indonesia because of heavy forest destruction to meet a growing global demand for palm oil, pulp and paper. Cambodia is mulling the idea of reintroducing tigers after declaring them functionally extinct last week following no evidence of the animals since 2007. Poachers often sell tiger body parts to the lucrative traditional Chinese

Continued on Page 13

ASSEMBLY TO DEBATE POWER RATES, GRILLING

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: The National Assembly is scheduled to discuss a draft law stipulating to increase electricity charges for the first time in 50 years but an increasing number of MPs are rejecting any raise for Kuwaiti citizens. The Assembly is also expected to debate a grilling against Commerce and Industry Minister Youssef Al-Ali over alleged administrative and financial violations. If the assembly cannot debate power charges today due to time constraints, it is likely to be delayed till tomorrow.

A large number of MPs have vowed to reject any increase for Kuwaiti citizens, saying the plan breaches the constitution. MP Youssef Al-Zalzalah however said he and a number of lawmakers will propose to exempt citizens who consume under 12,000 kilowatts monthly from any increase, and thus will continue to pay 2 fils per kilowatt.

The government had proposed a rate of 5 fils per kilowatt for the first 3,000 kW, 8 fils per kilowatt for consuming 3,000 to 6,000 kW, 10 fils per kilowatt for 6,000 to 9,000 kW and 15 fils per kilowatt for above 9,000 kW. But the Assembly's financial and economic affairs committee rejected the proposals and made one of its own, under which consumers of up to 6,000 kW will continue to pay the current rate of 2 fils a kilowatt.

Continued on Page 13



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani. — Amiri Diwan photo

AMIR RECEIVES LETTER FROM QATARI AMIR

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received yesterday Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah accompanied by Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani.

During the meeting, Sheikh Mohammad delivered a letter to His Highness the Amir from the Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. The letter highlighted bilateral relations and ways to boost cooperation in all fields and on issues of mutual

concern. The meeting was attended by Deputy Amiri Diwan Affairs Minister Sheikh Ali Jarrah Al-Sabah.

The Qatari minister arrived yesterday in Kuwait where he was welcomed by Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, Assistant Foreign Minister Ambassador Sheikh Dr Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, Assistant Foreign Minister for honorary missions Ambassador Dhari Ajran Al-Ajran, Assistant Foreign Minister for GCC Ambassador Nasser Haji Al-Mezyan, Qatari Ambassador to Kuwait Hamad bin Ali, and senior foreign ministry

officials. Meanwhile, His Highness the Amir received Chairman of Kuwait International Bank (KIB) Sheikh Mohammad Jarrah Al-Sabah on the occasion of assuming his new post as Board Chairman of the Union of Arab Banks (UAB). Also yesterday, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received Deputy President of Royal Family Council Sheikh Dr Ibrahim Duaij Al-Sabah. His Highness the Crown Prince also received National Security Bureau Chief Sheikh Thamer Al-Ali Al-Sabah. — KUNA

MINISTRY INFORMED TO SPEED UP MUBARAK AL-KABEER PORT

KUWAIT: The cabinet yesterday entrusted the Ministry of Public Works with speeding up work to complete the first stage of building the Mubarak Al-Kabeer Port. In addition, the body in charge of developing the Silk City and Boubyan Island has been ordered to coordinate with the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) and the Kuwait Port Authority (KPA) for the preparation of an integrated study on maritime transport of goods and people, related to operating the port. The cabinet also tasked the Ministry of Public Works with coordinating with the relevant bodies to take the urgent and preventive measures to face the phenomenon of accumulating dust and sand dunes on highways. This came during the cabinet's weekly meeting held at Seif Palace yesterday day under chairmanship of Acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah.

Islamic Summit

Meanwhile, the cabinet was informed that His Highness the Amir will leave for Turkey tomorrow to attend the 13th session of the Islamic Summit Conference. His Highness the Amir's accompanying delegation comprises First Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister

Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Finance Minister and Acting Oil Minister Anas Al-Saleh, Minister of Justice, Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane and several senior officials of the Amiri Diwan and Foreign Ministry. The cabinet voiced confidence that the summit would lead to more integration and cooperation among the Muslim nations, thus promoting their security, stability and backing to Islamic issues.

The cabinet was also apprised of a letter sent to His Highness the Prime Minister from Cypriot President Nicos Anastasiades on relations between both friendly countries and ways of promoting them in all fields, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah said in a press statement following the meeting.

Yemeni talks

Afterwards, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled gave a briefing on Kuwait's preparations and arrangements for hosting talks between Yemeni rivals. The cabinet wished that the talks would put an end to the ongoing conflict in Yemen.

He also kept the cabinet posted on the outcomes of a recent visit by New Zealand's Foreign Minister Murray McCully, focused on

ways of promoting bilateral cooperative relations in all domains, as well as views on regional and international issues. Then, Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah informed the cabinet about the outcomes of last week's visit by his Italian counterpart Roberta Pinotti to Kuwait.

Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah also offered the meeting a brief account of the talks he held with the visiting Minister of State for Defense Affairs in Qatar Dr Khaled bin Mohammad Al-Attiyah. Talks held during the two visits focused on means of boosting bilateral ties, military ones in particular, and issues of common concern. The ministers then proceeded to discuss political developments on the Arab and international scenes, following up the landmark five-day visit by Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud to Cairo. During the visit that concluded earlier today, Cairo and Riyadh signed a multitude of agreements and MoUs to enhance bilateral cooperation in all fields, and to serve the interests of the Arab nation. Yesterday's cabinet meeting lauded the historical visit that adds to the march of the Arab joint action and economic integration, which is also for the good and stability of the entire region. — KUNA



CAIRO: Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud meets with Speaker of the Kuwaiti National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem. — KUNA

SAUDI KING RECEIVES KUWAITI SPEAKER

CAIRO: Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud received at his residence on Sunday Speaker of the Kuwaiti National Assembly Marzouq Al-Ghanem and his accompanying delegation. Ghanem conveyed to King Salman the regards and greetings of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. King Salman, in turn, asked Ghanem to convey his best wishes to His Highness the Amir, according to the Saudi Press Agency (SPA).

The audience gathered, from the Saudi side, Minister of Islamic Affairs, Awqaf (Endowments), Call and Guidance Saleh bin Abdulaziz Al

Asheikh, Minister of State Musaad bin Mohammed Al Aiban, Minister of Finance Ibrahim bin Abdulaziz Al Assaf, Minister of Commerce and Industry Tawfiq bin Fawzan Al Rabi'ah, Minister of State Essam bin Saad bin Saeed, Minister of Culture and Information Adel bin Zaid Al Toraiqi, Minister of Foreign Affairs Adel bin Ahmed Al Jubeir, and Ambassador to Egypt Ahmad bin Abdulaziz. Ghanem was accompanied by MPs Faisal Al-Shaya, Awda Al-Rowaey, Humoud Al-Hamdan, Khalil Abul and Madhi Al-Hajeri, as well as National Assembly Secretary General Allam Al-Kandari. —KUNA

AMBASSADOR HAILS CULTURAL FIGURES' VISIT TO PALESTINE

KUWAIT: Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub stressed that when Arab citizens visit Palestine, it shows the best form of support to the Palestinian people's resistance, especially in view of the complicated situation of the Palestinian cause and in view of aggressions against Muslim and Islamic sacred places in Jerusalem. The ambassador made his remarks in a press statement commenting on posts on social media that criticized a number of Kuwaiti culture, poetry and literature figures for their plans to visit Palestine, describing the visit as 'normalization' ties with Israel.

Tahboub reiterated remarks often repeated by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in which he says 'visiting the prisoner does not mean normalizing relations with the jailors.' "It is a national and religious duty towards brothers suffering under occupation," he said of the visit, pointing out that making such accusations was but part



Palestinian Ambassador Rami Tahboub

of doing away with national, religious and ethical responsibilities towards a people facing the threat of Judaization of its land and religious places.

"Kuwaitis' visits express that they share the same concerns with Palestinians," Tahboub said. "The Kuwaiti leadership and people have always been keen on a Palestine cause that was born in Kuwait."



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GOVT LAUNCH EFFORTS TO CONVINCE MPS TO PASS ELECTRICITY PROPOSAL

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The government has started extensive communications with some lawmakers to convince them vote in favor of its proposed electricity consumption price increases, informed sources said. The sources added that the government found those lawmakers were in a critical situation before voters, feeling that they would lose voters' support if they approved the government's proposal. The source said that lawmakers would reject both the government's and the parliamentary financial affairs' proposals because they refuse to overburden citizens with extra charges.

"The government can increase electricity prices for investment and commercial buildings but not for citizens' private residences," said the sources. They further noted that this topic was starting to create a state of anger between the two authorities, at a time when lawmakers were already talking about troubled waters between His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak and Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, because the latter was against the government's project while he ought to be neutral.

The sources said that unless it was sure that enough MPs would vote for its proposal, the government might withdraw the bill and postpone the vote, especially when MPs like Humoud Al-Hamdan, Talal

Al-Sehali and Abdullah Al-Adwani, who had been in favor of the government's proposal, seem to have started to change their minds.

Protecting citizens

Commenting on the issue, MP Saad Al-Khanfour stressed that ever since his first electoral rally in 2008, he had promised voters to protect the constitution, Islamic sharia and citizens. "I have neither approved the government's nor the financial committee's proposals on electricity," he underlined.

Commenting on the strike of oil sector employees protesting on applying the payroll strategic alternative, Khanfour stressed that he totally supports the employees, especially those working on 24 hour shift basis at various oil facilities. He also stressed that administrative oil sector employees must get equal salaries like those their peers get in other ministries.

Deputy Speaker Mubarak Al-Khuraiej stressed that interpellations were part of MPs' constitutional rights, yet he blamed some MPs who said that they already had a no-confidence motion against minister of commerce signed by 10 of them to file after discussing the grilling motion against him. "We have to discuss the grilling motion and listen to the minister first before we decide to file a no-confidence motion," he underlined.



HOUSES CONSUME 40% OF ENERGY, APARTMENTS 20%

KUWAIT: Private housing in Kuwait consumes up to 40 percent of the overall energy per year, amounting to 48 billion (kWh), the investment sector (residential apartments) 20 percent, a recent study shows. It further indicates that the commercial sector five percent, the government sector 18 percent, the industrial sector six percent, the agricultural sector six percent, chalets and stables and others five percent.

Furthermore, the study shows that the private housing sector consumes 43 percent of the annual water output, amounting to 140 billion gallons, the investment sector 22 percent, the commercial sector six percent, the government sector 11 percent, the industrial 10 percent, the agricultural two percent, chalets, stables and others six percent. Kuwait is one of the top GCC countries in terms of power and water consumption, however the bills are the lowest in the region.

According to the study, electricity consumption in Kuwait amounted to 48 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) in 2015, amid forecast it will soar by three times in the 2016-2017 period, to 64 billion (kWh) by 2020, some 86 billion (kWh) in 2025, 115 billion (kWh) 2030 and 154 billion by 2035. Kuwait's water production, which reached 140 billion gallons in 2015, is projected to jump to 187 billion gallons in 2020, 251 billion gallons in 2025, 335 billion gallons in 2030 and 449 billion gallons in 2035.

Production costs

Annual costs of power and water production was estimated in the study at KD 2.66 billion, including KD 2.45 billion worth of government subsidies. Revenues

reached KD 210 million. These costs are projected to leap to KD 3.56 billion in 2020, state share of which is in the range of KD 3.279 billion with income estimated at KD 281 million. The annual costs, in 2025, are predicted to be at KD 4.76 billion, State share of which stands at KD 4.38 billion, with returns at KD 376 million. But the costs will jump in 2030 to KD 6.37 billion with the Kuwaiti stake at KD 5.87 billion in contrast with KD 673 million worth of paid bills.

In case consumption is rationalized by 20 percent, up to KD 1.030 billion for the fiscal year 2016-2017 will be saved. The saving will reach KD 1.092 billion in the coming fiscal year and to KD 1.157 billion in the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

Annual saving will amount to some KD 1.22 billion in the 2019-2020 fiscal year, KD 1.3 billion in the 2020-2021 fiscal year and will gradually increase to reach KD 2.94 billion in the 2025-2034 fiscal year, according to the study which forecast saving at KD 35 billion worth of the subsidy sums from 2017 to 2035.

No option

The study concludes by suggesting that Kuwait currently has no option other than proceeding with economic reforms due to soaring power and water consumption, population growth and development schemes, and this need has become more potent as a result of bearish oil prices and reckless consumption of the energy resources. In this context arises necessity of educating the society, individuals and institutions, about rationalizing the energy consumption; that is through, partly, ongoing awareness campaigns. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Andrew Brown, upstream director of Shell (R), Jason Bordoff, Professor of professional practice in international and public affairs and founding director of the Centre on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University and Mohammad Husain, President and CEO of Equate Petrochemical Company attend the fourth Kuwait oil and gas conference yesterday. —Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

ALTERNATIVE PLANS TO HANDLE OIL WORKERS' STRIKE: KNPC

KUWAIT: A senior oil sector official said that plans are in place to face a planned strike by oil sector employees. "We have alternative plans prepared in case a strike takes place," said Khaled Al-Asousi Deputy CEO for Support Services at Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) during the Kuwait fourth oil and gas conference yesterday. He explained that the plans include utilizing the services of workers who are not on strike, as well as expatriate labor forces and retirees.

The oil sector's labor unions announced yesterday that they would stage a 'total strike' next Sunday after negotiations with the government regarding a plan to cut their wages and benefits broke down.

At a meeting this Sunday, the government told unions that it would suspend plans to limit oil sector employees' benefits, as well as plans to include oil sector employees in a major payroll restructuring program that is currently under study, pending further negotiations. Unions responded, however, by rejecting the government's offer. Instead, they demanded abolishing the entire proposal to cut workers' benefits, and a complete exclusion of oil sector employees from the so-called 'Strategic Alternative Payroll System.'

Protest

On March 22, more than 3,000 workers and

the heads of several unions from Kuwait's different oil companies gathered at the oil workers trade union's headquarters in Ahmadi to protest government plans to cut benefits and possibly wages, known as the 'Strategic Alternative.' "We are against the Strategic Alternative which is death to the oil sector. We are also against privatizing the oil sector which will put us under the power of private sector and the businessmen," the union's head Saif Al-Qahtani said at the protest. Several lawmakers including MPs Faisal Kandari and Abdullah Al-Tamimi were present at the unions' rally.

The Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC) had announced plans two months ago to study austerity measures that included reducing spending, cutting annual bonuses and pay increases. The Strategic Alternative as outlined by the government sets up a new salary scale that would 'unify' the salaries and benefits for all state employees, including those in the strategic oil sector. Diplomats, doctors, military personnel and engineers would be excluded under the current proposal. Kuwait's government-run oil sector employs nearly 20,000 workers.

Proposal rebuffed

Deputy Premier and Acting Oil Minister Anas Al-Saleh announced the oil sector's labor unions' rejection of the proposal. In a press statement following his meeting with representatives of

the unions earlier this week, Saleh, also Minister of Finance, stated that he has proposed freezing the decisions taken by KPC recently and forming a joint committee to negotiate a compromise in a matter of 10 days.

"Unfortunately, they have turned down the proposal and insisted on abolishment, not freezing of KPC decisions," he said. The minister added that they have also demanded a written pledge to exclude the oil sector for a draft of what was being called the "strategic alternative" law on unifying civil servants salaries and wages.

Saleh added that he could not offer such a pledge as the National Assembly, not he nor the Oil Ministry, has the sole right to include or exclude any sector in the 'strategic alternative' law. He, however, stressed that the he would defend oil sector laborers' rights in the National Assembly. The minister urged unions' members to prioritize Kuwait's higher interests and to show the spirit of patriotism and involve in constructive negotiations for a deal instead of going on strikes that would harm the state, its different sectors and citizens.

He emphasized keenness on listening to their views and concerns about KPC's decisions, which were taken as a part of broader measures to reform the state budget. He added that the decisions are meant to reform budget without jeopardizing employees and workers' financial rights. — Agencies

NOUFEXPO, CAIT ORGANIZE 4TH E-GOVERNMENT FORUM - ELECTRONIC SERVICES PERSPECTIVES

KUWAIT: Engineer Qussai Ibrahim Al-Shatti, the Acting General Manager of the Central Agency for Information Technology (CAIT), announced yesterday that the '4th E-Government Forum - Electronic Services Perspectives' will enjoy a new look and feel. He continued saying, "EGOV became an annual event awaited by all IT government professionals and departments in Kuwait, especially those that are mandated with developing the e-Government program." He added, "The patronage of His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah for the 4th consecutive year represents the invaluable support that Kuwait's political leadership is providing to CAIT's role in developing the e-government program for Kuwait. We are delighted to announce that His Highness the Prime Minister will be represented by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah, Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs and Chairman of the Board of the Central Agency for Information Technology, in inaugurating EGOV4 and its accompanying exhibition. As the Chairman of the Board of the Central Agency for Information Technology, we highly value His Excellency's invaluable support and advice to drive CAIT's strategies and projects forward and fulfill its objectives. We are also pleased to join forces with NoufEXPO in holding this event. We can count on their professionalism that was clearly manifested during the last three rounds of EGOV, a success that energizes the event's growth year over year."



HH the PM Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak



Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah



Qussai Al-Shatti

Services are meant to be accessible via endless types of computing systems and mobile devices. The IoT phenomenon is adding to the complexity. Information security and privacy, moreover, represent an increasingly pressing issue with their impact on people and legislations."

Excellence Award

Another exciting initiative has been announced by Shatti. For the first time, an e-Services Excellence Award will be awarded to the Kuwaiti government agency that deploys the best e-Service via the official electronic portal of Kuwait (www.e.gov.kw). Al-Shatti commented on this award by saying, "Our aim is to promote the collective efforts between CAIT and the

other IT Departments of government agencies in Kuwait, as well as collaboration among these departments. We intend to promote a positive attitude of competition that benefits us all. CAIT will, shortly, communicate the terms of participation and the rules of evaluation to all relevant government agencies. The results of the e-Services Excellence Award will be announced during the opening ceremony of the 4th e-Government Forum that will be held from 27 - 29 November 2016 at Araya Ballroom of By Courtyard Marriott Hotel Kuwait City. Shatti concluded his statement by saying, "I look forward to seeing all government IT departments in Kuwait during EGOV4. They are all invited to participate in the e-Services

Excellence Award competition. Invitations will reach out to GCC and other Arab E-Government organizations since we all share a lot of common challenges and opportunities. EGOV4 and its accompanying exhibition will be a perfect business development venue for global, regional, and local technology and communications vendors. They will be in direct contact with IT leaderships of the biggest technology project in Kuwait. NoufEXPO and EGOV4's Scientific Committee at CAIT are in the process of finalizing the Forum's scientific program. Interested IT vendors may confirm their participation by contacting NoufEXPO or the Scientific Committee on +965 22469921 or via email info@noufexpo.com.kw."

PIC ANNOUNCES NEW PDHPP PROJECT IN ALBERTA, CANADA

KUWAIT: Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Acting Minister of Oil Anas Al-Saleh said that Petrochemical Industries Company (PIC) and Canada's Pembina Pipeline Corporation (Pembina) signed an agreement to jointly develop a feasibility study for a world-scale combined PDHPP facility in Alberta, Canada. Under the terms of the agreement, the partners PIC and Pembina will study a world-scale propane de-hydrogenation (PDH) and polypropylene (PP) plant in Alberta, Canada with capacity to produce up to 800,000 tons per year of Polypropylene.

Saleh said building on PIC's existing assets in Alberta since 2004, this potential project further supports PIC's continued efforts in expanding its business portfolio globally with exceptional

investment and partnership opportunities, especially in the promising regions with advantageous feedstock.

With access to the largest supply of propane in Western Canada, Pembina is ideally suited to facilitate the development of this project. Moreover, this project potentially builds on both Pembina's position as the largest supplier to Alberta's existing petrochemical industry, as well as being one of Canada's leading energy infrastructure companies, he added.

The feasibility study will be completed within six months followed by relevant approvals to proceed to Front End Engineering Design (FEED). Subject to regulatory, environmental, and PIC and Pembina's Board of Directors' approval, the project has a start-up planned by 2020. — KUNA



Anas Al-Saleh

FINANCE INVESTIGATION UNIT SIGN MEMO WITH WORLD BANK

KUWAIT: The President of Kuwaiti Financial Investigation Unit and Chairman of the National Committee for Combating Money Laundering and Financing Terrorism Talal Al-Sayegh said yesterday that a Memorandum to obtain Consultation Services was signed with the World Bank in preparation for implementing the national risk assessment program.

Sayegh said that the memorandum aims at being well-informed on international developments in the field of combating money laundering, and execute implementation of the strategic national risk assessment amendments on combating money laundering, financing terrorism, and financing the spread of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction for 2016-19, especially the focus will be focusing on risk assessment at the national level.

Sayegh stressed the importance of such vital cooperation which will also help all related authorities in Kuwait to combat money laundering and financing terrorism effectively and to identify risks, activities, and monitor possible vulnerabilities surrounding money launderers, terrorists financiers,

and to develop programs to combat such through optimal routing of sources and enhance the unit capacity. Sayegh expressed pleasure on the signing of this Memorandum which comes in the context of seeking to unify Kuwaiti Financial Investigation efforts and to promote national cooperation with all members of the National Committee and to contribute in strengthening national capacities and qualified personnel.

Sayegh explained that the national risk assessment program is led by a national task force headed by the unit of the Kuwaiti Financial Investigation and the membership of the appropriate authorities of the National Committee. Implementing this strategic project will be done through workshops, Sayegh added.

Sayegh pointed out discussion on the mechanism of executing the National Risk Assessment Program will take place during a setup timetable. Established in 2013, the unit main goal is to combat money laundering and terrorism financing as an independent entity that is authorized to receive and analyze information. —KUNA



KUWAIT: Sheikh Nimr Fahd Al-Malik Al-Sabah inaugurates the Property and Investment Exhibition. —Photos by Joseph Shagra

PROPERTY, INVESTMENT EXHIBITION UNDERWAY



Sheikh Nimr Fahd Al-Malik Al-Sabah tours the exhibition.



By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: The Property and Investment Exhibition kicked off yesterday at Kuwait International Fairgrounds in Mishref. Sheikh Nimr Fahd Al-Malik Al-Sabah, Assistant Undersecretary for Foreign Trade Affairs in the Kuwaiti Ministry of Commerce and Industry attended the opening ceremony and toured the exhibition.

More than 70 firms are participating in the expo this year. "This is the ninth consecutive year of this event, as it attracts many companies. This year 70 companies are offering more than 250 projects in 15 Arab and European countries, including lands, villas, flats and ownership documents. Real estate exhibitions boost the economy due to their importance," said Sheikh Malik Al-Sabah, Chairman of Top Expo Group.

He added that Kuwaiti investors occupy a high rank and make up a large percentage of investors in the real estate sector worldwide. "The expo has great significance in terms of its relevance to the real estate sector, currently being one of the most viable economic sectors in Kuwait and worldwide," he said. The expo has more than 250 real estate projects on offer from Kuwait, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Jordan, Egypt, the UK, France, the US, Germany, Bulgaria, Spain, Georgia, Bosnia and Turkey. "The demand for real estate is mostly for property apartments and investment," Sheikh Malik said.

The Top Expo Group mandated all companies to commit themselves to the ministry's requirements and terms. "Many companies are marketing projects to the Kuwaiti people, and we believe it is an excellent opportunity for companies to get to know new investors in addition to projects at the exhibition. This fair is held over 3,150 square meters to allow the participation of a large number of companies," stressed Sheikh Malik.

"Statistics show a growth in the number of Kuwaiti investors comprising of both individuals and companies in the regional and international real estate sector, demonstrating the nature of the Kuwaiti people and their interest to invest in those countries," he added.

AMIR PLAYS HISTORIC ROLE IN SOLVING HOUSING PROBLEM: MINISTER

KUWAIT: Minister of State for Housing Affairs Yasser Abul said Sunday His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah made a historic decision when he instructed to liberate acquisition of state land for housing purposes.

Similarly, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah attach great importance to the efforts meant to resolve the housing problem, Abul said.

He made the comments in an interview with Al-Majlis TV channel. "His Highness the Prime Minister follows up personally the observations of landlords in residential areas such as Sabah Al-Ahmad, Jaber Al-Ahmad, northwest Sulaibikhat regarding public utilities and maintenance services. The requests for maintenance services received by the Public Authority for Housing Welfare (PAHW) concern only 14 percent of the 4,452 houses delivered to citizens," Abul said, noting that 90 percent of these requests were addressed timely and properly. He affirmed that PAHW is keen on the welfare of beneficiaries from all housing projects and adopts a policy of zero tolerance regarding any negligence or irregularities in the construction projects whoever the culprit might be.

Poor finishing

Commenting on a video clip recently circulated via the social media regarding poor finishing of some houses, Abul said a technical probe panel, led by Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR), was set up last month before the emergence of the video to investigate the matter.

"The panel will soon produce a final report which will pinpoint those responsible for the shortcomings and pave the way for referring the case to the Public Prosecution which will, in turn, adopt the appropriate legal measures against the culprits whether inside the PAHW or the contractors," he explained.

The PAHW Board of Directors had previously adopted deterrent measures against a contracting company, including the withdrawal of licenses for implementing construction projects and exclusion from future projects, for involvement in certain irregularities, he recalled.

On the construction of the infrastructure projects in the South Mutlaa City, Abul said the main contract for the development of these projects will be signed on April 24, noting that the city covers an area of 100 sq. km., and includes 30,000 plots of land, 12 neighborhoods and 2,400 housing units. "There are two other contracts that will be



Housing Minister Yasser Abul

inked later on, one relates to the construction of subsidiary infrastructure for 18,000 housing units and another relating to 12,000 units," he went on.

He ruled out the possibility of the current financial situation of the state impacting negatively on the development of the South Mutlaa City and the other PAHW projects that aim to provide a total of 60,000 units in the coming five years.

He noted that the cabinet was able to address the obstacles facing the implementation of South Saad Al-Abdullah project which is going on as planned. The PAHW and the Kuwait Credit Bank formed a joint committee to facilitate offering soft housing loans of KD 70,000 for Kuwaiti widows who have non-Kuwaiti children, he noted, adding that the government and the National Assembly work together for solving the housing problem. —KUNA



KUWAIT: (From left) Faisal Al-Qanaie, KJA's Secretary, Ali Hassan, Deputy Chairman of KCSECR, Ibrahim Al-Baghli, Chairman of KCSECR and Dr Siham Al-Qabandi, Head of the Preparation, Cooperating, and Judging Committee attend the press conference. —Photo by Joseph Shagra

KCSECR ANNOUNCE 'SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE AWARD 2016'

'PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF ALZHEIMER'S'

By Nawara Fattahova

KUWAIT: Kuwait Journalist Association (KJA) hosted a press conference yesterday in which an announcement was made to organize 'Scientific Excellence Award 2016'. This is the second year of this award, and this year's theme is 'Prevention and Treatment of Alzheimer's'. The organizers announced the launch of a competition organized by the Kuwait Charitable Society for Elderly Care and Rehabilitation (KCSECR). The application for this competition is open till May 31, 2016, while the deadline for submitting the research is July 31, 2016.

"The Scientific Excellence Award is held to achieve the goals of the society including spreading awareness among elderly people and their families about elderly care services provided by public and private institutions, make them aware them about the elderly care law, the developments related to ageing, problems elderly people face and the way to help them overcome them," said Ibrahim Al-Baghli, Chairman of KCSECR, during the press conference.

The society is also providing more services. "KCSECR is complementing the role of the government to serve elderly people. One of the ways of supporting the elderly is preparing researches and studies in this field in order to keep them up-to-date with the international changes and development in social care and rehabilitation," he added.

After the success of this competition last year, the organizers decided to hold it again this year. "This year's competition is focusing on the ways of preventing and treating Alzheimer's disease. Through this competition, we aim to encourage researchers to provide researches in this field and benefit from the

recommendations and results of these scientific researches to improve the care and rehabilitation services provided to the elderly in all fields," concluded Baghli.

Conditions

Ali Hassan, Deputy Chairman of KCSECR, spoke about the conditions to participate in this award. "The research should be serious and innovative. It should also be precise and clear, documenting all resources inside the research and not at the end, and it shouldn't have been published or presented previously. It should provide practical ways of facing Alzheimer's. All participants should have university degree and should be older than 25. Public and private institutions can participate. The research should be between 20 to 30 pages long, submitted in two versions - paper and electronic," he explained.

Dr Siham Al-Qabandi, Head of the Preparation, Cooperating, and Judging Committee, noted that this competition focuses on studying issues related to Alzheimer's including the nature of this disease and its reasons, dealing with it, early detection and prevention, health awareness of its cause and latest treatments and finding suitable solutions to decrease the spread of this disease," she pointed out.

"The members of the judging committee are highly qualified specialists from the field from Kuwait and abroad. After announcing the winning researches, the winners will be awarded during a forum, where the participating researches will be discussed, which at the end will have a positive impact on the services provided in this field," Qabandi added. The winner will receive KD 750, the runner-up KD 500, and the second runner-up will get KD 250.

STAKEHOLDERS CONVENE IN KUWAIT TO PROTECT OCEAN, MARINE ENVIRONMENT

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: A three-day Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) ocean experts' workshop kicked off yesterday at the Kuwait University's Marine Sciences Center in Fintas under the patronage of Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the US Department of State and the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

the formation of a permanent national commission for the management of the environmental situation in Kuwait Bay. Sheikh Abdullah said that among such environment protection steps are a wide-scale environmental scan and a study of the impact of the disruption of the Mishref sewage pumping station on marine environment. He also commended the new environment protection law which imposes strict penalties against violators and the new envi-

gation, the participation of GCC states in international organizations, and agreements and treaties targeting marine environment protection. US Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, International Environmental and Scientific Affairs Judith Garber said the United States supports all countries of the world in protecting the environment, and hailed the role of Kuwait and GCC states in fighting pollution. She believed that it is the responsibility of

unique perspectives and demonstrate effective actions to preserve our shared marine environments. US Ambassador Douglas Silliman thanked Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, as Chair of the Environmental Council of the Council of Ministers, and EPA's Sheikh Abdullah, for their leadership on environmental issues. "Gulf Cooperation Council governments and representatives from the private sector, academia and civil society will explore ways to increase cooperation between the United States and the region in addressing oceanic challenges," he said.

Workshop participants will also explore initiatives by GCC member states that could be deliverables to be announced at the international "Our Ocean" conference in September in Washington. "Protecting our ocean requires coordination that cannot be handled by any single country. The marine environment is part of a regional - and global - ecosystem that does not recognize national borders. We are all stakeholders in protecting the health and sustainability of our oceans. All of us - young and old, men and women, government and civil society - have a stake in the outcome," Silliman added.

He said the experts' workshop in Kuwait is yet another step in forging a new partnership to leverage the work of individual countries in the region, adding, "The United States stands ready to continue our work with Kuwait to deepen this partnership and deliver concrete outcomes for a healthier regional ocean."



KUWAIT: (From left) US Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, International Environmental and Scientific Affairs Judith Garber, Environment Public Authority's General Manager Sheikh Abdullah Al-Sabah, US Ambassador Douglas Silliman and Director General of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences Dr Adnan Shihab-Eldin attend the workshop. —Photo by Joseph Shagra

The Environment Public Authority (EPA) has taken several steps to reduce pollution in the Gulf marine region and has drafted a series of relevant regulations, said EPA's General Manager Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad Al-Hmoud Al-Sabah. The steps mainly include

ronmental police squad to follow up and track hazardous activities.

Global economy

The two-day workshop discusses the GCC states' contributions to the development of the global economy to facilitate marine navi-

everyone worldwide to work for the protection of marine environment and oceans.

The event convened regional and US experts, advocates, policymakers, businesspeople and researchers to share lessons learned and the best science, offer

MINISTRY PRAISES KFH FOR PATRONIZING ORPHANED CHILDREN

KUWAIT: Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Yaqoub Al-Sane honored Kuwait Finance House (KFH) in recognition of its contributions and commendable efforts in patronizing the orphaned children in coordination with Zakat House.

KFH, during the 7th Orphans Forum organized by Zakat House under the theme of "Thank you Humanitarian

Kuwait", was applauded for its donations and charitable work in collaboration with official authorities and concerned parties.

KFH has been always keen on sponsoring the orphans emanating from its commitment towards achieving the social responsibility. KFH contributes in rehabilitating the orphans and improving their livelihood at all levels.



People rounded up during a police crackdown on fishermen's residence in Sharq.



TWO DEAD WHILE RUNNING AWAY FROM POLICE

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: Two citizens, 29 and 26, sustained serious injuries and later died when they lost control over their vehicle and it rolled over several times in a desert area off Al-Salmi highway. The men had the accident while attempting to escape from a weapon inspection patrol, said security sources. The source explained that the men saw the patrol car light its flashers and sound its siren to stop them, because they had been spotted hunting with air-pressure rifles. They immediately drove off into a desert area where they lost control over the vehicle. However, on arriving at the scene, paramedics found that the two young men were already dead. Initial investigations showed that there was no contact between the patrol car and the suspects' vehicle and what happened was an accident. However,

security sources stressed that the interior ministry intends to conduct further investigations to make sure the patrol force acted within the law without any abuse of powers or law violations.

Dismissal overruled

The first instance commercial court yesterday annulled the government's decision to dismiss former Kuwait Airways chairman Sami Al-Nisf and ordered temporarily compensating him with KD 5,001. Notably, the court of cassation had refused hearing the case by its administrative panel and sent it to the commercial court. The government is expected to contest this ruling and take the case to the court of appeal. Commenting on the verdict, lawyer Bassam Al-Assoussi said this was a message to the government that the judiciary power was closely watching its arbitrary deci-

sions. He also advised the government not to go to the court of appeal. In another case, a court yesterday seconded a previous ruling sentencing the defendants in the case of stealing special forces' weapons to 10 years in prison, dismissing the first suspect from his job and making them pay a sum of KD 22,000, in addition to a fine that is twice as much as the value of the stolen weapons.

Construction regulations

The Municipal Council yesterday held a special session to discuss construction regulations and amending them to provide special facilities for the disabled. The meeting was attended by council members including Yousif Al-Ghareeb, Fahad Al-Sane, Hassan Kamal, Abdullah Al-Kandari, Ali Al-Moussa and the head of the council's legal committee Mane Al-Mane.

INTERIOR DENIES IS ATTACK REPORT

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Relations and Security Department at the Interior Ministry denied in a statement reports in the media that authorities foiled an Islamic State (IS) plot to attack Kuwait International airport. The statement said that a report that published details of the alleged plot is not true, adding that security authorities continue their duties and take precautionary measures to guarantee the safety and security of the country, citizens and expatriates. The statement asked everyone to be cautious about publishing unverified news reports.

Crackdown

The Relations and Security Media Department at the Interior Ministry said that a force from the marine security and capital security department carried out a surprise

raid on fishermen's residence in Sharq to check on their legal status. Around 200 persons were arrested, and 10 of them are in violation of the residency law. They were sent to concerned authorities.

Reckless drivers arrested

The Relations and Security Media Department at the Interior Ministry said criminal detectives arrested two persons and are working on arresting other reckless drivers who appeared in video footage on social media, showing them preventing a policeman from carrying out his duties.

Forgery

The Relations and Security Media Department at the Interior Ministry said a Saudi national named Sultan Murjan Al-Mutairi, who is banned from traveling, was arrested on forgery charges. Information was received about the suspect traveling in and out of the country despite several travel ban orders against him. Security authorities in Kuwait contacted their counterparts in Saudi Arabia and it was confirmed that the man was registered in entry and exit logs several times there. His passport was checked and six entry and exit stamps were found, but were not entered in the computer of the border department. The person who facilitated his movement and other collaborators are being arrested.



KUWAIT: This handout photo shows a man arrested yesterday for forgery that allowed him to bypass a ban and travel in and out of the country.

MUNICIPALITY LAYS OFF 54 EXPATS, MORE TO FOLLOW

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Kuwait Municipality yesterday announced laying off 54 expatriates who had been working on a 'pay-for-work' basis, including 14 working with the municipal council. The municipality added that more expats, at least twice as many, would be laid off within the coming few days upon Civil Service Commission's (CSC) recommendations to cut expenses. The municipality also stressed that all laid off expats would receive their financial dues in full.

Students' safety

Deputy chairman of Kuwait Students Union in the United States Yousif Al-Mojammad stressed that the union had been coordinating with the Kuwaiti embassy and consulate to solve the problems Kuwaiti students were facing in Pocatello. He added that the union had

emailed all students informing them that they could be transferred to other universities in other states.

PAAAFR's role

Chairman of the parliament's budgets and final statement committee MP Adnan Abdulsamad said that the committee met yesterday to discuss the Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources' (PAAAFR) budget for 2016-2017 and that it noticed that many of the remarks made in the previous parliamentary term had been resolved or tackled. Abdulsamad added that PAAAFR failed to achieve the role it had been established for in the first place - achieving self-sufficiency and food security. "The government paid KD 140 million over the past four years to subsidize animal husbandry without achieving any tangible results except in eggs production," he said.

KUWAIT MARKS UN 'MINE AWARENESS DAY'

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Director of The Relations and Security Media Department at the Interior Ministry Brigadier Adel Al-Hashash said the higher leadership at the interior ministry pays great attention on demining based on a scientific method in order to protect citizens and expats and guarantee their safety. He said security establishment's interest in the international day to spread awareness of mine risks that was designated by the United Nations in April each year comes out of Kuwait being one of the

countries that suffers from mines, following the Iraqi Invasion on Aug 2, 1990. He said efforts to remove mines and other explosives left over from the war began after liberation, and this process went through several stages, with each having its goals and the mechanism of their removal. He said the second stage began immediately after liberation until Dec 1991, as Kuwait signed contracts with several friendly governments and companies to rid the country of mines, while the third stage began after the second one and continues until today.



Brigadier Adel Al-Hashash



KUWAIT: The Kuwait Autism Center hosted a lecture titled 'My Journey with my Autistic Son,' delivered by Dr Robert Nasif, who is visiting Kuwait from the United States of America. The lecture was organized as part of events the center hosted to mark the World Autism Awareness Day.

MINISTER REITERATES KUWAIT'S HIGH INTEREST IN ISLAMIC ARTS

KUWAIT: Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah yesterday emphasized Kuwait's high interest in Islamic arts, that enjoy diversity and richness, from India and China in the East to Al-Andalus in the West.

This came in Sheikh Salman's address during the opening of the Conference of Islamic Arts, organized by the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) in cooperation with the Kuwait University, as part of the celebrations of Kuwait

Capital of Islamic Culture 2016. Sheikh Salman is also chairman of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL).

The creative works of Islamic art have mirrored the toleration of Muslim artists with their geographical and human surroundings, he said. Thus, they produced works that expressed strong belief in the true faith, with cultural and ethical diversity that has left a mark in the history of humanity.

In addition, they were a state of communication and toleration among the various cultures and

arts of peoples who were all equated by Islam, the minister said. This has to be highlighted and conveyed to the world as one of the special traits of Islamic culture.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Salman stressed that Kuwait's concern with Islamic arts as an integral part of the history and culture of the Kuwaiti people. He referred to Dar Al Athar al Islamiyyah and the rare Al-Sabah Collection there, that has manifested the creativity of Muslim artists when displayed in international exhibitions.

The minister noted that Kuwait

has drawn a comprehensive executive plan that comprises a multitude of Islamic cultural and artistic activities and events through 2016 to reiterate the continuous communication between Kuwait and other Muslim peoples. This is prompted by the belief in the significant role of culture to unify stances and get people closer.

Professor of history at the Kuwait University Reem Al-Rudini said meanwhile that Islam had offered intellectual and religious bases for art, which gave a special mark to the various arts in the Islamic communities. —KUNA

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Al-Anbaa

WHERE ARE REGIONAL COUNTRIES HEADING?!

By Sami Al-Nisf

Some optimistic people believe that the bloody civil wars going on in countries like Iraq, Syria, Libya and Yemen are getting close to regional situations by the end of the 1980s, when the Iraqi-Iranian and the Lebanese civil wars were over and it was time, then, for major companies to reap the fruits through reconstruction and make billions.

Within this scenario, economists assessed the cost needed to reconstruct Syrian in the billions of dollars and assessed the sums needed to reconstruct other Arab countries afflicted by civil wars that claimed lives and destroyed factories, houses, cities and farms by at least twice as much. The believe that oil prices should start increasing to enable GCC states to fund these reconstructions in the billions or trillions, the way they did with Iraq, Lebanon and Gaza.

There are signs for this optimistic scenario including things expected to happen before the summer, like the success of the Libyan government in achieving security, the success of the Syrian and Iraqi armies in controlling their territories and getting rid of or limiting the capabilities of IS pending reaching a final international agreement to solve the problem and end the conflict by including everybody.

In addition, they expect success at the Kuwait conference in bridging the gap between Yemenis and turning Sanas over to the legitimate government. Accordingly, those for this scenario expect GCC-Iranian relations to improve, putting an end to proxy wars and regional doctrinal conflicts.

On the other hand, some people, including me, are pessimistic and expect even worse, more horrible and bloody incidents to take place. They believe that the current movements in the concerned countries are nothing but part of a strategic deception plan and a 'warrior's rest' before resuming endless civil wars leading to divisions. They also believe that more countries will suffer the same fate in a domino effect-like reaction.

Moreover, they believe that oil prices will remain low, leading to more severe economic problems in GCC states and eventually to political and security instability, which will result in sending all Arab expat workers to their home countries, creating severe economic problems and unemployment there, especially since all European borders are closed with the excuse of terrorism.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

MUNICIPALITY REPORTS BANK GUARANTEE FORGERY

KUWAIT: Communication Minister and State Minister for Municipality Affairs Essa Al-Kandari sent a letter to the prosecutor general regarding a forgery case to release a bank guarantee work KD 40,000. Kandari said the municipality formed a task force earlier in order to investigate the status of guarantee letters submitted by companies and issued by local banks in favor of the municipality, that keeps the original copy. Companies do not recover the value of those guarantees without a letter from the municipality to the bank stating that it agrees to return the money. This will not be done until companies meet all their commitments towards the municipality without any notes.

On Dec 20, 2015, the head of the task force, assistant director general for financial and administrative affairs at the municipality, sent a letter to a bank asking about the authenticity of the guarantee issued by it in the name of a company of a value of KD 40,000 to guarantee the registration of the company at the Central Tenders Committee as a contractor with the municipality on Dec 6, 2015, but the bank said the guarantee was released according to the municipality approval based on a letter dated Sept 22, 2014 in the name of the Former Director of Financial Affairs Younes Al-Saleh.

The head of the task force said the guarantee is still included in the computer of guarantees follow up at the financial affairs department, which means the municipality did not release this guarantee.

Based on the above, and the events states the occurrence of the following crimes:

1- Felony of facilitating the takeover of funds deposited at the bank in favor of the municipality, which is criminalized by article 10 of the public funds protection law 1/1993.

2- Forgery in official letters and papers of a bank by imitating signatures and seals of concerned municipality officials as well as signatures and seals of the general registrar.

3- Use of forged papers with forged seals. — Al-Anbaa

NO FEASIBILITY FOR LIVESTOCK COMPANY

KUWAIT: The government showed reservations towards the law to establish a second livestock trading company due to the lack of a feasibility study and registering its opinion with the parliamentary financial committee. These reservations were supported recently by a report from the Public Investment Authority (KIA) which concluded that "there is no economic feasibility for the establishment of a second livestock trade company." High-ranking ministerial sources said KIA sent a report along with the founding committee report to the finance ministry on the law of the second livestock company, stating that there was no economic feasibility to establish it, and it will not make profits. — Al-Anbaa



SOCIAL MEDIA

Crime

Report

Woman sentenced for offering sexual services over Twitter

KUWAIT: The misdemeanors court sentenced the owner of a social media account to one year in jail followed by deportation, after offering to have sex with other Twitter users in exchange for KD 150 per hour. Vice detective Lt Col Haitham Essa said messages were monitored during which a Twitter user who operated an account called "Lujain" offered to have sex with others and stated the amount of money for that. The suspect denied the charges, and said a person kept bothering her through social media sites, so she attempted to lure him so she could report him. She said she sent voice messages to him to meet at her house and then call the police. She said the voice is hers and detectives' investigations are correct. In another case, the misdemeanors court sentenced a well-known tweeter to one month in jail and sent the case to the civil court after convicting him for insulting the chairman of a cooperative society. The chairman complained against a tweeter who insulted him on Twitter and Instagram, accusing him of embezzlement. The court said the suspect's claims were not supported by any documents.

Policemen insulted

A drunk man in Sabah Al-Salem insulted policemen who stopped him, and had a bottle and was drinking from it. Policemen arrested the man and took him to the police station where he was charged with public drunkenness and insulting public employees while on duty.

Ex-husband charged

A citizen accused her ex-husband of kidnapping their children and threatening to harm her if she informed police about him, and lodged a complaint against him at Ali Sabah Al-Salem police station. Detectives are looking for the man for further action.

Blackmail

A citizen accused a man she knows of threatening and blackmailing her because of an old relationship, and lodged a complaint against him at Qairawan police station. The woman, according to a security source, told police her sister had a relationship with a man, then she dumped him, which made him angry and he started to blackmail her financially, and did not stop despite what he received during the past months. Investigations are underway.

Bootlegger caught

Ahmadi security police arrested an Indian man with possession of 200 bottles of homebrewed liquor he was selling in Fintas. A police patrol spotted the Indian roaming the streets late at night, and when he was stopped, he seemed nervous. When searched, the liquor was found in the trunk of his car. The suspect and the liquor were sent to the Drugs Control General Department. — Al-Rai



Al-Qabas

HEROES BEHIND THE CURTAIN

By Qais Al-Usta

Amidst the dust of politics and our talk about the situation in the country, some find things OK and that all what is being said is exaggeration, while others do not agree and protest, and in the crowd, we forgot to mention heroes who decided to work in silence. We forgot to talk about the border soldiers, those who work in electricity and operate stations, we forgot to talk about nurses and x-ray technicians; we forgot ambulance drivers and customs officers; we forgot the firefighting heroes who face flames every day; we forgot traffic officers and their stand on the streets.

They do not have battles to defend a position, do not have parties to instill in departments, and do not have tenders and bids - these are people who took a decision to serve the country's people. I do not know why we ignored them and focused on those who are supposed to take a decision for a simple reason, because there is no one who dares to make a decision! Since when we are hearing about reforms, and since

when we are hearing about sports crises and the economy, and why are they not resolved until now? Since when we are hearing about forged certificates, and did any holder of such certificates get a position? Where is the blade that will pass over heads? Where are the deficit numbers and what is your answer to those who are saying the deficit is a lie?

All has been corrected after we arrested those who drew on the transformer, and why do not we arrest those who drew a dark future for this country? Why were they not pictured on screens, and instead of that they were awarded tenders? Why is the country monopolized by four companies? We return to the heroes to tell them Allah will reward you, and your appreciation will come from the word "thank you" from a simple citizen or an elderly man or woman. But our government honors with a different view, which only the highly knowledgeable understand.

Was the message delivered? I hope so.

— Translated by Kuwait Times



AZERBAIJANI MINISTRY HOSTS ROADSHOW TO PROMOTE TOURISM

KUWAIT: Azerbaijan's Ministry of Culture and Tourism presented a roadshow to develop cooperation in the field of travel and tourism in business and leisure and highlight information about tourism to diversify the country's dependence on oil and gas, as development of tourism is currently a key priority for Azerbaijan. The roadshow was attended by Kuwaiti ministers, pioneers in the industry and other dignitaries.

Rashid Al-Noori, Representative of the ministry in the GCC, presented his country's travel and tourism portfolio for various segments and discussed features to engage industries and government to support

Azerbaijan's tourism growth.

Minister for Culture and Tourism Abulfas Garayev gave a presentation on the solution basket to help make Azerbaijan the ultimate tourism destination offering unparalleled travel and holiday experiences.

"We would like to inspire travelers from all over the world to visit and explore Azerbaijan. We would also like to deliver a global network to support tourism promotion in Azerbaijan and to champion tourism."

He spoke about the importance of the Middle East, particularly the GCC states, for Azerbaijan's tourism. He shared his best experiences working in cooperation with Qatar.

"The government of Azerbaijan has lifted advance visa requirement for the citizens of the GCC countries, as well as Japan, Malaysia, China, South Korea and Singapore. This is a milestone in our relationship with these countries. We are pleased to inform the public, travel trade companies and those planning to visit Azerbaijan and enjoy historical sites and its beautiful landscaping," he added.

Azerbaijan has diverse attractions to offer and this visa waiver will facilitate "An excellent traffic of all categories of people to visit Azerbaijan."

Azerbaijan is a next-generation travel destination. It was chosen to organize World Tourism

Forum Lucerne Think Tank with the presence of World Tourism Organization Secretary-General Taleb Rifai, and World Tourism Forum President Reto Wittwer. It also hosted the First European Games in Baku in 2015 and has signed a contract with Formula 1 to organize Baku Grand Prix this year. These events will attract people from all over the world, impacting the tourism sector positively over the next decade.

"With excellent air accessibility, world-class conference facilities and high-quality hotels to accommodate events, unique dining venues and authentic on site activities, we are working together to make Azerbaijan visible to the world of meetings," concluded.



KUWAIT: Al-Sanabel Al-Thahabiya Company and its principal Sebamed continued their participation in the activities of the 'Beat Diabetes' campaign organized by the Health Promotion Department of the Ministry of Health. Director of the ministry's Health Media Office Dr Ghalia Al-Mutairi is personally following up the activities and helping participants assist the public as best as they can.

KUWAIT FIRST WORLDWIDE IN ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION

KUWAIT: Ministry of Electricity and Water's Undersecretary Mohammad Bushehri said the "idea of creating categories for consumption is in harmony with the idea of fair distribution of subsidies, especially under the growing consumption pattern with all types of consumers, be it private, investment, commercial or industrial sectors." He said the "numbers show the average consumption of power in Kuwait is nearly 15,700 kW, and ranks first in the world, while in water we are third with a daily consumption rate of 500 liters, although we are categorized as the second poorest country in freshwater resources after Mauritania."

Bushehri said the ministry works on

more than one aspect to guarantee rationalization of power and water consumption in various sectors, adding that the tariff of consumption categories being currently proposed is one of those aspects, in addition to the awareness campaigns the ministry organizes in this regard. He added there is coordination with the ministry of commerce to implement the new building code and consume less air conditioning.

Bushehri said that it is wise to reconsider the way power and water is consumed, adding the ministry is also working on renewable energy and materials for lighting and air conditioning, adding that the "ministry has several tools, if they are activated, to achieve what it is looking for." — Al-Rai



Kerry 'deeply moved' after Hiroshima visit

WITH NEW DECREE, PALESTINIAN LEADER TIGHTENS GRIP

HAMAS AND OTHERS ACCUSE ABBAS OF POLITICAL MONOPOLY

GAZA: Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has quietly established a constitutional court that analysts say concentrates more power in his hands and may allow him to sideline the Islamist group Hamas in the event of a succession struggle. The nine-member body, which will have supremacy over all lower courts, was created without fanfare by presidential decree on April 3 and will be inaugurated once its ninth member is sworn in at a ceremony yesterday, officials said.

Critics say the body is packed with jurists from Abbas's Fatah party and risks deepening Palestinian political divisions. Fatah says it is Abbas's right to create the court, which it says is independent of the 81-year-old president.

"Neither the president nor any of the leaders (of Fatah) has a private agenda regarding this issue," said Osama al-Qwasm, the spokesman for Fatah in the

West Bank. "The prime task of the constitutional court is to monitor laws. By the law, it is a completely independent body and we have full confidence in it."

Abbas's decision comes at a time of worsening splits between Fatah and Hamas and as questions are raised about what will happen when the president steps down or if he were to die in office without a successor. Abbas took office after the death of Yasser Arafat in 2004, and was elected to a four-year term as president in 2005. But new elections were not held in 2009 and he continues to govern by decree. Parliament has not sat since 2007. In theory, the speaker of parliament, a Hamas member, would take over as president on an interim basis were Abbas to die in office, although Fatah disputes whether that remains constitutional. While Abbas may have the authority to create the court, which is being established 14 years after the Palestinians draft-

ed a basic law, a form of constitution, some analysts see it as a way of circumventing opposition at a critical time. "It's a blatant power grab at a time when he knows he can get away with it," said Grant Rumley, a research fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies in Washington, DC. "From Abbas's standpoint, this is his way of both thwarting his rivals in Hamas and securing his Fatah party's hold on the Palestinian Authority once he is gone," Rumley said.

Block on rivals?

Palestinian commentators also see the court, whose decisions would be binding on the executive, the legislature and the judiciary, as a means of bolstering presidential authority and marginalizing Hamas. All nine members are either Fatah members or seen by Hamas and others as being allied with Fatah. "It is as if you are confiscating

everything and putting all the institutions in your hands," said Hani al-Masri, an unaffiliated political analyst based in Ramallah. Hamas, which won Palestinian elections in 2006 and seized control in Gaza a year later, saw itself sidestepped during the swearing-in process. Two of the nine members are from Gaza. Fatah said Hamas prevented them from leaving the territory to be sworn in at a ceremony in the West Bank on April 5. So instead they were sworn in via video link on Sunday.

"This is a factional court," said Sami Abu Zuhri, Hamas's spokesman, arguing that it gave Abbas the ability to sidestep parliament - if the current one ever sits again - or if a new parliament is eventually elected. Abbas's legal adviser, Hassan al-Awry, said the court was needed in part because parliament's legal status was in question given the lack of elections. "It is not a shame if the constitutional court would debate this

issue," he told Reuters, adding that the justices on the court were all legal experts and independent. "We want a judicial reference should such an issue be brought up."

Yet Palestinian scholars say the court raises problems. Issam Abdeen, a law professor at Birzeit University in the West Bank, said it would have little check on its authority. "It can be a lethal weapon if misused," he told Reuters, pointing out that Abbas's political opponents, such as Mohammad Dahlan who now lives in exile, have a new hurdle to clear in efforts to mount legal challenges to his authority. Rumley, of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, regards the court as a potential barrier to reform.

"Rather than reforming his party, preparing for elections, or reactivating the defunct parliament, (Abbas) is creating another judicial body by presidential decree in order to, among other things, approve presidential decrees," he said.—Reuters



GAZA: Lightning is seen over Gaza City during a storm in the late hours of the night on April 10, 2016. — AFP

POLICE FILE CHARGES OVER INDIA'S TEMPLE DISASTER

KOLLAM: Indian police said yesterday they have filed initial charges against six people over a massive explosion during a banned fireworks display that killed over 100 people and left many more with horrific burns. Thousands had packed into a Hindu temple in the southern state of Kerala on Saturday night for the show when a stray firework apparently landed on a stockpile of them, triggering a huge blast that tore through concrete buildings.

Police said they were investigating who was responsible for holding the fireworks display even though authorities in Kerala's Kollam district had refused permission for it. The blast was strong enough to flatten a building in the temple complex and killed 109 people, with hundreds more still being treated for their injuries. "A case was registered yesterday against six people," said the head of Kerala police crime branch S Ananthakrishnan. "Six

people have been named in the case—three from the temple committee, three who were contractors for the fireworks display."

Initial charges against the six include culpable homicide not amounting to murder, he said. None of the six has yet been arrested. Police said one was in hospital and the other five had gone missing. Police also said they were questioning five temple workers involved in staging the fireworks display. They faced no charges at this stage. Witnesses told how the force of the explosion sent concrete slabs and roof tiles slamming into the panicked crowd of onlookers in the early hours of Sunday. Thousands had gone to the temple to celebrate the Kerala festival of Vishu, marking the Hindu new year. Local resident Shiva Kumar said the victims were mostly young men competing to set off the most explosive crackers. "It was a sort of competition between

two groups," he said. "The firecrackers are sponsored by families who get them made, they are locally manufactured and don't follow the usual norms. Sometimes they use gunpowder to get that extra firepower."

'Memories will haunt us'

One man living near the temple told how his son Adiraj, a factory worker, had gone to the display with three old friends. Only one survived. "He was with his friends near the structure where the firecrackers were kept," said Baba, 46, giving only one name. "He had dressed up for the festival after having dinner and said he will be with his friends. We saw his body afterwards at the hospital morgue... his memory will haunt us every year on this day." Firefighters and police battled to douse the fire that broke out after the explosion and to rescue those trapped at the complex, but some victims were charred beyond recognition. More than 30 have yet to be identified and a team of specialist doctors was deployed from New Delhi to treat the horrific burn injuries. Some buildings at the temple complex were completely flattened by the force of the blast, while others had their roof tiles blown off or plaster ripped from the walls. Fires and stampedes are not uncommon at temples and during religious occasions, often because of poor security arrangements and lax safety standards.

The Kerala government has ordered a judicial inquiry into the disaster, which comes as the southern state heads to the polls. Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the scene of the disaster on Sunday. Activists from various parties were distributing free food at Kollam hospital yesterday. Kerala is currently governed by the Congress party, which is in opposition at the national level, although the Communist party is also popular in the state. Local residents said representatives of both parties had visited victims' homes to offer help. "This incident happened at election time and that's why political leaders are coming here," said local resident T Rajesh. "No one will come once voting is over."—FP



KOLLAM: Footwear of the devotees lie scattered inside the temple compound where a massive fire broke out during a fireworks display at the Puttingal temple complex in Paravoor village, Kollam district, southern Kerala state. — AP



KUWAIT BEAUTIFUL & GREEN STUDENTS ART COMPETITION

March 10th Till April 14th, 2016

Organized By
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HELLO ARTISTS...

Welcome to the Student's Art Competition. I hope you are ready to paint a beautiful painting and win wonderful prizes. The theme for your painting must be related to planting and greening, basically anything pertaining to our environment. We are looking for a great painting. So, please pick up your color pencils, paint brushes, crayons or whatever you prefer and start drawing and painting.

Good luck to you, our young artists.

- Competition is open to ages from (6 - 8) (9 - 11) (12 - 14) and (15 - 17) and Special needs.
- The competition is open for all schools in Kuwait (Government and Private)
- **The competition will start on March 10th and will continue till April 14th 2016.**
- 10 winners from each category will receive valuable prizes.
- All participants will receive a certificate of appreciation.
- All schools participating in

the competition will receive an appreciation plaque.

- Any school or individual interested to participate in this competition is welcome to visit the office of Kuwait Times and collect the drawing sheets.
- Drawing sheets will be given to schools FREE of charge.
- Only drawing sheets provided by the Kuwait Times will be allowed.
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BANGLADESH IN SECURITY CRACKDOWN FOR NEW-YEAR FESTIVAL



DHAKA: Bangladeshi residents prepare an installation at Dhaka University as a part of Bengali New Year preparations in Dhaka. The Bengali calendar is solar, with the year beginning on Pohela Boishakh, which this year falls on April 14, in Bangladesh. — AFP

DHAKA: There will be “unprecedented” security for this week’s Bengali New Year festivities which hardline clerics have branded “un-Islamic”, Bangladesh police announced yesterday, as the country faces rising religious violence. Police said thousands of officers would be deployed for the annual street parade to celebrate the new year on April 14 that traditionally sees hundreds of thousands of revelers swarm through the capital.

“We want people to celebrate the festival safely. Therefore, we have taken unprecedented steps to prevent any mishaps,” Dhaka Metropolitan Police spokesperson Maruf Hossain Sorder said. Open-air evening concerts, normally held at Dhaka University and the main Ramna Park, have been banned as part of the stepped up security arrange-

ments. “We’re erecting nine security watch towers at the festival venues in an effort to prevent any untoward incident,” Sorder said.

Masks, commonly worn during the New Year parades, are banned this year for security reasons, along with plastic vuvuzela horns to reduce noise pollution, the home minister said last week. Sorder said police have also launched a stepped up hunt for Islamic militants as Muslim-majority Bangladesh reels from deadly attacks on religious minorities and foreigners in recent months. The government has blamed the attacks on home-grown Islamic militants, rejecting claims of responsibility from the Islamic State group as well as Al-Qaeda. Several foreigners were murdered last year, while minority Sufi and Shiite Muslims, Christians and Hindus were also target-

ed in a series of deadly attacks. An activist, who posted against Islam on Facebook, was killed last week, the latest in a series of murders of secular bloggers and a publisher. Police did not say if Bangladesh was facing any specific threat during the new year, but in 2001 a bomb blast in the Ramna park killed 10 people. Eight Islamist militants were later sentenced to death for the attack. Ahead of this year’s festival, a group of clerics has asked the government not to promote the festival, calling it “un-Islamic and Haram (forbidden)” according to mass-circulated Bengali daily Prothom Alo. A long-running political crisis in the majority Sunni Muslim but officially secular country has radicalized opponents of the government and analysts say Islamist extremists pose a growing danger.—AFP

UKRAINE LOOKS TO NEW PRO-EU GOVERNMENT AFTER PM QUIT

KIEV: Ukraine prepared yesterday to usher in a stable new pro-Western government following the resignation of Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk over public anger with his seeming inability to fight government graft. Yatsenyuk’s announcement on Sunday came barely two months after he survived a no-confidence vote in parliament that left the government paralyzed and put the release of vital foreign aid on hold. The former Soviet republic has been roiled by a pro-Russian eastern revolt and an economic collapse that has wiped out people’s savings and stirred public resentment toward the government since Yatsenyuk assumed office in February 2014. “Having done everything to ensure stability and make a smooth transition of power possible, I decided to step down from the post of prime minister of Ukraine,” the 41-year-old said in a weekly television address. President Petro Poroshenko’s party has proposed replacing Yatsenyuk with parliament speaker Volodymyr Groysman—a coalition builder who has gained stature by keeping the notoriously-rowdy chamber in relative peace since his appointment in November 2014.

But some economists fear that the 38-year-old Poroshenko protege may lack the toughness needed to stand up to a handful of tycoons who have dominated Ukraine’s fractious politics for years. Parliament is to decide whether to accept Yatsenyuk’s resignation Tuesday at what is expected to be a marathon session that might also see a vote on Groysman’s candidacy. Yatsenyuk’s party member Anton Gerashchenko wrote on Facebook that there were “more than enough votes” needed to accept the premier’s resignation. Yet what comes next is far less clear.

A reform-oriented government

The parliamentary factions headed by Poroshenko and Yatsenyuk have been trying for weeks to muster the majority necessary

to push through a new cabinet leader and form a government that could appease the other dissatisfied parties. But smaller groups such as the one headed by former prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko have pulled out of the pro-EU coalition that formed in wake of the February 2014 ouster of Ukraine’s despised Russian-backed president Viktor Yanukovich. Tymoshenko’s party and other factions that also broke ranks with the government have so far been noncommittal about whether they were ready to see Groysman assume one of Ukraine’s two top posts. This confusion comes against the backdrop of fierce jostling for top cabinet seats and a raging trade war with Russia that has hurt producers and further stalled Ukraine’s return to economic growth.

Groysman himself warmly praised Yatsenyuk for his decision but said nothing about his own chances of becoming the next premier. “I understand that this was a thought-through and dignified step, perhaps a difficult one, but one that deserves respect,” Interfax-Ukraine quoted Groysman as saying. He called on parliament to quickly forge a coalition “that can form a new reform-driver government and choose a prime minister, thus ensuring the inevitability of (Ukraine’s) European integration.” US Vice President Joe Biden on Sunday also thanked Yatsenyuk “for his partnership during a historic time for Ukraine.”

Finance ministry opening

Analysts and the Ukrainian media predict that one of the most important changes in the government will involve the departure of Finance Minister Natalie Jaresko. The US-born former State Department worker and private banker has been widely praised by the West for being able to pull together a crucial debt restructuring deal in August 2015. Yet she is unlikely to serve under Groysman after herself volunteering for the premiership post.—AFP



JERUSALEM: Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon (left) listens during the weekly cabinet meeting in Jerusalem. — AP

ISRAELIS ACCUSED OF ABUSING DETAINED PALESTINIAN MINORS
ISRAEL CLEARS COLONEL LINKED TO PALESTINIAN DEATH

JERUSALEM: Human Rights Watch yesterday accused Israeli security forces of using unnecessary force in the arrest and interrogation of Palestinian minors in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem. HRW also said that arrests of youths had spiraled since an October 2015 outbreak of violence that has killed more than 200 people. It cited figures released by Israeli rights group B’Tselem showing that in January 406 Palestinians under 18 years of age were held “as security detainees and prisoners” compared with 183 in January 2015.

“Interviews with children who have been detained, video footage and reports from lawyers reveal that Israeli security forces are using unnecessary force in arresting and detaining children, in some cases beating them, and holding them in unsafe and abusive conditions,” the rights group said in a statement. “Screams, threats, and beatings are no way for the police to treat a child or to get accurate information from them,” it quoted its Israel and Palestine director Sari Bashi as saying. Israeli police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said the report was “inaccurate and misleading”.

“The youths were arrested for being directly involved in terrorist and criminal activity,” he said. HRW cited testimony from three young men, one identified as 16-year-old

Ahmed A-from the West Bank city of Hebron and two from Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem. “Soldiers arrested Ahmed on November 27 at about 7:00 pm in the garden of a friend... near his home in Hebron,” the HRW report said.

“He said that the soldiers blindfolded and handcuffed him and took him to a police station in the nearby settlement of Kiryat Arba, where he was made to sit outside on the ground until about 12:30 am. “He asked to have his father come there, but police officers told him his parents would not be allowed into the interrogation. “He was permitted to speak to his lawyer by phone before the interrogation,” it added. “He said interrogators accused him of having a knife, which he denied, and then took him to a military compound,” where six or seven soldiers forced him to lie on the ground and hit and kicked him.

He told Human Rights Watch he was “hit on my back and legs, with kicks and blows to my head.” “He was transferred to a detention facility the next day and released six days later without charge, after a DNA test failed to link him to a knife that had been found,” the report said. Violence since October has left 200 Palestinians and 28 Israelis dead. Most of the Palestinians killed were carrying out attacks and many of the assailants have been young people, including teenagers, according to Israeli authorities. Other youths have been shot dead during protests and clashes with security forces.

Israeli colonel cleared

Meanwhile, an Israeli colonel has been cleared of any criminal charges after shooting dead a Palestinian teen who stoned his jeep in the West Bank last year, the military said yesterday. A rights group that distributed a video showing the shooting denounced the decision, which comes amid controversy over a separate killing of a Palestinian by an Israeli soldier last month. Colonel Israel Shomer had been under investigation for the July 3 shooting near Qalandia checkpoint, south of Ramallah, that killed Mohammad Kasba, 17.

The army said at the time Shomer and another soldier had opened fire when the vehicle was damaged “and in response to the imminent dan-

ger”. But a video distributed by the B’Tselem human rights group appeared to dispute the claim, showing the shots were fired at Kasba while he seemed to be running away after stoning the jeep. The army said a Palestinian had thrown a rock through the windshield of Shomer’s vehicle and that in response the officer “exited his vehicle and fired into the air and towards the lower extremities of the assailant.” “However, due to the reality of the

operational situation, the shots resulted in the death of the assailant,” it said in a statement.

“The military advocate general concluded that the shooting of the perpetrator was not criminal and the event does not justify taking legal action against the officer.” B’Tselem condemned the army’s decision, which it called “an integral part of the whitewash mechanism which is Israel’s military investigative system.” —Agencies

RUSSIA MUSCLES INTO CENTRE OF PEACE DRIVE ON GROUND IN SYRIA

AL-NASRIYA: Two elderly men in chequered headaddresses, a Syrian army officer and a Russian colonel sat at a plastic table by a desert road signing sheets of paper. “In the name of Allah the most merciful” read a Russian translation of the agreement, with the title “Application form to join the cessation of hostilities” printed across the top. The ceremony-performed on Saturday in front of the cameras of journalists on a Russian army press tour-appeared to see the village of Al-Nasriya, some 70 kilometers (45 miles) northeast of Damascus, become the latest location in Syria to have a local truce agreed between government and opposition groups.

In September, Russia launched a massive military campaign to support long-time ally President Bashar al-Assad. Since then, Moscow has mediated several local truces. Along with Washington, it also brokered a ceasefire for the whole country, which has largely held since coming into force on February 27. “Russia is acting as a mediator,” said Yuri Zrayev, leader of the Russian team overseeing the implementation of the six-week ceasefire around Damascus.

“The signing of an agreement for this territory took a long time to work out and required a huge amount of work,” Zrayev told journalists. “It was good that your arrival coincided with the signing. Even though up until yesterday (Friday) we didn’t know if anyone would show up.” AFP could not independently confirm that the men presented as

town elders who signed the agreement—which also commits the Syrian army to halt hostilities against the village-really represented the local population.

But the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which monitors the conflict, said separately that a truce deal was meant to be signed in the area where army positions are some three kilometers from civilian areas. “I’d like very much to talk about the situation here but they won’t let me,” one local man said hurriedly in halting Russian, gesturing towards a Kalashnikov-wielding Syrian soldier who then escorted him away from journalists. A rebel group in the area—which the Russian military said attacked a Syrian army base nearby a few days earlier—does not appear to have signed up to the ceasefire.

Some seven weeks after Russian President Vladimir Putin hammered out the truce deal with US President Barack Obama and four weeks since he ordered a partial withdrawal from Syria, Moscow has positioned itself as the key peacemaker on the ground in the war-torn country. So far Russian forces say some 60 different towns and villages and 50 rebel groups have signed truces with the government forces Moscow backs, halting clashes across swathes of the country.

“If before it was simply about fighting then now our main focus has switched to the peace process,” Russian military spokesman Igor Konashenkov said. —AFP



AL-NASRIYAH: Elders, a Syrian army officer (left) and a Russian colonel (right) sign pieces of paper in the village of Al-Nasriyah in front of journalists on a Russian army press tour, which appeared to see the village become the latest location in Syria to have a local truce agreed between government and opposition groups. —AFP



AL-FASHIR: Women queue outside a polling station at the Abu Shouq camp for Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) in El-Fasher, in North Darfur yesterday, during a referendum on whether to keep its five states or unite them into a single region despite rebels boycotting and international criticism. — AFP

DARFUR VOTES ON STATUS

EL-FASHER: The war-scarred Sudanese region of Darfur voted yesterday in a referendum on its future status despite international criticism and a boycott by rebel groups. Despite ongoing unrest in areas, President Omar Al-Bashir-wanted on war crimes charges related to the 13-year conflict-has insisted voting go ahead on whether to unite Darfur’s five states into a single region or maintain the status quo. A united Darfur with greater autonomy has long been a demand of ethnic minority insurgents battling the Sudanese government since 2003, but they have boycotted the referendum, saying it is unfair.

The United States has also voiced concerns, warning that “if held under current rules and conditions, a referendum on Darfur cannot be considered a credible expression of the will of the people”. Voting got underway at 9:00 am (0600 GMT), with a slow early trickle of people coming to cast their ballots at polling stations guarded by armed police and decorated with posters urging a strong showing. “All polling centers in Darfur’s five states opened and no centre has encountered any difficulties,” said Omar Ali Jomaa, head of the referendum electoral commission. “It is too early to assess the turnout.”

The state’s governor Abduwahid Yousif voted early at a centre in an area mostly inhabited by government employees, where nearly 100 women were waiting to

cast ballots. Outside one of the booths in a station at a camp for the displaced on the edge of the town, resident Fathiya Adam Hassan had just voted. “I voted for a single region, I want a one region to solve Darfur’s problems,” the 38-year-old said. Searching for her name on a list of registered voters outside the health centre where voting was taking place, Samia Haroun said she supported a five-state system, the choice favored the ruling National Congress Party. “I want the five states, I want that choice to win,” she said. At other locations, only a handful of residents came to vote in the first hours of the referendum.

International concerns

Darfur was a single region until 1994 when the government split it into three states, adding another two in 2012, claiming it would make local government more efficient. The vast western region has been mired in conflict since 2003 when ethnic minority insurgents rebelled against Bashir’s Arab dominated government over claims they were marginalizing them. Rebels have long demanded a return to the single-region system but say current unrest and the high number of people in camps for the displaced mean the vote will not be fair and are boycotting. Despite Washington’s concerns, Sudan insists the timing is appropriate and that there has been high interest in the vote.—AFP

'KEIKO' VS 'PPK': CHARACTERS IN PERU PRESIDENCY DRAMA FUJIMORI HEADS FOR RUNOFF

LIMA: Peruvians say you either love or hate Keiko Fujimori, daughter of their jailed former leader Alberto. Despite his dark legacy she is now one step away from becoming president too. She will fight a runoff election on June 5 against Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, a 77-year-old flute-playing former banker with showbiz connections. Smiling broadly, the 40-year-old who Peruvians simply call "Keiko" danced for crowds of supporters ahead of her first-round victory on Sunday. Her campaign rallies are glittering spectacle, but it is her name that most grabs the attention in this South American nation.

If she beats Kuczynski, she will be the first woman to be elected president of Peru-but not the first Fujimori. She came of age during the violent period of her father Alberto Fujimori's rule in the 1990s. Alberto Fujimori, now 77, is in jail for ordering the massacre of people he said were terrorists in 1991 and 1992. Pursued by the memory of that dark decade, she made a solemn "pledge of honor" to safeguard human rights. "We want to put violence aside and start to look forward," she said. "I want to be the president of all Peruvians."

Her father won the love of many for stamping out the Shining Path, a communist guerrilla group that carried out attacks and kidnappings. "You either love Keiko or you hate her," said one voter in Lima, Diego Ramirez, 25, who works in a bank. "I find it incredible that she could be president. Her father was corrupt and a killer... All she has is her family name." But many voters harbor nostalgia for Alberto Fujimori's rule and want Keiko to follow in his footsteps. "If Fujimori had continued as president the country would be in a better state now," said Felizardo Mogollon, a 58-year-old taxi driver in Lima. "Keiko is a woman who will

work for security and improve the economy even more."

On the morning of Sunday's elections, Fujimori cooked sausages in front of the television cameras as her family sat at the breakfast table. Alongside her two daughters and husband, US consultant Mark Villanella, sat Keiko Fujimori's mother, Susana Higuchi. Higuchi accused Alberto Fujimori's men of torturing her during his rule. She fled the presidential palace and filed for divorce in 1994. Keiko sided with her father and took over as first lady of the nation aged 19. She and her mother appear to have reconciled since.

Guinea-pig guy

Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, known to Peruvians simply as "PPK," has lived a globetrotting life that has left him with a "Yanqui" twang to his accent. He is a cousin of Franco-Swiss filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard and his American wife Nancy is a cousin of the Hollywood actress Jessica Lange. PPK cut an eccentric figure on the campaign trail, donning a multicolored woolly hat and playing folk music on the flute. The mascot for his campaign was a man-sized guinea pig. Kuczynski has vowed to create jobs by boosting business and growth. One voter in Lima, Andres Vera, 39, said he backed Kuczynski "because he is a moderate right-winger and it will prevent a far-left candidate from reaching the second round"—a reference to third-place contender Veronika Mendoza.

A former prime minister, Kuczynski had a colorful career as an international businessman and financier, according to his official website. He says his father, a doctor, was an officer in the German army in World War One but fled his native country when Hitler came to power and ended up in Peru treating lepers. — AFP



NEW YORK: Supporters line up on Washington St in Binghamton to enter a rally for democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders yesterday in Binghamton, New York. The New York Democratic primary is scheduled for April 19th. — AFP

CALIFORNIA OR BUST: SANDERS CHARTS A WHITE HOUSE PATH MOMENTUM SOUGHT TO BEAT FRONT-RUNNER HILLARY

NEW YORK: Defying opinion polls and expert predictions, US Democratic hopeful Bernie Sanders aims to seize the party's White House nomination from Hillary Clinton's grasp with a last-ditch come-from-behind triumph in California. By far the most populous US state, California is the largest prize of the state-by-state nominating contests, and the vote on June 7 is one of the last before Democrats convene in July to select a nominee for the Nov 8 presidential election. An aggressive schedule of large rallies is planned along with heavy purchases of TV, radio and online advertising in three languages and a "far, far more expensive" campaign effort than in any other state, Sanders campaign sources disclosed.

"I think they're still riding rainbow unicorns if they think there's a path," said Steve Schale, a Florida-based strategist, of Sanders' bid for the White House. California has been a reliable source of campaign funds for Clinton, and opinion polls show her ahead there by as many as 14 percentage points. The statistical analysis media site FiveThirtyEight gives her a 91 percent chance of winning the state primary.

The Sanders campaign push aims to net as much as a 10-point win in California, helping him deny the front-running Clinton the 2,383 convention delegates she needs to clinch the nomination and give

him the momentum to force a contested convention where he can try to win over the "superdelegates," those not decided by a state nominating contest and free to support anyone, the campaign sources said. Sanders, a US senator from Vermont, has eroded Clinton's lead in California, according to a Field Poll released on Friday. Clinton led Sanders by only 6 points in that survey, down from a double-digit lead earlier this year.

'Barnstorm the place'

"With California what we're going to do is something that (Sanders) really likes to do: Barnstorm the place," said Tad Devine, Sanders' senior adviser, acknowledging Sanders' underdog status against Clinton, the former secretary of state. That means two or three large-scale rallies a day for weeks, possibly starting in late April to target early voters, he said. Such rallies are a sweet spot for the 74-year-old New York-born democratic socialist's firebrand speaking style championing the working class and vowing to erase economic inequality. At a late March event in The Bronx, he drew 18,500 people. Clinton leads in pledged convention delegates - those allocated to candidates on the basis of the state primaries and caucuses - with 1,287 to 1,037 for Sanders.

A candidate needs 2,383 delegates to clinch the nomination. California has 475 delegates, to be divided proportionally according to the June 7 primary vote. The Clinton campaign plans to put up a fight. Local and national surrogates will speak out in English and Spanish and staff will beef up offices up and down the West Coast as the California vote nears, her campaign said. "We're fighting for every vote by talking to Californians about why Hillary Clinton is the only candidate in this race who will break down the barriers that hold people back and deliver real results," Amanda Renteria, Hillary for America national political director, said in a statement to Reuters.

"Headed into the June 7 primary, our volunteers and supporters are knocking on doors and hitting the phones to share with friends, family and neighbors Hillary Clinton's plans to create more good-paying jobs in California, keep our streets safe from gun violence, protect our environment, reform our immigration system and ensure all Californians have access to a good education and quality affordable health care." Sanders has won seven of the last eight state nominating battles but faces a potentially rougher road in big states like New York, where Clinton was a US senator and which holds an April 19 primary. — Reuters



LIMA: Peru's presidential candidate Keiko Fujimori arrives at the polling station in Lima. — AFP

BRAZIL'S ROUSSEFF: EX-GUERRILLA IN AN EPIC IMPEACHMENT BATTLE

RIO DE JANEIRO: When she was being tortured under Brazil's military dictatorship, Dilma Rousseff could never have imagined becoming the country's first female president. But four decades on from those dark days in 1970, when Rousseff belonged to a violent Marxist underground group, she did indeed rise to the top-only to face impeachment less than a year into her second term.

Impeachment proceedings launched in October enter their crucial phase yesterday, with a vote in Congress' lower house commission. Although non-binding, the decision sets the tone for a critical vote in about a week's time in the full house on whether to send Rousseff to trial. Brazil's 68-year-old "Iron lady" has put up a serious fight, trying frantically to repair a coalition left in tatters by the defection of the country's largest party, the PMDB. The impeachment charges center on her government's allegedly illegal juggling of accounts to cover budget holes. But momentum is also fueled by anger across Latin America's biggest country over steep recession, corruption and the government's inability to deal with Congress.

Whether that's fair or not, Rousseff has already been condemned by public opinion, her government's popularity plummeting to around 10 percent since her narrow 2014 re-election win against business-world favorite Aécio Neves. Some critics attack Rousseff for lacking charisma. Others go further, calling her the classic accidental president, a politician who doesn't like politicking. But as Rousseff herself has pointed out, torture



BRASILIA: Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff (left) walks with her security detail in the area of the Alvorada Palace in Brasilia yesterday. — AFP

steered her for tough times. "I have come up against hugely difficult situations in my life, including attacks which took me to the limit physically," she said. "Nothing knocked me off my stride."

Cancer battle

Rousseff came to power in a 2010 election as the handpicked Workers' Party candidate to succeed hugely popular president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. Whether as Lula's chief of staff or energy minister, she won a reputation for laser-like attention to detail and ability to master the most minute of policy points-a talent she is said to have carried on into her own cabinet meetings.

Supporters say there's also a warmer side to the leader popularly known by

her first name Dilma. Twice married, Rousseff has a daughter, Paula, from a 30-year relationship with ex-husband, fellow leftist militant Carlos de Araujo. At Lula's prompting during her reelection campaign she learned to open up a little, for example once confessing to escaping the presidential palace on the back of a friend's Harley-Davidson and cruising through the streets of Brasilia incognito.

"People always say about women in power that they're hard, managerial. But Dilma is a person with a great sense of humor, fun, extremely caring and generous," said Ieda Akselrud de Seixas, who was jailed with Rousseff in the 1970s. Rousseff also tapped into a national obsession for plastic surgery, getting her teeth whitened, hair redone and lifting wrinkles from her face. The relatively fresh look was in contrast to the visible toll exacted during her successful battle against lymphatic cancer that was first diagnosed in 2009. At one point, she had to wear a wig to cover hair loss from chemotherapy. She has since made a complete recovery, doctors say.

'High priestess of subversion'

Born December 14, 1947 to a Brazilian mother and Bulgarian businessman father, Rousseff grew up comfortably middle-class in the southeastern city of Belo Horizonte. She cut her political teeth as a Marxist militant opposed to the 1964-1985 dictatorship and in January 1970 was arrested and sentenced to prison for membership of a group responsible for murders and bank robberies. Rousseff's actual exploits during her time in the Revolutionary Armed Vanguard Palmares group remain shrouded in rumor, claims, denials and accusations of exaggeration, but most reports agree that she played more a support role than taking part in violence. — AFP

CANADIAN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY DECLARES SUICIDE CRISIS EMERGENCY

TORONTO: A Canadian aboriginal community of 2,000 people has declared a state of emergency after 11 of its members tried to take their own lives on Saturday night, national media reported. CTV News reported on Sunday that the remote northern community of the Attawapiskat First Nation in Ontario experienced an additional 28 suicide attempts last month. More than 100 people in the community have attempted suicide since last September, and one person died, according to CTV. Charlie Angus, the local member of parliament, told the Canadian Press it was part of a "rolling nightmare" of more and more suicide attempts among young people throughout the winter.

The Canadian Press said the regional First Nations government was sending a crisis response unit to the community following the declaration. The Health

Canada federal agency said in a statement it sent two mental health counselors as part of that unit. The First Nation's band office could not be immediately reached for comment. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said on Twitter: "The news from Attawapiskat is heartbreaking. We'll continue to work to improve living conditions for all Indigenous peoples."

Another Canadian aboriginal community in the western province of Manitoba appealed for federal aid last month, citing six suicides in two months and 140 suicide attempts in two weeks. Canada's 1.4 million aboriginals, who make up about 4 percent of the country's population, have higher levels of poverty and a lower life expectancy than other Canadians and are more often victims of violent crime, addiction and incarceration. — Reuters

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ICELAND'S PIRATE PARTY READY TO BOARD SHIP OF STATE

REYKJAVIK: Iceland's Pirate Party, founded in 2012 as a marginal protest group, is now unexpectedly in a position where it could seize power in a country fed up with the political and financial establishment. Recent public opinion polls have shown the party with 43 percent of voter support, with many Icelanders furious to discover that hundreds of their rich and powerful countrymen were named in the so-called Panama Papers leak which exposed hidden offshore dealings around the world.

The Pirate Party, a libertarian movement campaigning for more transparency in politics as well as Internet freedom and copyright reform, is modeled on a Swedish namesake launched in 2006. "We can't predict whether (voter support) will stay like this or not, but what we can see is that people like our style, our approach," Asta Gudrun Helgadóttir, one of three Pirate Party members to hold a seat in parliament said. Things have moved quickly for the small party, which in many ways is still under construction.

Its national headquarters, located in Reykjavik's Old Harbour, consist of a two-room office that looks more like an apart-

ment intended for a tiny protest party breathing fresh air into Icelandic politics, rather than the seat of a party ready to take the reins of power. Birgitta Jónsdóttir, a 48-year-old poetess and WikiLeaks activist, founded the party in 2012 after the dissolution of the Citizens Movement, another small pro-direct democracy party for which she was elected to parliament in 2009. "She was searching for herself. She's a rebel and she had this idea for the Pirate Party, which caught on right away," recalled Stefania Óskarsdóttir, a political science professor at the University of Reykjavik.

In 2013 legislative elections, the newly-created party managed to squeeze into parliament, just surpassing the threshold of five percent of votes required to be represented in parliament - 5.1 percent-and taking three seats. Since then it has continued to surprise political observers, gaining much more voter support than a slew of other protest parties founded in the wake of the 2008 financial meltdown that plunged Iceland into a deep recession and left thousands heavily indebted. Yet Pirate Party members are trying not to get in over their heads, despite their popularity. The Pirates main goal is to

break with Iceland's old political guard, and put an end to left-right bloc politics.

'Everyone takes part'

"In the other parties, when you're young and get involved in politics, it's simple: you start out listening to the speeches given by party leaders, and you clap. Here, it's not like that. Everyone takes part, everyone can write proposals that will be debated," said Karl Hedinn, a 21-year-old party member who zips around central Reykjavik on a skateboard. The party insists on a flat structure, almost devoid of hierarchy except for an executive committee consisting of seven members, seven substitutes and a rotating presidency.

"This weak structure is the Pirates' strength but also its weakness. They have to find competent people to make it work, otherwise it'll be complicated. In politics you have to be pretty organized so that on election day, your voters actually cast their ballots," Óskarsdóttir said. "For the time being, the Pirate Party is an excellent place to put your voter intent, and send a message. But a lot of voters will ask for more during the campaign", with legislative elections due to



REYKJAVIK: Birgitta Jónsdóttir, Icelandic MP speaks to a journalist at Reykjavik District Court. The Pirate Party's popularity stems from massive frustration over the political establishment's role in two major financial scandals, the country's 2008 banking crash and now the Panama Papers leaks. — AFP

be held in the autumn, she said. Voters may want to know which governing alliances would be expected, in a country where no

single party has obtained a parliamentary majority since Iceland's independence from Denmark in 1944. — AFP



JALALABAD: Afghan security forces inspect damage to a bus after a suicide attack in Jalalabad east of Kabul yesterday. — AP

AFGHANISTAN MP UNDER FIRE AFTER CONTROVERSIAL INTERVIEW ON RAPE BOMB KILLS 2 EDUCATION MINISTRY WORKERS IN KABUL

KABUL: A video of an Afghan lawmaker purportedly threatening to cut off a reporter's nose after she asked his views on marital rape has gone viral and sparked widespread condemnation online. The clip, which has been retweeted more than 4,000 times since it was posted by the VICE website Saturday, highlights the parlous state of women's rights more than 14 years after the fall of the hard-line Taliban. VICE reporter Isobel Yeung is seen questioning Afghan parliamentarian Nazir Ahmad Hanafi about his opposition to the Elimination of Violence Against Women Act.

It was submitted to parliament in 2009 but has yet to be passed due to strong resistance from MPs. "What if a husband rapes his wife, is that domestic abuse? Should the man be punished or should the woman be punished for that, in your opinion?" she asks Hanafi. He represents the western city of Herat and is also an Islamic scholar who lectures at various universities and madrassas. "There is a kind of rape you have and another we have in Islam," he replies. Yeung attempts to press on with another question but is cut off by Hanafi, who tells her: "I think you should stop it now."

Manipulated and made up

He is then seen turning in another direction and says: "Maybe I should give you to an Afghan man to cut your nose off." Hanafi later denied making the comments in an interview with Radio Free Europe,

suggesting the video was fabricated. "Actually I haven't said such a thing, neither have I behaved in a such a way with anyone," he said. "This video has been manipulated and made up. Fabricating a video is something normal and everyone can do it." The clip sparked angry reaction online after being widely shared on Facebook. User Mohammad Bashir Haidary wrote in Dari: "Dear MP...you have defamed the dignity of the entire Afghan people. May you face the wrath of the Almighty, you are representing the ancient province of Herat."

Another user, Aminullah Farahi, wrote: "This dirty man knows well that the interview is watched by millions of Easterners and Westerners, and you are representing Islam, is this Islam?" Gender equality has improved somewhat since a US-led coalition toppled the hardline Taliban regime in 2001, with women-particularly from cities-taking up numerous professional jobs and holding more than a quarter of all seats in parliament. President Ashraf Ghani has also pledged to place women's rights at the top of his agenda, but major challenges remain. Last year a 27-year-old woman known as Farkhunda was beaten to death in Kabul after being falsely accused of blasphemy, a case that became a symbol of the endemic violence that women still face.

Blast hits bus

In another development, a bomb hit a mini-bus

carrying Afghan Education Ministry workers in the capital Kabul yesterday, killing two people and wounding seven, the ministry said. The roadside bomb blew up as the bus was carrying workers to their offices in Kabul's eastern Bagrami district, the ministry said. There was no immediate claim of responsibility. Government workers and members of the security forces are often targeted by insurgent groups, including the Taliban, who are seeking to topple the US-backed government in Kabul.

Bus conductor Rahim Gul said the force of the blast threw him out of the vehicle. "We picked up the Education Ministry staff and we were driving on the road when there was an explosion," Gul told Reuters Television. "It was very powerful and threw me out of the car window. A few minutes later I found myself in a wheat field and then I rushed to the site of the attack and helped some injured people and they were taken to hospital."

The Taliban have stepped up their insurgency since most foreign troops withdrew from Afghanistan at the end of 2014, although Kabul has enjoyed a period of relative calm during the harsh winter months. That lull was expected to end soon with the Taliban poised to launch their annual spring offensive. Six people were killed by a suicide bomber on a motorcycle in Parwan district, northwest of Kabul, last week. On Feb 22, a Taliban suicide bomber killed 14 people and wounded 11 at a clinic in the same district. — Agencies

PARENTS OF NIGERIA MISSING CHIBOK GIRLS CLING TO HOPE

LAGOS: When Dauda Yama retrieved his mobile phone from a neighbor's house in January this year, he noticed a missed call from his daughter Saratu who had been missing for almost two years. The last time he spoke with Saratu was on April 14, 2014, when she rang to say men from the Islamist group Boko Haram had loaded her and her classmates from the Government Girls' Secondary School in Chibok in northeast Nigeria onto trucks. Attempts to reach her again failed and two years on, 219 girls abducted that night remain missing, despite a global campaign #bringbackourgirls involving celebrities and US first lady Michelle Obama calling for them to be found.

The students are among an estimated 2,000 girls and boys abducted by the Boko Haram since the start of 2014, with many of those abducted used as sex slaves, fighters and even suicide bombers, according to an Amnesty International report. But when Yama returned the missed call that evening, a man answered. Yama hung up and rushed to the home of Yakubu Nkeki, chairman of the Association of Parents of the Abducted Girls from Chibok. "He asked me what he should do," Nkeki, 58, a schoolteacher, whose 17-year-old adopted daughter Maimuna Yakubu Usman is among those missing, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Nkeki took the phone and redialed the number that was again answered by a man who said the phone belonged to his wife. Reporting the matter to any of the armed personnel around Chibok was out of the question so instead they informed a campaigner with the Bring Back Our Girls group, which advocates the return of the missing girls "now and alive". "We don't know who to trust," said Nkeki who has received physical threats for his efforts to keep the abduction of the Chibok girls in the headlines and the government's sights with the

abduction becoming a political issue for Nigerian leaders.

Took the lead

Providing counsel to parents of the missing Chibok girls is part of Nkeki's role as chairman of the association. He also checks up on the parents to see if they need help at all. "I check if they have food items or if someone is seriously sick," he said. "If there is any issue, I call the committee members." Some months ago, for example, the association received a donation of 128 bags of corn from a missionary group. The association decided to give three bags to one parent to sell and raise money for medicine for his son who was bitten by a snake.

Nkeki said he had not intended to become a leader for the parents but was catapulted into the role when he tried to rally families into action after the abduction. Under his lead, and frustrated by a lack of official action, the parents formed a team to search the Sambisa forest for missing girls the day after the abduction, finding scarves and other items along a trail until heavy rain forced them back. Nkeki then organized a meeting of parents in his village of Mbalala, calling for a peaceful demonstration and seeking media coverage to get the word out, with his initiatives prompting the parents to appoint him as their leader.

It was Nkeki's efforts that ascertained exactly how many girls were missing after the school said the Boko Haram had razed all records. He cycled from village to village for two weeks with pen and paper to build a register. "I got the names of the girls, their pictures. I asked for proof. They showed me their daughters' books so that I could get the exact name the girl used in the secondary school," he said. His census revealed the number of girls abducted was 276 but 57 were able to escape as the trucks took off and came home. — Reuters



LAGOS: Yana Galang, the mother of Rifkatu Galang, one of the abducted Chibok girls, holds a phone with a picture of her daughter during an interview in Lagos. — AFP

RED CROSS, AID GROUPS RESIST TOUGHER AUSTRIA ASYLUM BILL

VIENNA: Aid groups, including the Red Cross, said yesterday they would resist plans by the Austrian government to toughen its asylum process, shifting decision-making to centers near its borders. Draft legislation Austria says is needed to safeguard public order and internal security would make family reunification harder for migrants and would see the bulk of asylum requests being dealt with within an hour of crossing Austria's border.

"This is probably the most fundamental change in recent decades. A change which means Austria virtually takes leave of the right to asylum," Michael Landau, head of the Christian non-governmental organization (NGO) Caritas, told reporters. Austria's government has relied heavily on NGOs such as Caritas, the Red Cross and German aid group Diakonie to manage migrant flows and accommodation centers, provide legal assistance and collect and distribute clothes and food to asylum seekers.

The head of Austria's Red Cross, Werner Kerschbaum, said he had sent a letter to the government to say his group would refuse to help enforce the new measures, should parliament approve them in a vote

expected to take place in May. The heads of all three organizations said the bill breached both European law and the Austrian constitution and would encourage migrants to make use of human traffickers. "There is no doubt about the illegality of this. There is no doubt in question," said Michael Chalupka of Diakonie. The groups will appeal to each lawmaker's conscience in writing to encourage them to vote against the draft tabled by Austria's centrist coalition government, Chalupka said.

The new plans would go beyond previous restrictions Austria introduced to limit the number of asylum claims it accepts this year to 37,500 - less than half of last year's 90,000. It has received around 14,000 claims so far in 2016. The country has mainly served as a conduit into Germany for refugees and migrants from the Middle East and Africa but has absorbed a similar number of asylum seekers relative to its much smaller population. Austria has also coordinated a series of border closures with nearby Balkan countries over the past few months, which has led to around 50,000 people being stuck in Greece. — Reuters

TENSIONS AS GREECE AND MACEDONIA TRADE BLAME FOR TEAR GAS INCIDENT

IDOMENI: Fresh protests broke out yesterday at a flashpoint border crossing, as Greece and Macedonia blamed each other for an incident in which tear gas and rubber bullets

were fired on migrants trying to breach the closed border to get to western Europe. Greece lashed out at Macedonia for using "excessive force". Macedonia however hit back and



IDOMENI: Migrant men show used tear gas canisters apparently used by Macedonian police during yesterday riots at the fence of a makeshift camp in the northern Greek border point of Idomeni yesterday. — AP

accused police on the Greek side of failing to intervene as around 3,000 migrants "violently" tried to cross the frontier in Sunday's incident.

Medical charity Doctors Without Borders (MSF) said 260 people were treated for injuries after the flare-up on the Greece-Macedonia border: 200 for breathing problems, 30 for wounds caused by plastic bullets and 30 for other injuries. It was the latest violence to erupt at the flashpoint Idomeni crossing, where around 11,000 migrants have been living rough for weeks after Balkan states closed their borders, cutting off access to western Europe.

Many of them are fleeing war in Syria and Iraq. MSF said in a tweet that tensions were high in Idomeni yesterday with fresh protests. "Protestors in Idomeni have dragged a train wagon in front of the police bus. Tensions are high," it said. MSF spokesman Jonas Haensen added: "We have treated 30 to 40 people, mostly men but also women and

children, for injuries across the body caused by rubber bullets. "According to their accounts, Macedonian police fired on them," he said. Macedonian police accused crowds of hurling stones and other objects at them in a bid to break down a fence at the border, saying they had used tear gas to protect themselves.

But a spokesman for the Greek migration coordination agency, Giorgos Kyritsis, blasted the Macedonian reaction as totally unwarranted and out of proportion. He told Vima radio station that there had been "an excessive and asymmetrical use of force" that had created a "very difficult situation on Greek soil". The Greek government said it had lodged two "very strong protests" with Macedonian authorities, while Kyritsis said it had also "launched action against other European countries which have sent police observers to the Macedonian side," including Slovenia and Hungary. — AFP

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PHILIPPINES MILITARY ON THE DEFENSIVE AFTER BLOODY CLASH

MANILA: The Philippines army defended its operations yesterday after 18 soldiers were killed and more than 50 wounded in a jungle ambush by militants in the south of the country who have pledged allegiance to Islamic State. Security experts and some media criticized the handling of Saturday's encounter with the Abu Sayyaf rebels, which had echoes of a grisly 2011 clash when 19 troops died - some beheaded - and another last year when 44 police commanders were slain.

"It's deja vu. The government forces underestimated the rebels' firepower capability and ties with other lawless groups on Basilan," said security analyst Rommel Banlaoi, referring to the southern island where the clash raged for 10 hours. Military spokesman Brigadier-General Restituto Padilla said the troops had been adequately trained and the operation had been well coordinated, but they had been lured into a trap of improvised landmines that could not have been anticipated. "The situation on the ground is much different from how these armchair generals and analysts saw it. They

tend to magnify this unfortunate incident when the army has had many successes."

Padilla said eight Abu Sayyaf rebel bodies were found on Sunday, bringing to 13 the number of dead on the rebels side, including a Moroccan national. Describing the incident, he said the military had pounded the Abu Sayyaf camp on the island with bombs and artillery shells before sending in ground troops. "When they got in there, there were explosions around them, the place was booby-trapped and they were pinned down and the rebels were firing at them at all sides," he said.

Padilla said that, as well as the army, the government had a role to play in stamping out militancy in the south of the country through development and providing social services. The small but violent Abu Sayyaf group, which is known for extortion, kidnappings, beheadings and bombings, is one of several brutal Muslim rebel factions in the impoverished south of the largely Christian Philippines. The group has posted videos on social media sites pledging allegiance to Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria,

which have attracted foreign fighters from Southeast Asia, the Middle East and North Africa to the troubled southern Philippines.

The army stepped up its offensive against Abu Sayyaf late last year, when President Benigno Aquino ordered troops to hunt down the rebels over the kidnapping and execution of foreign nationals. The Philippines military has had years of US counter-terrorism training, although American troops have no direct role in the offensive against Abu Sayyaf. "It's not simply a matter of training," said Ric Jacobson, a US security expert. "If the leadership and preparations are not solid, then these operations are destined for failure, no matter how well-trained the troops."

The incident has not prompted criticism from candidates vying for the Philippines' presidency in next month's election. But a tough talking mayor from a southern city, who has vowed to end corruption and crime, has topped the latest opinion poll and is the front-runner for the May 9 election. The opinion poll was conducted March 30-April 2, before the fighting on Basilan. — Reuters



SAN JOSE: Philippine Marines take positions during a beach landing as part of the 11-day "Balikatan" (shoulder-to-shoulder) annual joint US and Philippine military exercises at San Jose airport in Antique province in the central Philippines yesterday. US and Philippine troops began major exercises on April 4 as China's state media warned "outsiders" against interfering in tense South China Sea territorial disputes. — AFP



SEOUL: Visitors take pictures beneath campaign posters of South Korean general election candidates displayed at Cheonggye stream in Seoul yesterday. — AFP

TWO SENIOR NORTH KOREA OFFICIALS DEFECT TO SOUTH

SOUTH KOREA OPPOSITION ACCUSES GOVT OF OPPORTUNISM

SEOUL: Two senior North Korean officials, including an army colonel specializing in espionage against the South, defected to South Korea last year, the Seoul government said yesterday. News of the defections followed a South Korean announcement on Friday that 13 workers at a restaurant run by the North in an unidentified country had defected, a case it described as unprecedented, arriving in the South a day earlier. South Korea did not say where the 13 had worked. China said yesterday that 13 North Koreans had been there and had left lawfully. It did not say if they were the same group.

The South's Unification and Defense Ministries said yesterday a North Korean army colonel defected last year and had been granted political asylum. He had worked in the secretive General Reconnaissance Bureau, which is focused on espionage activities against the South. South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles North Korea issues, also said that a senior diplomat who was posted in an African country had defected to the South last year with his family. The defec-

tion of a high-ranking officer in the General Reconnaissance Bureau is a coup for Seoul. The North set up the bureau in 2009, consolidating several intelligence agencies to streamline operations aimed at the South.

Its head, General Kim Yong Chol, is accused by the South of being behind a 2010 torpedo attack against the South that sunk a navy ship and killed 46 sailors. The North denies any responsibility for the sinking. The bureau is also known to operate an elite team of computer specialists working to infiltrate the networks of the South and other countries and to conduct cyber attacks against key institutions. South Korea's Yonhap news agency said the North Korean colonel specialized in anti-South espionage operations before defecting and had divulged the nature of his work to South Korean authorities. South Korean officials declined to comment. News of the defections come after a period of tension on the Korean peninsula following the North's fourth nuclear test in January and a long-range rocket launch the next month.

'Valid passports'

The South Korean government's public acknowledgement of defections is unusual. The main liberal opposition Minjoo Party yesterday accused the government of conservative President Park Geun-hye of trying to influence conservative voter turnout ahead of tomorrow's parliamentary elections by announcing the defection of the restaurant workers last week. Both ministries denied suggestions that yesterday's revelations were made for domestic political reasons and said disclosing the defections was in the public interest.

China is North Korea's main ally and is known for sending defectors back to the North, so South Korean media reports that restaurant workers had been there initially raised some surprise. Asked about the workers yesterday, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman said it had received a report about a group of 13 North Koreans in China who had gone missing. "After an investigation, (we found) the 13 North Koreans used valid passports to leave the country normally

in the early hours of April 6," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang told a regular briefing, without saying where they had gone. "What needs to be stressed is that these people had valid identity documents and legally came to the country, not North Koreans who have entered illegally."

South Korea's JoongAng Ilbo newspaper said the 13 worked at a restaurant in the Chinese city of Ningbo until around Tuesday last week when they disappeared, quoting a Chinese worker at the Ryugyong Korean Restaurant. Calls to the restaurant seeking comment went unanswered. South Korean media said the 13 left China and travelled to a Southeast Asian country before being flown to South Korea, citing unidentified government sources. The South's Unification Ministry declined to comment on where the North Koreans had been before arriving in South Korea. The two Koreas have been fierce rivals since the 1950-53 Korean War and about 29,000 people had fled North Korea and arrived in the South, since then, including 1,276 last year. — Reuters

CHINA'S XINJIANG OFFERS \$800,000 REWARDS FOR TIP OFFS ON ATTACKS

BEIJING: China's violence-prone far western region of Xinjiang will offer rewards of up to 5 million yuan (\$772,738) for tip offs about terrorist attacks, the government there said yesterday, in the latest stability move by authorities. Hundreds of people have been killed in unrest in Xinjiang in the past few years. The government blames the violence on Islamist militants who want to establish an independent state called East Turkestan for minority Uighurs, a mostly Muslim people who speak a Turkic language and hail from Xinjiang.

Exiles and rights groups though say the unrest is more a reaction to repressive government policies than being organized by any cohesive militant group. China strongly denies abusing anyone's rights in Xinjiang. The rewards, starting at 200,000 yuan, are for tips about attacks, kidnappings, murders and other terrorist acts, the Xinjiang government's news portal, Tianshan Net, said.

People can also apply for other perks, such as priority admission to schools and work promotions, it added. Tips will be treated in confidence and steps taken to ensure tipsters and their families do not suffer any form of revenge attacks. Xinjiang has previously offered varying levels of rewards for such tips, and since 2014, about 10,000 people have offered information to the authorities on terrorist activities, the news site added. Other provinces and regions in China and government departments also offer rewards for such counter-terrorism tips, including the Internet regulator, which gave out 2 million yuan of rewards last year. — Reuters

KERRY 'DEEPLY MOVED' AFTER HIROSHIMA VISIT

HIROSHIMA: John Kerry said yesterday he was "deeply moved" by his unprecedented visit to the Hiroshima atomic bomb memorial and urged President Barack Obama also to make the trip. The US secretary of state, who was joined by other G7 foreign ministers, is the highest-ranking administration official to pay respects at the spot where American planes launched the first-ever nuclear attack more than seven decades ago. Washington officials say Obama is considering a trip to Hiroshima late next month around the time of a Group of Seven summit, which is being held in another part of Japan.

An Obama visit would have huge symbolic importance as the first to Hiroshima by a sitting US president. "I want to express on a personal level how deeply moved I am" to be the first US secretary of state to visit Hiroshima, Kerry told reporters yesterday as he and his G7 counterparts wrapped up two days of talks. A museum at the memorial site is a "gut-wrenching display that tugs at all your



HIROSHIMA: US Secretary of State John Kerry gestures as he answers questions during a press conference following the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Hiroshima yesterday. — AFP

sensibilities as a human being", Kerry said. About 140,000 people died from the Hiroshima blast on August 6, 1945, or later from severe radiation exposure. The city, a key military installation during the war, was flattened by the massive detonation.

The atomic bombing of Nagasaki followed three days later, killing some 74,000 people. Japan surrendered within a week to end World War II. "Everyone should visit Hiroshima, and everyone means everyone," Kerry said. "I hope one day the president of the United States will be among the everyone who is able to come here." But Kerry declined to comment on the likelihood of an Obama visit. "Whether or not he can come as president, I don't know," he said. "That is subject to a very full and complicated schedule that the president has to plan out way ahead of time."

'World without nukes'

Yesterday morning, the G7 ministers and the foreign policy chief of the European Union visited the memorial museum, which shows the devastating impact of the bombing-such as survivors' burned clothing and other personal effects. "It is a stark, harsh, compelling reminder not only of our obligation to end the threat of nuclear weapons, but to rededicate all our effort to avoid war itself," Kerry wrote in the museum's guest book. The G7 later issued its Hiroshima Declaration that called for a "world without nuclear weapons". The foreign ministers discussed a range of other issues, from the refugee crisis and war in Syria to North Korea's latest military provocations and conflict-wracked Ukraine.

They pledged to step up the fight against the Islamic State group, while expressing concern about maritime disputes in Asia-an oblique criticism of China's territorial ambitions. Earlier yesterday, hundreds of schoolchildren waved flags of G7 nations and the EU as the group walked to a cenotaph in the leafy park next to the museum. Later children presented them with necklaces made of paper cranes-a symbol of peace-woven in the bright colors of their national flags. The ministers laid wreaths at the site, with the ruins of a domed building gutted by the blast in the background. — AFP

News

in brief

Egypt's former minister gets 10 years for graft

CAIRO: An Egyptian court yesterday sentenced a former agriculture minister to 10 years in prison for corruption, months after his arrest for taking bribes. Salah Helal had been detained in September after being told to step aside during a corruption scandal that prompted the entire government to resign a few days later. His chief of staff Muhyidin Mohamed Said was also sentenced to 10 years. Helal was also fined one million Egyptian pounds (\$112,600), and Said was fined 500,000 Egyptian pounds. The businessman who paid the bribe, and another who facilitated it, were spared jail because they confessed. Helal, 59, an agronomy graduate, rose through the ranks at the Agriculture Ministry to become minister in March 2015. Helal and his chief of staff had been charged with having "requested and received" bribes from businessman Ayman Al-Gamil-via an intermediary-to legalize the purchase of a property bought from the state.



MOGADISHU: Hassan Hanafi Haji, a former journalist accused of belonging to Al-Shabaab and involvement in the killings of five Somali journalists, is tied to a wooden post as he is prepared to be executed by firing squad. — AP

Somalia publicly executes Al Shabaab ex-spokesman

MOGADISHU: A former media officer for the Somali Islamist group Al Shabaab was publicly executed by a government firing squad yesterday for ordering the death of six journalists, court officials said. Hassan Hanafi, who arranged news conferences for the Al-Qaeda-linked Islamist group when the militants controlled the capital Mogadishu, admitted during his trial to personally killing one journalist in Somalia. "Today, the court fulfils the execution of Hassan Hanafi who had killed journalists," Abdullahi Hassan, deputy judge of the court, told reporters at the scene yesterday. A masked Hanafi was tied to a pole before government forces opened fire at an execution field at a police training camp, according to witnesses. Since 1992 a total of 59 journalists have been killed in Somalia, according to industry body, the Committee to Protect Journalists.

Turkey's favorite comic on trial for 'insulting' official

ISTANBUL: Turkey's most popular comedian went on trial Monday accused of insulting a provincial governor, the latest in a string of such court cases seen as clamping down on free speech in the country. Cem Yilmaz, who is also an award-winning actor, is facing up to two years in jail for a series of tweets criticizing the governor of northwestern Yalova province over the death of a mathematics teacher. The governor, Selim Cebiroglu, had harshly berated a mathematics teacher in March last year in front of his students over his clothes and beard, saying he could be "mistaken for a beggar". The teacher, Halil Serkan Oz, 42, died of a heart attack a week later at a protest against the governor. After his death, Yilmaz tweeted: "Crushing a man by using the power of an official position and fatally breaking his heart... What a shame that the poor teacher died."

Kyrgyzstan PM quits after cabinet accused of graft

BISHKEK: Kyrgyz Prime Minister Temir Sariyev resigned yesterday after a parliamentary commission accused his cabinet of corruption, a move highlighting tensions between different factions of President Almazbek Atambayev's supporters. "Squabbles, rumors and gossip have upset the balance within the government," Sariyev said. "The government's work has stalled at such a difficult time." A commission set up by the ex-Soviet republic's parliament said last week the government had broken the law, accusing it of having rigged a \$100 million road construction tender to ensure it was given to a Chinese firm that lacked the required license.

Hungary scraps unpopular Sunday retail trading ban

BUDAPEST: Hungary's government decided yesterday to scrap an unpopular ban on Sunday retail trading in a rare climbdown for Prime Minister Viktor Orban who wanted to avert a potentially awkward referendum on the issue sought by the opposition Socialists. The retreat represents a tactical victory for the Socialists, but Orban's ruling nationalist Fidesz party, in power since 2010, remains well ahead of its rivals in the opinion polls. The next parliamentary election is due in 2018. The trading ban, which forces all but the smallest retail outlets to close on Sunday, has been in effect for just over a year but has proved unpopular with Hungarians. "The ban ... has proved divisive," Orban's cabinet chief Antal Rogan told reporters. "We could not convince people that this is a successful measure from their point of view. (They perceived) that it made the everyday lives of families more difficult."



Competitors take part in the 31st edition of the Marathon des Sables on Sunday in the southern Moroccan Sahara desert. The 31st edition of the marathon is a live stage 257-km race through a formidable landscape in one of the world's most inhospitable climates. — AFP

WORLD TIGER COUNT RISES FOR FIRST TIME...

Continued from Page 1

medicine market, and the felines also face other man-made problems such as habitat loss.

In 2010 the 13 countries with tiger populations - Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Russia, Thailand and Vietnam - launched a plan to double their numbers by 2022. Yesterday's global census was released a day before a three-day meeting of ministers from these countries in New Delhi to discuss conservation efforts. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the conference which is expected to be attended by around 700 tiger experts, scientists, managers and donors from across the world.

"Due to the concerted efforts of the government and other stakeholders, more than 70 percent of the global wild tiger population is in India," Prakash Javadekar, India's Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister said in a statement. Conference delegates are expected to discuss some of the key conservation issues including a unified anti-poaching strategy, monitoring protocols, habitat and landscape management.

Hollywood actor Leonardo DiCaprio, whose eponymous charitable foundation was also involved in the 2010 tiger conservation plan, voiced his elation at the increased numbers. "Proud of @World_Wildlife and #LDF's efforts that have helped increase tiger populations for the first time in 100 yrs," the Oscar-winner and environmentalist tweeted. — AFP

OIL WORKERS TO STRIKE OVER PAYROLL DISPUTE

Continued from Page 1

The other companies where workers plan to join the strike are Kuwait Oil Company, Kuwait Oil Tanker Company, Equate Petrochemical Industries Company and Kuwait Gulf Oil Company.

According to Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), the oil production rate of Kuwait is currently around three million barrels per day, with the aim of reaching four million barrels per day by 2020. KPC is planning to expand its performance in the petrochemical field and develop Jurassic gas to further contribute to Kuwait's economy, said KPC's CEO Nizar Al-Adsani at fourth Kuwait oil and gas conference yesterday.

Since June 2014, a drop in oil prices has been posing a challenge to oil industries, including an overflow of oil supply in international markets and low production, said Adsani. He noted that KPC is exerting efforts to achieve sustainability through over 100 initiatives to develop the company and its subsidiaries.

The initiatives focus on reducing costs, boosting performance, investments in big projects and developing the petrochemical industries' sector, he added. In the same context, Adsani mentioned that Kuwait Petrochemical Industries Company has signed an agreement to acquire 25 percent of South Korea's SK Gas Company. The agreement will boost the Kuwaiti oil sector and investments in East Asia, the CEO noted.

Meanwhile, Deputy CEO for Support Services at KNPC Khaled Al-Asousi said that the oil refining rate at Kuwait's three refineries is recorded between 920,000 to 930,000 barrel per day. KNPC's oil refining power has dropped by about 50,000 barrels due to the fire that broke out at the seventh unit in Shuaiba refinery a while back, Asousi said on the sidelines of the conference. He

added that the refinery's performance is back to normal now, noting that other factors such as maintenance can also cause a drop in rates.

As for the company's clean fuel project, Asousi said that KNPC will provide 30 percent of the project's financial value, while the remaining 70 percent will be financed by local and international banks. Also, he said that KNPC has completed 16 percent of the Zour refinery project. On KNPC's readiness level to implement a potential decision to increase petrol prices, Asousi said that the company's systems are prepared to alter the prices as soon as it receives orders from the finance ministry.

Also, Kuwait Oil Co will soon offer contracts for offshore rigs and support services to drill its first undersea wells as the state tries to boost crude output to the highest level in more than four decades, reported Bloomberg. "We are trying to make use of the low cost of production in Kuwait," Chief Executive Officer Jamal Jaafar said at the conference, whose company is the exploration and production arm of KPC.

KOC is looking at six offshore areas to drill its first undersea wells and plans soon to offer contracts for the work, he said, without specifying dates. Kuwait, OPEC's fourth-largest member, hasn't pumped an annual average of more than 3 million barrels a day since 1973, data compiled by Bloomberg show. Kuwait will also start a project this year with Royal Dutch Shell Plc to capture carbon dioxide at oil fields and reinject it underground to produce more crude, he said. KOC is tackling more difficult crude formations to increase production capacity, and it's testing the injection of chemicals and polymers at fields in the northern part of the country to enhance recovery. — Agencies

ASSEMBLY TO DEBATE POWER RATES, GRILLING

Continued from Page 1

It also proposed a rate of 8 fils a kilowatt for 6,000 to 12,000 kW and 10 fils a kilowatt for using 12,000 to 18,000 kW. As for expatriates and those who live in apartments, the committee accepted the government bill which stipulates 5 fils a kilowatt for the first 1,000 kW, 10 fils a kilowatt for 1,000 to 2,000 kW and 15 fils a kilowatt for consumption above that. Zalzalah said that based on official statistics, about 75 percent of Kuwaiti households

consume less than 12,000 kW monthly, adding that these are the low and middle income people who should be protected.

A large number of MPs have expressed their total rejection of both the government and financial committee proposals, saying they will not allow any harm to Kuwaiti citizens. The lawmakers will also set the date for the implementation of the new charges. Some MPs have said that for Kuwaiti citizens, the implementation could take two years, and several months for others.

SAUDI KING ENDS LANDMARK EGYPT VISIT

Continued from Page 1

The islands had historically been Saudi and were "leased" to Egypt in 1950. Analysts said Salman's visit puts to rest months of reports in Saudi and Egyptian media of strained ties between the two countries over Cairo's unwillingness to participate fully in Saudi-led operations against Iran-backed Shiite Houthi rebels in Yemen. Egypt had announced it would back Saudi Arabia with ground forces if needed, but appears to have balked at sending troops for fear of becoming mired in the conflict.

"The two countries realize that common interests outweigh their practical differences," said Fawaz Gerges, professor of Middle East politics at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Following Salman's visit, Egypt would now be expected to offer more vocal support for Saudi Arabia when it comes to Iran and Yemen, he said. "The Egyptians are basically going to convince the Saudis that they are in the same trench when it comes to the Saudis' existential fight with Iran, and Saudi Arabia too seems to be very committed to Egyptian national security and the Sisi administration," said Gerges.

Since he ousted Morsi in 2013, Saudi Arabia has supported former army chief Sisi. Riyadh viewed Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood movement with deep suspicion. Saudi support for Cairo has helped Sisi tighten his grip on Egypt after he crushed not just the Brotherhood but also secular dissidents. Hundreds of supporters of Morsi have been killed and tens of thousands jailed in a blistering police crackdown. Hundreds more including Morsi himself have been sentenced to death or lengthy jail terms after often speedy trials that have been condemned by the United Nations and global rights groups.

Prior to Salman's visit, Riyadh had already pumped billions of dollars in aid and investment into Egypt. It has helped prop up Egypt's economy, whose tourism industry has been devastated by years of political turmoil and jihadist attacks. "Although Saudi Arabia's support is important to confront Egypt's economic crisis, what Egypt needs is more political stability and security to attract tourism

and foreign direct investments," said Ibrahim El-Ghitany, a researcher at Cairo-based Regional Centre for Strategic Studies. Egypt's economy, which is heavily dependent on tourism, was dealt a body blow when IS downed a Russian airliner over the Sinai Peninsula on Oct 31. All 224 people on board, mostly Russian tourists, were killed in the attack which IS said was carried out by stowing a bomb on the aircraft.

Later in Turkey, television footage showed the king, wearing black sunglasses, serenely descending from the plane with a special escalator rather than steps before being welcomed by Erdogan. King Salman is expected to hold talks today at Erdogan's presidential palace in Ankara expected to focus on the Syrian conflict and the fight against militants. Salman will then attend the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) summit in Istanbul on Thursday and Friday after wrapping up talks in the Turkish capital.

Local media reported that he will stay in Ankara in a 450-sq-m hotel suite, with bulletproof windows reinforced by bomb-resistant cement. A 300-person Saudi delegation had earlier arrived in Ankara to coordinate the king's accommodation and deal with security issues, the Hurriyet newspaper said. Five hundred luxurious Mercedes, BMW and Audi cars had been hired for the king's transport in Ankara and Istanbul, it added. The king's personal belongings had all been shipped to Turkey in cargo planes.

Saudi Arabia and Turkey have forged close alliance after their relationship had been damaged by Riyadh's role in the 2013 ousting of Morsi, a close ally of Ankara. Ankara and Riyadh have cooperated closely over the five-year Syrian war. Both back rebels who are seeking to remove Syrian President Bashar al-Assad from power and see his exit as essential to ending the war. In February, Saudi jets arrived at Incirlik air base in southern Turkey to join the air campaign against Islamic State jihadists. Turkey will take over the OIC's rotating presidency from Egypt at the Istanbul summit, which is seen as a new bid by Erdogan to showcase Turkey's influence in the Islamic world. — Agencies

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MESSI REMAINS WORLD'S TOP PAID FOOTBALLER

PARIS: Argentina and Barcelona star Lionel Messi remains the world's highest paid footballer with an annual income of 74 million euros (\$84.3 million, £59.3 million), according to a report set to appear in today's edition of France Football magazine. Messi's earnings in 2015 rose by nine million euros compared to the previous figures, keeping the five-time Ballon d'Or winner ahead of Cristiano Ronaldo (67.4m euros) and Neymar (43.5m euros) as the top three stayed unchanged for the third year running. France Football's estimates were based on players' pre-tax salaries, sponsorship revenues and various bonuses, it added. Angel Di Maria was the top-earning player in France with 24 million euros following his off-season move from Manchester United, with the Argentine narrowly ahead of Paris Saint-Germain team-mates Thiago Silva and Zlatan Ibrahimovic. However, figures in France only accounted for player wages and contract bonuses, according to the report. Despite his sacking from Chelsea in December, Jose Mourinho was the highest earning coach on 24 million euros, with Pep Guardiola and Fabio Capello rounding out the top three. — AFP



MARQUEZ CLAIMS FOURTH STRAIGHT TEXAS VICTORY

AUSTIN: Honda's MotoGP leader Marc Marquez won the Grand Prix of the Americas for the fourth year in a row on Sunday while bitter rival Valentino Rossi was one of several riders who crashed. Spain's Marquez was again in a race of his own at the Circuit of the Americas track, starting on pole position for the fourth successive year and pulling away after a brief tussle on the opening lap with Yamaha's Jorge Lorenzo. World champion Lorenzo finished second, 6.107 seconds behind his compatriot, and Italian Andrea Iannone was third on a Ducati. The win was Marquez's second in a row, and 26th in MotoGP, and left the double world champion on 66 points after three races. Lorenzo moved up to second overall on 45, with Rossi remaining on 33. Marquez was challenged only at the start, with Lorenzo leading into the first corner before running wide and doing the same at turn 11. The Honda rider then had a controlled run to his 10th successive victory on U.S. soil, which includes eight MotoGP races and two in Moto2, before raising four fingers in the air in triumph.

GOOD RACE

"I think I did a really good race and I feel

really great on this circuit," said Marquez. "The race was not fun but we took 25 points which was the most important." Rossi crashed out from sixth place on the third lap, with the Yamaha squirming away from him and into the gravel. It was the first time in 25 races that he had failed to finish in the top five. Lorenzo fell behind Andrea Dovizioso in the battle for second place but re-took the Italian on lap five with the Ducati rider then taken out by Marquez's Spanish team mate Dani Pedrosa on the seventh lap. Pedrosa lost control, with the bike sliding away from under him and straight into the Ducati. It was the second race in a row that Dovizioso had been eliminated by a rival while in a podium position. In Argentina last weekend he was felled by team mate Iannone in a final-lap drama. Pedrosa went to apologise to Dovizioso in the Ducati garage after the race. British pair Cal Crutchlow and Bradley Smith both crashed at turn 11, with Smith's Yamaha just missing the LCR Honda rider. Spaniard Maverick Vinales finished fourth for Suzuki after a thrilling battle with team mate Aleix Espargaro. — Reuters

TKMCE WINS INAUGURAL CETAA KIDS FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

KUWAIT: The first inter alumni KIDs Football tournament conducted by College of Engineering Trivandrum Alumni Association (CETAA) saw TKMCE beat MACE 1-0 in a thrilling grand finale at SKELPS Football Academy Mehboula on April 1. The football tournament had six Alumni Associations of Kuwait Engineers Forum (KEF) fraternity. The matches were conducted in a league cum knock out format with 3 teams in each pool playing against each other during the league stage. The top 2 teams from each pool qualified for the semifinals. It was inaugurated by Senior CETAA member George K John. In pool A, NSS topped the group beating MACE 2-1 and TEC 4-0. MACE beat TEC 3-0 to regain the second spot in pool A. TEC bowed out of the tournament with straight losses to MACE and NSS. In pool B, KEA topped the group beating TKMCE 1-0 and CET 4-0. TKMCE beat CET 2-1, knocking the hosts CETAA out of the tournament. The first semifinal between TKMCE and NSSCE was a thrilling match; the match was evenly poised at 1-1 during half time, and with only 5 minutes to go before final whistle NSSCE unfortunately

conceded a self-goal and had to crash out of the tournament losing to TKMCE 2-1. The second semi saw the match between favorites KEA and the "never say die" MACE. The mercurial strikers of KEA couldn't penetrate the defense of MACE. Both teams played their heart out but couldn't score a goal during the normal time and extra time. The match went to penalty shootout and MACE won by 2-0. MACE goal keeper Naveen Georgi (Best goalkeeper of the tournament) saved 2 crucial goal kicks and made sure that they are in the finals. The final between TKMCE and MACE was an exciting battle and there were many excellent moves from both teams. Amit Suresh (Player of the finals and the tournament) scored the all-important goal in the second half and sealed the match for TKMCE. TKMCE had many match winners in their side and beat MACE 1-0 in the finals to lift the first CETAA KIDS Football Tournament trophy. The most promising youngster award was given to Kurien of CET. The winners and runners-up trophies along with medals were distributed by senior KEF members & family.



Finalist TKMCE being awarded the winners trophy.



MACE team with their runners-up trophy.

OLYMPIC CHAMPION WALKERS BACK IN RUSSIAN TEAM

MOSCOW: Three Olympic champion race walkers have returned to the Russian national team after serving doping bans. Sergei Kirilyapkin, Olga Kaniskina and Elena Lashmanova were all named in an updated team list on the Russian Sports Ministry's website Monday, meaning they could compete at the Olympics in August if the Russian team's suspension from track and field is lifted in time. Russia had previously avoided picking athletes who had served doping bans as it tries to rebuild its reputation following its suspension in November by the IAAF following allegations of systematic doping. Kirilyapkin last month lost his Olympic gold medal in the 50-kilometer walk when the Court of Arbitration for Sport ruled his doping sanction was too lenient. Kaniskina lost a silver medal. The return of the three to the national team could prompt tension with track's governing body, which has ordered Russian track officials to "immediately suspend all cooperation" with their government-run training center in the city of Saransk.—AP

LEAK REVEALS NEYMAR'S 45.9 MILLION BARCA DEAL

BARCELONA: Barcelona star Neymar will make a minimum 45.9 million euros (\$52.3 million) from his five-year contract with the European champions, football whistleblowing site Football Leaks revealed yesterday. The Brazilian's bonus incentivised deal also commits the 24-year-old to learning the local Catalan language. A complicated web of contracts negotiated to complete Neymar's signing from Santos in 2013 has landed Barcelona, the player and his father in trouble with the Spanish and Brazilian authorities over accusations of tax fraud. The controversy over the transfer led Barca to already make certain figures from Neymar's playing contract public in a bid for transparency in 2014. A copy of the full contract shows Barca will have to make up the difference should the player not make at least 45.9 million euros between his signing bonus, salary and a series of performance related bonuses. Barca paid an initial signing-on fee of 8.5 million euros on top of a basic salary of five million euros a season.—AFP



AUGUSTA: Danny Willett of England celebrates with the green jacket after winning the 2016 Masters Tournament at Augusta National Golf Club on Sunday in Augusta, Georgia. — AFP

WILLETT CAPTURES MASTERS AFTER SPIETH COLLAPSE

AUGUSTA: England's Danny Willett was the shock winner of the 80th Masters on Sunday thanks to a bogey-free final round and an epic back-nine collapse by defending champion Jordan Spieth. Willett fired a five-under par 67 for a three-shot victory that brought the 28-year-old Englishman the green jacket symbolic of victory at Augusta National as well as a \$1.8 million top prize from the \$10 million purse. "It's crazy. It's surreal," Willett said. "Words can't describe the emotions and feelings. You do something special and it still doesn't quite sink in what you have achieved." Willett, five down to Spieth with six holes to play, birdied the par-5 13th, par-4 14th and par-3 16th to charge into the clubhouse while the 22-year-old American endured a nightmare meltdown with bogeys at 10 and 11 and a quadruple bogey at the par-3 12th. "I just put a couple of weak swings on it and suddenly I'm not leading anymore," said Spieth. "I'll be disappointed with that one." It was a very tough 30 minutes for me. I hope I never experience it again.

Willett finished 72 holes at five-under 283, with Spieth and English playing partner Lee Westwood sharing second on 286. Westwood, trying to win his first major title at age 42, shot 69 while Spieth, who defends his US Open title in June at Oakmont, fired a 73. Spieth, as defending champion, presented Willett with the green jacket that he looked to make his own for most of the week, leading after all three prior rounds. "It was a very surreal day when I look back at the ebbs and flows," Willett said. "I was able to make a couple of good putts and here I am." Willett was not even going to play the Masters because his wife was due to give birth on Sunday, but she gave birth March 30 and he was able to come down Magnolia Lane for his date with destiny. "You talk about fate and everything else that goes with it-it has been a crazy week," Willett said. World number 12 Willett took his first major crown in only his 12th major start, becoming only the second England golfer to win the Masters after Nick Faldo, the champion in 1989, 1990 and 1996. Spieth, a wire-to-wire winner last year, had a last gasp with birdies and 13 and 15, but he missed a eight-foot birdie putt at 16 and a bogey at 17 sealed his fate.

'LACK OF DISCIPLINE'

World number two Spieth closed the front nine with four birdies in a row to reach the turn with a five-shot lead over Willett. Then came a back-nine horror show as frightful as anything Augusta National's famed Amen Corner has ever inflicted. Spieth went bogey-bogey to begin the back nine and disaster struck at 12 as Spieth plunked his tee shot and his third into Rae's Creek, his lead vanishing as the ball did in a splashdown to plunge him from the lead at five-under to one-under and three back. "It's tough. It's really tough," Spieth said. "Just put a bad

swing on it right at the wrong time. Just compounded mistakes. Just lack of discipline." Even rivals felt sympathy. "Anything can happen in Amen Corner," said Westwood. "It's a fine line between disaster and success at this place. That's how it is in major championship golf. It throws you some shocks." Willett sank four-foot birdie putts at 13 and 14 to reach four-under. Westwood chipped in for birdie at 15 to pull within a shot but Willett responded with a birdie from seven feet at 16 while a Westwood bogey dropped him three back. Willett, who shared 38th last year in his Masters debut, joined Phil Mickelson and Doug Ford as the only Masters winners to shoot 67 or better in a bogey-free last round. Spieth failed in his bid to join Faldo, Tiger Woods and Jack Nicklaus as back-to-back Masters winners and missed a chance to overtake Australia's Jason Day for the top ranking

spot. England's Paul Casey and Americans Dustin Johnson and JB Holmes shared fourth on 287 with Japan's Hideki Matsuyama, Dane Soren Kjeldsen and England's Matthew Fitzpatrick another stroke back sharing seventh.

ACES WILD WITH THREE AT 16

Anticipation built for the wild back nine after a record three aces at the par-3 16th in the same round. Ireland's Shane Lowry and US Ryder Cup captain Davis Love made the first two at the 170-yard hole and South African Louis Oosthuizen added a third when his ball struck billiards-style off that of playing partner Holmes and into the cup. Germany's 58-year-old Bernhard Langer, a two-time Masters winner trying to become golf's oldest major champion, fired a 79 to finish on 294. Third-ranked Rory McIlroy, trying to become the sixth man to complete a career Grand Slam, fired a 71 to finish on 289. — AFP

WIGAN ROUT NOT A PAIN FOR WANE

LONDON: Wigan may have suffered a 62-0 hammering by Wakefield on Sunday but coach Shaun Wane insisted it was not even his side's worst loss of the Super League season. Wigan's build-up to the match was marred by a virus that swept through their squad which, adding to an already lengthy injury list, meant Wane was without 10 frontline players for the Wakefield match. It all helped contribute to Wigan's heaviest league defeat for more than a decade, with former Wests Tiger Jacob Miller scoring a hat-trick of tries for a resurgent Wakefield. Nevertheless, Wane said: "I'm not stressed one little bit. I don't want to take anything away from Wakefield, let them enjoy their day and if they want to book their coaches to London, let them book them. "But I know what we've got in the club and how we can play so that result doesn't stress me in the slightest. Don't confuse that with the games at Catalans and Castleford, where we went with strong teams (and lost heavily)." Elsewhere on Sunday, Castleford coach Daryl Powell was proud of his side's fighting qualities after Denny Solomona produced a hat-trick in their come-from-behind win over Widnes. Solomona has now scored an incredible 12 tries from nine games in Super League this year, and his Sunday treble was badly needed as Tigers were made to recover from 18 points down in an eventual 34-24 victory. "There's an immense amount of character in the team and the response to being 18-0 down showed great determination to come out the other side when you're in a tough patch," said Powell. "Luke Gale's execution near the line got us opportunities and we were good enough to

take them. "Denny Solomona's finishing was again top quality and Jake Webster gave him some good opportunities with skill as well." **LEEDS LOSE AGAIN** Wigan are not the only superpower in the wars, with reigning champions Leeds falling to their eighth defeat in 10 league matches so far this season on Saturday. Former North Queensland Cowboy Robert Lui, on his return from a four-game absence through injury, pulled the strings in a try-scoring performance as Salford won 14-10. It was just their second victory over the Headingley club in 37 outings, but Leeds coach Brian McDermott has promised the Rhinos will fight through both the rut and a glut of injuries. "It's unbelievably frustrating for the injured players on the sidelines watching this unfold," said McDermott. "We are going through some experiences together as a group that are not easy. But I don't think anyone is going home racked with self-doubt." Meanwhile Tony Smith conceded Warrington were the architects of their own downfall after the league leaders came unstuck in a 25-22 loss to St Helens. The Saints' win-just their second in the last five games-was especially impressive considering they were without eight first-choice players. "I saw a couple of signs in the second set in defence that we were a little bit off, some signals that we didn't have some of that sharpness that we've had, particularly about our defence," said Smith. He added: "I thought we inflicted a bit of pain on ourselves with the amount of errors we made, but I don't want to take anything away from Saints." —AFP

WADA: KENYA HAS UNTIL MAY 2 OR WILL BE NON-COMPLIANT

NAIROBI: The World Anti-Doping Agency has given Kenya a final deadline of May 2 to bring its program in line with the global code or risk an international ban. Kenya missed its second deadline this year on Tuesday, when an independent compliance review committee decided Kenya's anti-doping program was still "not in compliance" with the global code, WADA said in a statement on Thursday. Unless Kenya passes doping legislation and formally adopts regulations for its new national anti-doping body by next month, the review committee will ask WADA's board to declare

it non-compliant, WADA said. The WADA board meets in Montreal on May 12. Although being non-compliant with WADA's rules doesn't immediately affect Kenyan athletes, it could spur the IAAF to consider further sanctions, including a possible international ban on the East African nation with a rich history of distance running champions. IAAF president Sebastian Coe has not ruled out further action against Kenya if the country has serious problems with its anti-doping program. The IAAF last year banned Russia from international athletics after WADA declared it non-

compliant because of corrupt activity by anti-doping and athletics authorities. WADA's decision gave Kenya a little over three weeks to pass the law criminalizing doping, the biggest problem among the proposed reforms. The legislation has been debated once by Kenyan lawmakers but suffered numerous delays because of the country's system of passing laws. Kenyan officials expressed confidence the latest extension would be enough to get the law passed despite already missing Feb. 11 and April 5 deadlines. "We are all happy about this

and confident that parliament will enact the bill within this period," Anti-Doping Agency of Kenya chief executive Japhter Rugut told The Associated Press. Kenyan athletics federation vice president Paul Mutwii said "This is great ... athletes were jittery about anything that would make them not go to the Olympics. But with that one month, everything will be OK and they can continue to train and do well in Rio." Doping regulations aren't the only problems Kenya faces. Four senior athletics officials were suspended pending investigations by the IAAF into allega-

tions they attempted to extort money from athletes in return for lenient bans. Also, an investigation by the AP recently found Kenyan runners who were banned for doping were still competing in international races. Since the 2012 London Olympics, 40 Kenyan athletes have been banned, a rate of one nearly every month. The biggest name so far is Rita Jeptoo, who was about to win \$500,000 for being the top women's marathon runner in 2014 before it was announced she failed an out-of-competition test for the blood booster EPO. — AP

WORLD CHAMPION BILES BEGINS RUN-UP TO RIO AT PAC-RIMS

WASHINGTON: She's done "The Ellen DeGeneres Show" thing. The "Vogue" thing. The "get a massive shipment from Coca-Cola and Instagram it because it's cool to be 19 and a professional athlete" thing. Now, Simone Biles gets a chance to go out and do her thing - which she does better than any gymnast on the planet. The three-time world all-around champion makes her 2016 debut on Saturday at the Pacific Rim Championships, a team competition in reality but a showcase for Biles in spirit and - she hopes - a springboard to Olympic gold. Not that she wants to talk about it or anything. "It stresses me out thinking about the Olympics, so why stress yourself out?" Biles said. "I just think of what's next to come." This weekend includes unveiling a new floor routine and an upgraded second vault designed to make it that much harder for the rest of the world to catch her in Rio de Janeiro in August. Of course, Biles demurs when asked to discuss her chances of making history in Brazil. Last she checked, the US team won't be named for another three months and she's not taking anything for granted no matter how high she soars. Imagine Usain Bolt saying that. And in a very real sense the relentlessly dynamic teenager from the Houston suburbs has spent the quadrennium since the London Games serving as her sport's version of Bolt, collecting a record 14 world championship medals and doing it using a formula that seems borderline unfair. Biles doesn't just put together the hardest routines. She executes them better than contemporaries doing challenging but slightly less difficult sets. "I think she needs to compete with the men to make it fair," 1984 Olympic champion Mary Lou Retton said.

DOMINATES Retton is kidding, but only a little. Biles doesn't just win, she typically dominates. There have been few close calls during a winning streak that started with her first national championship in 2013 and she heads to floor the of the XFINITY Arena in Everett, Washington, rested after a five-month break, part of a carefully calibrated plan for 2016 that will - barring injury - have Biles peaking by mid-summer. Of course, Biles has been peaking for the better part of three years. It's an incomparable run of success in a sport where windows of greatness are typically limited to months. "I don't think there's anyone close," Retton said. Yet Biles refuses to play it safe. There's a competitive restlessness to her that demands oach Aimee Boorman and

national team coordinator Martha Karolyi find ways to keep her engaged. It's why she's debuting her third different floor routine in three years this weekend while throwing in a new secondary vault to go with an Amanar that is right there with two-time Olympic medalist McKayla Maroney in "OMG" factor. Named after three-time world champion Cheng Fei of China, the vault requires Biles to do a round off onto the board followed by a back handspring with a half-twist onto the vault before finishing with 1 1/2 twists while simultaneously doing a layout. Sounds kind of impossible. Biles stressed she's landed it "every single time" over the last few months but is curious to see how it will play under the lights, concerned about how far she'll be bent over when she lands. If the way drilled it during practice on Wednesday - powering down the runway and effortlessly twisting through the air - is any indication, she should be just fine.

FISTFUL OF MEDALS If anything, getting back to competition will give her a sense of normalcy. She's spent the downtime since her triumphant two weeks in Scotland last fall trying to find a balance between preparing for Rio, fulfilling sponsor obligations and trying to make time for herself. Chasing gold while taking time to still be 19 can be tough, but it does have its perks. Her deal with Coke includes a stack of cases that combined would tower over her 4-foot-9 frame.

After another fistful of medals at worlds, Ellen DeGeneres finally called and asked Biles to stop by, an invitation Biles coveted for years. The spot included the two chatting about Biles' 32-hour-a-week training, her crush on actor Zac Efron (with DeGeneres offering her an Efron-inspired leotard) and footage of Biles climbing up a 30-foot rope using only her arms with a speed that would make the most ardent Crossfitter blush. She finished it off with a watered down exhibition on the balance beam, the equivalent of LeBron James in a layup-line. On Saturday night, however, it's back to the one place she feels most at ease even as the spotlight grows brighter by the day. "There's a lot more eyes on me, but I don't focus on the stress everyone puts on me," she said. "I'm the only one that can control what happens when I go out there. I feel more confident in my routines, but there are always days in the gym where it's a mess and I'm like really? But other days go smoothly and I feel confident. I'm normal. I'm 19." —AP



WASHINGTON: Simone Biles trains for the Pacific Rim gymnastics championships April 7, in Everett, Wash. Competition begins Friday.—AP



BALTIMORE: Manny Machado #13 of the Baltimore Orioles waits to bat in the first inning against the Tampa Bay Rays at Oriole Park at Camden Yards on Sunday in Baltimore, Maryland. — AFP

UNBEATEN ORIOLES BEAT RAYS 5-3 FOR 5TH STRAIGHT WIN

BALTIMORE: Manny Machado went 4 for 4 with a two-run homer, helping Baltimore beat Tampa Bay to remain the only undefeated team in the majors. The 5-0 start matches the 1970 team for the best in Orioles history. After sweeping Minnesota in three games to open the season, Baltimore completed the homestand by taking two from Tampa Bay in a rain-abbreviated series. Vance Worley gave up three runs over 4-2-3 innings in his Orioles debut and the bullpen blanked the Rays on one hit the rest of the way. Brad Brach (1-0) entered in the fifth and Zach Britton worked a perfect ninth for his second save. South Korean outfielder Hyun Soo Kim made his major league debut for Baltimore, starting in left field and batting ninth. He got two infield hits and went 2 for 3.

CUBS 7, DIAMONDBACKS 3 Jake Arrieta homered and pitched seven innings, helping Chicago finish off an impressive first week by beating Arizona. Chicago is tied with Cincinnati for the best record in the NL at 5-1. The Cubs host the Reds in their home opener Monday night at Wrigley Field. Arrieta (2-0) allowed three runs and eight hits, striking out six. The reigning NL Cy Young Award winner gave himself a boost with a two-out, two-run homer in the second inning off Shelby Miller (0-1). Arrieta hit two home runs in 2015 and has three in his career.

GIANTS 9, DODGERS 6 Joe Panik hit a tiebreaking two-run double in the sixth inning and San Francisco homered three times to overcome an early five-run deficit and beat Los Angeles. Buster Posey, Brandon Belt and Angel Pagan all homered as the Giants rallied after falling behind 5-0 before they even came up to bat. San Francisco has 14 homers in the opening week of the season and the Giants have hit at least one homer in the first seven games for the first time since at least 1913. Johnny Cueto (2-0) settled down after the rough first and earned the win in his home debut for the Giants, allowing six runs and 10 hits in seven innings. Santiago Casilla got three outs for his second save as San Francisco took three of four from its fiercest rival.

PHILLIES 5, METS 2 Odubel Herrera hit a two-run homer off Matt Harvey in the first appearance at Citi Field for the Mets ace since he failed to close out Game 5 of last year's World Series, and Philadelphia beat New York. Philadelphia won the last two games of the three-game series after an 0-4 start. The Phillies already have more wins at Citi Field this season than last, when they went 1-8. Jeremy Hellickson (1-0) held the Mets hitless until Yoenis Cespedes lined an opposite-field single to right in the fourth, and kept them scoreless until Cespedes chased him with a two-run homer in the sixth that cut Philadelphia's lead to 3-2. The NL champions dropped to 2-3 - their record before 11-game winning streaks in 1986 and last year. Pitching on the Citi Field mound for the first time since manager Terry Collins allowed him to try to finish a shutout against Kansas City, Harvey (0-2) gave up three runs and six hits in six innings.

ROYALS 4, TWINS 3, 10 INNINGS Speedy pinch runner Terrance Gore streaked home in a wild pitch with two outs in the 10th inning, scoring with a headfirst slide to lift Kansas City over winless Minnesota. The World Series champion Royals rallied for two runs in the ninth to tie it, then dropped the Twins to 0-6. This is Minnesota's worst start since the Washington Senators moved to the Twin Cities in 1961. Christian Colon drew a leadoff walk in the 10th from Trevor May (0-1). Gore then made his first appearance of the season, running for Colon, and dashed to third on May's throwing error on a pickoff attempt. May retired the next two batters and issued a walk. With a 1-2 count on Lorenzo Cain, May threw a breaking ball that bounced off catcher John Ryan Murphy's chest protector and skittered to the right side of the plate. Gore beat Murphy's throw to May covering the plate. May slammed down his hand in frustration after Gore scored.

ATHLETICS 2, MARINERS 1, 10 INNINGS Coco Crisp hit a two-out homer in the 10th inning to help Oakland overcome a dominant outing from Seattle ace Felix Hernandez and sweep the three-game series. Hernandez struck out 10 over seven scoreless innings, allowing three hits and two walks. Oakland's Marcus Semien hit a homer to lead off the eighth against Joel Peralta, tying the game 1-1. Crisp hit his no-doubter to right field off Nick Vincent (1-1). John Axford (1-0) pitched a scoreless ninth and Sean Doolittle struck out two in the 10th to earn his first save. Chris Bassitt allowed one unearned run in seven innings for Oakland.

YANKEES-TIGERS, PPD The Detroit Tigers' game against the New York Yankees was postponed because of rain. With light rain falling and no end in sight, the game was called off several hours before the scheduled first pitch. Justin Verlander had been scheduled to make his second start of the season for the Tigers, while the Yankees planned to send Masahiro Tanaka to the mound. A makeup date was not immediately announced. The teams aren't scheduled to meet again in Detroit this season.

BLUE JAYS 3, RED SOX 0 Marco Estrada pitched seven shutout innings, Josh Donaldson hit a solo home run and Toronto beat Boston, avoiding a three-game sweep. Activated off the 15-day disabled list before the game after missing the start of the season with a sore lower back, Estrada (1-0) gave up five hits, walked two and struck out eight, helping Toronto win for the first time in five games. Drew Storen worked the eighth and Roberto Osuna finished for his third save to complete the seven-hitter. The Red Sox came up empty after scoring at least six runs and getting at least 10 hits in each of their first four games of the season.

REDS 2, PIRATES 1 Jay Bruce hit an RBI triple in the ninth inning and Cincinnati capped a strong season-opening homestand, beating Pittsburgh. The Reds took two of three from the Pirates and are off to a 5-1 start. Brandon Phillips led off the ninth with a single. After a popout, Bruce tripled down the right field line against Arquimedes Caminero (0-1). Former Pirates right-hander Ross Ohlendorf (2-0) escaped a first-and-second, one-out jam in the ninth to get the win. Eugenio Suarez opened the Reds sixth with his fourth home run of the season, tying at 1. He had three hits in the game.

ANGELS 3, RANGERS 1 Jered Weaver pitched six effective innings in his injury-delayed season debut, and Los Angeles beat Texas to earn a split of the four-game series. Mike Trout got his first two RBIs of the season and Albert Pujols also singled home a run for Los Angeles, which bounced back after losing two in a row. Weaver (1-0)

allowed a run and six hits en route to his 139th career win - passing Nolan Ryan for second on the franchise list behind Chuck Finley's 165. The veteran right-hander's outing was held up because of nerve problems in his neck and shoulder. Texas left-hander Martin Perez (0-1) was charged with three runs, seven hits and a career-worst five walks in 6 1/3 innings.

BREWERS 3, ASTROS 2 Jimmy Nelson struck out nine in six-plus innings, and Milwaukee took advantage of early wildness by Houston ace Dallas Keuchel in a win. The AL Cy Young Award winner walked four in the first inning and gave up a two-run single to Aaron Hill. Keuchel (1-1) left with two outs in the sixth with a career high-tying six walks, including an intentional pass to Ryan Braun in the fourth. Domingo Santana added an RBI double in the fourth for rebuilding Milwaukee, which took two of three in the interleague series against the AL West contenders. Nelson (1-1) settled down after allowing a leadoff homer to deep left to Jose Altuve on the game's first pitch. Jeremy Jeffress pitched a perfect ninth for his third save.

INDIANS-WHITE SOX, PPD The Chicago White Sox's game against the Cleveland Indians was postponed because of rain. The game will be made up on May 23 as part of a doubleheader. The Indians have had three games rained out so far this season. The White Sox and Indians split the first two games of their series.

CARDINALS 12, BRAVES 7 Brandon Moss and Matt Carpenter hit three-run homers and St. Louis kept Atlanta as the only NL team without a win. The Braves (0-5) also lost right-hander Dan Winkler, who suffered a fractured right elbow while throwing a pitch in the seventh. He left the mound in obvious pain after throwing a pitch behind Randal Grichuk. The Cardinals completed the three-game sweep despite a poor start from Adam Wainwright, who allowed five runs in five innings. After rallying for a 7-6 lead in the eighth, the Cardinals put the game away with five runs in the ninth to score 12 runs for the second straight day. Aledmys Diaz hit a two-run double off Jose Ramirez in the ninth before Carpenter's three-run homer.

NATIONALS 4, MARLINS 2 Jayson Werth had an RBI single for his first hit of the season and Joe Ross allowed a run in seven innings to help Washington to a victory over Miami. Bryce Harper hit the 99th and 100th doubles of his career and drove in the Nationals' first run as Washington split a two-game series after Saturday's postponement because of cold weather. Anthony Rendon went 3 for 5 with a double and scored twice. Clint Robinson's two-run single completed Washington's three-run seventh. Jonathan Papelbon gave up a ninth-inning home run to Miami's Christian Yelich, but still earned his third save. Tom Koehler (0-1) allowed two runs in 6 1/3 innings.—AP

MLB Results/Standings									
Toronto 3, Boston 0; Philadelphia 5, NY Mets 2; Cincinnati 2, Pittsburgh 1; Washington 4, Miami 2; St. Louis 12, Atlanta 7; Baltimore 5, Tampa Bay 3; Milwaukee 3, Houston 2; Kansas City 4, Minnesota 3 (10 innings); LA Angels 3, Texas 1; San Francisco 9, La Dodgers 6; Chicago Cubs 7, Arizona 3; Oakland 2, Seattle 1 (10 innings); Colorado 6, San Diego 3.									
American League Eastern Division					National League Eastern Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB					
Baltimore	5	0	1.000	-	Washington	3	1	.750	-
Boston	3	2	.600	2	NY Mets	2	3	.400	1.5
NY Yankees	3	2	.600	2	Philadelphia	2	4	.333	2
Toronto	3	4	.429	3	Miami	1	3	.250	2
Tampa Bay	2	4	.333	3.5	Atlanta	0	5	0	3.5
Central Division					Central Division				
Kansas City	4	1	.800	-	Chicago Cubs	5	1	.833	-
Detroit	3	1	.750	0.5	Cincinnati	5	1	.833	-
Chicago White Sox	4	2	.667	0.5	Pittsburgh	4	2	.667	1
Cleveland	2	2	.500	1.5	Milwaukee	3	3	.500	2
Minnesota	0	6	0	4.5	St. Louis	3	3	.500	2
Western Division					Western Division				
Oakland	4	3	.571	-	San Francisco	5	2	.714	-
Texas	3	4	.429	1	LA Dodgers	4	3	.571	1
Houston	2	4	.333	1.5	Colorado	3	3	.500	1.5
LA Angels	2	4	.333	1.5	San Diego	2	4	.333	2.5
Seattle	2	4	.333	1.5	Arizona	2	5	.286	3

WADA SAYS DOPING CASES FROM 2005 WORLDS ARE PAST TIME LIMIT

MOSCOW: Numerous doping cases in track and field may go unpunished because the sport's governing body tested samples after their time limit had expired.

In at least one case, a Russian runner could be allowed to keep her world championship medal even though she tested positive for a banned substance. The World Anti-Doping Agency said in an e-mail to The Associated Press that the IAAF wrongly interpreted a rule change in April 2015 when it decided to retest samples from the 2005 and 2007 world cham-

pionships. Testers found 28 athletes had tested positive at both championships, but only the samples from 2005 missed the deadline.

The IAAF believed it was able to retest the 2005 samples because the statute of limitations in the WADA code had increased to 10 years in 2015, but WADA said the previous eight-year limit should have been used.

"If the previous eight-year statute of limitations has expired prior to 1 January 2015, it does not extend to 10 years under the 2015 code," WADA spokesman

Ben Nichols told the AP. The IAAF has been under pressure to clean up the sport since a WADA commission report detailed state-supported doping in Russian track and field. The country's track team has since been banned from competition and could miss this year's Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

Doping samples from the 2005 worlds in Helsinki stopped being eligible for retesting in 2013, well before the IAAF began its latest round of checks in April 2015. One athlete who could benefit from the decision is Russian runner Tatyana

Andrianova. She was banned by the IAAF in December after the steroid stanozolol was found in a sample from the day she won bronze in the 800 meters at the 2005 worlds. She has already appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Another athlete linked to the retests is Russian hammer thrower Tatyana Beloborodova, who won silver at the 2005 worlds and gold at the 2012 London Olympics. The IAAF confirmed Monday she has been provisionally suspended but refused to comment on reports in Russian state media that this was because

of a retested sample from 2005.

Doping cases from the 2007 world championships and earlier retesting of 2005 samples that the IAAF performed in 2013, catching five medal winners, are within the deadline.

"As to the 2005 world championship retests, there is currently an ongoing case before the Court of Arbitration for Sport concerning an appeal by one of the athletes concerned, Tatyana Andrianova," the IAAF said in an e-mailed statement. "The IAAF will not be commenting further until the conclusion of that case." —AP

McEVOY SIZZLES IN WINNING 100M, MAGNUSSEN FOURTH

ADELAIDE: Cameron McEvoy swam the third fastest time in history to storm to victory in the 100-metres freestyle at the Australian Championships with James Magnussen missing out qualifying in the event for the Rio Olympics yesterday.

McEvoy, the silver medallist in the sprint at last year's Kazan world championships, set a Commonwealth and Australian record time of 47.04 seconds to blitz his rivals in Adelaide.

McEvoy's time was just 0.13 secs outside the 2009 world record held by Brazilian Cesar Cielo (46.91secs).

Rising star Kyle Chalmers, 17, claimed the second qualifying place in the race for Rio in 48.03 secs, with London Olympics silver medallist Magnussen finishing fourth in 48.68secs.

It was a sensational time by McEvoy, 21, bettering Eamon Sullivan's Australian record by one-100ths of a second and the third-best time in the 100m freestyle event.

"I had some good words of advice leading into this race and it was pretty much was that a lot of the best swimmers in the world past and present get up behind the blocks and just put up the curtains on either side of the lane," McEvoy said.

"So I did that and I guess it paid off," McEvoy, who was 17 when he went to his first Olympics in London, is now a strong gold medal contender for the event in Rio in August. "I went to London and I was Kyle's age. It's going to be a different experience and I have just got to treat it like any other competition," he said. "I shouldn't race it any differently, why fix something that's not broken. "I have just got to go

back and train my hardest and hope I can improve a little bit more."

MAGNUSSEN 'SHATTERED'

Chalmers continued his dramatic improvement to take second placing ahead of James Roberts and Magnussen. It was a shattered Magnussen, who was fighting back from a shoulder injury in his bid to go one place better than his silver medal in the event at the London Olympics in 2012.

"Tough race, I did everything I could physically to get back in shape," Magnussen said. "Obviously, I'm pretty shattered but I have just got to go home, soak that in and get ready for the 50m freestyle tomorrow. "Those guys just raced a better race tonight and I couldn't keep up with them and that's how strong Australian swimming is at the moment. It's going to be a cracking relay team for the Olympics."

Former world champion Cate Campbell posted a hot time of 52.41secs to qualify fastest for the women's 100m freestyle final in Monday's semi-finals. It was Campbell's fastest time since she claimed the 2013 world title. She finished ahead of reigning world champion and her youngster sister Bronte Campbell (52.78) who was second fastest ahead of today's final with Emma McKeon third fastest after winning the other semi-final in 52.98secs. In yesterday's other finals, Matthew Wilson (2:09.90) and Nicholas Schafer (2:10.75) finished in the top two places in the 200m breaststroke, but their times did not qualify them for Rio.

Madeline Groves (2:05.47) beat Brianna Throssell (2:06.58) in the women's 200m butterfly final. —AFP



NEW YORK: Radko Gudas #3 of the Philadelphia Flyers gets under Bracken Kearns #38 of the New York Islanders during the third period at the Barclays Center on Sunday in the Brooklyn borough of New York City. — AFP

DUCKS BEAT CAPITALS TO CLINCH PACIFIC DIVISION

WASHINGTON: Corey Perry and Nick Ritchie scored, Frederik Andersen stopped all 24 shots he faced, and the Anaheim Ducks clinched the Pacific Division on the final day of the regular season by beating the Washington Capitals 2-0 on Sunday night. The Ducks will face Nashville in the first round of the playoffs, leaving second-place Los Angeles to play San Jose. This is Anaheim's fourth consecutive division title under coach Bruce Boudreau. Andersen looked sharp in his return from a five-game absence because of a concussion. He faced little resistance from a Capitals team that rested star forwards Alex Ovechkin and Nicklas Backstrom and defensemen John Carlson and Brooks Orpik. The Capitals also sat goaltender Braden Holtby after he tied Martin Brodeur's single-season wins record.

FLYERS 5, ISLANDERS 2

Michael Raffl scored the tiebreaking goal early in the second period and added two assists to lead the Philadelphia Flyers past the New York Islanders. Evgeny Medvedev, Shayne Gostisbehere, Scott Laughton and R.J. Umberger also scored for the Flyers, who trailed 2-0 midway through the first period. Michal Neuvirth stopped 15 shots in the teams' season finale that was a game rescheduled from Jan. 23 due to a blizzard. Nikolay Kulemin and Matt Martin

scored for the Islanders, who finished with the Eastern Conference's top wild card and will face the Atlantic Division champion Florida Panthers

in the first round of the playoffs. Both the Flyers and Islanders had already secured postseason berths and sat their stars. — AP

NHL results/standings

Philadelphia 5, NY ISLANDERS 2; Anaheim 2, Washington 0.										
Western Conference										
Central Division										
	W	L	OTL	GF	GA	PTS				
Dallas	50	23	9	267	230	109	Tampa Bay	46	31	5 227 201 97
St. Louis	49	24	9	224	201	107	Detroit	41	30	11 211 224 93
Chicago	47	26	9	235	209	103	Boston	42	31	9 240 230 93
Nashville	41	27	14	228	215	96	Ottawa	38	35	9 236 247 85
Minnesota	38	33	11	216	206	87	Montreal	38	38	6 221 236 82
Colorado	39	39	4	216	240	82	Buffalo	35	36	11 201 222 81
Winnipeg	35	39	8	215	239	78	Toronto	29	42	11 198 246 69
Pacific Division							Metropolitan Division			
Anaheim	46	25	11	218	192	103	Washington	56	18	8 252 193 120
Los Angeles	48	28	6	225	195	102	Pittsburgh	48	26	8 245 203 104
San Jose	46	30	6	241	210	98	NY Rangers	46	27	9 236 217 101
Arizona	35	39	8	209	245	78	NY Islanders	45	27	10 232 216 100
Calgary	35	40	7	231	260	77	Philadelphia	41	27	14 214 218 96
Vancouver	31	38	13	191	243	75	Carolina	35	31	16 198 226 86
Edmonton	31	43	8	203	245	70	New Jersey	38	36	8 184 208 84
Eastern Conference							Columbus	34	40	8 219 252 76
Atlantic Division							Note: Overtime losses (OTL) are worth one point in the standings and are not included in the loss column (L).			
Florida	47	26	9	239	203	103				

FORGET 2022, QATAR FOCUS NOW ON 2018 WORLD CUP

DOHA: Of the 12 Asian Football Confederation (AFC) teams anxiously awaiting today's draw for the Russia World Cup 2018 third round qualifiers, arguably Qatar has the most at stake. Since being controversially chosen to host the 2022 tournament, the Gulf state has been battered by ongoing allegations of corruption, charges it denies, and labour abuse, which it claims to be addressing through reform. This week's draw though—which will see the dozen remaining AFC sides split into two groups of six, with the top two from each qualifying for Russia — addresses another criticism, namely that Qatar has little or no footballing past.

Russia 2018 represents Qatar's last chance to qualify for a World Cup on

merit before automatically playing as hosts in 2022. If Jose Daniel Carreno's emerging side manage to progress from the third round, they will make history as the first Qatari team to play in football's biggest tournament.

Fail and Qatar will face four years of inevitable sneering that come 2022 their place among the sport's elite will be due only to the energy-rich country's extraordinary wealth in being able to host a \$30 billion World Cup. "It is important that we are there (Russia)," Hassan Al-Thawadi, head of the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, the body overseeing organisation of the 2022 World Cup, told AFP.

"The fact of having 2022 is an extra motivation for the players." Despite the

burden of expectation and, no doubt, many critics wanting to see Qatar fail, the national side have got to the third round with one of the most impressive qualifying records in the AFC.

They won the first seven of their eight Group C matches, losing only to China in the final match, when Qatar's progress to the next round was already assured.

Along the way they set a record for their biggest ever victory — 15-0 versus Bhutan—and finished with a goal difference of plus-25. That, however, has only served to increase the pressure. "The dominance Qatar showed in the group stages of Round 2 would have immensely increased the expectation of the people," said local sports journalist, Joe Koraith. "They have also been playing a

style of football that is pleasing to the eye. So people in Qatar will be hoping for a similar run in the next round."

'REAL TEST STARTS NOW'

Qatar's task is tough, especially as they are only the ninth highest ranked team out of the remaining 12, according to FIFA, ahead of Iraq, Syria and Thailand.

Iran and Australia are the two highest ranked sides, both more than 30 places higher than 83rd-placed Qatar.

Regional powers and perennial World Cup teams such as Japan and South Korea are in Tuesday's draw, which takes place in Kuala Lumpur. "The real test for Carreno starts now," said Ganesh Neelakantan, a reporter with the local Doha Stadium Plus sports weekly.

"Iran are the highest-ranked among the 12 teams, but Qatar would be more comfortable playing them than Australia, South Korea and Japan," he said. "Qatar's record of late against the three east Asians isn't that encouraging. "Two of these three teams will be grouped together and Qatar's wish will be to avoid that group."

Also in the draw are Saudi Arabia, Uzbekistan, UAE and China. A lifeline exists for the teams finishing third to go into a play-off for Russia against a team from the Americas.

But Qatar will be looking to automatically qualify."If Qatar can pull it off, it could be the biggest moment in the country's football history," said Neelakantan. —AFP



MARSEILLE: Marseille's supporters react as stadium stewards and security men gather near a tribune fence during the French L1 football match Marseille vs Bordeaux on Sunday at the Velodrome stadium in Marseille, southern France. — AFP

FANS FED UP AS MARSEILLE CRISIS GETS MORE DEEPER

PARIS: The crisis at Marseille gets deeper and deeper with the French giants' interminable struggles on the field leading to mockery from their own fans, who have turned on the team as well as the club's owner. Marseille's 0-0 draw at home to Bordeaux in Ligue 1 on Sunday was played out to fan protests at the team's struggles that featured banners depicting goats and the Benny Hill theme tune being played from the stands. But, along with the humour, the supporters also continued their theme of fury at the perceived apathy of owner Margarita Louis-Dreyfus, who inherited the club after the death of her husband Robert in 2009. "Margarita rich incompetent heiress get lost!" read one banner unfurled behind the goal at the north end of the Stade Velodrome, while another read:

"Margarita go back to your real job, housewife!" The game itself ended in more bad blood with around 200 supporters having to be dispersed by riot police firing tear gas. Marseille are on a club record run of 14 home top-flight games without a win since they beat Bastia 4-1 in September.

Home or away, they have not won in nine and as a result they are not safe yet from the threat of relegation, with just six points separating them from the drop zone and five matches still to play.

"We need three more points to ensure survival. It has been a difficult season. We need to finish it as well as possible and start again next season," said goalkeeper and captain Steve Mandanda, just about the only Marseille player to avoid the wrath of the disgruntled support in recent weeks.

DISARRAY

Marseille's season has never recovered from the disarray of last summer, when Marcelo Bielsa resigned in the wake of a 1-0

home defeat to Caen on the opening weekend of the campaign after uncertainty reigned for weeks surrounding his future.

Spanish former Real Madrid player Michel was eventually appointed as his successor but has been unable to revive the fortunes of a team who finished fourth last season but saw a host of key players depart in the close season, including Dimitri Payet, Andre Ayew and Andre-Pierre Gignac. Marseille could yet salvage silverware from their season as they have a French Cup semi-final away to Ligue 2 Sochaux next midweek, but even if they win that their all-conquering bitter rivals Paris Saint-Germain could lie in wait in the final. Media reports in France have indicated that president Vincent Labrune wants Michel sacked but Louis-Dreyfus, with her hands firmly on the purse strings, refuses to sanction the necessary pay-off.

She stated last week that Michel would see out the season, but Marseille legend and current club ambassador Basile Boli broke ranks to speak out publicly against the Spaniard on Sunday.

"I was surprised by Michel's choices," Boli, who scored the winning goal when OM beat AC Milan in the 1993 Champions League final and later played for Rangers, told media after Sunday's game.

In particular, Boli was perplexed at Michel's decision to leave 19-goal leading scorer Michy Batshuayi on the bench against Bordeaux. "There are experienced players you need to look to in these difficult moments and there we had a new-look team," he added before giving his backing to the protesting fans.

"The Marseille shirt is important and has a history. Marseille deserve better than that. This is a city that lives for football. The fans are going mad seeing their team like this and I understand them." — AFP

TEARS, NO FEARS AS RANIERI'S LEICESTER CLOSE IN ON TITLE

SUNDERLAND: Leicester City manager Claudio Ranieri played down his emotional response after the Foxes took their latest big step towards the English Premier League title. Ranieri left the pitch in tears after Jamie Vardy's second-half double sealed a hard-fought 2-0 win at relegation-threatened Sunderland on Sunday. Leicester ended the day seven points clear of second-placed Tottenham Hotspur, with the 5,000/1 pre-season outsiders' fairytale journey towards the title showing no sign of ending any time soon.

Now, if City win three of their five remaining league games they will be crowned champions of England for the first time in the Midlands club's 132-year-history, regardless of what Spurs, or any of the chasing pack, do in the closing stages of the campaign.

"It's difficult to express what I feel inside," said Ranieri who, after his initially teary response, dedicated the Foxes' fifth consecutive victory to Leicester's 2,500 travelling fans at the Stadium of Light. "I really want to thank our fans. Today, when we arrived at the stadium, it was like we'd moved Leicester to Sunderland," the Italian added. "For me I don't think I showed any more or any less emotion today, but I'm just so happy with this victory against a very tough Sunderland side who made it hard for us."

Ranieri again refused to let himself be carried away by the euphoria surrounding Leicester's title bid, rejecting the notion that the Premier League trophy is already on its way to the King Power Stadium despite that now being its most likely destination. Leicester next play top-four hopefuls West Ham at home on April 17, where they will look to extend a clean sheet record that stretches for more than eight hours.

"People can say we're going to win the title, that's fine for them to say it but it's important for us to now focus on the next match," Ranieri explained. "For now we're happy, but from tomorrow (Monday) again we focus on the next match because we know what a good team West Ham are."

SAME MESSAGE

The former Chelsea manager added: "When I speak with the players, my message is the same every time. It has been all season and to be fair to them they have listened to what I've said. We focus on the next match, regardless of whether we've won or lost the last one."

"We have Champions League qualification on the table, but at this stage, nothing more."

Third-bottom Sunderland are four points adrift of safety after they were twice caught on



SUNDERLAND: Leicester City's Italian manager Claudio Ranieri (R) gestures as he challenges a linesman's decision during the English Premier League football match between Sunderland and Leicester City at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland, northeast England on Sunday. — AFP

the counter-attack by England striker Vardy, who scored in open play in the Premier League for the first time in two months to take his tally for the season to 21 goals.

"I'm very happy for Jamie because he's not scored for us in the past few weeks, though he's made some great assists," said Ranieri. "At half-time I told him 'I need you' and he came out and scored two goals for us." Sunderland face a crucial trip to fourth-bottom Norwich on April 16 as they bid to prolong their decade-long stay in the

top flight. "My disappointment is not so much today, because we've given a good account of ourselves against the top of the league," said Sunderland manager Sam Allardyce.

"My disappointment is the points we've thrown away in three or four games this season and that's the problem we're suffering from now."

"The key for us is that we can't afford to lose at Norwich because we have a game in hand on them. They'd be seven points clear of us if we lose, so that can't happen," he added. — AFP

FEDERER CONFIDENT HIS KNEE WILL HOLD UP ON RETURN

MONACO: Roger Federer fully expects his left knee to hold up when he returns to action at the Monte Carlo Masters today, and the 17-time Grand Slam champion feels "mentally and physically" rested after more than two months out. Seeded third, Federer opens in the second round against Guillermo Garcia-Lopez. He leads the Spaniard 3-0 in career head-to-heads.

The Swiss star might be a little rusty, seeing as his last match was a semifinal defeat to top-ranked Novak Djokovic in the semifinals of the Australian Open. Shortly afterward he had arthroscopic surgery on Feb. 3 for torn cartilage in his left knee.

Although Federer was scheduled to play at the Miami Masters two weeks ago, he withdrew because of a stomach virus. That meant he arrived much earlier than usual to practice on the clay courts of Monte Carlo, where he has been runner-up four times: three straight to Rafael Nadal from 2006-08 and to countryman Stan Wawrinka two years ago.

Federer does not have high hopes of an 89th career title, but is using the tournament more as a gauge in the lead up to the French Open in Paris, which begins on May 22. "I am rested mentally and physically. I feel really good," Federer said. "Every week that goes by I'm going to get better and then hopefully by Paris that's where you really want there not to be a problem - seven (matches), five sets, OK, I'm ready for that."

Depending on how he does here, he will decide whether to play the following clay Masters events in Madrid - starting on May 1 - and Rome the week after.

"I have to wait and see how my knee and my body react," Federer said. "I have to see what I feel I still need to work on. Is it recovery? Is it training? Is it something specific? I don't know yet. I will know more in two weeks. Then I can decide."

Federer, who lost to Frenchman Gael Monfils in the third round here last year, is in the same half of the draw as Djokovic, the defending

champion. He won six titles last year, beating Djokovic in two finals at Cincinnati and Dubai.

The 34-year-old's last title came at his home town of Basel on November 1 when he beat Rafael Nadal in the final. Given his advanced age, Federer views his absence as a useful way of storing up energy that will come in handy later in the season.

"I do believe that whatever rest it is - maybe from injury, maybe from just a training block or a vacation - it all ends up somewhere in a canister where you can pull from it," Federer said. "You

see it with Tommy Haas for instance. He's been injured for almost three years or more of his career, yet he's still on tour. Because he's still mentally fresh. He loves it."

Federer, who lost to Djokovic in the final at Wimbledon and the U.S. Open last year, still strongly believes he can clinch an 18th major.

"I've won Paris before and I've played so well there over the years as well. Why not there?" he said. "But I definitely think that Wimbledon and the other Slams probably give me a bit of a better chance than the French." — AP

FORMER FIFA OFFICIAL PLEADS GUILTY IN BRIBERY SCANDAL

NEW YORK: A former vice president of soccer's international governing body pleaded guilty to four conspiracy counts yesterday in the sweeping FIFA bribery scandal.

Speaking through a translator, Alfredo Hawit told Judge Raymond Dearie in US District Court in Brooklyn that he had accepted hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes in connection with a scheme to sell marketing rights to tournaments in Latin America.

Hawit, 64, is free on bail and next appears in court in October. Each count carries a maximum of 20 years in prison; he also will forfeit \$950,000 upon sentencing. Hawit told the judge he had conspired with others to get companies in Florida and Argentina marketing rights in exchange for bribes paid to bank accounts that he and his family controlled in Panama and Honduras.

"I knew that it was wrong of me to accept such payments," he said. He and his lawyer declined to comment outside court. The plea deal is part of a case involving more than 40 people from around the

world. Prosecutors said soccer officials have taken hundreds of millions of dollars in illegal payments in the last 25 years.

The Honduras native, a lawyer, also served as interim president of the North and Central American and Caribbean soccer governing body, CONCACAF, from June until his Dec. 3 arrest. He was extradited from Switzerland earlier this year.

Last month Rafael Callejas, a former president of Honduras and member of FIFA's television and marketing committee, also pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy and wire fraud conspiracy in a Brooklyn courtroom. Callejas similarly said he had accepted bribes by the Miami-based sports marketing company in exchange for awarding marketing rights to World Cup tournament matches in 2014, 2018 and 2022. Hawit said that though he had accepted bribes from the Argentine marketing company, including some following a meeting in Uruguay to coordinate the conspiracy, CONCACAF ultimately didn't award the rights to the Argentine company. —AP



CARSON: Jelle Van Damme #37 of the Los Angeles Galaxy slides past Fanendo Adi #9 of the Portland Timbers for a loose ball during the second half of their MLS match at StubHub Center on Sunday in Carson, California. —AFP

CONTE TO BE CLEARED OF FRAUD, AFFIRM LAWYERS

MILAN: Future Chelsea manager Antonio Conte will be cleared of sporting fraud charges because he is “a total stranger” to the world of sports betting, his lawyers claimed yesterday. Conte’s appointment as Chelsea manager last week was overshadowed when an Italian court called for the 46-year-old to receive a six-month suspended prison sentence over match-fixing allegations.

The former Juventus coach is accused of sporting fraud, having failed to expose an allegedly rigged second-division match in May 2011 when he was coach of one of the teams involved, Siena. Conte, who denies any wrongdoing, was also ordered to pay an 8,000 euros (\$9000) fine, by Cremona court public prosecutor Roberto Di Martino. But Conte’s lawyers are hitting back.

Following a hearing in Cremona on Monday, they believe he will be cleared. “He’s a total stranger to the betting world and that’s why he will be cleared by the judge,” Francesco Arata, one of Conte’s lawyers, was quoted as saying throughout the Italian media following the hearing. “The sports betting world and Conte’s world are at opposite ends of the scale.” The May 29, 2011 game suspected of

being fixed for betting purposes ended with a 1-0 away win for Conte’s side at Albinoleffe. Siena gained promotion to Serie A that season, with that success earning Conte the job at Juventus, the club he graced as a player for 13 years. In 2012, when he was in charge of Juventus, Conte was hit with a 10-month ban by the Italian football federation (FIGC) over the affair, reduced to four months on appeal.

Conte’s lawyers have elected for a fast-track trial in order to get it wrapped up before the European championships begin in France on June 10. Conte, who steered Juventus to three consecutive Serie A titles in 2012-2014, will take over at Stamford Bridge after Euro 2016 in France. He will succeed Guus Hiddink, appointed interim manager after Jose Mourinho’s sacking in December. — AFP

VAN GAAL’S SLIDING DOORS MOMENT IMPACTED MAN UNITED, SPURS

LONDON: What appeared a snub two years ago could have been a lucky escape for Tottenham and a missed opportunity for Louis van Gaal.

Had Van Gaal not spurned Tottenham’s interest in 2014, the Dutchman could have been managing the London club rather than Manchester United in Sunday’s Premier League match.

Instead, with the smart, ambitious Mauricio Pochettino at the helm of a rapidly developing young squad, Tottenham blitzed a ragged United 3-0 and exposed Van Gaal’s flawed tactics and badly-constructed squad.

Not only did it end a 15-year drought without a home win over United but it gave Tottenham a 12-point lead over the visitors in the league.

Such a gulf would have been unthinkable during Alex Ferguson’s United reign when points were rarely dropped against Tottenham, which was renowned for managerial instability and cashing in on its best players.

“Lads,” former United captain Roy Keane recalled Ferguson telling them before games. “It’s Tottenham.”

Now, while Tottenham is second and on course for its highest finish in more than 50 years, United is languishing outside the Champions League places in fifth. “In the balance we are still ahead,” Van Gaal said, comparing the two teams after Sunday’s loss. “And you take one match as something that I have to say, ‘The challenge is bigger?’ The challenge is always bigger in a bigger club.

“But I (would have) liked to also sign for Tottenham Hotspur and (chairman) Daniel Levy knows that. But the challenge was bigger for me in Manchester United and shall always be bigger.”

Undoubtedly, United with its \$3 billion-plus valuation and reputed 659 million global followers is the bigger club. But more immediately, it is Tottenham with the more balanced, hungrier younger squad.

Van Gaal looked all set to take his job in England at Tottenham before the United hot seat became vacant with the firing of Ferguson’s ill-fated successor, David Moyes. Van Gaal, preparing to lead the Netherlands into the 2014 World Cup, naturally chose the record 20-time English champions over a club without a league title since 1961.

“I could have opted for an easier job,” Van Gaal explained at the time. “If I had gone to Tottenham, the job would not have been as enormous.”

JOB AT THE WRONG TIME

United’s pursuit of Van Gaal looked savvy when he steered an underwhelming Dutch team to third place at the World Cup. Just look how even qualifying for Euro 2016 proved beyond his successors. Van Gaal vacated the Oranje

dugout at just the right time but perhaps took the United job at the wrong time.

Inheriting a team that finished five points below Tottenham in 2013-14, Van Gaal did turn that around to a six-point advantage the following May to steer United back into the Champions League, but only by finishing fourth.

United was then embarrassed in the group stage and may not return next season as it is currently four points behind fourth-placed Manchester City, with six rounds remaining.

Reviving a fallen power has proved beyond the 64-year-old coach despite being allowed to spend more than \$350 million on new talent. Young players, notably teenage forward Marcus Rashford, only gained first-team opportunities due to injuries.

Van Gaal’s 2014 snub led to Spurs resorting to their backup plan. Pochettino was prized away from Southampton, securing the services of an impressive younger coach albeit one without a trophy on his C.V. The 44-year-old former Argentina international has steadily - without much fanfare or bluster - steered Spurs up the standings, with only Leicester ahead of them.

TOP SCORER

Had Van Gaal taken the Tottenham job would he have been as astute as Pochettino, who has turned academy product Harry Kane into the league’s top scorer, developed third-tier midfielder Dele Alli into an England international and transformed record-signing Erik Lamela from the flop he inherited into a first-team mainstay? Tottenham has been shedding its chokers reputation and holding its own in second place under Pochettino. Van Gaal, though, bristled on Sunday at suggestions that his sliding doors moment in 2014 saw him make the wrong coaching move.

“I’m sorry for Tottenham but Manchester United is a bigger club,” Van Gaal told reporters at White Hart Lane. “And I think it is a little bit pathetic that you ask that. Because they have won 3-0, it’s easy to ask that. But OK, you enjoy yourself.”

Van Gaal doesn’t seem to be enjoying himself at United, with no sign he will replicate the trophy success he enjoyed at Ajax, Bayern Munich and Barcelona.

With a second season ending without a trophy and United not denying they are planning a managerial change in the summer, Van Gaal looked doomed.

And if United overlooks Jose Mourinho again, the American owners could be battling with Tottenham once more for the services of a manager. Pochettino’s work at White Hart Lane has made him the standout choice to lead United. Soon he could have the same decision to make as Van Gaal: Tottenham or United? — AP



MADRID: Wolfsburg’s Carlos Ascues, left, vies for the ball with teammate Dante during a training session at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid, yesterday. Wolfsburg will play a Champions League soccer match against Real Madrid today. — AP

ZIDANE SEEKS PATIENCE IN MADRID RECOVERY MISSION

MADRID: Real Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane insisted he remains positive his side will overcome a 2-0 first-leg deficit to reach the Champions League semi-finals against Wolfsburg today. Madrid need to end a run of bowing out in the Champions League the last eight times they have lost the first leg, but Zidane also stressed the need for patience as an away goal for the Germans would leave Real needing four to go through.

“I am always positive and I achieved something as a player with this philosophy,” said Zidane, who scored the winner for Real in the 2002 Champions League final.

“What most concerns me is to see the faces of my players and they are very focused on the game, so that eases the pressure. “We need to score, but we have 90 minutes or more to do so.” Madrid’s fortunes have turned around dramatically in La Liga in recent weeks as they came from behind to end Barcelona’s 39-game unbeaten run earlier this month before closing to within four points of the leaders with six games to go after Barca lost again at Real Sociedad on Saturday. And Zidane is hopeful the momentum of their league form will carry into a famous night at the Santiago Bernabeu, where Madrid have scored 37 goals in nine

games since he took charge in January. “The message is patience because we know anything can happen in football,” he added. “As we’ve seen in La Liga with Barcelona’s goal we were 13 points behind and now we are four. That is the great thing about football. “We have to keep our heads, we are not going to win (the tie) in 10 or 15 minutes.

“It will be much more difficult if they score a goal. Anything can happen, but we need to be concentrated from the first minute.” Madrid will be at full strength as Karim Benzema has recovered from a knee knock that forced him off in the first leg.

GREAT TEAM

Captain Sergio Ramos returns from suspension, whilst the likes of Gareth Bale, Toni Kroos and Luka Modric were rested for Saturday’s 4-0 thrashing of Eibar.

“We have a great team full of talent and I think that the whole side is capable of coming back tomorrow with the help from our fans,” said Modric. Wolfsburg weren’t so successful at the weekend as a 1-1 draw at home to Mainz all but ended their hopes of qualifying for next season’s Champions League through the Bundesliga. Coach Dieter Hecking admitted any chance

the Germans were underestimated by Madrid in the first leg will certainly not be repeated in the Spanish capital. “If it was the case that Real had underestimated us in the first leg, they definitely won’t do that again,” he said. However, German international Andre Schuerle claimed his side were “one million percent ready” to continue their historic European run and the former Chelsea forward is hopeful of killing the tie off with an away goal. “We have already shown that we have the quality up front and if we get a goal, that will make it all a lot easier.” — AFP



Matches on TV

(Local Timings)

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Man City v PSG 21:45

beIN SPORTS 1 HD

Real Madrid v Wolfsburg 21:45

beIN SPORTS 2 HD

CITY SELLS STAR POWER TO FILL VENUE AGAINST PSG

MANCHESTER: Manchester City is trying to harness the star power of Paris Saint-Germain forwards Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Angel Di Maria in a late bid to fill the stadium. City told The Associated Press yesterday afternoon that it had 1,595 remaining seats out of 53,045 for today’s second leg of the Champions League quarterfinals. The club website was still showing availability in many parts of the Etihad Stadium as radio stations in the city began airing ads calling the match “unmissable.”

There’s still much to play for, with City holding a slight advantage after securing a 2-2 draw in Paris tomorrow.

City manager Manuel Pellegrini is trying to end his career with the club in May by delivering the club’s first European title. Winning could also be the only route back into the competition next season when Pep Guardiola is in charge, with City’s place in the top four of the Premier League not yet secured. “The fans maybe for different reasons have not been 100 percent (attending games) in this European competition,” Pellegrini said yesterday. “But as we continue further they will (come). They know tomorrow is a very important achievement for the club so I don’t have any doubt we will have ... a full capacity.”

It’s the latest sign of an uneasy relationship with the Champions League and competition organizer UEFA, which sanctioned City and PSG because their owners spent too much to strengthen their squads. Throughout the season City has booed the Champions League anthem when it is played before games.

But it has coincided with City’s best run in Europe’s elite competition. “If you are superstitious, we continue winning when they boo the anthem,” Pellegrini said. Here are some other things to know about today’s match:

VERRATTI DILEMMA

PSG coach Laurent Blanc is debating whether to risk starting central midfielder Marco Verratti against City. The Italy international is trying to recover from a groin injury that has kept him sidelined since Feb. 20. Blanc is desperate to have him back given how cheaply PSG gave the ball away in midfield in the first leg, with both of City’s goals stemming from sloppy mistakes near the halfway line. With midfielder Blaise Matuidi suspended for the game, Blanc has an even greater need for Verratti. One solution could be to bring Verratti on in the second half.



MANCHESTER: Manchester City’s French defender Bacary Sagna (L) and Manchester City’s Chilean manager Manuel Pellegrini (C) attend a press conference following a team training session in Manchester, northern England yesterday. — AFP

MARQUINHOS’TURN

With center half David Luiz suspended, the versatile Marquinhos is expected to line up in central defense for PSG.

Marquinhos was left out of the side in the first leg to make way for the return of Serge Aurier. The defender was right back into the side following a club suspension for an expletive-laced rant on social media where he insulted Blanc and teammates. Marquinhos was a regular in Aurier’s absence and felt he should have started at right back instead of him. Blanc’s decision to select Aurier instead - given the circumstances and given Aurier’s lack of match fitness - faced criticism in France. Aurier was at fault for City’s second goal, losing the ball as he pushed up into midfield and then getting involved in a mix-up with center half Thiago Silva in the penalty area. — AP

SOCCER BRIEFS

Getafe sack coach Escriba

MADRID: La Liga strugglers Getafe have sacked coach Fran Escriba after a 12-game winless run saw them slip into the relegation zone with just six games remaining. “Fran Escriba is no longer the coach of Getafe,” the club said in a statement yesterday. “The club thanks his work for this institution and we wish him the best in his professional future.” The club have yet to name Escriba’s successor, but Madrid sports daily Marca reported former midfielder Javier Casquero is set to be put in charge for the rest of the season. Getafe are two points from safety and face the daunting task of a visit from Real Madrid on Saturday.

FIFA warn Nigeria over elections

ABUJA: Football’s world governing body FIFA yesterday told Nigeria they risk suspension after a court ruling which nullified the elections of the executive committee of the Nigeria Football Federation. “The decision of the Federal High Court in (the central city of) Jos, if implemented, would likely be considered as an interference in the internal affairs of the NFF,” the letter read. Should the ruling be implemented, FIFA would consider sanctions, “including the suspension of the NFF”, the letter dated April 11 from acting secretary general Markus Kattne, added. FIFA statutes dictate that member states should “manage their affairs independently with no influence from third parties”. The warning came after the court last week ruled that the September 2014 election of NFF president Amaju Pinnick was null and void. The case against Pinnick’s election dates back two years when Chris Giwa claimed he had been elected NFF president but FIFA did not endorse the vote and again threatened suspension unless the vote was re-run.

Feghouli suspended by Valencia

MADRID: Valencia have suspended Algerian international Sofiane Feghouli until the completion of a disciplinary procedure against the 26-year-old amid reports he refused to take part in a training session following Sunday’s 2-1 win over Sevilla. “Valencia have decided to open a disciplinary procedure involving player Sofiane

Feghouli,” Valencia said in a statement yesterday. “During the processing of said procedure, and awaiting the resolution of the matter, the player will be suspended as a cautionary measure.” Feghouli was introduced as a second-half substitute at the weekend as Valencia took a huge step towards ensuring their place in the Spanish top flight next season with victory in Pako Ayestaran’s first home game in charge since replacing the sacked Gary Neville. However, Spanish sports daily Marca and Valencian newspaper Superdeporte reported Feghouli refused to take part in a warm-down after the game having also missed a training session last week. Feghouli is expected to leave the club when his contract expires at the end of the season. — Agencies



ISTANBUL: Supporters of Besiktas football club cheer their team before the start of the Turkish Spor Toto Super league football match between Besiktas and Bursaspor at Vodafone arena stadium yesterday in Istanbul. — AFP

World champion Biles begins run-up to Rio at Pac-Rims

16



Zidane seeks patience in Madrid recovery mission

19



TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2016

PIETERSEN MULLS PLAYING FOR SOUTH AFRICA

Page 17



SAN ANTONIO: Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry, center, passes between San Antonio Spurs' LaMarcus Aldridge (12) and David West during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday in San Antonio. Golden State won 92-86. — AP

WARRIORS BEAT SPURS FOR RECORD 72ND WIN

SAN ANTONIO: Stephen Curry had 37 points as the Golden State Warriors beat the San Antonio Spurs 92-86 on Sunday night for their 72nd victory, equaling the 1995-96 Chicago Bulls for the season record. The Warriors will finish the regular season at home against Memphis tomorrow night. The Spurs had won 48 consecutive regular-season games at home, including an NBA-record 39 straight to begin this season. Golden State ended a 33-game skid in San Antonio that dated to 1997. Golden State dominated the fourth quarter. Curry controlled the action with a series of layups when San Antonio's defense attempted to run him off the 3-point line. LaMarcus Aldridge had 24 points for San Antonio. The Spurs had not lost at home since March 2015.

PACERS 129, NETS 105

Myles Turner had 28 points and 10 rebounds, helping Indiana beat Brooklyn to clinch a playoff berth. Solomon Hill had 13 points and 12 rebounds, George Hill had 18 points, Ian Mahinmi 16, and Paul George 15. The Pacers jumped ahead 17-5 in the first quarter and led by as many as 42 points. Sean Kilpatrick led the Nets with 26 points. Markel Brown had 18 points and 11 rebounds. The Pacers have two games left and can still finish as high as seventh in the Eastern Conference if they finish with the same record as Detroit.

CLIPPERS 98, MAVERICKS 91

Jamal Crawford scored 22 points and Los Angeles beat Dallas, snapping the Mavericks' six-game winning streak and preventing them from clinching a playoff berth. J.J. Redick added 20 points and Blake Griffin had 17 points and 11 rebounds in his best game since returning a week ago from a three-month absence to help the playoff-bound Clippers win their fifth in a row. Raymond Felton led Dallas with 21 points, Deron Williams added 15, and Dirk Nowitzki 14. The loss kept the Mavs (41-39) in seventh place in the Western Conference, a game behind Memphis with two games to play. Dallas needs either a victory or a Houston loss to clinch a playoff berth for the 15th time in 16 years. The Rockets beat the Lakers 130-110 on Sunday.

JAZZ 100, NUGGETS 84

Trey Lyles scored a career-high 22 points in an unexpect-

ed start, Gordon Hayward helped fuel a 24-0 third-quarter run and Utah beat Denver to maintain its one-game lead over Houston for the last Western Conference playoff spot. Lyles got the start when Derrick Favors was a late scratch because of right knee soreness. Hayward scored 10 of his 22 points in a pivotal third quarter that saw Utah turn the game into a rout. Nikola Jokic and Emmanuel Mudiay each had 19 points for Nuggets.

ROCKETS 130, LAKERS 110

James Harden scored 20 of his 40 points in the fourth quarter, and Houston kept its playoff hopes alive with a victory over Los Angeles. Harden also had 13 assists. Trevor Ariza and Patrick Beverley each 19 points for the Rockets. Kobe Bryant, who has just two games left before his retirement, had 35 points for Los Angeles. Jordan Clarkson had 21 points and eight rebounds.

WIZARDS 113, HORNETS 98

Marcin Gortat had 21 points and 13 rebounds and Washington beat Charlotte, damaging the Hornets' chances to secure home-court advantage in the first round of the playoffs. Marcus Thornton added 16 points for the Wizards and Ramon Sessions had 15 points and 11 assists. Frank Kaminsky had 18 points and 11 rebounds for the Hornets.

HEAT 118, MAGIC 96

Luol Deng scored 20 points, Hassan Whiteside added 18 points and 15 rebounds in his first start since Jan. 20, and Miami beat Orlando. Goran Dragic had 19 points for the Heat, and Dwyane Wade had 17 on 7-of-9 shooting in 24 highly efficient minutes. Gerald Green added 15 for Miami, which outscored Orlando 60-38 in the paint. Evan Fournier scored 21 points for the Magic, with Nik Vucevic adding 19 points.

BUCKS 109, 76ERS 108, OT

Khris Middleton scored 36 points and John Henson had 18 points and 10 rebounds to lead Milwaukee past Philadelphia. Jabari Parker added 15 points and Giannis Antetokounmpo had 14 for the Bucks. Ish Smith led the 76ers with 22 points and Nerlens Noel had 18 points and 13 rebounds. — AP

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Thanks
for your Support

Winners

1

Gazi Qaffaf
First Winner
Kuwait In Our Eyes “



2

JESUSLITO ARCIA
Second Winner
Kuwait In Our Eyes “



3

MUFLEH ALHAJRI
Third Winner
Kuwait In Our Eyes “



4

ASAAD ABDULLA
Fourth Winner
Kuwait In Our Eyes “



5

SHIFIMON
Fifth Winner
Kuwait In Our Eyes “



6

JOEL SANTOS
Sixth Winner
Kuwait In Our Eyes “



Runner Up



Mohammed Sayed Al-Awadi
Runner Up
Kuwait In Our Eyes



Saoud Khalaf Salem
Runner Up
Kuwait In Our Eyes



Saleh Taqi
Runner Up
Kuwait In Our Eyes



Jaber Abedalkhaleq
Runner Up
Kuwait In Our Eyes



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IN OUR EYES 2016
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CORPORATE EARNINGS IN KUWAIT RESILIENT IN 2015

LEW: US SHOULD NOT SURRENDER GLOBAL ECONOMIC LEADERSHIP

WASHINGTON: US Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew called yesterday for the US to maintain its global economic leadership and not cede it to others like China in a tide of protectionist sentiment.

With some US presidential candidates advocating a pullback from the post-World War II Bretton Woods structure that rebuilt the global economic structure guided by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, Lew said the next administration needs to remain committed to those principles. "If we want it to work for the American people, we need to embrace new players on the global economic stage and make sure they meet the standards of the system we created," he said in a speech at the Council on Foreign Relations.

"The worst possible outcome would be to step away from our leadership role and let others fill in behind us," Lew argued that the Bretton Woods system, with its focus on increasing cooperation on trade and financial regulation and on fighting poverty, had underpinned a quadrupling of world per capita income since 1950.

"American leadership was essential to the creation of that system and the progress it yielded," he said. In recent years, the system made possible rapid response through the IMF and World Bank to the Ebola crisis in West Africa and the economic and political crisis in Ukraine.

It also helped make effective US sanctions on Iran, Russia and North Korea, Lew argued. The administration of President Barack Obama, now in its final year, has faced persistent resistance in Congress to support for the IMF, cooperation with China, and to two Obama-driven international trade treaties, one spanning the Pacific and another cross-Atlantic deal with the European Union.

A number of the current candidates to replace Obama, led by Republican hopeful Donald Trump, have campaigned on opposition to the trade deals and putting up more barriers to foreign competitors.

Lew argued that the global system does better when the United States is leading, and that institutions like the World Bank and IMF "amplify US influence on the global stage." In addition, he added, the United States and China, the two largest economies, "have a unique responsibility to work together to advance shared prosperity, maintain a constructive global economic order, and make progress on critical challenges like climate change." —AFP

WB: EAST ASIAN GROWTH TO REMAIN OVER 6% IN 2016

CHINA TO DRAG DOWN GROWTH IN DEVELOPING ASIA

MANILA: Growth in developing East Asia and the Pacific is expected to remain resilient despite the slowdown in China and a gloomy global outlook, the World Bank said yesterday.

The US-led development bank forecasts that developing East Asia will expand at a still robust pace of 6.3 percent this year and 6.2 percent in 2017-2018, down from 6.5 percent in 2015 and slightly lower than its forecast in October. The Philippines and Vietnam will lead growth in Southeast Asia. Indonesia, the biggest economy in Southeast Asia, is forecast to grow by 5.1 percent in 2016, 5.3 percent in 2017, and 5.5 percent in 2018. But that will depend on the success of recent reforms and follow-through on ambitious public investment plans. China, the world's second-biggest economy, is shifting from export and investment-led growth to a greater reliance on consumer spending. The World Bank's latest estimate puts growth at 6.7 percent this year, 6.5 percent in 2017, and 6.2 percent in 2018, down from 6.9 percent in 2015.

"The resilience of growth of the economies in this region is particularly striking when you realize that this has been achieved against the backdrop of fairly gloomy global growth," said Sudhir Shetty, the bank's chief economist for East Asia and the Pacific region.

But he cautioned that "it's a very volatile time for the global economy." In 2015, developing East Asia and the Pacific accounted for almost two-fifths of global growth, more than twice the combined contribution of all other developing regions, said Victoria Kwakwa, incoming World Bank East Asia and Pacific Regional Vice President. The 14-country region includes China but excludes India, Japan, South Korea and Singapore.

"The region has benefited from careful



SINGAPORE: Pedestrians walk along the Orchard Road shopping district in Singapore yesterday. China's economic slowdown will hit growth in developing East Asia and the Pacific from this year until at least 2018, the World Bank said yesterday, warning of volatile global markets and urging caution. —AFP

macroeconomic policies, including efforts to boost revenue in commodity-exporting countries," she said. "But sustaining growth amid challenging global conditions will require continued progress on structural reforms." The report called for close monitoring of economic risks, particularly those associated with high levels of debt, price deflation, slower growth in China, and high corporate and household debt in some large economies.

China's economic slowdown will hit growth

in developing East Asia and the Pacific from this year until at least 2018, the World Bank said, warning of volatile global markets and urging caution.

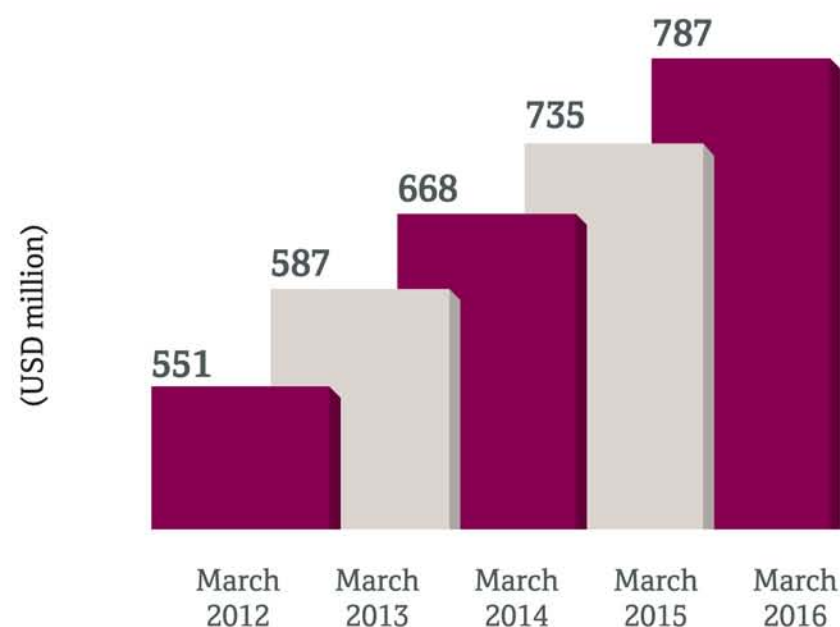
Regional growth is forecast to slow from 6.5 percent in 2015 to 6.3 percent this year and 6.2 percent in 2017 and 2018, the bank said in its latest outlook. However, Southeast Asian economies led by Vietnam and the Philippines are still expected to see healthy expansion, with both forecast to see growth rates of more than

6.0 percent, it said. The bank said the regional outlook reflected China's gradual shift to slower, more sustainable growth, expected at 6.7 percent this year and 6.5 percent in 2017 and 2018, from 6.9 percent in 2015. China is in the midst of reforms as it moves to make domestic consumption a key economic growth driver instead of exports and as manufacturing gives way to services taking on a bigger role in the economy. "Continued implementation of reforms should support the continued rebalancing of domestic demand," the report said on the Chinese economy. "In particular, growth in investment and industrial output will moderate, reflecting measures to contain local government debt, reduce excess industrial capacity and reorient fiscal stimulus toward social sectors." Victoria Kwakwa, incoming World Bank East Asia and Pacific vice president, said in a statement that the region's developing countries accounted for "almost two-fifths of global growth" last year.

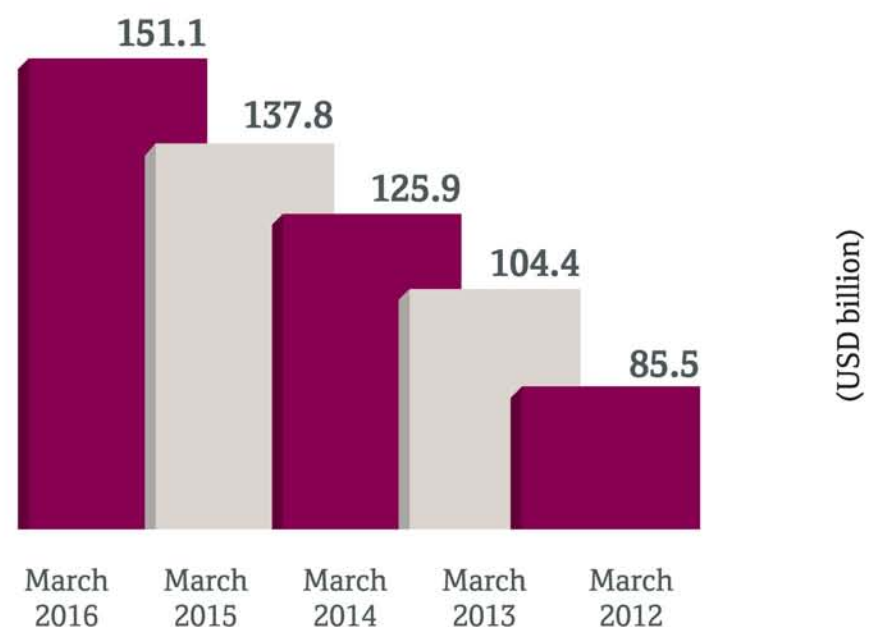
Elsewhere in developing Asia, the World Bank said the Philippine economy was expected to expand 6.4 percent in 2016, up from 5.8 percent last year. Vietnam is seen growing 6.5 percent this year, down from 6.7 percent last year. The Southeast Asian economies most likely to be adversely affected by China's tapering growth include Indonesia, Mongolia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar.

Cambodia's growth is forecast at slightly below 7 percent in 2016-2018 due to weaker prices for agricultural commodities, constrained garment exports, and moderating growth in tourism. "Countries should adopt monetary and fiscal policies that reduce their exposure to global and regional risks, and continue with structural reforms to boost productivity and promote inclusive growth," said Shetty. —Agencies

Net Profit US\$787 million up
by 7% on March 2015



Total Assets US\$151.1 billion up
by 10% on March 2015



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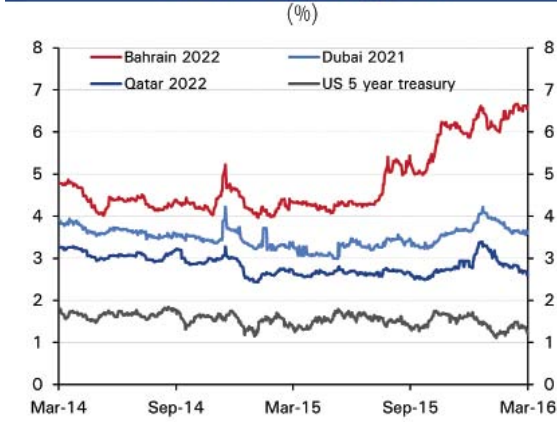
GCC DEBT MARKETS YIELDS REMAIN VOLATILE IN Q1 16

KUWAIT: GCC yields were volatile in 1Q16 but ended the quarter little changed from 4Q15. Investor confidence picked up on bullish oil price developments, but debt yields remained at levels higher than a year ago. Sovereign issues remained the main driver of debt growth, as GCC countries sought to plug growing deficits at favorable rates. Preference to borrow in local currency continued to pressure domestic liquidity, pushing some GCC borrowers towards international markets. Cautious global investor sentiment may challenge the latter.

GCC yields picked up from 4Q15, peaking in late January, before subsiding gradually over the rest of 1Q16. The volatility in yields was driven by increased sensitivity to oil prices. Yields were pushed higher early in the quarter, at a pace not seen since the Fed taper tantrum, following the rapid decline of oil prices to 12-year lows. Dubai 2021 and Qatar 2022 paper saw increases of 57 basis points and 47 basis points over that period, respectively. Oil prices have since recovered; with GCC yields responding immediately (lower), shedding all added points, to settle by quarter's end little changed at 3.58 percent for Dubai 2021 and down 20 basis points to 2.60 percent for Qatar 2022.

Investor confidence benefited from the positive developments in oil prices, as well as from the reforms underway, to different degrees, in GCC countries. Credit

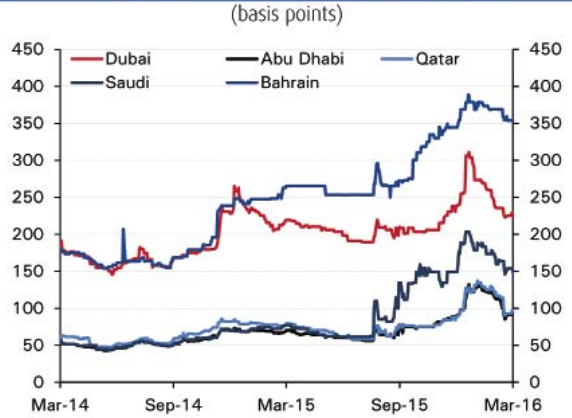
Chart 1: GCC sovereign yields (%)



Source: Thomson Reuters Datastream

NBK ECONOMIC REPORT

Chart 2: GCC 5 year credit default swaps (basis points)



Source: Thomson Reuters Datastream

default swap (CDS) rates, which reflect likelihood of borrower default, decreased significantly across the board, with Dubai benefiting the most. CDS rates were down between 34 and 86 basis points. Recent downgrades and outlook reviews by major rating agencies had limited impact on sentiment. GCC sovereigns had already begun applying counter measures to their fiscal challenges, calming investor concerns.

Despite these improvements, yields and CDS rates are higher for most GCC sovereigns from a year ago. Dubai's yield on 5-year paper has increased by 58 basis points in the past 12 months, while its CDS rate is up 6 basis points for the same period, and 34 basis points higher from July 2015, when it recorded a yearly low. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia saw its CDS rate jump 72 basis points since 1Q15, the second highest increase after Bahrain's CDS rate, which increased by 89 basis points. Saudi and Bahrain by association, are two of the most oil sensitive economies. Yields and CDS rates could see upward pressure ahead, if moved again by oil prices or geopolitical concerns, though the latter seem to have abated.

The rise in debt pricing (lower yields) has led GCC sovereigns to step up their issuance efforts to help plug a combined estimated deficit of \$140 billion for 2016. As of 1Q16, GCC sovereigns have issued \$16.5 billion, leading the GCC's primary debt market for the quarter. As a result, the GCC's outstanding bonds increased by 18 percent, to settle at \$314 billion.

With most of their debt issued in local currency, the pick-up in sovereign activity continued to strain domestic liquidity. To offset the latter, some sovereigns relaxed monetary regulations. Kuwait and Saudi both increased their loan to deposit ratio (LDR), with Kuwait excluding interbank deposits from the LDR calculation. Interbank rates for these sovereigns have come off their highs, but still reflect liquidity pressures.

For fear of crowding-out their domestic markets, the GCC has begun to look outwards for financing with most announcing international bond issues and syndicated loans. Oman and Kuwait are seeking \$5-\$10 billion and \$3 billion, respectively, in international bonds, while Saudi is in talks with foreign banks to secure a \$6-\$8 billion syndicated loan. But, international creditors are demanding higher returns, which may hinder their borrowing efforts. Bahrain experienced this first hand when it withdrew an overpriced international re-tap (a bond offer with similar terms as a previous one).

Chart 3: Brent oil price (\$/bbl)



Source: Thomson Reuters Datastream

News

in brief

US dollar firms against Kuwait dinar at 0.301

KUWAIT: The US dollar steadied against the Kuwaiti dinar yesterday exchanging at KD 0.301, the same case with the euro which stood at KD 0.343, compared to Sunday's rates. The Central Bank of Kuwait said the sterling pound was stable at KD 0.425, the Swiss Franc remained at KD 0.316 and the Japanese yen remained unchanged at KD 0.002.

OPEC basket price up \$1.30 to \$36.01 pb

VIENNA: The OPEC daily basket price stood at USD 36.01 a barrel last Friday, compared with USD 34.71 Thursday, the organization announced yesterday. The annual average of the OPEC basket price hit \$49.64 pb, it said in a press release. The new OPEC Reference Basket of Crudes (ORB) is made up of the following: Saharan Blend (Algeria), Girassol (Angola), Oriente (Ecuador), Iran Heavy (Islamic Republic of Iran), Basra Light (Iraq), Kuwait Export (Kuwait), Es Sider (Libya), Bonny Light (Nigeria), Qatar Marine (Qatar), Arab Light (Saudi Arabia), Murban (UAE) and Merey (Venezuela). During their recent meeting in Vienna in late 2015, OPEC member countries had decided to maintain their production at 30 million barrels per day (bpd) despite a surplus in the market estimated at over a million barrels.

IPIC denies links with BVI-incorporated firm

ABU DHABI: Abu Dhabi's state-owned International Petroleum Investment Company (IPIC) yesterday said neither itself nor its unit Aabar Investments PJS have any links to a British Virgin Islands-incorporated firm named in a report into the troubles at Malaysian state fund 1MDB. "Both IPIC and Aabar confirm that Aabar BVI was not an entity within either corporate group," IPIC said in a statement on the London Stock Exchange, referring to Aabar Investments PJS Limited (Aabar BVI). "Further, both IPIC and Aabar confirm that neither has received any payments from Aabar BVI nor has IPIC or Aabar assumed any liabilities on behalf of Aabar BVI," the statement added, noting that according to publicly available records, Aabar BVI was wound up and dissolved in June 2015.

SAUDI TO SUPPLY EGYPT WITH 700,000 TONS OF OIL PRODUCTS A MONTH

CAIRO: Saudi Arabia is to provide Egypt with 700,000 tons of petroleum products a month under a \$23 billion deal over five years between Saudi Aramco and the Egyptian General Petroleum Corp, an EGPC official said yesterday.

"The Saudi Fund for Development will pay Aramco for the petroleum products directly, and receive in return the amount from Egypt in instalments," the source told Reuters.

The deal is part of financial support for Egypt announced during a visit this month by Saudi Arabia's King Salman. It also highlights a change in strategy by Saudi Arabia to focus more on financial support for Egypt that will also provide Saudi Arabia with a return on its investment. Egypt will get financing for the

products but will have to repay the money. Saudi Arabia, along with other Gulf oil producers, has pumped billions of dollars, including grants, into Egypt's flagging economy since the toppling of President Mohamed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood in 2013 after mass protests against his rule.

Low oil prices have contributed to Saudi Arabia's change of approach. Under the 700,000-tonne monthly supply deal, Saudi Aramco will provide Egypt with 400,000 tons of gas oil, 200,000 tons of benzene and 100,000 tons of Mazut, the source said. The financing for the petroleum and petroleum products will have an interest rate of 2 percent and will be repaid over 15 years, the source said. — Reuters



TOKYO: Money traders work in front of the computer screens with the day's exchange rate between yen and the US dollar, top left, and Nikkei stock index, bottom left, at a foreign exchange brokerage in Tokyo yesterday. — AP

OIL PRICE DIPS AS BANKS CAUTION ON IMPACT OF DOHA MEETING

LONDON: Oil prices slipped yesterday after banks dampened hopes that the meeting of producers in Doha next Sunday, aimed at freezing current output levels, would improve the demand-supply balance.

Brent crude futures, the global benchmark, fell by 10 cents to \$41.84 a barrel by 1208 GMT, retreating from last week's rally to a three-week high reached on Friday after a drop in the rig count of US drillers to its lowest since November 2009. US WTI crude also eased yesterday, falling to \$39.50 a barrel, down 22 cents from the previous session.

"Prices will move back and forth this week on

expectations for Doha. This morning it seems that speculation is being scaled back again," Commerzbank senior oil analyst Carsten Fritsch said. Analysts at Goldman Sachs, who expect oil prices to average \$35 a barrel in the second quarter, cautioned that the outcome of the meeting in Qatar could prove bearish for the market.

A production freeze at recent levels would not accelerate a rebalancing of the market, the analysts said, citing Russian and non-Iranian OPEC output that has remained close to the bank's 2016 average annual forecast of 40.5 million bpd.

Azerbaijan, the energy minister of which will attend the Doha meeting, said on Monday that

its output had dropped by 1.6 percent in the first quarter compared with a year earlier to 10.496 million tons. Barclays, meanwhile, gave warning that the Doha meeting could have limited impact because some producers are unlikely to take part in an output freeze.

Bearish sentiment was further reflected in price expectations. BMO Capital Markets lowered its 2016 Brent and WTI price forecasts to \$41 and \$38 a barrel respectively, down from the \$45 and \$41.50.

Many oil market speculators agreed with a more bearish outlook as data from the InterContinentalExchange (ICE) showed that net

long positions on Brent had been cut to 355,225 contracts in the week ending April 5.

However, analysts are forecasting firmer demand for oil over the longer term. Researchers at Bernstein expect global oil demand to increase at a mean annual rate of 1.4 percent between 2016 and 2020, compared with annual growth of 1.1 percent over the past decade. "We expect oil markets to rebalance by the end of 2016. This will allow prices to recover towards the marginal cost of \$60 per barrel," Bernstein said, adding that global demand reach 101.1 million bpd by 2020, from the current 94.6 million bpd. — Reuters

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.800
Indian Rupees	4.563
Pakistani Rupees	2.885
Srilankan Rupees	2.091
Nepali Rupees	2.850
Singapore Dollar	225.280
Hongkong Dollar	38.943
Bangladesh Taka	3.851
Philippine Peso	6.565
Thai Baht	8.633

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.603
Qatari Riyal	83.029
Omani Riyal	785.083
Bahraini Dinar	802.710
UAE Dirham	52.294

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	33.5005
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	34.410
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.405
Tunisian Dinar	150.820
Jordanian Dinar	425.880
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.014
Syrian Lira	2.154
Morocco Dirham	31.867

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	302.100
Euro	346.360
Sterling Pound	428.680

Canadian dollar	233.640
Turkish lira	106.750
Swiss Franc	318.670
Australian Dollar	230.650
US Dollar Buying	300.900

GOLD

20 Gram	252.300
10 Gram	129.070
5 Gram	65.380

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer

US Dollar	303.250
Canadian Dollar	230.325
Sterling Pound	429.535
Euro	339.765
Swiss Frank	297.075
Bahrain Dinar	802.260
UAE Dirhams	82.805
Qatari Riyals	84.020
Saudi Riyals	81.545
Jordanian Dinar	427.185
Egyptian Pound	34.053
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.063
Indian Rupees	4.538
Pakistani Rupees	2.891
Bangladesh Taka	3.857
Philippines Peso	6.540
Cyprus pound	577.595
Japanese Yen	3.675
Syrian Pound	2.375
Nepalese Rupees	3.835

Selling Rate

Malaysian Ringgit	76.000
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	46.930
Thai Bhat	9.565
Turkish Lira	105.085

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY BUY SELL

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.420300	0.429300
Czech Korune	0.004728	0.016728
Danish Krone	0.042218	0.047218
Euro	0.0339018	0.0347018
Norwegian Krone	0.032660	0.037860
Romanian Leu	0.076884	0.076884
Slovakia	0.008993	0.018993
Swedish Krona	0.032987	0.037987
Swiss Franc	0.310331	0.320531
Turkish Lira	0.100702	0.111002

Australasian	
Australian Dollar	0.220401 0.231901
New Zealand Dollar	0.199706 0.209206

America	
Canadian Dollar	0.227275 0.235775
US Dollars	0.298000 0.302500
US Dollars Mint	0.298500 0.302500

Asia	
Bangladesh Taka	0.003433 0.004007
Chinese Yuan	0.045229 0.048729
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036856 0.039606

Indian Rupee	0.004326 0.004716
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018 0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002712 0.002892
Kenyan Shilling	0.002981 0.002981
Korean Won	0.000253 0.000268
Malaysian Ringgit	0.073681 0.079681
Nepalese Rupee	0.002879 0.003049
Pakistan Rupee	0.002663 0.002943
Philippine Peso	0.006461 0.006741
Sierra Leone	0.000073 0.000079
Singapore Dollar	0.221173 0.227173
South African Rand	0.014191 0.022691
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001692 0.002272
Taiwan	0.009212 0.009392
Thai Baht	0.008280 0.008830

Arab	
Bahraini Dinar	0.794757 0.802757
Egyptian Pound	0.030630 0.035748
Iranian Riyal	0.000084 0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000191 0.000251
Jordanian Dinar	0.422084 0.429584
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000 1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000150 0.000250
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020584 0.044584
Nigerian Naira	0.001245 0.001880
Omani Riyal	0.778255 0.783935
Qatar Riyal	0.082268 0.083481
Saudi Riyal	0.079673 0.080623
Syrian Pound	0.001280 0.001500
Tunisian Dinar	0.147030 0.155030
Turkish Lira	0.100702 0.111002
UAE Dirhams	0.081269 0.082418
Yemeni Riyal	0.001365 0.001445

ECB SEEKS TO MOLLIFY GERMANY AFTER ROW OVER ‘CHEAP MONEY’

FRANKFURT: Almost a month after stoking a divisive debate about how far it should go in pumping money into the flagging euro-zone economy, the European Central Bank is trying to soothe relations with Germany after unusually strong criticism from Berlin. Late last week, German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble was reported as blaming the ECB's cheap-money policy in part for the rise of the country's right-wing anti-immigration Alternative for Germany (AfD).

The discussion is likely to continue when ECB President Mario Draghi meets Schäuble this week in Washington at the International Monetary Fund's spring gathering of central bankers and ministers from around the world. A storm of protest erupted in thrifty Germany after Draghi last month described the idea of "helicopter

money" - sending money directly to citizens - as a "very interesting" - if unexamined - concept. Late last week, top ECB officials, including the ECB's chief economist and its vice president, backpedalled, saying the idea was not on the table. But the damage had already been done.

"The ECB's policy was already unpopular in Germany and the idea of helicopter money was the straw that broke the camel's back," said Joerg Kraemer, an economist with Commerzbank in Frankfurt. "People feel that ideas like this are dangerous." German analysts see the idea as an excessive ramping up of a loose money policy that is already fuelling rising property prices in their country, and also because it would undermine the euro by printing money and giving it away for free. "We've seen most of the

impact of QE (Quantitative Easing) last year and there is little more to come," said Lars Feld, one of the 'wise men' that advise the German government on economic policy.

"Higher interest rates would now be good for the profits of banks and insurers and would stop the emergence of property bubbles, such as the one we might see in Germany."

On Sunday, a number of German politicians criticized the ECB's stance, with one minister blaming low interest rates for putting a "gaping hole" in pensions, as rumors of possible legal action over helicopter money swirled.

'NO TO EVERYTHING'

It marked a new low in the often fraught relations between the euro zone's biggest

country and the central bank's Italian chief, who has recently bemoaned what he described as the "nein zu allem" ("no to everything") approach - a swipe at Germany. But the discussion about ever wider boundaries of possible ECB action, distracting from the ECB's 1.7-trillion-euro-plus money printing scheme, also irritated some euro zone central bank governors, a person familiar with the matter said.

The ECB, which for years has struggled to improve its image with a sceptical German public, declined to comment. But many at the ECB resent what they see as unrelenting criticism from German politicians, journalists and economists, who reject the ever more generous measures the ECB is taking to fire up the slow economy.

"I think this shooting at the institution,

especially in this country, is sometimes difficult to swallow," Peter Praet, the ECB's chief economist, told a conference of economists last week in Frankfurt. There seems little prospect, however, of the debate abating ahead of a meeting of the 19 euro zone central bank governors on April 20-21. A spokesman for Schäuble's finance ministry described it as a "legitimate discussion."

Others forecast that the idea of sending money directly to Europeans could shadow such gatherings. "It will be hard to get the idea of helicopter money out of people's heads," said a euro zone official. "The criticism in Germany is justified but a little dishonest," said Commerzbank's Kraemer. "There is no way Schäuble would be balancing his books were it not for the ECB's policy." — Reuters

UK ECONOMY LOST STEAM IN Q1: INDUSTRY SURVEY

LONDON: Britain's economy lost steam in the first three months of the year, according to a major survey of businesses that showed domestic demand slipped for both services and manufacturing companies. The British Chambers of Commerce's (BCC) Quarterly Economic Survey follows a string of lacklustre data since the start of the year, with industrial output declining sharply and consumer confidence fading from highs seen last year.

Most of the BCC's key gauges either stagnated or fell. While they still pointed to modest economic growth, the business group warned of potential downside risks. Domestic sales growth for manufacturers receded to the lowest level since the end of 2012, and for services this was the weakest since mid-2013. And while manufacturing exports picked up slightly, the BCC's gauge of services exports slipped to its lowest since the end of 2011.

"From sales and orders to confidence and investment intentions, many of the business indicators we track are at a low ebb," the BCC's acting director general, Adam Marshall, said.

The BCC referred to "mounting global and domestic uncertainties" as reasons for the weaker outlook. It did not specifically mention Britain's June 23 referendum on membership of the European Union. Last month the BCC's pre-

vious director general resigned after he breached the group's neutral stance on the referendum and spoke in favour of a British exit from the EU. The BCC survey of more than 8,500 companies, the largest of its kind, painted a mixed picture of Britain's job market. Pay pressures, a key determinant of policy for the Bank of England, eased overall.

Services companies that comprise the bulk of Britain's private sector economy reported the greatest staff recruitment difficulties for 18 years. And while services companies took on staff during the first quarter at the slowest pace in two years, the proportion of them looking to expand their workforce in the coming three months improved.

Companies rolled back their plans to increase spending on training and machinery, suggesting policymakers may be frustrated in their hopes for a recovery led more strongly by business investment.

A separate survey from credit card company Visa Europe suggested consumer demand, a pillar of Britain's economic upturn since 2013, held up well during the first quarter. Its inflation-adjusted gauge of consumer spending, based on card transactions data, rose 2.3 percent year-on-year in March, up slightly from 2.2 percent in February. — Reuters



The sun rising above Tata Steel's blast furnaces at their Scunthorpe Plant in north east England. — AFP

BRITAIN FINDS BUYER FOR ONE TATA STEEL PLANT

GREYBULL DEAL SAVES 4,400 JOBS IN UK, 400 IN FRANCE

LONDON: Tata Steel agreed to sell one of its main British steelworks to investment firm Greybull Capital for 1 pound yesterday, saving a third of the 15,000 jobs placed in jeopardy by the Indian conglomerate's decision to sell up in Britain. Prime Minister David Cameron has been under pressure to keep the plants open to save jobs after Tata, one of the world's biggest steel-makers, said on March 30 it would sell its loss-making British business.

As Tata formally announced the sale of its steel assets in Britain, turnaround specialist Greybull Capital LLP said it would buy the Indian company's Long Products Europe division in Scunthorpe, northern England, which employs 4,400. It declined to rule out further purchases of Tata's British steel assets, including its plant at Port Talbot in Wales.

The sale to Greybull - for a nominal pound or 1 euro - includes a 400 million pound (\$570 mln) investment and financing package for the Scunthorpe business, as well as agreements with suppliers and unions on cutting costs. "We're expecting no redundancies going forward, the business plan calls for no redundancies," Greybull co-founder Marc Meyohas told reporters on a conference call.

The Greybull deal, which is subject to a ballot by union members, includes two additional mills, an engineering workshop and a design consultancy in Britain, plus a mill in Hayange, in northeast France. The purchase will see the business renamed 'British Steel', in a revival of a historic name last used almost two decades ago.

Cameron, already grappling with a divided ruling party ahead of a June 23 referendum on membership of the European Union, has been scrambling to try to find buyers for Tata's Scunthorpe plant and its other main plant at Port Talbot, to save jobs. Britain's eurosceptic media has blamed Brussels for preventing London from taking greater steps to protect the steel industry while the opposition Labour Party has called on Cameron to do more to save the plants.

Tata, which owns iconic brands such as Jaguar Land Rover and Tetley Tea, is offloading its British steel operations, citing a global oversupply of steel and cheap imports from China, high costs and weak domestic demand.

BRITISH STEEL?

The deal for the Scunthorpe plant, which Tata had been trying to sell since 2014 before revealing talks with Greybull were underway in December, is expected to complete in eight weeks subject to certain conditions being met. Greybull, which is not taking on pension liabilities, said about half of the 400 million pound package would come from shareholders of Greybull and half from banks and government loans.

"We're expecting the company to be profitable in year one and that's very much the management plan," said Meyohas, who co-founded Greybull in 2008 after 12 years as CEO of technology services company Cityspace. Though the deal is positive for the Scunthorpe workers, there is deep unease in Port Talbot, Britain's biggest steel plant, where 4,000 people could be out of a job if Tata fails to find a buyer.

"While very welcome it does not mean that we are out of the woods yet," said Gareth Stace, director of trade association UK Steel. "A long-term investor is needed, in the very short term, for the remainder of the whole of the Tata Steel UK business, including Port Talbot," said Stace.

Scunthorpe produces steel mainly used in construction and infrastructure projects, whereas Port Talbot produces slab, hot rolled, cold rolled and galvanised coil which is used in products from cars to washing machines to food cans.

Finding buyers for Port Talbot and Tata's other assets, could take some time given the complexity of any deal, including negotiations over everything from pensions liabilities to energy subsidies.

Greybull said to date it had been wholly

focused on the Scunthorpe deal, but declined to rule out future interest in the Port Talbot plant. "Whether it's Tata or any other assets, we'll review it as and when is appropriate," Meyohas said. Another potential bidder for the Port Talbot plant is Sanjeev Gupta, the boss of metals trader Liberty House Group.

"LOSS-MAKING"

Gupta told Reuters on Friday that he was serious about making an offer and had the backing of a group with \$7 billion of revenues, hitting back at critics who have questioned his capacity to take on a business dragged down by heavy debt and weak sales.

However, much will depend on how much any potential investor is willing to pay to even hope of turning around the business. "It's a loss-making business and a loss-making business is not worth a lot in itself to buy," Gupta said. "It's more of a question of what are the resources required in turning it around." Tata, under former Chairman Ratan Tata, bought its UK steel operations in 2007 after outbidding Brazil's CSN to buy Anglo-Dutch steelmaker Corus for \$12 billion as a way to access the European market.

But the Indian conglomerate, controlled by philanthropic trusts endowed by the Tata family, struggled to turn the steelmaker around.

Like competitors such as ArcelorMittal, the world's top steel producer, Tata has been hit by plunging prices due to overcapacity in China, the world's biggest market for the alloy.

China said yesterday it wants to work with the rest of the world to find an appropriate resolution to overcapacity in the steel sector, after Britain asked Beijing to hurry up and tackle the problem. Tata Steel is the second-largest steel producer in Europe with a diversified presence across the continent. It has a crude steel production capacity of over 18 million tons per annum in Europe, but only 14 mtpa is operational. — Reuters

CHINA CONSUMER INFLATION STABLE AT 2.3% IN MARCH

BEIJING: China's consumer inflation was steady at 2.3 percent year-on-year in March, official data showed yesterday, a sign of stabilization for the world's second-largest economy. The rise in the consumer price index (CPI) released by the National Bureau of Statistics was the same as February's 2.3 percent, and slightly below market forecasts of 2.4 percent in a survey by Bloomberg News.

Moderate inflation can be a boon to consumption as it pushes buyers to act before prices go up, while falling prices encourage shoppers to delay purchases and companies to put off investment, both of which can hurt growth.

The producer price index (PPI), which measures prices of goods at the factory gate, fell 4.3 percent year-on-year, its slowest rate of decline since January 2015. It increased 0.5 percent from February, its first month-on-month rise in two and a half years. "Deflation is our top macroeconomic concern and today's PPI offers signs of relief," said analysts

with ANZ Research in a note.

They attributed the uptick to prices for commodities such as oil and iron ore rebounding since the beginning of the year, and a lower basis for comparison as producer prices fell sharply last year.

Even so, it marked the 49th consecutive monthly fall in producer prices as overcapacity in manufacturing drags on China's growth. The consumer figures were driven by food price inflation of 7.6 percent, with fresh vegetable prices jumping 35.8 percent year-on-year and pork prices up a hefty 28.4 percent.

NBS analyst Yu Qiumei said vegetable prices were boosted by a cold snap that affected supplies, while pig farmers had previously cut supplies in the face of long-term low prices.

But pork price inflation should ease, Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics said in a note, as producers have increased pig numbers recently, "which will help keep a lid on inflation". — AFP



BEIJING: People walk past a poster at the entrance of a mall in Beijing yesterday. China's consumer inflation was steady at 2.3 percent year-on-year in March, official data showed yesterday. — AFP

GULF BOURSES MIXED; EGYPT CORRECTS AMID LOCAL SELLOFF

DUBAI: Saudi and Egyptian stock markets corrected yesterday, while Abu Dhabi's and Qatar's bourses edged up, supported by the real estate sector. With no major companies reporting earnings, Riyadh's index fell 0.5 percent to 6,312 points, erasing some of the 1.4 percent gains on Sunday as profit takers cashed out.

The index fell below its critical resistance band between 6,325-6,400 points and short term technical indicators are considered overbought, making the case stronger for a correction, said a note by Riyadh Capital. Almarai, which jumped 3.6 percent after reporting on Sunday a slight rise in first-quarter net profit in a challenging market, fell back 1.3 percent.

NCB Capital said in a note that despite gross margins hitting a six-quarter low, favourable raw material pricing and a lower than expected impact of subsidy cuts, enforced by the government this year to help plug a budget gap, did less than expected damage to gross margins. Jarir Marketing, a giant retailer which sells electronics and stationeries, fell 0.4 percent, erasing some prior session gains. On Sunday it reported a net income drop of nearly 30 percent, short of analyst expectations, although sales turnover were not as

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

extreme as the company had previously expected.

The company's chairman, Mohammad Al-Aqeel, told CNBC Arabia late on Sunday that Jarir will push ahead with expansion plans for 2016, starting with the launch of two new branches in the second quarter. The retailer is also planning to expand to other Gulf countries and North Africa.

Dubai's index edged down 0.3 percent, pulling away from a five-month high hit on Sunday as local traders booked profits in small and mid-cap stocks which have been the backbone of the bourses gains over the last four weeks. Investment firm Shuaa Capital, which has rallied 40 percent since a month ago, dropped 3.7 percent. Builders Arabtec and Drake and Scull were also sold off, falling 1.7 and 1.6 percent respectively.

But Union Properties, a mid-sized developer, added a further 0.6 percent, its fourth straight session of gains. Emaar Properties fell 0.3 percent after the company said on Sunday that Abdulla Lahej had discontinued his role as group chief executive officer,

adding the group chief operating officer will be handling the role, without elaborating further. On the same day the company had announced plans to build a skyscraper surpassing its Burj Khalifa, the tallest building in the world.

In Egypt the main index dropped 0.8 percent as bourse data showed local and other Arab traders exited positions. Shares, which have rallied since the mid-March devaluation of the currency, continued to correct for a second day, with real estate investment firm Amer Group slumping 5.0 percent. The stock is now flat since the devaluation on March 14.

ABU DHABI, QATAR NUDE UP

Abu Dhabi's stock exchange added 0.2 percent, lifted by real estate shares. Aldar Properties rose 1.4 percent after the company said yesterday, a day ahead of Cityscape Abu Dhabi where developers exhibit planned projects, it will add new villas to its Yas Island development with a project valued at 6 billion dirhams (\$1.63 billion). But energy-related stocks fell back as investors booked profits ahead of earnings season. Dana Gas, which jumped 11.1 percent on Sunday, tumbled 6.7 percent. — Reuters



FAKU: Donkeys, horses and mules are gathered for sale at a livestock trading market in Faku, northeastern China's Liaoning province yesterday. — AFP

MARKETS EDGE UP AMID CHINESE STIMULUS HOPES

LONDON: World stocks mostly rose yesterday following a rally in oil prices and after weak Chinese inflation figures increased hopes for more market-boosting stimulus. European shares were higher yesterday, reversing earlier losses, helped by gains in Italian banks and mining stocks. Wall Street opened higher yesterday as investors braced for corporate earnings season, with Alcoa set to post first-quarter results after the market closes. Expectations for profit growth are low as companies struggle with a weak global economy, falling commodity prices and a stronger dollar.

Earnings at S&P 500 companies are expected to have declined 7.6 percent on average in the

first quarter, according to Thomson Reuters I/B/E/S. Big bank earnings are also on the cards through the week, starting with JPMorgan Chase & Co today. "We're in a bit of a holding pattern until earnings, which kick off with Alcoa tonight, but more importantly the banks will start to report by mid-week," said Aaron Clark, a portfolio manager at GW&K Investment Management in Boston. "That will be the next key event, which moves the market one way or the other," he said. At 8:32 a.m. ET (1232 GMT), Dow e-minis were up 59 points, or 0.34 percent, with 33,148 contracts changing hands. S&P 500 e-minis were up 7.25 points, or 0.36 percent, with 246,297 contracts

traded. Nasdaq 100 e-minis were up 18 points, or 0.4 percent, on 34,166 contracts. Investors are also looking for clarity on monetary policy, with US Federal Reserve appearing more cautious on rate hikes than the market had expected. A meeting yesterday between U.S. President Barack Obama and Fed Chair Janet Yellen to discuss the economy and Wall Street reform will be keenly watched.

Oil, which has been a big influence on the stock market this year, was little changed ahead of next Sunday's meeting by producers aimed at freezing output. A rally in crude on Friday pushed Wall Street higher, but did little to boost sentiment and the three

major indexes still closed lower for the week. New York Fed President William Dudley, who is a permanent voting member of the rate-setting Federal Open Market Committee, is due to speak later in the day. Yahoo shares were up 1.2 percent at \$36.49 premarket after the parent company of Britain's Daily Mail said it was in talks with potential partners to mount a bid for the company's Internet assets.

The pan-European FTSEurofirst 300 index had risen 0.8 percent to 1,314.42 points by 1109 GMT, after gaining 1.2 percent in the previous session. In spite of the gains the index is down almost 9 percent so far this year. The Italian banking sector index rose sharply for a second straight session on hopes the Italian government will soon thrash out a plan to set up a state-backed fund to buy bad loans and plug capital shortfalls.

"(There) seems to be a reaction to central bank news surrounding the creation of a recapitalization fund in Italy to shore up the banks," said James Helliwell, Head of Markets, Lex van Dam Trading Academy. "The news has been received positively following ongoing concern around the risks within the European banking sector."

Shares in Monte dei Paschi rose 9.7 percent, while UniCredit and Intesa Sanpaolo, the country's two biggest lenders, climbed 5.8 and 4 percent respectively. Gategroup soared by 15.5 percent, boosted after China's HNA Group made an agreed offer for the Swiss airline catering group. The STOXX 600 Basic Resource index rose 2.3 percent, making it the biggest sectoral gainer, after copper climbed on Monday from near its lowest in more than a month after middling U.S. wholesale inventories bruised the dollar. Shares in Anglo American, Glencore and Rio Tinto were all up more than 1.7 percent. A weaker dollar makes

commodities cheaper for buyers holding other currencies SAP fell as much as 2.6 percent after the company warned that first-quarter results would be weaker than expected due to slower sales of software licenses to corporate customers, particularly in Brazil and the United States. However, it recovered to trade up 1 percent, with analysts highlighting bright spots in the report.

"Despite the fact that SAP missed expectations, (it) performed quite well compared to its peers in terms of profitability," analysts at DZ Bank said in a note. Food company Nestle fell 2.8 percent, topping losers on the FTSEurofirst, as its shares went ex-dividend. Shares in Daily Mail & General Trust were broadly flat after the Wall Street Journal reported that the parent company of Britain's Daily Mail newspaper was in talks with several private equity firms about a possible bid for Yahoo Inc. Germany's DAX gained 1.2 percent to 9,740.03 and the CAC 40 of France added 0.7 percent to 4,333.36. The FTSE 100 was up 0.1 percent at 6,210.66.

"Strong gains in the oil market and a solid close in US markets should see a positive open to the trading week this morning," said Rick Spooner, chief market analyst at CMC Markets. "Even by the high volatility standards of recent months, Friday's rally in oil was noteworthy," he said. "This should lead to trader support for energy stocks today."

Investor sentiment was further buoyed by hopes for more stimulus to help the Chinese economy, which has been slowing down in recent quarters. A new report showed the annual inflation rate in the country was 2.3 percent in March, unchanged from February, while the producer price index, or wholesale prices paid at the factory gate, dropped 4.3 percent year-on-year. —Agencies

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report

Monday 11 April 2016

Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low
Price index	▲ 33.26	5,284.37	5,251.11	5,285.10	5,244.09
Weighted Index	▲ 0.12	362.26	362.14	362.89	360.79
KSX 15	▼ -1.47	853.73	855.20	858.18	849.72



Volume	279,760,832
Value (KWD)	14,580,881
Number of Trades	5,177

Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
MARIN	104	104	500	52	1	104	— 0.0
IKARUS	78	78	40,800	3,182	2	78	▼ -5.0
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	320	— 0.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	730	— 0.0
ENERGYH	44.5	42.5	19,500	832	8	42.5	▼ -2.5
GPI	42.5	41.0	16,974,362	710,875	217	42.0	▲ 0.5
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	104	— 0.0
Oil & Gas			17,035,162	714,941	228	797.77	▼ -4.92

KFOUC	196	192	957,620	186,037	75	194	— 0.0
BPCC	510	500	15,482	7,841	4	510	— 0.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	610	— 0.0
ALQURAIN	198	196	221,519	43,710	14	198	▲ 2.0
Basic Materials			1,194,621	237,567	93	957.47	▲ 3.79
KCEM	380	380	110,658	42,050	8	380	▲ 5.0
REFRI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	305	— 0.0
CABLE	365	355	24,100	8,655	7	365	▲ 5.0
SHIP	144	144	27,000	3,888	4	144	— 0.0
PCEM	1,020	1,000	27,750	28,205	5	1,020	— 0.0
PAPER	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	410	— 0.0
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	64	— 0.0
ACICO	280	280	2,000	560	1	280	— 0.0
GGMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	460	— 0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	134	— 0.0
KPAK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	286	— 0.0
KBMMK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	— 0.0
NICBM	236	236	2,717	641	2	236	— 0.0
EQUIPMENT	60	55	6,115,096	354,758	139	56	▲ 2.0
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	99	— 0.0
GYPBUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	— 0.0
SALBOOKH	74	68	623,558	44,271	39	70	▲ 1.0
AGLTY	465	460	1,362,831	633,516	34	465	— 0.0
EDU	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	— 0.0
CLEANING	39.0	38.0	49,990	1,900	5	39.0	— 0.0
CITYGROUP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	530	— 0.0
KGL	48.5	46.0	102,000	4,751	12	46.0	▼ -2.0
KCPK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	— 0.0
HUMANISOFT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	560	— 0.0
NAFAIS	154	154	300	46	3	154	— 0.0
SAFWAN	290	290	100	29	1	290	▲ 20.0
GFC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	33.5	— 0.0
MAYADEEN	23.5	23.0	8,870,176	205,953	94	23.5	— 0.0
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	790	— 0.0
MITCC	81	80	92,350	7,438	4	81	— 0.0
UPAC	730	720	99,950	72,548	24	730	▲ 10.0
ALAFCC	216	212	8,880	1,890	3	216	▲ 6.0
MUBARRAD	64	60	2,595,175	159,830	61	63	▲ 2.0
LOGISTICS	73	71	1,347,473	96,621	39	72	▼ -1.0
SCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	86	— 0.0
GCEM	79	79	55,000	4,345	3	79	— 0.0
QCEM	71	71	100	7	1	71	▲ 5.0
FCEM	74	73	99,960	7,297	5	74	▲ 1.0
RKWC	99	94	31,600	3,014	8	99	▲ 5.0
SPEC	78	73	34,710	2,549	10	77	▼ -1.0
Industrials			21,683,474	1,684,761	512	974.15	▲ 6.50

KSH	166	166	1,000	166	1	166	— 0.0
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	64	— 0.0
PAPCO	112	110	5,500	610	3	110	▲ 2.0
CATTL	132	132	43,000	5,676	1	132	— 0.0
DANAH	70	68	632,010	43,418	29	69	— 0.0
POULT	176	176	121,818	21,440	4	176	— 0.0
FOOD	2,580	2,560	44,349	114,063	27	2,580	▲ 20.0
Consumer Goods			847,677	185,374	65	1078.01	▲ 4.37
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	— 0.0
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920	— 0
YIACO	180	180	1,005	181	2	180	▲ 10
Health Care			1,005	181	2	958.25	▲ 23.99
KCIN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	990	— 0
KHOT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	210	— 0
SULTAN	64	62	43,968	2,814	4	62	▼ -2
CABLETV	26.0	26.0	16	0	1	26.0	▼ -3
EYAS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	385	— 0
IFAHR	186	186	300	56	1	186	— 0
OULAFUEL	114	112	92,509	10,410	18	112	▼ -4
MUNTAZAHAT	84	84	58,351	4,901	3	84	▲ 1
JAZFERA	900	880	350,000	314,522	8	900	▲ 10
SOOR	114	112	41,775	4,705	8	112	▼ -2
FUTUREKID	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	110	— 0
ALNAWADI	75	75	29,412	2,206	1	75	— 0
ALRAI	146	144	4,431	636	2	146	— 0
ZIMAH	44.5	42.5	6,515,882	282,524	176	42.5	▼ -2
UFIG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	100	— 0
Mezzan	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	1,160	— 0
Consumer Services			7,136,644	622,776	222	921.34	▼ -4.02

ZAIN	355	345	1,113,501	390,113	61	350	— 0
OREDDOO	1,140	1,080	4,500	4,939	3	1,140	— 0
HITSTELEC	32.5	31.5	6,602,514	211,252	43	31.5	▼ -1
VIVA	1,060	1,000	161,520	186,611	77	1,020	▼ -20
Telecommunications			7,902,035	792,915	184	619.35	▼ -7.82
NBK	670	660	338,645	224,757	28	660	▼ -10
GBK	246	238	2,990,865	724,218	53	242	▲ -6
CBK	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	435	— 0
ABK	335	335	50,000	16,750	2	335	— 0
ALMUTAHED	440	440	50,000	22,000	3	440	— 0
KIB	194	192	112,678	21,725	6	194	— 0
BURG	340	340	51,340	17,456	6	340	▲ 5
KFIN	485	480	468,082	234,961	44	485	— 0
BOUBAYAN	400	395	201,813	80,001	22	395	— 0
AUB	186	184	540,815	99,510	20	184	— 0
ITHMR	42.0	40.0	21,100,246	861,961	241	41.5	▲ 2
WARABANK	176	174	579,205	101,359	76	176	▲ 2
Banks			26,503,689	2,404,696	501	823.17	▲ 5.01

KINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	285	— 0
GINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	670	— 0.0
AINS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	485	— 0.0
WINS	104	104	20,000	2,080	1	104	— 0.0
KUWAITRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	— 0.0
FTI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	50	— 0.0
WETHAQ	40.0	40.0	50	2	1	40.0	▲ 2.0
BKIKWT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	355	— 0.0
Insurance			20,050	2,082	2	1058.83	▲ 9.04

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Security	Trades						
	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change
SOKOUK	36.0	33.5	15074776	529,514	249	35.5	▲ 1.0
KRE	48.5	48.0	491,284	23,777	10	48.5	— 0.0
URC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	88	— 0.0
NRE	90	88	139,400	12,317	6	90	— 0.0
SRE	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	345	— 0.0
TAM	550	550	100	55	1	550	— 0.0
AREEC	138	132	795	108	2	138	— 0.0
MASSALEH	41.0	41.0	9,950	408	2	41.0	▼ -2.5
ARBAREC	29.5	29.0	558,890	16,345	12	29.0	▼ -0.5
ERESCO	55	53	568,472	30,591	14	54	▲ 1.0
MBANEE	860	850	117,410	100,799	3	860	— 0.0
INJAZZAT	76	72	40,190	2,954	3	76	— 0.0
INVESTORS	23.0	22.0	0,654,580	217,326	102	22.5	— 0.0
ILTC	28.5	27.0	1,111,485	30,855	44	28.5	▲ 1.0
ALTIJARI	78	77	250,504	19,292	9	78	▲ 1.0
SANAM	33.5	33.5	20,500	687	3	33.5	▲ 1.0
AAYANRE	68	67	145,136	9,839	7	68	▲ 1.0
AQAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	60	— 0.0
ALAQARIA	20.5	18.0	1,285,671	25,351	34	20.5	▲ 2.5
MAZAYA	110	106	2,670,012	292,510	49	110	▲ 2.0
ADNC	18.0	17.0	5,640,826	98,892	70	18.0	▲ 0.5
THEMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	— 0.0
TJARA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	35.5	— 0.0
TAAAMEER	22.5	21.5	1,806,222	40,113	65	22.0	▼ -0.5
ARKAN	94	94	11,450	1,076	3	94	▲ 5.0
ARGAN	166	164	15,313	2,529	4	166	— 0.0
ABYAR	25.5	24.5	1,090,610	42,263	37	25.0	— 0.0
MUNSHAAT	48.5	45.5	5,768,071	271,458	125	48.0	▲ 1.5
FIRSTDUBAI	48.5	48.5	621,502	29,672	35	48.5	▲ 1.5
KBT	42.5	42.0	2,702,353	114,456	64	42.5	— 0.0
REAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	146	— 0.0
MENA	24.5	22.0	1,190,669	27,986	28	24.5	▲ 1.0
ALMUDJON	31.0	30.0	3,750,801	114,109	76	30.5	▲ 0.5
MARKAZEJ	33.0	31.5	51,900	1,137	6	33.0	▼ -1.0
REMAL	23.0	22.5	787,417	25,803	16	23.0	▲ 0.5
MASHAER	95	94	23,300	2,202	3	94	▼ -5.0
Real Estate			56,199,589	2,084,325	1,082	829.17	▲ 6.97

CORPORATE EARNINGS IN KUWAIT RESILIENT IN 2015

KUWAIT: Total net profit of corporates listed on the KSE grew by 2.4 percent Y-o-Y, as earnings improved to KD 1,712 million in FY 2015, despite falling oil prices that had an apparent impact on the overall economic growth and government budgets. Net profit of banks drove the increase, as earnings grew 7 percent Y-o-Y, after growing by over 19 percent the year before. Consumer services followed, as total earnings in the sector grew by c.100 percent (KD 55 million) in FY 2015. The Oil & Gas sector swung to a loss during 2015 due to sectoral headwinds, while Telecoms & Industrials witnessed declines of 20.6 percent & 15.2 percent respectively.

ROEs in key sectors stable

Return on equity (ROE) ratios of KSE listed entities remained stable overall in FY 2015 at 7.5 percent as against the previous year. On a sectoral basis, key sectors such as Banking, Real Estate and Financial Services were able to improve their ROEs while declines in profitability pushed Telecom and Industrial ROEs lower in 2015. For Banks, the ROE continued to improve to 9.8 percent, pointing towards higher profitability and value to shareholders.

Valuations at 5 year lows; Banking remains

price index in 2015, has pushed dividend yields higher at 3.6 percent. Stock prices have slipped by over 7 percent YTD, which would imply that valuations are more attractive now than Dec-2015. Nevertheless, we expect Q1-16 earnings to set the tone for full year 2016, as we expect corporates to be more cautious on their capex spending, and as they look to optimize cost side initiatives.

Net profits grow

The total reported net profit by companies listed on the KSE grew by 2.4 percent Y-o-Y, as close to 90 percent of the companies released their full year earnings. Net profit improved to KD 1,712 million in FY 2015 from KD 1,671 million in the previous year. Overall corporate profitability was able to post moderate growth despite falling oil prices impacting the economy and government budgets.

Net profits of Banks which accounted for more than half of the FY 2015 total corporate profits at the KSE continued to grow, as earnings in the sector grew by 7 percent Y-o-Y, after growing by over 19 percent the year before. Consumer Services was another key sector which contributed to the growth in total net profits

KAMCO INVESTMENT RESEARCH

the top 5 sectors in the index which contribute over 85 percent of the market capitalization of the index grew Y-o-Y in FY 2015.

Banks added approximately KD 56 million of profits in FY 2015, after adding over KD 129.5 million in 2014. Heavy weight local banks NBK and KFH were able to increase their profitability during the financial year. NBK corporate profits improved by 8 percent y-o-y, as one-off losses during the year was more than offset by the gain of sale of associate - International Bank of Qatar. The second largest bank in the sector KFH, saw its profits jump 15 percent as against 2014, driven by net finance income, which reportedly grew from KD 363.4 million in 2014 to KD 392.8 million in FY 2015.

Real Estate, another key sector in the index, improved by 2.6 percent as compared to the previous year as heavyweight Mabane was able post stable profits in FY 2015 (+0.7 percent Y-o-Y) from stable occupancy and rental trends, while NREC and Tamdeen were able to post significant Y-o-Y gains of 47 percent and 33 percent respectively. Most larger players in the sector were able to improve their profitability during FY 2015.

The Telecom sector profitability was pulled down by Zain which saw its net profit fall by 20.6 percent in FY 2015 as compared to the previous year and reported KD 154 million in net profits, as tougher domestic competition, service interruptions and higher costs in Iraq and FX volatility weighed on the bottom line.

Viva was however able to post a net profit growth of 6.4 percent Y-o-Y in FY 2015, as the company reported net profits of approximately KD 43 million. Key driver for the improvement in profitability was an increase in customer base, which reportedly grew by 2 percent Y-o-Y to reach 2.5 million subscribers in FY 2015.

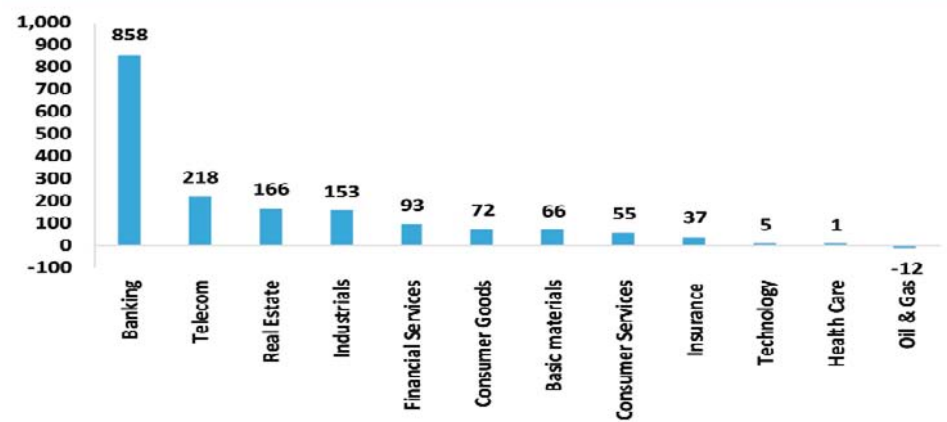
In the Industrial space, large cap Agility was able to post a net profit growth of 5 percent Y-o-Y in FY 2015 at KD 53 million, despite a 6 percent yearly decline in revenues, as revenue fell at the company's Global Integrated Logistics unit due to challenging market conditions. The largest cement company in the KSE, Kuwait Cement, was able to post an earnings growth of over 11.3 percent Y-o-Y in 2015.

An analysis of the return on equity ratios of corporates in the KSE, shows that corporate profitability remained stable overall in FY 2015 at 7.5 percent as against the previous year, while marginally off its five year peak of 7.8 percent attained in 2013. On a sectoral basis, key sectors such as Banking, Real Estate and Financial Services were able to improve their ROE ratios while lower profitability pushed Telecom and Industrial ROEs lower in 2015. Banking sector ROE improved by 200 bps in 2015 to 9.8 percent, while the ROE ratio of Financial Services improved by 800 bps, as the sector continues to improve. The Real Estate sector ROE remained stable at 6.0 percent as against the previous year, as developers look to attain a balance between their rental and development portfolios.

Banking Sector ROE

The banking sector has shown the most stable Return on Equity over the past five years with minimal fluctuations. Banking earnings has got a

KSE Sectoral Earnings - 2015 (KWD Mn)



Source: Kuwait Stock Exchange, KAMCO Research

boost from improving economic fundamentals primarily by way of projects announced by the government. Moreover, despite the fall in oil revenues, the government continues to announce new projects in critical sectors. In addition, non-core earnings for banks have shown good improvement recently further supporting the bottom-line.

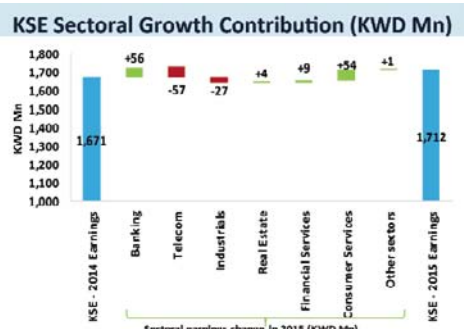
Looking at the market at the end of 2015, based on FY 2015 earnings and balance sheets, the KSE was trading at historical lows both in terms of P/E and P/B. The KSE was trading at a P/E ratio of 15.3x trailing earnings as of Dec-2015, as the ratio declined steadily over the last 5 - 6 years, as investor sentiment remained negative during the period.

On a sectoral basis, despite the recovery in Financial Services in terms of earnings, the sector continues to have the highest P/E at 22.6x, followed by the Industrials sector which saw its earnings decline by over 15 percent, and contributed to a higher P/E ratio of 22.9x. At the end of 2015, Telecoms traded at the lowest trailing sectoral P/E ratios as against other key sectors at 15.3x, as the sector fell out of favor from

15, which alleviates concerns of being overpriced on a relative and historical basis. The P/B ratio for the index declined from 1.8x in 2010 1.5x in 2013.

On a sectoral basis, all key sectors such as Banking, Telecoms, Real Estate and Industrials were trading at multi-year low P/B ratios as of Dec - 2015, as market sentiment turned negative in 2015, largely due to oil market concerns. By the end of 2015, Banking was trading at 1.5x P/B and remained more popular amongst investors, while Real Estate was trading at a discount to book value at 0.8x. Stock prices have slipped by over 7 percent YTD, which would imply that valuations are more attractive now than Dec-2015.

To analyze how the markets valued different sectors and sectoral profitability, we looked at the relationship between ROE and P/B across sectors. As of end 2015, Banking remained the most preferred sector as per investors as it is priced at a P/B of 1.5x, as investors continued to reward its highest ROE amongst peers (FY 2015: 9.8 percent). The Telecom sector followed despite a tough 2015, while the market continues to remain on the sidelines to see further



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2015 earnings breakup (%)	Y-o-Y (%)
Net Profit/Loss (KWD Mn)								
Banks	609	635	656	673	802	858	50.1%	7.0%
Telecom	1141	647	322	311	275	218	12.7%	-20.6%
Industrials	117	91	122	186	181	153	9.0%	-15.2%
Real Estate	-143	-95	88	174	161	166	9.7%	2.6%
Financial Services	-240	-89	-3	62	84	93	5.4%	10.7%
Consumer Services	-50	-10	37	52	0	55	3.2%	17978.1%
Consumer Goods	49	45	36	63	68	72	4.2%	5.1%
Insurance	25	22	30	27	25	37	2.2%	48.7%
Oil & Gas	18	-7	12	19	2	-12	0.7%	645.1%
Basic Materials	9	0	5	57	62	66	3.9%	7.4%
Health Care	10	11	11	10	8	1	0.1%	-85.4%
Technology	2	-6	3	-4	3	5	0.3%	89.1%
Kuwait Earnings	1547	1244	1320	1629	1671	1712	100.0%	2.4%

Source: KSE, KAMCO Research

most preferred, while Real Estate trades below book:

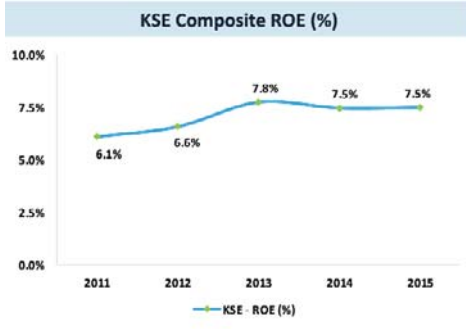
KSE is trading at historical lows both in terms of P/E and P/B. The KSE was trading at a P/E ratio of 15.3x trailing earnings as of Dec-2015, as the ratio declined steadily over the last 5-6 years, driven by negative investor sentiment. The P/B ratio for the index was 1.2x in 2015, as of Dec-15, which alleviates concerns of being overpriced on a relative and historical basis. Banking remained the most preferred sector by year end 2015, as it traded at a P/B of 1.5x. Real Estate traded at a discount to book value, at 0.8x, as investors continued to remain on the sidelines with respect to the sector.

Dividend yields have turned more attractive; Q1-16 corporate earnings to set the tone for 2016:

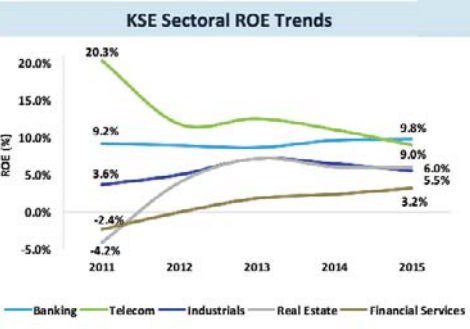
The decline of over 14.1 percent in the KSE

during the year, as total earnings in the sector grew by KD 55 million in FY 2015, after reporting only KD 0.3 million in the previous year. Other key sectors in the index which grew were Financial Services which saw its profits increase by 10.7 percent Y-o-Y, while Real Estate earnings went up by 2.6 percent as compared to the previous year. Amongst the larger sectors which constitute the index, Telecoms witnessed a significant drop in earnings, declining by 20.6 percent as compared to 2014, while Industrials saw double digit declines as well, receding by 15.2 percent Y-o-Y. The Oil & Gas sector continued to witness deep cuts in corporate profitability from 2014 and swung to a loss of KD 12 million in FY 2015, as the sector witnessed significant headwinds and pressures emanating oil prices declines of over 40 percent in FY 2015.

In terms of sectoral earnings trends, 3 out of



Source: Kuwait Stock Exchange, KAMCO Research



investors, due to sector headwinds while Banking and Real Estate traded at 21.7x and 19.0x its 2015 earnings.

Valuations at 5 year lows

Moreover, we also looked at the P/B ratio to corroborate our view, and to improve our analysis across companies with different capital structures listed in the KSE. Based on our analysis of data from KSE and reported book value based on company balance sheets, the KSE is trading at historical lows even on a trailing P/B basis. The P/B ratio for the index was 1.2x in 2015 as of Dec-

progress of the Real Estate and Industrial sectors.

As a result of the decline of over 14.1 percent in the KSE price index in 2015, dividend yields increased from 3.3 percent in 2014 to 3.6 percent at the end of 2015. Dividends yields increased despite a 3 percent - 4 percent decline in absolute dividends paid out by companies. Telecom was the most attractive sector on a trailing dividend yield basis at 6.5 percent, followed by Industrials at 4.8 percent. Nevertheless the further decline in the KSE price index in 2016, has pushed the dividend yields higher, and the market looks more attractive on a yield basis.

OECD CHIEF: PANAMA ‘WILLING TO COOPERATE FULLY’ OVER SCANDAL

INDICATOR FLAGS EASING GROWTH IN KEY ECONOMIES

TOKYO: OECD head Angel Gurría said yesterday that Panama is “willing to cooperate fully” with his organization in the wake of a massive leak of financial data that has sent shockwaves around the world.

Gurría told a press conference in Tokyo that Isabel De Saint Malo, vice president of the Central American country, called him last week to express cooperation with the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Panama is scrambling to avert redesignation as a tax haven that facilitates money laundering after the disclosure of off-shore dealings of many of the world's wealthy, famous and infamous in the so-called Panama Papers revelations.

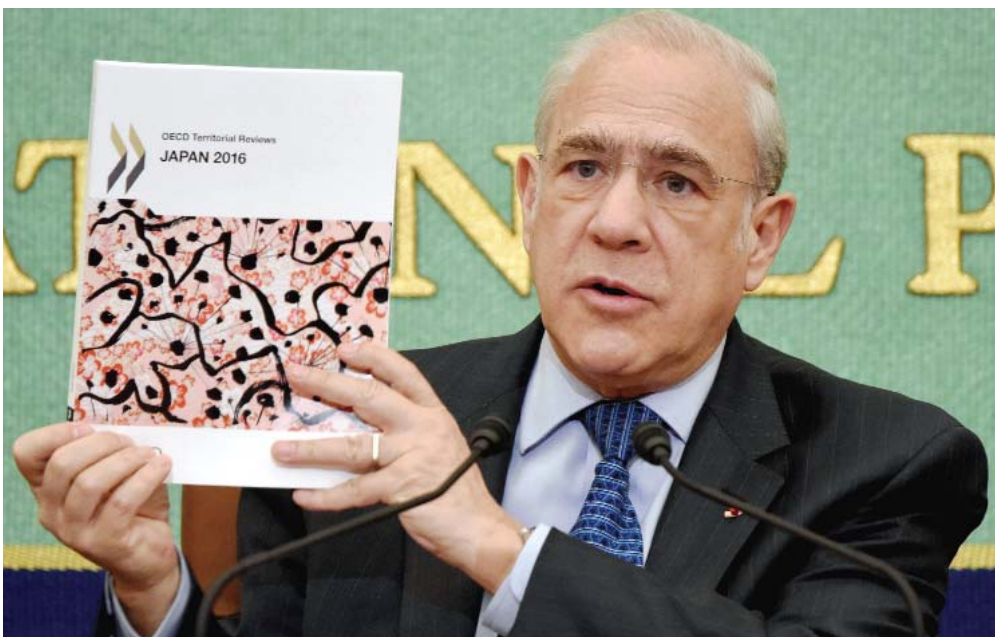
The scandal, which has already caused the Icelandic prime minister to resign, came when millions of documents covering nearly 40 years of business were leaked from the archives of the Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca. “I have to say that the vice president of Panama called me last week and she expressed the government is willing to cooperate fully with the OECD,” Gurría said.

“My expectation is that this very unfortunate event may trigger a reaction by the government of Panama to fully join the rest of the world in this exercise about transparency,” said Gurría, who is OECD secretary-general. “I think this event will help us to understand that the move towards transparency is not going to stop, that there is no reverse,” he said. His comment comes after the Panamanian vice president, who is also the country's foreign minister, told AFP last week in an exclusive interview that her country will deepen talks with the OECD on sharing tax information.

“We are going to establish technical-level dialogue between Panama and the OECD specifically on exchanging information,” she said.

Growth easing

Growth is seen easing off in major advanced economies, the OECD said yesterday, with the outlook continuing to deteriorate in the United States and Britain while the German economy is losing steam. The Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said its monthly leading economic indicator, a measure designed to



TOKYO: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Secretary General Angel Gurría holds up a copy of the Japan 2016 OECD Territorial Review during a press conference in Tokyo yesterday. — AFP

flag turning points in the world economy, showed signs of stabilisation in China, India and France.

“The CLIs (composite leading indicators) continue to point to easing growth in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan, with a similar outlook now expected in Germany and Italy,” it said in a statement. “In India and France, growth momentum is stabilising. Signs of growth stabilisation are also emerging in China and Canada,” it said. On an index where 100 represents the long-term average, the OECD said the reading for OECD countries as a whole edged down to 99.6 in February from 99.7 the month before.

The eurozone economy remained at 100.5 in its latest review of conditions, with the indicator for France stable at 100.9 while it dipped for Italy from 100.8 to 100.7. The US reading edged lower, to 98.9 from 99.0, while the UK reading dipped to 99.1 from 99.2. Germany's indicator dropped to 99.7 from 99.8.

China stood at 98.4, unchanged from the previous month. Brazil's reading remained at 97.7 while Russia stabilized at 98.2. — Reuters

HAS BREXIT SQUASHED STERLING’S BOUNCE?

LONDON: Whether it is Brexit nerves or just a bad run on shaky financial markets, sterling is on course for its first April loss in 12 years, boding ill for the run-in to the referendum on EU membership in June. While the pound has proved more robust since a collapse at the end of February, and it rose again yesterday, it is down just over 1 percent on the Bank of England's trade-weighted measure of its strength so far this month.

That compares with a consistent run of strong performances in the first month of the UK financial year that stretches back more than a decade through the worst banking storms since the 1930s. Traders and analysts have blamed the pound's weakness on nerves ahead of the June 23 referendum on European Union membership, poorer expectations for global growth or a current account deficit that ballooned to 7 percent of economic output at the end of 2015.

“Even through the financial crisis and the run-up to the May 2015 General Election, sterling has consistently appreciated against the dollar during April,” said Kamal Sharma, an FX strategist with Bank of America Merrill Lynch in London.

“A combination of the end of the UK tax year and a heavy month of dividend pay-

ments by UK corporates are factors.” Analysts say that either suggests sterling may have the potential to recover before the end of the month from current multi-year lows. Or it could signal worse is to come in May and June, once the support for sterling that normally shows up in April evaporates.

The market's most-watched positioning data, from the US Commodity Futures Trading Commission, on Friday showed investors added to bets against sterling in the first week of this month.

But senior figures on banks' FX sales desks warn that few institutional investors have as yet hedged against the risk of a Brexit, as leaving the EU is known. A Reuters poll on Friday suggested the pound would fall 7 percent in the immediate aftermath of a vote to leave. Some banks say it could be closer to 20 percent.

Opinion polls suggest the vote is too close to call, though bookmakers' odds tend to favour Britain staying in. “One thing that is clear is that institutional money is not prepared,” said the head of institutional currency sales at one of the top six FX trading banks by volume. “At some point they are going to have to take a decision and we may see a real impact on sterling at that point.” — Reuters

OBAMA’S APPROVAL RISES WITH IMPROVING ECONOMY

WASHINGTON: As many in the United States hold their noses in the search for the next president, they're increasingly warming to the president they already have.

Buoyed by some good economic news and a surge of goodwill from his base of supporters, President Barack Obama is seeing his approval rating rise. That puts Obama, who leaves office in January, in a position to remain a force in the political debate at a point in his final term when some others faded into the background. For the first time since 2013, half of those questioned approve of the job Obama is doing in office, according to an Associated Press-GfK poll. The survey found the apparent uptick in approval extended across issues, including foreign affairs, immigration and, most notably the economy, where people said they felt slightly better about their own prospects and Obama's stewardship.

Asked about their opinion of Obama more generally, those surveyed were more likely to give him a positive rating than any of the candidates for president, Republican or Democrat.

Terry Trudeau, 66, said he preferred Obama to “all of them” running for the White House. “One of the qualities I like is he's been able to work with other countries and make deals,” Trudeau said, citing Obama's climate change pacts with China as an example. “Donald Trump will never be able to do that. He would try to bully them.”

Obama's numbers remain modest. Compared with his predecessors, he's well above Republican George W. Bush, who had about a 30 percent approval rating at this point in his presidency, but below Democrat Bill Clinton's roughly 60 percent, according to polls conducted by Gallup. Still, where each of those

second-term presidents largely sat on the sidelines during the races to replace them, Obama is poised to stay in the game.

Approval ratings generally are tied to how people feel about the economy. Obama has enjoyed and promoted a steady trickle of positive economic news. The survey showed people were slightly more likely to describe the economy as good and slightly more optimistic about their own financial situations than they were in February.

Still, 54 percent characterize the economy as poor. While the poll found an increase in approval among Democrats and with people under 50, there is no evidence that Republican opposition is thawing or that the president has become a less polarizing figure. Only about 1 in 10 Republicans expressed a positive opinion of Obama or the job he's doing. — AP

FORD FUSION AUTONOMOUS RESEARCH VEHICLES USE LIDAR SENSOR TECHNOLOGY NO LIGHTS? NO PROBLEM!

DUBAI: Recently, under the cover of night, a Ford Fusion Hybrid autonomous research vehicle with no headlights on navigated along lonely desert roads, performing a task that would be perilous for a human driver.

Driving in pitch black at Ford Arizona Proving Ground marks the next step on the company's journey to delivering fully autonomous vehicles to customers around the globe. It's an important development, in that it shows that even without cameras, which rely on light, Ford's LiDAR - working with the car's virtual driver software - is robust enough to steer flawlessly around winding roads. While it's ideal to have all three modes of sensors - radar, cameras and LiDAR - the latter can function independently on roads without stoplights.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data has found the passenger vehicle occupant fatality rate during dark hours to be about three times higher than the daytime rate.

"Thanks to LiDAR, the test cars aren't reliant on the sun shining, nor cameras detecting painted white lines on the asphalt," says Jim McBride, Ford technical leader for autonomous vehicles. "In fact, LiDAR allows autonomous cars to drive just as well in the dark as they do in the light of day."

To navigate in the dark, Ford self-driving cars use high-resolution 3D maps - complete with information about the road, road markings, geography, topography and landmarks like signs, buildings and trees. The vehicle uses LiDAR pulses to pinpoint itself on the map in

real time. Additional data from radar gets fused with that of LiDAR to complete the full sensing capability of the autonomous vehicle.

For the desert test, Ford engineers, sporting night-vision goggles, monitored the Fusion from inside and outside the vehicle. Night vision allowed them to see the LiDAR doing its job in the form of a grid of infrared laser beams projected around the vehicle as it drove past. LiDAR sensors shoot out 2.8 million laser pulses a second to precisely scan the surrounding environment.

"Inside the car, I could feel it moving, but when I looked out the window, I only saw darkness," describes Wayne Williams, a Ford research scientist and engineer. "As I rode in the back seat, I was following the car's progression in real time using computer monitoring. Sure enough, it stayed precisely on track along those winding roads."

After more than a decade of Ford autonomous vehicle research, the company is dedicated to achieving fully autonomous driving capability, which, as defined by SAE International Level 4, does not require the driver to intervene and take control of the vehicle.

This year, Ford will triple its autonomous vehicle test fleet - bringing the number to about 30 self-driving Fusion Hybrid sedans for testing on roads in California, Arizona and Michigan. These developments are key elements of Ford Smart Mobility, the plan to take Ford to the next level in connectivity, mobility, autonomous vehicles, the customer experience, and data and analytics.



KUWAIT: United Real Estate Company (URC) Chairman Tariq Abdul Salam addresses the Annual General Assembly Meeting at the Chairmanis Club in KIPCO tower.



URC REPORTS 8.3% RISE IN NET PROFIT FOR 2015

ABDUL SALAM: 34% INCREASE IN NET OPERATING PROFIT OF KD 23 MILLION

KUWAIT: United Real Estate Company (URC), Kuwait's leading development and property services company, today announced an 8.3 percent increase in net profit of KD 8 million for the 2015 year at its Annual General Assembly Meeting.

The company's Chairman Tariq Abdul Salam also announced a 34 percent increase in net operating profit of KD 23 million for the year. The Company's general assembly meeting took place at the Chairman's Club in KIPCO tower, and was followed by URC's annual Shafafiyah (transparency) Investor's Forum, which included a review of the past five years, in addition to highlighting the outlook for 2016 to 2020.

Abdul Salam said URC had performed strongly despite market challenges and achieved a 52 percent increase in the company's total assets over the last five years, yielding a cumulative value of KD 554 million. The company's revenues also rose 154 percent since 2010 to reach KD 61 million last year.

"In 2014, URC forecast the growth of the com-

pany's revenues and profits and this has been reinforced by the company's end year results in 2015, yielding a 17 percent increase in revenues to reach KD 61 million, and a 34 percent rise in operating profit to reach KD 23 million, compared with 2014. Additionally, net profit increased by 8.3 percent from the same period last year, to reach KD 8 million."

"Our focus has been to consistently apply our strategic long term vision to yield steady, positive financial results year on year, and develop a range of unique development projects across the GCC and MENA region. The company has achieved sustainable returns by structuring a diversified portfolio of assets and building a balanced source of income. Moreover, URC took a number of steps in 2015 to support future expansion and development plans which has helped to open new strategic partnerships with investors and real estate professionals in the region.

The company's continued strategy to build the capacity of URC's subsidiaries, which specialize in

different areas including property and facilities management, contracting and building, construction and project management, has led to an increase of 43 percent in contracting and services revenue, as compared with the same period in 2014, to reach KD 12 million, and which the company plans to double in the coming year."

Ahmad Kasem, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of URC added, "In 2015, we completed several projects including 'Raouche View at 1090', a luxury high rise building situated overlooking the famous Raouche rocks in Beirut, Lebanon, 'Aswar Residences', a 75 unit residential community in New Cairo, and 'Abdali Mall', a 56,500 square meter, market leading entertainment and retail shopping destination in Amman, Jordan, set to open its doors next month."

"URC's outlook for 2016 to 2020 is for continued growth and profitability with a focus on continuing to diversify the company's capacity to take advantage of emerging development opportunities in Kuwait as well as the MENA region.

GULF BANK'S 2016 AL-DANAH PRIZE DRAWS

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank is happy to announce the remaining dates for its 2016 Al-Danah prizes draws. This year's multi-million Kuwaiti dinar prize draw line-up includes exciting daily draws (two KD 1,000 winners per working day), as well as Al-Danah's changed quarterly draws, now offering a single cash prize every quarter.



Al-Danah's first quarterly draw was held on 31 March with one winner of KD 200,000. The second Al-Danah quarterly draw is due to be held on 30 June with a prize of KD 250,000 and the third quarterly draw will be on 29 September with one prize of KD500,000. The final quarterly Al-Danah draw in 2016, for the top prize of KD1,000,000 will be held on 5 January 2017. As you will note, each quarterly prize draw now offers one major prize instead of three prizes as in previous years.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah loyalty chances program is different from every other chance program in Kuwait. Uniquely, the program transfers all the 'chances to win' gained by an Al-Danah customer at the end of the previous year to the following year. This means that all the chances gained by Al-Danah customers in 2015 have now been moved into 2016 and

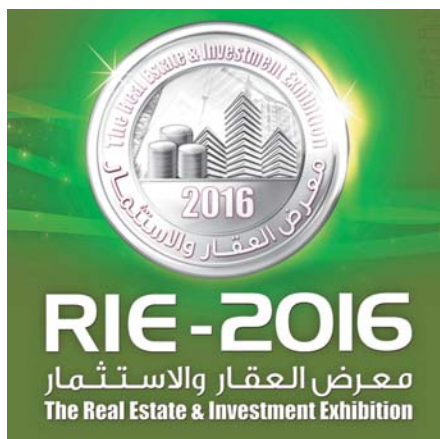
have been added onto all the new chances the customer gains this year.

Another feature is that for every KD100 a customer is rewarded with one chance, and that chance is increased by one on a daily basis as long as the customer maintains a minimum balance of KD 200. The more a customer deposits into their account, the more chances to win they gain on a daily basis.

Al-Danah also offers a number of special services to customers, including the Al-Danah Deposit Only ATM card which allows account holders deposit their money at their convenience, and the Al-Danah calculator to help customers work out their chances of becoming an Al-Danah winner.

Gulf Bank's Al-Danah account is open to Kuwaitis and all residents of Kuwait. Customers who open an account and/or deposit more will be entered into the draw within two days. To take part in the Al-Danah 2016 upcoming draws, customers must have an Al-Danah account containing at least KD 200.

To take part in the Al-Danah draws, prospective customers can open an account at any one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches, transfer on line using the bank's bilingual website at www.e-gulfbank.com, or call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805. Information about Al-Danah and its winners can also be found by logging on to www.e-gulfbank.com/aldanahwinners.



Mohamed Fargahly Thabet

TOP REAL ESTATE GROUP LAUNCHES TURNKEY PROJECTS IN THAILAND

KUWAIT: Top Real Estate Group announced the official launch of some outstanding projects at different areas in Thailand. The executive manager of the group, Mohamed Fargahly Thabet stated "The launch of these projects is based on the Group's continuous interest to provide the best real estate opportunities in the international real estate market in different areas while ensuring real returns for the investor whether rent yields or capital growth returns. Fargahly affirmed that "the group is committed to provide the best offers to its clients to achieve peace of mind and successful investment. The group does not save efforts to look for the best projects in the target markets through business relations with some major real estate developers in such markets to ensure timely handover of projects and their quality, prime locations, prices and yields.

He added that "Top Real Estate Group entered into contract with Sansiri Construction Corporation which is one of the largest real estate companies in the Kingdom of Thailand with great experience of more than 31 years. Sansiri Corporation has been listed in Thailand stock exchange market since 1996 with capital of about Thai Bat 27 billion (Approx \$850 million)". When asked about the projects contracted by the Group, Fargahly stated "We will launch six major projects including two major projects in Bangkok near the prominent touristic districts and

hospitals visited by many Arab people in addition to the launch of seaside project in Pattaya and three different projects in Phuket appropriate for different categories". He added that "There are different types of units offered within such projects including studio to four bedrooms and hall with areas ranging from 35 SM to 266 SM at prices starting at KD 23,000 and the flats shall be handed fully furnished with luxurious furniture selected by the client from amongst various options available with the company".

Fargahly added that "the offered projects are integrated projects as Sansiri is specialized in turnkey residential compound projects. Each project contains round the clock security service in addition to swimming pools, gym, integrated hotel service including housekeeping as well as integrated health facilities including sauna, Jacuzzi and barbeque and family party's areas. Fargahly added that "the group offers rent yields for flats at 6-7% under guaranteed contracts for two years". He affirmed that "the Thai market is much secured regarding rent in view of its great touristic capabilities and availability of touristic attractions from all over the world". Fargahly stated that "the group shall offer special discount to its clients during the exhibition period while the developer will bear all registration and title fees of any unit purchased during the exhibition period in view of the Group's belief that investor is at the top of our priorities."



BURGAN BANK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF YAWMI ACCOUNT

KUWAIT: Burgan Bank announced yesterday the names of the lucky winners of its Yawmi account draw, each taking home a prize of KD 5,000.

The lucky winners for the daily draws took home a cash-prize of KD 5,000 each, and they are:

1. JASSIM MOHAMMAD AHMAD AL ALI
2. MERWEH HUMOUD TAHER AL SHAMMARI
3. AHMAD ABDULLAH IBRAHEEM AL FAY-LAKAWI
4. FATMA JAFAR MOHAMMED HUSSAIN MARAFI
5. HAMAIID MESALAM ALI AL MASHMOUM

To further add to the anticipation of Yawmi account customers, Burgan Bank now offers a Quarterly Draw with more chances to win higher rewards, entitling one lucky customer to win KD 125,000 every three months. The Yawmi Account now offers Daily and quarterly Draws,

the Quarterly Draw requires customers to maintain a minimum amount of KD 500 in their account for 2 months prior to draw date. Additionally, every KD 10 in the account, will entitle customers to one chance of winning. If the account balance is KD 500 and above, the account holder will be qualified for both the quarterly and daily draws.

Burgan Bank encourages everyone to open a Yawmi account and/or increase their deposit to maximize their chances to becoming a winner. The more customers deposit, the higher the chances they receive of winning. For more information on opening a Yawmi account or about the new quarterly draw, customers are urged to visit their nearest Burgan Bank branch and receive all the details, or simply call the bank's Call Center at 1804080 where customer service representatives will be delighted to assist with any questions on the Yawmi account or any of the bank's products and services.

BRAND REPUTATION COSTS \$200,000 TO REPAIR



Konstantin Voronkov

DUBAI: 57% of companies globally, admit that the information security incidents they experienced in the last year had a negative impact on their reputation. The average cost of brand damage incurred per incident by small and medium-sized businesses was more than \$8,000, while the damage to enterprises exceeded \$200,000. These were the findings of a study by Kaspersky Lab and B2B International, with over 5,500 IT specialists from 26 countries around the world, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, surveyed in 2015.

In a highly competitive environment, successful businesses are built on more than just efficiency and product or service quality. Having the trust of customers and partners can yield higher profits, and a spotless brand reputation plays a key role in

establishing that trust. The loss of consumer confidence in a business often leads to lower profits, and sometimes to bankruptcy.

Reputational damage depends directly on whether or not the incident becomes public knowledge. 22% of the global respondents stated that information about an incident at their company had leaked to the media and been made public. The extent of reputational damage can be measured by the amount a company has to spend to restore its image. Every fourth company was forced to seek assistance from external PR consultants. Interestingly, over the last three years, businesses have begun to pay more attention to a positive reputation.

"It doesn't matter how big or small your company is - a damaged reputation can

harm any business equally," says Konstantin Voronkov, Head of Endpoint Product Management, Kaspersky Lab. "In these circumstances, it is important to take all possible measures to ensure information security. Complex multi-tier protection of every element of the corporate IT infrastructure will help safeguard the company from both information leaks caused internally and hackers penetrating the network."

To provide multi-level information security, Kaspersky Lab offers a portfolio of solutions and services for every element of the corporate infrastructure. It includes integrated solutions such as Kaspersky Endpoint Security and Kaspersky Small Office Security, and specialized solutions such as Kaspersky Security for Mobile, Kaspersky Fraud Prevention, and Kaspersky

Security for Virtualization, while extended support services can make protection even more robust.

About Kaspersky Lab

Kaspersky Lab is one of the world's fastest-growing cyber security companies and the largest that is privately-owned. The company is ranked among the world's top four vendors of security solutions for end-point users (IDC, 2014). Since 1997 Kaspersky Lab has been an innovator in cyber security and provides effective digital security solutions and threat intelligence for large enterprises, SMBs and consumers. Kaspersky Lab is an international company, operating in almost 200 countries and territories across the globe, providing protection for over 400 million users worldwide.

UK'S DAILY MAIL IN EARLY TALKS OVER BID FOR YAHOO

The owner of Britain's Daily Mail newspaper and media group is in early talks over a bid for the ailing US internet company Yahoo. A spokesman for the DailyMail.com said Sunday that, given the success of its site and Elite Daily, it has "been in discussions with a number of parties who are potential bidders." He said the talks are in a very early stage and there is no certainty any transaction will take place.

Yahoo did not respond to a request for comment. The Wall Street Journal first reported that the Daily Mail was speaking with private equity firms about an offer.

Yahoo is under intense pressure to revive its revenue growth and activist investor Starboard Value, a big stakeholder, is pushing for a change in leadership. Earlier this year, Yahoo cut 15 percent of its workforce, 1,700 employees, along with branches of the company that CEO Marissa Mayer deemed unworthy of continued support. It pulled the plug on an online video hub that had once been envisioned as Yahoo's answer to Netflix and YouTube.

Starboard last month announced its intent to overthrow Mayer and the company board. It is the third attempted coup at Yahoo since 2008, all led by different shareholders frustrated with attempts to turn the company around.

Starboard nominated nine alternative candidates to oppose Mayer and Yahoo's other directors at the company's annual shareholder meeting in June. Yahoo's business has declined under Mayer even as advertisers

pour more money into digital marketing, with most of it flowing to rivals Google and Facebook.

Yahoo going down

Shares of Yahoo have fallen about 30 percent since the end of 2014, increasing pressure on Mayer to take more drastic measures. The Daily Mail is one of the 10 most visited newspaper websites in the world according to the Pew Research Center. Founded in 1896 by brothers Alfred and Harold Harmsworth, the newspaper has been a family run operation throughout its history. It has relied on a tabloid mix of conservative political views and celebrity gossip to drive sales, and has invested heavily in the internet.

In 2015, the group reported adjusted pre-tax profit of 281 million pounds on revenue of 1.85 billion pounds, with 49 percent of revenue coming from abroad. The group includes DMG Events, which puts on business exhibitions and conferences around the world and Euromoney Institutional Investor PLC, which produces business-oriented publications such as Euromoney and Metal Bulletin. It also holds stakes in firms such as the Zoopla real estate website in the UK

"Given the group's financial strength, we are well placed to take advantage of the changes sweeping through the media and business information markets," Chairman Harold Harmsworth said in the group's 2015 annual report. In the United States, the publication is known as the DailyMail.com. — AP



WASHINGTON D.C.: A sign covers the door to MedStar Georgetown University Hospital. The hackers who seriously disrupted operations at a large hospital chain for days and held its data hostage broke into a computer server left vulnerable on its corporate network despite urgent public warnings since at least 2007 that it needed to be fixed with a simple update. — AP

NEWER TYPE OF RANSOMWARE IS HARBINGER OF DANGER

NO HUMAN INTERACTION IS NECESSARY

WASHINGTON: An unusual strain of virus-like hacker software that exploits computer server vulnerabilities without requiring human interaction is a leading example of a new generation of "ransomware," according to a new report by Cisco Systems Inc.

Hackers use such software to target large-scale networks and hold data hostage in exchange for bigger payments. Such a strain, known as Samas or samsam, hit the MedStar Health Inc. hospital chain last month. In such attacks, hackers target backup files and records, encrypting them to make them an unreadable gobbledygook of characters. To regain access, users without additional safe backups who don't want to lose critical files often pay the ransom, typically \$10,000 to \$15,000 for an entire network or hundreds to a thousand or so dollars for a single computer.

The ability to demand payment in bitcoin, a difficult-to-trace virtual currency not controlled by any country, was "basically the birth of ransomware" and has helped drive its success since the currency's introduction in 2009, said Craig Williams, a senior technical leader at Cisco's Talos security research group.

How does it hack

Samas exploits vulnerabilities giving hackers a way into JBoss application servers that are frequently used by some of the largest corporations. Once inside, the hackers sometimes implant a tool that steals credentials, allowing it to spread through the system, and encrypt scores of digital files along the way.

Ransomware has become a new targeted attack, with thousands of variants emerging over the last six months, said Dmitri Alperovitch, co-founder and chief technology officer of CrowdStrike Inc. Most ransomware still requires a human to click a link or open an infected email attachment, but Cisco's report warned that "the age of self-propagating ransomware, or cryptoworms, is right around the corner." Worms are generally virus-like infections that are programmed to spread automatically, without human interaction.

The semi-autonomous nature of this ransomware means that defenses, such as maintaining updated and patched systems and safe backups, are more predictable than teaching users to safely use the Internet. Ransomware has become an increasing threat over the last six months, with reported cases on pace to beat last year's numbers.

Last year's 2,453 reports of ransomware hackings to the FBI totaled a reported loss of \$24.1 million, making up nearly one-third of the complaints over the past decade. They also represented 41 percent of the \$57.6 mil-

lion in reported losses since 2005. Such losses are significantly higher than any paid ransoms because companies routinely include

remediation costs, lost productivity, legal fees and sometimes even the price of lost data in their estimates. — AP

WHY YOU MIGHT SOON TEXT ROBOTS AS OFTEN AS YOUR FRIENDS

SAN FRANCISCO: The robots are coming ... to help run your life, or sell you stuff, at an online texting service near you.

In coming months, people who use Facebook's Messenger app, Microsoft's Skype and Canada's Kik for online chats can expect to find new automated assistants offering information and services at a variety of businesses. These messaging "chatbots" are basically software that's capable of human-like conversation - and of doing some simple jobs once reserved for actual people. Google and other companies are reportedly working on similar ideas.

In Asia, such software butlers are already part of the landscape. When Washington, D.C., attorney Samantha Guo visited China recently, Guo said she was amazed at how extensively her friends used bots and similar technology on the texting service WeChat to pay for meals, order movie tickets and even send each other gifts. "It was mind-blowing," said Guo, 31. US services lag way behind, she added. Online messaging has become routine for most people, offering more immediacy than email or voice calls, said Michael Wolf, a media and technology consultant. Messaging services are now growing faster than traditional online social platforms like Facebook or Twitter, according to research by Xpert's firm, Activate.

And experts say messaging bots can handle a wider range of tasks than apps offered by retailers and other consumer businesses. In part, that's because bots can recognize a variety of spoken or typed phrases, where apps force you to choose from options on a drop-down menu. Reaching a chatbot can be as simple as clicking a link in an online ad or scanning a boxy bar code with a smartphone's camera; a special-purpose app requires a download and often a new account sign-up.

"Bots are the new apps," Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella said last month. Microsoft has just announced created new programming tools for businesses to build bots that will interact with customers on Skype, the Internet voice, video and messaging service Microsoft owns.

Who will follow suit

Facebook is widely expected to unveil similar tools for its Messenger chat service at the company's annual software conference starting Tuesday. It's already partnered with a few online retailers and transportation companies so that consumers can use Messenger to check the status of a clothing purchase from online retailer Zulily, order car service from Uber or get a boarding pass from KLM

Royal Dutch Airlines. At those services, automated chatbots handle some interactions, with supervision from human operators. Similarly, Facebook has been testing a digital assistant called "M" - sort of like Apple's Siri or Microsoft's Cortana - that can answer questions or perform tasks like ordering flowers in response to commands on Messenger, using a combination of artificial intelligence and input from human overseers.

Another messaging service, Kik, which is popular among US teenagers, opened a new "bot shop" last week. Kik users can talk to bots that will answer questions about the weather, show funny videos or help with online shopping. Slack, a messaging service used by businesses, has partnered with Taco Bell to introduce a "Taco Bot" that helps Slack users order ahead for meals at a local outlet.

In Asia, many smartphone owners are used to playing games and buying items through messaging services like WeChat, which claims 700 million active users. One in five WeChat users have added bank or credit card information to their messaging account so they can check balances, pay bills or send money to friends, according to the Andreesen Horowitz venture capital firm.

Tech experts are particularly eager to see what Facebook does with Messenger, since its 900 million users make it the world's second biggest chat platform after WhatsApp, which claims 1 billion users and which Facebook bought in 2014.

Both are free to users and don't produce much revenue for Facebook. But if Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg has given WhatsApp's co-founders leeway with their service, executives have signaled they are increasingly looking for ways to make money from Messenger.—AP



The icons for Microsoft's Skype and Facebook's Messenger apps on a smartphone. — AP



SUNNYVALE, CALIFORNIA: A sign outside Yahoo's headquarters. — AP

UBER SETTLES DRIVER BACKGROUND CHECK CASE FOR AT LEAST \$10M

LOS ANGELES: Ride-hailing company Uber will pay at least \$10 million to settle allegations by California prosecutors that it misled passengers about the quality of its driver background checks.

The settlement was signed Thursday in San Francisco, where Uber is based and where the district attorney led a lawsuit that said Uber falsely claimed its criminal screening of would-be drivers was the most comprehensive available.

San Francisco and Los Angeles prosecutors sued in 2014, saying Uber's background checks were inferior to what taxi drivers undergo because they did not include fingerprint checks for past convictions. Instead, Uber's process relies on a name search of other criminal databases and motor vehicle department files going back seven years.

Uber has defended the safety of its service amid a steady stream of allegations that its drivers have assaulted passengers, or, in the case of a driver in Michigan earlier this year, killed people. The app lets passengers share their location in real time, Uber points out, and the person who booked the ride is required to rate the driver after each trip, helping weed out unsavory characters.

The Payment plan

Under the settlement, Uber agreed to pay \$10 million within 60 days. If the company does not comply with the terms over the next two years, Uber would have to pay an additional \$15 million, prosecutors said. Uber did not admit wrongdoing, as is standard for such settlements, and said it already has made many changes prosecu-

tors sought. For example, Uber stopped claiming its background checks were "industry leading" when it settled a separate case brought by riders. Under that \$28.5 million settlement reached in February, Uber also renamed its "safe ride fee" as a "booking fee."

Prosecutors ratcheted up pressure on the company in August, expanding the lawsuit with claims that Uber failed to uncover the criminal records of 25 California drivers, including several registered sex offenders and a convicted murderer.

"The result we achieved today goes well beyond its impact on Uber," San Francisco District Attorney George Gascón said in a written statement. "It sends a clear message to all businesses, and to startups in particular, that in the quest to quickly obtain market share, laws designed to protect consumers cannot be ignored."

Originally, the district attorneys also filed a claim against Lyft, another ride-hailing company. Lyft settled its case last year by agreeing to pay \$250,000 and stop claiming its background checks were among the industry's best.

Thursday's settlement also touched on airport trips. Uber agreed to operate its lower-cost UberX service only at airports where it has been granted permission. And it cannot charge riders an airport fee unless all that money goes to the airport, prosecutors said. "We're glad to put this case behind us and excited to redouble our efforts serving riders and drivers across the state of California," Uber said in a written statement.—AP

SUMMER IS COMING TO EUROPE AND US, AND MAYBE ZIKA WITH IT

AMSTERDAM: With summer approaching, Zika may find its way into virus-carrying mosquitoes in Europe or the United States, disease experts have warned, but any outbreaks are likely to be small and short-lived. Doctors and scientists attending a major infectious diseases conference in Amsterdam said there was no reason to panic, and the idea of screening travelers was far-fetched.

Zika is borne by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito found in Latin America and the Caribbean—in the grips of an outbreak of the virus which has been linked to severe brain damage in babies and rare neurological diseases in adults.

"We have to accept that someday there will be a... traveler coming back from South America with Zika virus in his or her blood and there is a potential risk of start-

ing a transmission," tropical medicine professor Eskild Petersen of Denmark's Aarhus University said Monday.

"I would say that the southern part of the United States and southern Europe are definitely at risk," he told AFP on the conference sidelines. However, he stressed, the risk should not be exaggerated. "It is a disease which in the vast majority of cases is a mild viral disease." Rare cases of sexual virus transmission have also been recorded.

Unknown entity

The warmer summer months bring with them the peak mosquito season for Europe and the United States after the insects' eggs—typically found in stagnant water—hatch.

In Europe, the potential threat comes

from a related mosquito, *Aedes albopictus*, which began to spread in southern Europe about 25 years ago. *Albopictus* is not known to have transmitted Zika to humans in the wild, but has been shown capable of doing so in laboratory experiments.

"A real risk for Europe? No, I don't think so," said Jean-Paul Stahl, an infectious diseases expert from the Grenoble University Hospital in France. "The vector (the mosquito) is in the Mediterranean areas, but we don't have the virus. Not yet."

There is a risk of "some little outbreaks" around a single imported case, he added, "but I don't think at this time the virus will resettle in Europe." The main challenge, according to Petersen, would be to prevent infected blood making its way into blood banks and being given to a patient

with low immune protection.

According to Nick Beeching, a senior lecturer on infectious diseases at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, it is hard to predict threat based on the limited data available. Very little is known about Zika—how long it may hide out in the human body, the degree of risk of sexual transmission, and the full list of diseases it may cause.

"We think it's mostly transmitted by the mosquitoes that transmit dengue and similar infections, so we think there is probably not going to be much of a problem in countries where you don't have those mosquitoes," said Beeching. But "we don't know that for sure."

Studies are ongoing to see if other mosquitoes elsewhere may also transmit the virus. Petersen said there may also be

a risk for Africa, where Zika was first identified in 1947, in Uganda. If the virus had evolved genetically since then, it could mean that people in tropical Africa—who may have originally enjoyed Zika immunity—no longer do.

"The latest report I have seen, it was (Zika) described from the Cape Verde islands, which is halfway between Brazil and Africa," he cautioned. Screening all travelers from South America was "absolutely impossible" and not the solution, Petersen stressed.

"You have I don't know how many planes from South America to Europe every day. And if people knew that they would be screened they would just take a paracetamol half an hour before landing and they would not report" any fever. —AFP

LOW-LEVEL DRUG OFFENDERS FIND NEW SOURCE OF ADDICTION HELP

MEDICAID MADE THEM ELIGIBLE FOR COVERAGE

SEATTLE: When pondering how to keep low-level drug offenders out of jail, officials in Albany, New York, faced a challenge: How could they pay for a case manager to coax addicts onto the straight and narrow, sometimes by tracking them down on the streets?

The money turned up in a previously untapped source: President Barack Obama's health care law, which by expanding Medicaid in some states has made repeat drug offenders eligible for coverage, including many who are homeless or mentally ill and have never been covered before.

The idea could make the joint federal and state health insurance program for the poor into a new tool for shifting addicts out of the criminal-justice system. Advocates hope to prove that the concept works, possibly paving the way for more cities to try it as an alternative to the drug war.

Many repeat drug offenders are "precisely the population Medicaid expansion was designed to cover," said Gabriel Sayegh, co-founder of the Katal Center for Health, Equity and Justice, an advocacy group that aims to reduce incarceration rates and promote drug war alternatives. "Down the road, we see a path for case management and many other services to be supported by Medicaid."

Medicaid and avoiding jail

The notion of using Medicaid to steer people away from jails and into services that offer housing, job train-

ing and mental-health or substance-abuse treatment comes at a crucial time for the criminal-justice reform movement. Incarceration numbers are making headlines. States are legalizing marijuana, and police departments hammered over questionable shootings are trying to reconnect with the public they serve.

"This shows the community we're willing to try different things," said Albany Police Chief Brendan Cox. "This just makes all the sense in the world." Albany's efforts and others have been based on a highly touted Seattle program called Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion, or LEAD. Launched in 2011, it aims to keep people out of prison by focusing on those who use a disproportionate share of public resources by repeatedly getting arrested or seeking care at emergency rooms. Instead of booking those addicts or prostitutes into jail, police contact program employees, who meet with the offenders and try to enlist them in social services. That can mean getting them a pair of shoes or a bus pass to help keep appointments; buying them groceries until they obtain food stamps; providing short-term housing or even paying for yoga, art supplies, utility bills or college classes - whatever the person needs.

Unlike in drug courts, participants are not kicked out or threatened with jail time if they relapse. "They know we're out there struggling," said Jerald Brooks, one of the original partici-

pants in LEAD. "Sooner or later, you start to do a little better."

Cities are considering joining

Following a White House summit about Seattle's program last summer, dozens of cities are considering whether to follow suit. Santa Fe, New Mexico, launched its version in 2014. Albany began its pilot program this month, and Baltimore, Atlanta and Fayetteville, North Carolina, are expected to launch versions next year. Medicaid "makes it not crazy-expensive to do this," said Lisa Dagaard, director of Seattle's Public Defender Association and a top proponent of LEAD.

In cooperation with the Katal Center, Seattle's program just opened an office to guide other jurisdictions through the process. Evaluations in Seattle have shown that LEAD participants were up to 60 percent less likely to be arrested than a control group. The program also saves money on criminal-justice costs, but it still takes money to start such programs.

Before the Affordable Care Act, low-income adults with no children living at home were largely shut out of Medicaid. The law expanded Medicaid to cover people making up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level, or nearly \$16,400 for a single person.

So far, 31 states plus Washington, D.C., have taken advantage of it. The federal government pays a much bigger share of the cost of covering the

new enrollees than for groups traditionally covered by the program.

Some programs around the country have been enrolling inmates in Medicaid just as they leave prison. More than 112,000 were signed up by January 2015, many of them single men being covered for the first time, according to a Johns Hopkins University study published in December.

Medicaid expansion remains a highly politicized issue, and 19 states have rejected it. Among them is Georgia. That leaves Atlanta in tougher shape as it plans to launch a LEAD program next year, said Xochitl Bervera, co-director of Atlanta's Racial Justice Action Center.

Instead of relying on Medicaid, the city is trying to arrange a combination of county, private and possibly federal money to supplement a \$200,000 grant from billionaire George Soros' Open Society Institute, which has provided similar LEAD startup grants to several other cities.

Because many people who would benefit from behavioral health services were not previously covered, there was little incentive for providers to offer services in many areas, including Atlanta. Medicaid's expansion could remedy that, she said. "The case managers are one piece, but then you need in-house drug treatment for some people and mental health care for others," she said. "We just don't have enough here." —AP



SEATTLE: Jerald Brooks, left, one of the original participants in a Seattle program called Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion, or LEAD, goes shopping for groceries with Chris Cates, right, his caseworker. —AP

DETAILS ABOUT THE FEDERAL RULE REGARDING LEAD IN WATER

IOWA CITY: A federal rule that took effect in 1991 is designed to protect the public from unsafe levels of lead in drinking water. Some answers to common questions about how it works:

Q: How often do water systems have to test for lead?

A: Systems must test every six months until they have achieved compliance and can qualify for a reduced sampling program. Systems that serve more than 50,000 customers can test annually as soon as two consecutive testing periods are below the level that requires federal action. Smaller systems that meet that standard can test every three years.

Q: How do cities decide which homes to test and how are samples collected?

A: Water systems are supposed to collect samples from buildings that are at highest risk of lead contamination. Homeowners are recruited to voluntarily collect the samples, which must be drawn from a tap that has not been used for at least six hours.

Q: How many samples are collected?

A: It depends on a system's size and whether it is on a reduced-sampling program. The number can vary from 100 samples for the largest water districts to five for the smallest.

Q: What is the threshold for the EPA considering a water system in violation?

A: A system is considered out of compliance if more than 10 percent of the sites sampled have lead levels above the federal-action level of 15 parts per billion.

Q: What happens then?

A: Within 60 days, the system must notify customers about the test results, inform them of the possible health risks and outline steps they can take to protect themselves. Those suggestions often include running water for 30 seconds to flush lead, using cold water for cooking and making baby formula, and replacing lead-based plumbing fixtures and service lines. Buying water filters and bottled water also are options.

Q: Are the water systems required to do anything else?

A: Yes. Typically, they are required to study and eventually add corrosion-control treatments to the water supply. Often, systems use a chemical such as phosphate to make the water less corrosive and therefore less likely to leach lead from service lines and plumbing fixtures. They may also be required to replace some lead service lines, which connect water mains to individual homes.

Q: Do all schools and day care centers have to test for lead?

A: No. In fact, most schools are not required to do testing under the rule. Only schools and day care centers that operate their own water systems are required to test for lead. Public and private schools and day care facilities that rely on a municipal water system are not required to test, although some do in the interest of safety.

Q: How do I know if my house might have lead in the water?

A: Just because your community is over or under the federal limit does not mean the drinking water at your house is safe or unsafe. The best way to know might be to call your water supplier to have it tested for lead, a service that many are now offering for free.

Q: Why don't more water systems replace their old lead pipes?

A: The cost, along with some questions about ownership. Many water systems have replaced or are in the process of replacing all of the lead-based water lines they own. But millions of miles of service lines deliver water to old homes, schools and businesses, and often cost \$2,000 to \$3,000 per location to replace. Property owners are generally responsible for those pipes. —AP



LAKEWOOD, COLORADO: Stacey Linn jokes with her 15-year-old son, Jack on Sunday outside their home. Jack, who has cerebral palsy, is not allowed to wear a skin patch delivering a cannabis-derived treatment to school. —AP

POT-IN-SCHOOLS DEBATE RETURNS TO COLORADO

DENVER: A new Colorado law allowing medical marijuana use at public schools got a second look yesterday in a House committee.

The current law allows students who need medical marijuana to use edible pot at public schools - as long as the school districts agree. No school districts currently does, so patient advocates are pushing the bill to make Colorado the second state to require schools to allow nurses or parents to administer medical pot. New Jersey made the change last year.

"They need to make reasonable accommodations so that children who need medical marijuana can go to school," said Stacey Linn, a Lakewood mother of a 15-year-old with cerebral palsy who is not allowed to wear a skin patch delivering a cannabis-derived treatment to school.

Marijuana laws and schools

Medical marijuana has been legal in some states for two decades. But school districts and lawmakers nationwide are only now starting to grapple with thorny issues about student use of a drug still illegal under federal law. Colorado is one of three states where medical marijuana is legal that has any rules for use in schools, according to the pro-legalization Marijuana Policy Project.

The possibility of medical marijuana in schools raises a number of questions for school officials. The law currently says that the drug must be in non-smokeable form and is to be administered by a school nurse or a caregiver, likely a parent. But those school nurses are also required to report to authorities any child who is exposed to an illegal drug, including marijuana-derived treatments.

That happened to the Wann family of Highlands Ranch, which got a call from Child Protective Services last year because their epileptic 8th grader uses a cannabis-derived treatment. Amber Wann said her son doesn't take the oil at school, but the district reported the family as possible child abusers, despite

last year's law clarifying that schools may allow marijuana treatment. "They were more concerned about losing federal funds and law enforcement coming after their nurses than about the new law saying they can allow a hemp-derived medicine," Wann said.

The case against allowing it in schools

School officials say they're being unfairly asked to accommodate an activity that still runs afoul of federal law. This year's update, for example, gives schools no guidance for the possibility of a student grabbing a cannabis treatment away from a parent and rightful patient on a school bus and taking it themselves. "School boards do not lack compassion for students that benefit from medical marijuana," said Jane Urschel of the Colorado Association of School Boards, which opposes the marijuana requirement. "How do you begin to deal with those difficulties in different venues?"

The parents counter that medical marijuana shouldn't be treated any differently than Ritalin or other controlled substances that are routinely dispensed by school districts. Supporters also say that schools are being too conservative about the prospect of endangering federal funding. New Jersey last year required schools to accommodate student medical marijuana use, with no repercussions from federal authorities.

The law's backers say they're not sure whether the school pot requirement will pass. The state Department of Education is neutral on the measure. Colorado has about 350 kids under 18 on the medical marijuana registry, according to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

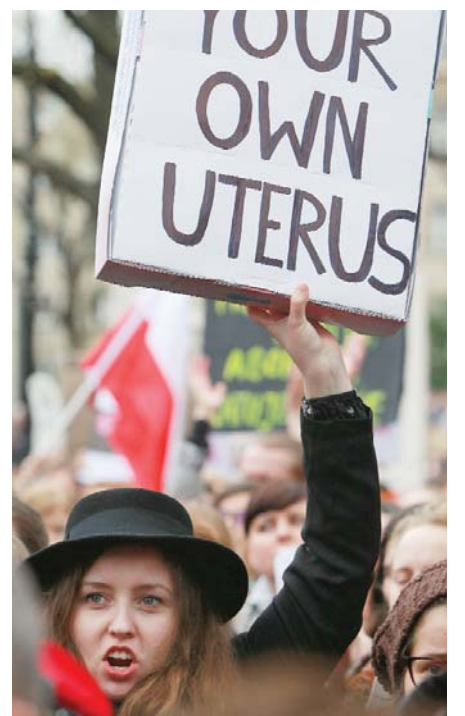
Sponsors say they hope that growing acceptance of marijuana to treat childhood illnesses gives the school pot requirement a boost. "Kids shouldn't have to choose between their medicine and going to school," said Rep. Jonathan Singer, D-Longmont and sponsor of the bill. —AP

THOUSANDS OF POLES PROTEST EFFORTS TO CHANGE ABORTION LAW

WARSAW: Thousands of Poles rallied Saturday against tightening Poland's anti-abortion law, which is already among Europe's strictest. Street protests were organized in Warsaw and in other Polish cities by a new pro-abortion group that opposes a recent call by some Catholic bishops for an unconditional ban on abortion in Poland, and efforts by an anti-abortion group to have the current law tightened. It was the second wave of such street protests this month.

Poland's new, conservative government promotes Catholic values and families with many children. Government leaders say that, as Catholics, they support a total ban. Abortion is illegal in Poland except for cases when the pregnancy poses a threat to the woman's health or life, if it results from a crime like incest or rape or if the fetus is damaged or incurably sick. The regulations were adopted in 1993 as a hard-won compromise.

Earlier this month, some bishops issued a statement condemning the law and calling for a total ban on abortion. A civic group, meanwhile, has drafted new legislation tightening the law and is taking steps to make lawmakers vote on it. The moves have provoked a heated debate that has exposed deep divisions among Poles, who mostly declare themselves Catholic. —AP



WARSAW: A woman takes part in a street protest against the further tightening of Poland's already strict anti-abortion law on Saturday. —AP



WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: A man smokes a cigarette. —AFP

SMOKERS HAVE HARDER TIME GETTING WORK

MIAMI: People who smoke may find it harder to get work, and make less money than non-smokers, according to a US study out Monday. The findings in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Internal Medicine were based on more than 250 unemployed job-seekers in the San Francisco area.

About half smoked cigarettes-on average 13 per day-and the other half did not smoke. Researchers checked in with them six and 12 months after they enrolled in the study to see how their job hunts were going. "We found that smokers had a much harder time finding work than non-smokers," said lead author Judith Prochaska associate professor of medicine at Stanford University.

After one year, 56 percent of non-smokers had found work, compared to only 27 percent of smokers. Among those who had jobs, smokers earned an average of \$5 per hour less than nonsmokers. Smokers who managed to get work earned an average of \$15.10 per hour, compared to \$20.27 per hour for non-smokers.

Nearly two-thirds of those in the study were men. Participants' average was 48.

Whites made up 38.2 percent of the study, African-Americans were 35.9 percent, and the remaining subjects were Hispanic, Asian or "other" race.

One third of those studied had a college degree. The study had some limits, including its small size and its geographic location in health-conscious northern California, where smoking can carry a significant stigma.

There were also some key differences between the groups in their analysis: smokers tended to be younger, less-educated and in poorer health than non-smokers. "We designed this study's analyses so that the smokers and nonsmokers were as similar as possible in terms of the information we had on their employment records and prospects for employment at baseline," said co-author Michael Baiocchi, an assistant professor of medicine at Stanford.

The study urged employment service agencies to use the findings to "raise awareness of tobacco-related costs, wage losses, health harms and associations with lower reemployment success," and to connect job-seekers to resources that could help them quit smoking. —AFP

IN US, RICH MAY OUTLIVE POOR BY NEARLY 15 YEARS

MIAMI: The richest Americans tend to outlive the poorest by almost 15 years, and that gap has grown since 2001, said a major study of income and life expectancy this week. The findings, published Sunday in the Journal of the American Medical Association, were based on more than one billion tax records from 1999 to 2014, as well as government mortality statistics.

The gap in life expectancy between the richest one percent and the poorest one percent was 14.6 years for men and 10.1 years for women, said the study led by Raj Chetty, an economics researcher at Stanford University.

"For example, men in the bottom one percent of the income distribution at the age of 40 years in the United States have life expectancies similar to the mean life expectancy for 40-year-old men in Sudan and Pakistan."

The inequality in life expectancy also increased over time. "There was a

larger increase in life expectancy for higher income groups during the 2000s," said the study. The rich tended to live even longer-by more than two years for men and almost three years for women between 2001 and 2014. "Life expectancy did not change for individuals in the bottom five percent of the income distribution," it said.

Researchers said factors found to affect life expectancy among the poor included smoking and obesity. Where people lived also made a difference. The shortest life expectancies in the lowest income groups were seen in Nevada, Indiana and Oklahoma — 77.9 years-while the longest-lived among the poorest Americans were in New York, California and Vermont — 80.6 years. The average life expectancy in the United States is 78.8 — 81 for women and 76 for men, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. —AFP

NEW FRONT OPENS IN WAR ON SUPERBUGS

‘LAST RESORT DRUG COULD BE RENDERED IMPOTENT’

AMSTERDAM: A newly-discovered antibiotic-resistant gene is threatening to open a new front in the war against superbugs by rendering a last-resort drug impotent, experts warn.

The gene's resistance to colistin, a life-saving medication which has been around for 60 years, is the latest frustration for physicians battling disease with a shrinking arsenal of antibiotics to treat a wide variety of ailments, many once easily curable. Dubbed mcr-1, the resistance-conferring gene easily transfers between bacteria, benign or otherwise, found in humans, animals or the environment.

First identified in China last November, the gene has since been discovered in livestock, water, meat and vegetables for human consumption in several countries, and in humans infected with E.coli-one of the disease-causing bacteria it targets.

For the first time, mcr-1 has now also been found living in the gut of healthy humans, a conference of the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases

(ESCMID) heard in Amsterdam this weekend.

‘Antibiotic crisis’

"(A) key element for the emergence of superpathogens (superbugs, or drug-resistant germ strains) has made its way to our bodies," researcher Ayca Gundogdu of Turkey's Erciyes University told delegates.

"It is (only) a matter of time (before) the dissemination of mcr-1 gene will be prevalent in the clinic, bringing the world closer to an antibiotic crisis." Colistin has been available since 1959 to treat infections caused by Gram-negative bacteria-a category including the food-poisoning germs E.coli and Salmonella, as well as Acinetobacter which can cause pneumonia or serious blood and wound infections. It was abandoned for human use in the 1980s due to high kidney toxicity, but is widely used in livestock farming, especially in China.

As bacteria have started to develop resistance to other, more modern drugs, colistin had to be brought back as a treatment of last resort in hospitals and clinics. Now resistance

to that too is becoming a problem. Gundogdu and a team analyzed DNA in fecal samples of individuals from China, Europe and Turkey. Of the 344 Chinese study subjects, six harbored the gene in their gut-a known major reservoir of drug resistance, the team found.

Humans as hosts

"They are healthy people. They are hosts, they are carrying this gene," Gundogdu told AFP. Why is it scary? Because water treatment "can't eliminate these bacteria or these genes perfectly," he said.

"After treatment, this water directly goes to the environmental water. And then we, the people, use this water for fishing, for many things, which means there is a circulation."

Another research team, which retrospectively tested stored E.coli and Salmonella samples from food-producing animals, said the gene has already been around in Europe for more than a decade. Resistance to drugs can emerge through changes in the bacterium's genetic code-altering the target on its surface to which antibiotics would normally bind, making the germ impenetrable.

ing the germ impenetrable

These supergerms spread easily with human help. The wrong antibiotics, taken for too short a period or in too low a dose, help them proliferate-also in animals given antibiotics to fatten them up. Experts at the conference lamented that not enough new drugs were being developed. "We have to fight all these microorganisms," said ESCMID president Murat Akova. "They are emerging, and we are defenceless, we are losing patients. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has warned that drug resistance "threatens a return to the pre-antibiotic era".

A large-scale study commissioned by the British government and released last year, said between \$16 billion and \$37 billion would have to be spent over a ten-year period to bring vital new antibiotics to the market.

This paled in comparison, it said, to the estimated cost of \$20 billion per year to treat drug resistant illnesses in the United States alone. The AMR report said 700,000 people died every year as a result of drug resistance-a number expected to rise to 10 million by 2050. —AFP

SOME KEY GAPS IN AMERICANS' KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ZIKA VIRUS

Zika poll

An AP-NORC Center survey finds many Americans know little about the Zika virus, which is sweeping through areas near the U.S. and is linked to birth defects.

Q: How much have you heard or read about the Zika virus?

60% A lot/Some 19% Only a little/Nothing at all

Three in four of those who had heard about Zika knew it has been linked to birth defects in babies born to infected mothers:

75% Yes, linked to birth defects 22% No Haven't heard enough to say

Many in that group said they weren't aware that there is no effective treatment or vaccine for Zika:

Q: Is there an effective medicine to treat people sick with Zika?

7% Yes 34% No 69% Haven't heard enough to say

Q: Is there an effective vaccine to prevent people from becoming infected with Zika?

5% Yes 45% No 52% Haven't heard enough to say

Responses based on survey of 1,004 U.S. adults conducted March 17-21. The margin of sampling error for all respondents in ±3.8 percentage points, higher for subgroups. Numbers are rounded and may not total 100.

SOURCE: NORC Center for Public Affairs Research AP

student, Zeleski calls this a "very scary" time for women of childbearing age and wonders what scientists will discover next about Zika's risks, unknown until the current outbreak began in Brazil last year.

Gaps in knowledge

Zeleski said she'll wear insect repellent and cover up during mosquito season. The AP-NORC Center poll found that among people who've heard about Zika, 90 percent know mosquitoes can spread it but there are some other key gaps in knowledge:

About 1 in 5 couldn't say whether Zika was linked to birth defects. Zika also sometimes spreads through sexual intercourse, but 14 percent wrongly thought it couldn't, and another 29 percent said they didn't know. That's worrisome, because the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says men who've traveled to Zika-affected areas either should use condoms with their pregnant partners or avoid sex until the baby's born.

More than half didn't know if there was a vaccine or treatment for Zika there is not - or a diagnostic test. There are tests but they're not perfect, and they're being used primarily with pregnant women.

What can be done

More public education is needed before there are any homegrown Zika infections, said Gillian SteelFisher of Harvard's school of public health, whose own polling has found even more misconceptions about Zika. "We have an opportunity, before there's a case, to get people to worry where they need to and not where they don't," SteelFisher said. "With good information, people can take the right steps to protect themselves." —AP

CLINIC PAGE



Kuwait Times

248 33 199

Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم

Consultant Pediatrician إستشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

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In the name of International Women Group (IWG), a number of the spouses of ambassadors designated in Kuwait recently thanked the NCCAL secretary general, Ali Al-Yoha for adapting and supporting the ideas suggested by IWG while celebrating Kuwait's selection as the capital of Islamic Culture for 2016. On his part, Al-Yoha praised the efforts exerted and contributions of IWG member, Narjis Al-Shatti and cooperation with other members from throughout the Muslim world.



SONAM KALRA BLENDS SUFI AND GOSPEL

Award winning singer and composer Sonam Kalra will be performing live at the 'Music for Peace' benefit-concert, on 15 April at the Indian embassy auditorium.

Sonam Kalra has been trained in both Indian and Western traditions of music and is equally adept at both. Her unique brainchild, 'The Sufi Gospel Project' which blends the many voices of faith, through poetry, prayer and music to create one universal voice of faith, has earned her international critical acclaim.

Sonam's music training allows her to flow seamlessly from one music genre to another. She has been trained in Hindustani Classical music under Shubha Mudgal and Sarathi Chatterjee and has also studied Gospel and Jazz with Ashley Clement in Singapore and classical opera under the noted tenor, Hur Chul Yung.

She is well known for her powerful yet sensitive voice and ability to blend styles while remaining true to the music. In addition to performing with her group of highly talented musicians, Sonam has collaborated with many musicians from different musical traditions, and has shared the stage with legendary musicians like Abida Parveen, Sir Bob Geldof and also performed for world renowned musician Sting.

Sonam's vast research into understanding Sufism, its true essence and her unique creative and contemporary interpretation of it has been greatly appreciated across the world. Owing to her versatility and unique perspective, Sonam is fast becoming a familiar voice at prestigious venues and festivals and has performed in numerous countries, including in the UK, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Pakistan, Oman, Kuwait, Lebanon, Tunisia, Mauritius, Egypt, South Africa and the US.

In 2015, Sonam was awarded the L'Oreal Paris - Femina Women Award for Music and Performing Arts, by Femina, India's leading women's magazine. In 2013 the Mail Today newspaper listed her as one of the 50 creative powerhouses and impresarios.

Among the more notable recent performances of Sonam Kalra and The Sufi Gospel Project are: Women in the World Summit, New Delhi; The International Sama'a Festival for Spiritual Music, Cairo, The World Sufi Spirit Festival in Nagaur, The Khushwant Singh Festival in Kasauli, Saif Khan and Kareena Kapoor's wedding reception in New Delhi, and several others.



ACK STUDENTS VISIT FAILAKA ISLAND

A group of students from the Australian College of Kuwait (ACK) spent a joyful day at Failaka Island, one of Kuwait's largest islands. Failaka encompasses a number of archaeological and heritage sites making it a hub for those wanting to explore the

ancient history of Kuwait.

The Students Recreational and Activities Center at ACK organized the trip to familiarize students with the history of Failaka, which constitutes a large part of Kuwait's history as a whole, as the island is home to

some amazing archaeological sites and artifacts. The Student Affairs department aims to create vibrant student life activities that contribute to ACK's students in different ways pushing them towards excellence and success.

WHAT'S ON - SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All photos submitted for What's On should be minimum 200dpi. Articles must be in plain text and should include name and phone numbers. Articles and photos that fail to meet these requirements will not be published.

Please send them to news@kuwaittimes.net

TSC TAKES PART IN KIDZANIA 'KIDS FOR A GREENER WORLD PROGRAM 2016'

As part of its ongoing support to the community and the environment; The Sultan Center has taken part in the KidZania

"Kids for a Greener World Program 2016" which was launched on March 24th and is ongoing till May 7th at KidZania - The Avenues Mall.

The event is designed to provide children with hands-on experience while learning the importance of taking care of the environment in which they live. The Greener World program has a number of activities which children can engage in; one of these activities is Vita's Garden, where children have the opportunity to develop a new skill and experience gardening first hand.

TSC's prime objective is empowering children with a general knowledge about preserving the environment in which they live. The Vita's Garden activity helps children understand how to plant seeds, tend to the soil to make plants grow and understand where their fresh food comes from. Gardening can also help children improve their attitude about fresh vegetables which can contribute to making more healthy food choices.

Commenting on TSC's initiative, Lisa Al Gharib - Marketing Manager at TSC said: "We're glad to be part of 'Kids for a Greener World Program 2016' in collaboration with KidZania". She added: "Being a leader retailer in the Kuwaiti market that provides a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables from all over the world, it is important for TSC to demonstrate to kids how these vegetables actually grow and where their fresh food comes from".

TSC has been at the forefront in sponsoring events and activities that are educational, informative and promote a healthy lifestyle within the communities it operates.



100 CANDIDATES APPLY FOR RED BULL ART OF CAN SO FAR

Following the success of Red Bull Art of Can 2011, the event is returning this year and will be giving talents from Kuwait the chance to go with inspiration to new heights. The Red Bull Art of Can offers a platform for anyone, regardless of age, who wants to explore his or her creative talent. Artists, students, grandparents and all those in between are invited to submit their works of art. The Red Bull Art of Can is a true expression of one's imagination, with little or no restrictions placed on the budding artist.

So far, 100 applicants have applied so far and already started working on their pieces of art, with great chances to win cash prizes, categorized in the physical category, the 1st place prize is 1,000 KD, the 2nd place prize 750 KD and 3rd place prize is 500 KD. As for the displayed digital category, the 1st place is



1,000 KD.

The closing date for applications is 16th April 2016, the last day for receiving the artworks, however, is 31st May 2016. The organizers will afterwards shortlist the entrants qualified to participate in "The Art of Can" exhibition based on creativity, theme and final presentation.

The physical piece of art should include the actual Red Bull can as the primary material in the final

work. However, the digital displayed art is a work of art that can be displayed on a screen and should include a digital version of the Red Bull can in the final piece. Submissions could take the form of an animation, a digital short film, stop motion, or GIF.

Applications can be submitted online by registering at www.redbull.com/artofcankw or through calling the hotline: +965 66406020.



THIRD ART GALLERY HELD TO SUPPORT K'SPATH

With the presence of Kuwait Society for the Protection of Animals and Their Habitat (K'SPATH)'s CEO, Sheikha Fatima Mubarak Al-Sabah and the society team, and in celebration of the society's

11th anniversary, an art exhibition was recently opened at Boshheri Art Gallery, Salmiya April 10. Speaking on the occasion, Al-Sabah expressed happiness on celebrating the 11th anniversary noting that the society

was founded by K'SPATH chairlady, Aisha Al-Humaidhi to take care of animals. She added that K'SPATH now has 50 members, 15 employees and over 600 volunteers.



CROWNE PLAZA KUWAIT AL THURAYA CITY UNVEILS ITS LUXURIOUS ROYAL SUITES

Crowne Plaza Kuwait Al Thuraya City unveiled this week its five Royal Suites, 206 square meters of luxury designed for the most discerning guests. The beautifully-appointed Royal Suites have a spacious living room, a dining area, a fully-equipped kitchen, a study room, a master bedroom, and marble bathrooms with jacuzzi. Their interior design features ornamented golden decorations, carved ceilings, and luxurious furnishings. Royal suite guests are provided with private butler service, ensuring continuous care and luxury pampering. Commenting on the

new suites, Russell Loughland, Executive Assistant Manager: "The introduction of our five Royal Suites introduces to Kuwait hospitality a previously unseen level of luxury, which combined with immaculate butler service provides an unbeatable guest experience." Guests staying at Crowne Plaza Kuwait Al Thuraya City enjoy continental buffet breakfast at the hotel's signature restaurant, Silk, and have access to Edge 24 Hour Fitness and Spa Aquatonic, which boasts a 650 square meter large therapeutic pool and 17 treatment rooms.

KUWAIT CIVIL DEFENSE AND MARINA HOTEL CARRY OUT EMERGENCY EVACUATION SIMULATION

Marina Hotel Kuwait in cooperation with and under the guidance of the Civil Defense Department (Ministry of Interior) materialized for the first time a simulation of an emergency evacuation exercise. Conducted by the General Department of Civil Defense, the four day training took place with the hotel staff and management. It was a practice to evacuate in case of fires in order to ascertain the level of efficiency and readiness and crisis contingency plans during emergency incidents. The Civil Defense Department conducted a mock evacuation indicating that a fire siren rang at 10.00 am. Immediately, the safety and security procedures were implemented and all employees were evacuated. A head count was conducted at the assembly point to ensure that everybody was out. Upon ensuring that everything was under control, the site was declared safe and the employees returned to their offices; whereas, the concerned officials held a meeting to review the results of the event, locate the gaps and discuss the lessons learned. "This exercise aims to train hotel staff with skills to deal with incidents in accordance with the best international calibration to maintain the safety and the lives of hotel-goers and staff," said Mr. Nabil Hammoud, General Manager, Marina Hotel. Mr. Hammoud stressed the importance of this exercise in making sure that the hotel is ready to



deal with different circumstances pointing to Marina Hotel's commitment in the application of the best quality and safety standards in the various hotel facilities. He praised the cooperation of the hotel guests with the evacuation practice and the efforts of the hotel employees and the immediate response to the Civil Defense training from their eagerness to document their responsibilities in providing the best comfort, safety, and security standards for guests. Mr. Hammoud expressed his deep appreciation and thanks for the Kuwait Civil Defense for

supplying the skills of the best preventive measures, evacuation routes, preservation of public health, safety and rescue. Civil Defense exercises did not overlook the mechanism of dealing with people with special needs, children, how to evacuate, the provision of safety and rescue to preserve their safety. During the training there were lectures hosted on fire safety and emergency evacuation processes in addition to covering practices for ensuring the safety and security of employees during emergency situations.

DIVAS CHAIN OPEN THEIR NEW RESTAURANTS 'DIVAS LOUNGE'

In the presence of Mr. Saad Al-Rashid - CEO and owner of Divas chain of restaurants - who welcomed the guests and pointed in brief words about the opening of a new branch for Divas restaurants under the name "Divas Lounge" located in Gold's Gym building, which offers panoramic views of the Arabian Gulf Street and opposite to The Scientific Center.



Saad Al-Rashid - CEO and owner of Divas chain of restaurants



French Chef Edward Grosah

Mr. Rashed added: the new restaurant consists of three floors equipped furnished in a unique way as it contains of the latest Technology in restaurants innovations, which were imported from Europe, for example special seats with special touches from "RocheBobois" global company. As for the outside seating area the chairs are imported from "Kartell" global company as to achieve the high level requested by the company, the series of three Divas Restaurants "Divas Lounge" "Divas Olympia" "Divas Miral Complex, with a central kitchen equipped in accordance with the requirements of ISO 22000 and a space of 1,300 square meter area, led by a French team of chefs specialists with international expertise, for example, Chef Edward Grosah and chef Olivia, which provides our restaurant to offer a rich menu of food that meet all our Guests requirements and tastes, and moreover the restaurant cares for the sources of the raw materials used by the chefs. This option ensures providing each guest a unique experience, where the welfare of the place and quiet corners in addition to the diversity and richness of the dining Menu and the magnificent scenery overlooking the Arabian Gulf Street. The Company distinguishes this particular branch its equipped with the most modern audio-visual system and achieve complete privacy for those who wish to use a separate training hall



or to hold several meetings and celebrations for companies and individuals. The restaurant is suitable to host a press conferences and meetings, and this came after a deep study of the requirements and needs of the market where there are many companies needs a hall that provide them with the highest levels of hospitality and services. It is worth mentioning that "Food and Beverages Company" recently opened another new company called "Le Pavillon", which will offer a new concept of hospitality and Catering in the State of Kuwait and Gulf Area.

COLOR DIET

Tell me what your favorite food is and I'll tell you who you are! Join me on a journey of rainbow colors and some delicious food. We will also enjoy fruitful information about food, colors and human personality. Bringing color into our lives through the food we eat is one of the most powerful uses of color as a healing tool. Tuesday, April 19 @ 7pm

amc

00:15 Cursed
01:55 Behind Enemy Lines
03:25 Jason's Lyric
05:25 Cannon For Cordoba
07:10 One More Time
08:45 The Night They Raided Minsky's
10:25 Apache
11:55 The Raven
13:20 The Garbage Pail Kids Movie
14:55 Empire Of The Ants
16:25 Solarbabies
18:00 The Adventures Of Gerard
19:30 Robinson Crusoe
21:00 Breaking Bad

ANIMAL
PLANET HD

00:45 Mountain Monsters
01:40 Australia Doesn't Just Want To Kill You
02:35 Tanked
03:25 Lion Battlefield
04:15 Gator Boys
05:02 Treehouse Masters
05:49 Australia Doesn't Just Want To Kill You
06:36 Meet The Orangutans
07:25 Swamp Brothers
07:25 America's Cutest Pets
08:15 Australia Doesn't Just Want To Kill You
09:10 Treehouse Masters
10:05 Tanked
11:00 America's Cutest Pets
11:55 Bondi Vet
12:25 Bondi Vet
12:50 Australia Doesn't Just Want To Kill You
13:45 Gator Boys
14:40 Treehouse Masters
15:35 Tanked
16:30 Lion Battlefield
17:25 River Monsters
18:20 Ten Deadliest Snakes With Nigel Marven
19:15 Tanked
20:10 Animal Cops South Africa
21:05 Treehouse Masters
22:00 Ten Deadliest Snakes With Nigel Marven
22:55 Gator Boys
23:50 River Monsters

BBC
FIRST

00:15 Eastenders
00:45 New Tricks
01:40 New Tricks
02:30 Silent Witness
03:25 Doctors
03:55 Eastenders
04:25 Doctor Who
05:15 Father Brown
06:00 Doctors
06:30 Doctors
07:00 Eastenders
07:30 Stella
08:15 The Paradise
09:15 Doctor Who
10:00 Doctors
10:30 Eastenders
11:05 Father Brown
11:50 Stella
12:40 The Paradise
13:40 Doctor Who
14:30 Doctors
15:00 Eastenders
16:20 Dickensian
17:10 Doctor Who
18:00 Doctors
18:30 Eastenders
19:05 Father Brown
20:00 Hobby City

Bloomberg
TELEVISION

00:00 Charlie Rose
01:00 Bloomberg West
02:00 First Up With Angie Lau
03:00 First Up With Angie Lau
04:00 Trending Business
05:00 Trending Business
06:00 Asia Edge
07:00 Bloomberg West



FLIGHT PLAN ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

08:00 Countdown
09:00 Countdown
09:30 On The Move
10:00 On The Move
11:00 The Pulse
12:00 Bloomberg Surveillance
13:00 Bloomberg Surveillance
14:00 Bloomberg Go
15:00 Bloomberg Go
16:00 Bloomberg Go
17:00 Bloomberg Markets
18:00 Bloomberg Markets
European Close
19:00 Bloomberg Markets
20:00 Bloomberg Markets
21:00 Bloomberg Markets
22:00 Bloomberg Markets
23:00 What'd You Miss?

CCTV NEWS

00:00 News Update
00:30 Dialogue
01:00 News Update
01:15 China 24
02:00 The Heat
02:30 News Update
03:00 Global Business
04:00 News Update
05:00 News Update
06:30 Dialogue
07:00 News Hour
08:00 Global Business
09:00 News Update
10:30 Sports Scene
11:00 Global Business
12:00 News Update
12:30 Culture Express
13:00 Africa Live
14:00 News Update

14:30 Dialogue
15:00 News Update
15:15 China 24
16:00 News Update
16:15 Global Business
17:00 News Update
17:15 World InSight
18:00 Asia Today
18:30 Culture Express
19:00 News Update
19:30 The Heat
20:00 Africa Live
21:00 Global Business
21:30 Dialogue
22:00 News Update
22:15 China 24
23:00 News Update
23:15 World InSight

CNBC

00:00 Access: Middle East
00:30 Inside China
01:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
02:00 Asia Street Signs
05:00 Capital Connection
08:00 Squawk Box Europe
11:00 Europe Street Signs
12:00 Worldwide Exchange
13:00 U.S. Squawk Box
16:00 Squawk On The Street
18:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
19:00 Fast Money: Half Time Report
20:00 U.S. Power Lunch
22:00 U.S. Closing Bell

crime
& investigation
network

00:00 The Ghost Inside My Child
01:00 The Haunting Of...
02:00 The Haunting Of...
03:00 Cursed: The Bell Witch
04:00 The Ghost Inside My Child
05:00 The Haunting Of...
06:00 Monster In My Family
07:00 Britain's Biggest Heists
08:00 Crime Stories
09:00 Surveillance Oz
09:30 Steven Seagal: Lawman
10:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
11:00 After The First 48
12:00 The FBI Files
13:00 Monster In My Family
14:00 Crime Stories
15:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
16:00 Britain's Biggest Heists
17:00 After The First 48
18:00 The FBI Files
19:00 Monster In My Family
20:00 Crime Stories
21:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
22:00 50 Ways To Kill Your Lover
23:00 My Crazy Ex

Discovery
CHANNEL
HD

00:20 Fast N' Loud
01:10 You Have Been Warned
02:00 Troy
02:50 Superhuman Science
03:15 Superhuman Science
03:40 Extreme Collectors
04:05 Storage Wars Canada
04:30 Garage Gold
05:00 How Do They Do It?
05:30 Chasing Classic Cars
06:00 Outback Truckers
06:50 Wheeler Dealers
07:40 Fast N' Loud
08:30 Extreme Collectors
08:55 Storage Wars Canada
09:20 Garage Gold
09:45 How Do They Do It?
10:10 Chasing Classic Cars
10:35 You Have Been Warned
11:25 Troy
12:15 The Carbonaro Effect
12:40 The Carbonaro Effect
13:05 Extreme Collectors

Disney
JUNIOR

12:38 Mythbusters
13:23 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
14:10 Eco-Tech
14:57 Food Factory
15:20 Food Factory
15:44 Space Pioneer
16:31 Building The Biggest
17:18 Eco-Tech
18:05 Mythbusters
18:50 Secret Space Escapes
19:40 Space Pioneer
20:25 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
21:15 Eco-Tech
22:00 Secret Space Escapes
22:45 Space Pioneer
23:35 Mythbusters

Disney
CHANNEL

00:00 Violetta
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 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
04:10 Hank Zipzer
04:35 Binny And The Ghost
05:00 Violetta
05:45 The Hive
05:50 Mouk
06:00 Lolirock
06:25 Sofia The First
06:50 Graviy Falls
07:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
07:40 Jessie
08:05 Shake It Up
08:30 Shake It Up
08:55 Hannah Montana
09:20 Hannah Montana
09:45 Girl Meets World
10:10 Girl Meets World
10:35 A.N.T. Farm
11:00 A.N.T. Farm
11:25 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
14:00 Liv And Maddie
14:25 Cars Toons
14:30 Liv And Maddie
14:55 Dog With A Blog
15:10 Dog With A Blog
15:20 Dog With A Blog
15:45 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
16:10 Violetta
16:25 Alex And Co
17:50 Dog With A Blog
18:15 Best Friends Whenever
18:40 Graviy Falls
19:05 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
19:30 Violetta
19:30 Good Luck Charlie
21:10 Good Luck Charlie
21:35 H2O
22:00 Binny And The Ghost
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
22:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:10 Hank Zipzer
23:35 Binny And The Ghost

Disney
JUNIOR

00:05 Art Attack
00:30 Henry Hugglemonster
00:45 Calimero
01:00 Zou
01:15 Loopdidoo
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Henry Hugglemonster
02:05 Calimero
02:20 Zou

Disney
JUNIOR

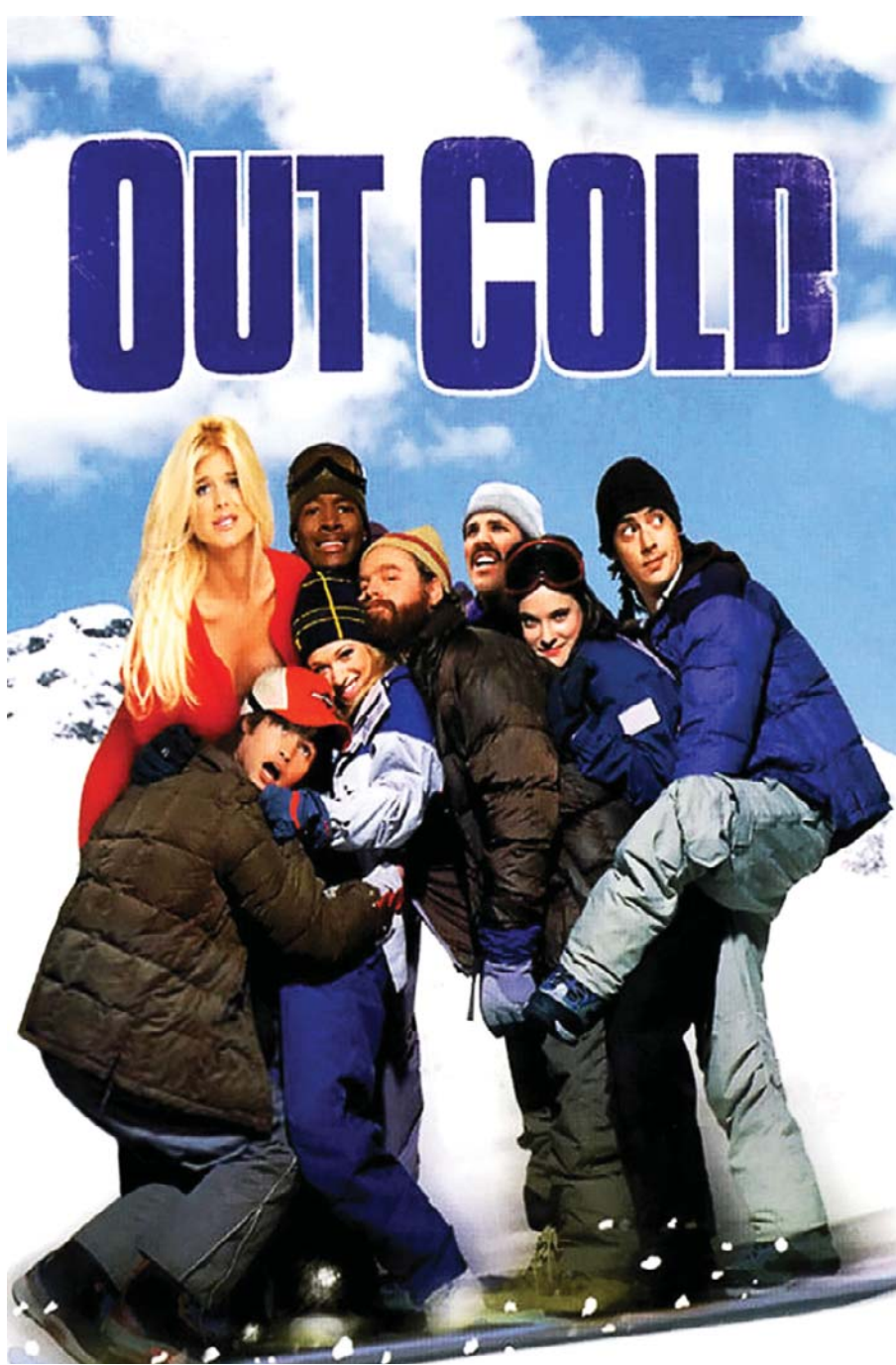
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Disney
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01:15 Loopdidoo
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Henry Hugglemonster
02:05 Calimero
02:20 Zou



OUT COLD ON OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

14:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
15:10 Miles From Tomorrow
15:35 Jake And The Never Land
16:00 Sofia The First
16:25 Jungle Cubs
16:50 Aladdin
17:15 Gummi Bears
17:40 Goldie & Bear
18:05 Miles From Tomorrow
18:30 Sofia The First
19:00 Jake And The Never Land
19:30 Violetta
19:30 Good Luck Charlie
21:10 Good Luck Charlie
21:35 H2O
22:00 Binny And The Ghost
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
22:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:10 Hank Zipzer
23:35 Binny And The Ghost

XD

06:00 Boyster
06:10 Super Matrak
06:35 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
07:00 K.C. Undercover
07:15 Supa Strikas
07:50 Annedroids
08:40 Lab Rats
09:10 Kirby Buckets
09:35 Guardians Of The Galaxy
10:00 Rocket Monkeys
10:25 Ultimate Spider-Man
10:50 Boyster
11:20 Boyster
11:45 Pair Of Kings
12:10 Pair Of Kings
12:35 Lab Rats
13:00 Lab Rats
13:30 Phineas And Ferb
13:55 Phineas And Ferb
14:20 Kickin' It
14:45 Kickin' It
15:10 Guardians Of The Galaxy
15:15 Rocket Monkeys
15:40 Guardians Of The Galaxy
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
18:40 K.C. Undercover
19:05 Cars Toons
19:10 Annedroids
19:35 Phineas And Ferb
20:00 Kirby Buckets
20:25 Gamers Guide To Pretty
20:55 K.C. Undercover
21:20 Pickle And Peanut
21:45 Lab Rats
22:10 Mighty Med
22:40 Disney Mickey Mouse
23:00 Programmes Start At 6:00am KSA

HISTORY

00:20 Aussie Pickers
01:10 Storage Wars: New York
01:35 Storage Wars: New York
02:00 Ice Road Truckers
02:50 Ax Men
03:40 American Restoration
04:30 Pawn Stars
05:00 The Curse Of Oak Island
06:00 Mountain Men
06:50 Swamp People
07:40 Ax Men
08:30 Shipping Wars
08:55 American Restoration
09:20 American Restoration
09:45 Lost In Transmission
10:35 Counting Cars
11:00 Counting Cars
11:25 The Curse Of Oak Island
12:15 American Pickers
13:05 Storage Wars
13:30 Storage Wars
14:20 Storage Wars
14:45 Aussie Pickers
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
20:10 Pawn Stars
20:35 Pawn Stars
21:00 Ax Men
21:50 Swamp People
22:40 Mankind The Story Of All Of Us
23:30 Ax Men

HISTORY

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18:30 The Curse Of Oak Island
19:20 American Pickers
20:10 Pawn Stars
20:35 Pawn Stars
21:00 Ax Men
21:50 Swamp People
22:40 Mankind The Story Of All Of Us
23:30 Ax Men

20:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
21:00 Dash Dolls
22:00 El News
23:00 Fashion Police

food
network

00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Chopped
02:00 Cuthroat Kitchen
03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
04:30 Iron Chef America
06:00 Chopped
07:00 Man Fire Food
07:30 Man Fire Food
08:00 Chopped
09:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
09:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
10:00 The Kitchen
11:00 Anna Olson: Bake
11:30 Anna Olson: Bake
12:00 Chopped
13:00 The Pioneer Woman
13:30 The Pioneer Woman
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Man Fire Food
16:00 Chopped
17:00 The Kitchen
18:00 Anna Olson: Bake
18:30 Anna Olson: Bake
19:00 Chopped
20:00 Iron Chef America
21:00 Private Chef
21:30 Private Chef
22:00 Tia Mowry At Home
22:30 Tia Mowry At Home
23:00 Man Finds Food
23:30 Man Finds Food

HISTORY

00:10 Brain Games
01:00 Explorer
02:00 Supercar Megabuild
02:55 Manta Mystery
03:50 Brain Games
04:45 24 Hours In A&E
05:40 Filthy Riches
06:35 I Wouldn't Go In There
07:30 Cesar To The Rescue
08:25 Building Wild
09:20 24 Hours In A&E
10:15 Supercar Megabuild
11:10 The Yard
12:05 Ultimate Survival Alaska
Compilations
13:00 Building Wild
14:00 80s Greatest
15:00 Megastructures
16:00 Supercar Megabuild
17:00 China From Above
18:00 Dirty Rotten Survival
19:00 The 2000s: The Decade We Saw It All
20:00 Supercar Megabuild
20:50 The Yard
21:40 Dirty Rotten Survival
22:30 Underworld, Inc.
23:20 Filthy Riches

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20:00 Supercar Megabuild
20:50 The Yard
21:40 Dirty Rotten Survival
22:30 Underworld, Inc.
23:20 Filthy Riches

NAT GEO
people HD

00:10 Dream Cruises
01:00 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
01:50 Top Tables, Top Cities
02:15 Eat Street
02:40 Eat Street
03:05 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
03:30 The Wine Quest: Spain
03:55 The Food Files
04:20 Maximum Foodie
04:45 Maximum Foodie
05:10 Eat Street
05:35 Eat Street
06:00 Trekking Malaysia With Jason Scott Lee
06:50 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
07:40 Top Tables, Top Cities
08:05 Eat Street
08:30 Eat Street
08:55 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
09:20 The Wine Quest: Spain
09:45 The Food Files
10:10 Maximum Foodie
10:35 Maximum Foodie
11:00 Eat Street
11:25 Eat Street
11:50 Trekking Malaysia With Jason Scott Lee
12:40 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
13:35 Top Tables, Top Cities
14:00 Sara's New Nordic Kitchen
14:30 Tom's Istanbul Delight
14:55 Glamour Puds
15:25 Glamour Puds
15:50 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
16:20 Maximum Foodie
16:45 Maximum Foodie
17:15 East Bites West
17:40 Lee Chan's World Food Tour
18:10 Lee Chan's World Food Tour
18:35 Carnival Eats
19:05 Glamour Puds
19:30 Glamour Puds
20:00 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
20:25 Maximum Foodie
20:50 Maximum Foodie
21:15 East Bites West
21:40 Lee Chan's World Food Tour
22:05 Lee Chan's World Food Tour
22:30 Carnival Eats
22:55 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
23:45 Top Tables, Top Cities

NAT GEO
WILD HD

00:20 Deadly Instincts
01:10 Wild 24
02:00 Monster Fish
02:50 World's Deadliest
03:45 Ultimate Predators GPU
04:40 Caught In The Act
05:35 World's Deadliest
06:30 Ultimate Predators GPU
07:25 Caught In The Act
08:20 Outback Wrangler
09:15 Race Of Life
09:40 Race Of Life
10:10 America's National Parks
11:05 Animals Gone Wild
12:00 Monster Fish
12:55 Africa's Creative Killers
13:50 I, Predator
14:45 Caught In The Act
15:40 Cameramen Who Dare
16:35 Race Of Life
17:00 Race Of Life
17:30 America's National Parks
18:25 Animals Gone Wild
19:20 Caught In The Act
20:10 Cameramen Who Dare
21:00 Race Of Life
21:25 Race Of Life
21:50 America's National Parks

OSN FIRST HD

COMEDY

00:00 Parks and Recreation
00:30 Hot In Cleveland
01:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore
01:30 Married
02:00 The Big C
02:30 Man Seeking Woman
03:00 Mad Love
03:30 The Goldbergs
04:00 Two And A Half Men
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
05:00 My Name Is Earl
06:00 The Bernie Mac Show
06:30 Community
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:00 Two And A Half Men
08:30 My Name Is Earl
09:00 Mad Love
09:30 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
10:00 Community
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
12:00 The Bernie Mac Show
12:30 Two And A Half Men
13:00 My Name Is Earl
13:30 Community
14:00 The Goldbergs
14:30 The Grinder
15:00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
15:30 Hot In Cleveland
16:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore

OSN FIRST HD

COMEDY

00:00 Parks and Recreation
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13:30 Community
14:00 The Goldbergs
14:30 The Grinder
15:00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine
15:30 Hot In Cleveland
16:00 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore

OSN FIRST HD

COMEDY

16:30 The Bernie Mac Show
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
18:00 Mad Love
18:30 Living With Fran
19:00 Modern Family
19:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
21:00 Hot In Cleveland
21:30 The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore

OSN FIRST HD

00:00 Bates Motel
01:00 Quantico
02:00 Rosewood
03:00 Allegiance
04:00 Good Morning America
06:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
07:00 Covert Affairs
08:00 Heroes Reborn
09:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
10:00 Quantico
11:00 Covert Affairs
12:00 Coronation Street
12:30 Coronation Street
13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
14:00 Live Good Morning America
14:30 Heroes Reborn
17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
18:00 Heroes Reborn
19:00 The Voice
21:00 Castle
22:00 Supergirl
23:00 Better Call Saul

OSN MOVIES HD

ACTION

00:30 John Wick
02:15 Jersey Shore Shark Attack
04:00 The Bourne Legacy
06:30 388 Arletta Avenue
08:15 Airplane vs. Volcano
10:00 The League Of Extraordinary Gentlemen
12:00 Age Of Dinosaurs
14:00 388 Arletta Avenue
16:00 Justice League: Throne Of Atlantis
18:00 The League Of Extraordinary Gentlemen
20:00 Flightplan
22:00 X-Men Origins: Wolverine

OSN MOVIES HD

COMEDY

00:00 Out Cold
02:00 50 First Dates
04:00 The Trip To Italy
06:00 Three Men And A Baby
08:00 Spy Hard
10:00 The Trip To Italy
12:00 50 First Dates
14:00 What About Bob?
16:00 Spy Hard
18:00 Mystery Men
20:00 Identity Thief
22:00 The Hooligan Factory

OSN MOVIES HD

FESTIVAL

01:00 Carrington
03:00 The Man Who Would Be King
05:15 Where Angels Fear To Tread
07:15 Happiness
08:45 Memories
10:30 Where Angels Fear To Tread
12:30 A Secret Promise
14:00 The Horse Whisperer
17:00 Memories
19:00 The Silent Storm
21:00 Reds

OSN MOVIES HD

OSN FIRST HD

COMEDY

01:00 Playing It Cool
03:00 Kon-Tiki
05:00 The Last 5 Years
07:00 Step Up All In
09:00 Tracers
10:45 Taken 3
12:45 Selma
15:00 Make Your Move
17:00 The Hundred-Foot Journey
19:00 Whiplash
21:00 Chocolate City
23:00 Fifty Shades Of Grey

OSN SPORTS 1 HD

00:30 PGA Tour Special
01:30 PGA Tour Highlights
02:30 NHL
04:30 Gillette World Sport
05:00 Live NHL
08:00 Golfing World
09:00 AFL Premiership Highlights
10:00 Super Rugby
12:00 Golfing World
13:00 NFL Premiership
15:00 AFL Premiership Highlights
16:00 PGA Tour Highlights
17:00 Top 14 Highlights
18:00 Gillette World Sport
19:00 Golfing World
20:00 NFL Full Time
21:00 World Rugby
22:00 Top 14 Highlights
23:00 Gillette World Sport
24:00 Players Championship 2015 Official Film
25:00 The PGA Tour Champions Highlights

OSN SPORTS 2 HD

02:30 This Week In WWE
03:00 Live WWE Raw
06:30 Top 14 Highlights
07:00 Darts UK Open
10:30 Top 14 Highlights
11:00 PGA Tour Highlights
12:00 Gillette World Sport
13:00 WWE Experience
14:30 WWE Afterburn
15:00 This Week In WWE
18:0

CLASSIFIEDS

Kuwait Times

TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 2016



Now you can browse

www.kuwaittimes.net

e-mail: info@kuwaittimes.net





SHARQIA-1	
OBSERVANCE	12:15 PM
OBSERVANCE	2:30 PM
NO FRI+SAT	
KUNG FU PANDA 3	2:15 PM
FRI+SAT	
KUNG FU PANDA 3	4:15 PM
OBSERVANCE	6:15 PM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	8:00 PM
OBSERVANCE	11:00 PM
OBSERVANCE	12:45 AM

SHARQIA-2	
THE BOSS	12:30 PM
SARDAAR GABBAR SINGH - Telugu	1:30 PM
THE BOSS	2:30 PM
MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	4:30 PM
THE BOSS	6:30 PM
MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	8:30 PM
THE BOSS	10:30 PM
MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	12:30 AM

SHARQIA-3	
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	1:00 PM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	4:00 PM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	7:00 PM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	10:00 PM
10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	1:00 AM
10 CLOVERFIELD LANE	1:45 PM
SARDAAR GABBAR SINGH - Telugu	4:00 PM
SARDAAR GABBAR SINGH - Telugu	7:15 PM
SARDAAR GABBAR SINGH - Telugu	10:30 PM

MUHALAB-1	
THE BOSS	12:15 PM
THE BOSS	2:15 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	4:15 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	6:15 PM
MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	8:15 PM
THE BOSS	10:30 PM
MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	12:30 AM

MUHALAB-2	
OBSERVANCE	12:00 PM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	1:45 PM
SARDAAR GABBAR SINGH - Telugu	1:30 PM
OBSERVANCE	4:45 PM
OBSERVANCE	6:30 PM
OBSERVANCE	8:15 PM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	10:00 PM
OBSERVANCE	1:00 AM
SARDAAR GABBAR SINGH - Telugu	10:15 PM
OBSERVANCE	1:30 AM

MUHALAB-3	
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	12:30 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	11:30 AM

KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (07/04/2016 TO 13/04/2016)

KUNG FU PANDA 3	1:30 PM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	3:30 PM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	6:45 PM
OBSERVANCE	10:15 PM
SARDAAR GABBAR SINGH - Telugu	3:30 PM
SARDAAR GABBAR SINGH - Telugu	6:45 PM
SARDAAR GABBAR SINGH - Telugu	10:00 PM
OBSERVANCE	1:15 AM

FANAR-1	
THE BOY AND THE BEAST	12:15 PM
THE BOY AND THE BEAST	2:45 PM
THE BOY AND THE BEAST	5:15 PM
MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	7:45 PM
THE BOSS	10:00 PM
MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	12:05 AM

FANAR-2	
MR. RIGHT	1:00 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	3:00 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	5:00 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	7:00 PM
MR. RIGHT	9:00 PM
MR. RIGHT	11:00 PM
MR. RIGHT	1:00 AM

FANAR-3	
OBSERVANCE	12:45 PM
OBSERVANCE	2:30 PM
JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)	4:45 PM
OBSERVANCE	6:45 PM
JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3 (JU-ON: THE BEGINNING OF THE END)	8:45 PM
OBSERVANCE	10:45 PM
OBSERVANCE	12:45 AM

MARINA-1	
OBSERVANCE	12:15 PM
THE BOSS	2:00 PM
THE BOSS	4:00 PM
OBSERVANCE	6:00 PM
OBSERVANCE	8:00 PM
THE BOSS	10:00 PM
OBSERVANCE	12:05 AM

MARINA-2	
MR. RIGHT	12:30 PM
MR. RIGHT	2:30 PM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: AWN OF JUSTICE	4:30 PM
MR. RIGHT	7:30 PM
BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	9:30 PM
MR. RIGHT	12:30 AM

MARINA-3	
MA3 AL KHATAR Kuwaiti Film)	11:45 AM
MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	2:00 PM
MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	4:15 PM
KUNG FU PANDA 3	2:00 PM



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Sri Lankan maid looking for a part time job, our honest, trustworthy and hard working, preferably with a European family. She has been working with us for several years and we can recommend her to everyone. Contact: 55206281. **(C 5159)**
12-4-2016



FOR SALE

2008 Suv Audi Q7, black, full option, very good condition. KD 3900. Contact: 90905788. **(C 5158)**

Owner leaving Kuwait want to sell household items, Samsung smart TV 40", bedroom furniture, drawing room furniture, 1 Ikea office table with two side tables, with 1 Ikea office chair, curtains, dining table, Arabic majlis, 2 gas cylinders. Contact 69302121. **(C 5157)**
10-4-2016

Contents of a flat (furniture) for sale in Salmiya next to Donbosco School, expat leaving Kuwait. Contact: 97453334. **(C 5156)**
7-6-2016



السحراء



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- **Reception (Male + Female)**
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Flight Schedule

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

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

Arrival Flights on Tuesday 12/4/2016				Departure Flights on Tuesndsay 12/4/2016			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	AIC	976	Goa/Chennai	00:05
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10	BBC	144	Chittagong/Dhaka	00:10
JZR	239	Amman	00:20	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:25
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	MSR	615	Cairo	00:30
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
KKK	6506	Istanbul	00:55	MSC	404	Asyut	00:55
DLH	635	Doha	01:00	KLM	411	Amsterdam	00:55
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15	MSC	416	Sohag	01:05
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20	THY	773	Istanbul	01:40
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:00
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	THY	765	Istanbul	02:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:55
UAE	853	Dubai	02:25	UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	OMA	644	Muscat	04:00
FDB	067	Dubai	03:15	KKK	6505	Istanbul	04:05
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	FDB	068	Dubai	04:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:15	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10
QTR	1076	Doha	03:25	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
KAC	544	Cairo	03:40	QTR	1077	Doha	04:35
LMU	5101	Cairo	04:00	JZR	560	Sohag	05:00
THY	6376	Istanbul	05:05	LMU	5111	Cairo	05:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	RJA	643	Amman	06:25
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	QTR	1087	Doha	06:30
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	06:15	THY	6376	Dubai/Istanbul	06:35
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:25	THY	771	Istanbul	06:45
BAW	157	London	06:40	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15	FDB	070	Dubai	07:05
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30	JZR	1081	Doha	07:15
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	07:35	MSR	621	Cairo	07:55
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:40	GFA	218	Bahrain	08:25
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:50	FDB	064	Dubai	08:30
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	KAC	361	Colombo	08:40
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	ABY	124	Sharjah	08:50
KAC	354	BLR	08:00	FDB	060	Dubai	09:15
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15	KAC	283	Dhaka	09:30
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20	UAE	876	Dubai	09:30
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20	JAI	571	Mumbai	09:30
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	KAC	331	Trivandrum	09:45
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00	DLH	634	Doha	09:45
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	KAC	353	BLR	09:50
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	KAC	343	Chennai	10:00
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	KAC	543	Cairo	10:00
IRA	675	Lar	09:40	KAC	351	Kochi	10:00
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	MEA	403	Beirut	10:40
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40	OMA	648	Muscat	10:40
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	MSR	607	Luxor	10:45
MEA	404	Beirut	11:00	QTR	1089	Doha	11:00
JZR	561	Sohag	11:25	DHX	171	Bahrain	11:20
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30	FDB	5054	Dubai	11:25
JZR	165	Dubai	11:50	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	11:25
NIA	151	Cairo	12:20	ALK	230	Colombo	11:35
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	KAC	381	Delhi	12:00
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30	UAE	860	Dubai	12:05
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	KLM	415	Dammam/Amsterdam	12:10
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	KAC	301	Mumbai	12:10
KAC	620	Doha	13:10	KAC	345	Ahmedabad	12:15
IRC	6507	Shiraz	13:35	GFA	220	Bahrain	12:50
KAC	514	Tehran	13:45	KAC	205	Islamabad	13:00
FBA	831	Al Najaf	13:50	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	13:10
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05	KAC	155	Istanbul	13:10
KAC	672	Dubai	14:05	QTR	1083	Doha	13:20
AXB	393	Kozhikode	14:10	KAC	411	Bangkok/Manila	13:30
				PIA	240	Sialkot	13:30
				KAC	203	Lahore	14:00

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

For labor-related inquiries
and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw



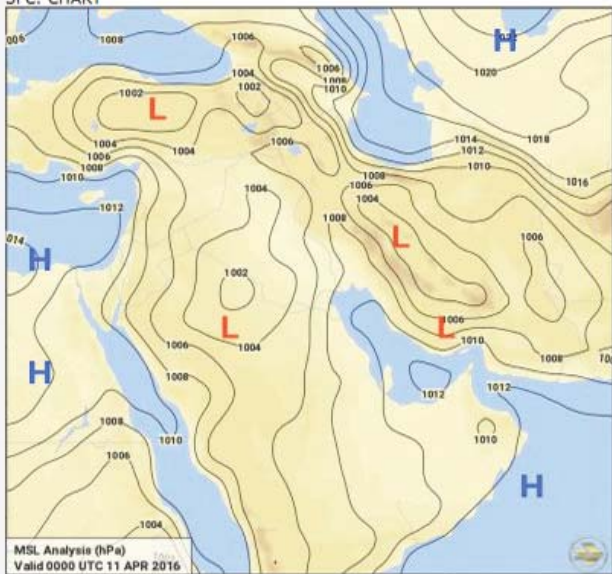
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 11/04/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 33 °C

By Day : Partly cloudy to cloudy with moderate to fresh south easterly wind, with speed of 25 - 50 km/h causing raising dust with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times
By Night : Partly cloudy to cloudy with moderate freshening at times south easterly wind, with speed of 20 - 45 km/h causing raising dust with a chance for rain that might be thundery at times

SFC. CHART



MSL Analysis (hPa)
Valid 0000 UTC 11 APR 2016

Four-Day Forecast

	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Expected Weather	partly cloudy	partly cloudy	partly cloudy	clouds to decrease
Min Temp °C	22	23	22	22
Max Temp °C	35	33	32	34
Wind Direction	south easterly	south easterly	south easterly to easterly	variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly
Wind Speed km/h	25 - 50	25 - 45	15 - 40	12 - 32

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings



Thunder Rain

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C REC	Max °C EXP
KUWAIT CITY	27	34
KUWAIT AIRPORT	23	33
ABDALY	23	38
BUBYAN	23	30
JAHRRA	24	39
FAILAKA ISLAND	23	34
SALMIYAH	23	30
AHMADI	24	31
JAL ALIYAH	23	38
QAROH ISLAND	22	26
UMM AL-MARADEM	23	26
NUWAISIB	20	37
WAFRA	23	38
MANAGISH	24	37
SALMY	24	36
MUTRIBA	23	41

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	37
Min Temp (°C)	20
Max Rel Hum (%)	50
Min Rel Hum (%)	11
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	39 S
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm



Sunrise 05:26



Sunset 18:12

Prayer Times

Fajr	04:04
Sunrise	05:26
Zuhr	11:49
Asr	15:23
Sunset	18:12
Isha	19:31

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Nigar	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abdallah 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 Practitioners	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaazem	23269920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadad	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abidallah Al-Refae	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abidallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
Family Doctor	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
Psychiatrists	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr. Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	
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 Surgeons	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
Internists, Chest & Heart	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

Paediatricians	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarroof	25713514
Dr. Pradip Gujar	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
Dentists	
Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abidallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abidallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abidallah Al-Ali	22633135

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. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
Rheumatologists:	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
Internist, Chest & Heart	
DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Consultant Cardiologist	
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123	

Psychologists
/Psychotherapists

Soor Center
Tel: 2290-1677
Fax: 2290 1688

info@soorcenter.com
www.soorcenter.com

Kaizen center
25716707

Noor Clinic
23845955

William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677
Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677

G o s s i p



KENDALL and KYLIE JENNER add new handbag line to clothing line

Kendall and Kylie Jenner are set to add new handbag line to Kendall + Kylie fashion label. The 'Keeping Up with the Kardashians' sisters will add 18 varieties of the "must-have" accessory, including two purse charms, to their clothing range this autumn, which will complement the existing ready-to-wear pieces from their Spring 2016 collection that hit Neiman Marcus department stores on Thursday. Speaking to WWD magazine about the upcoming launch, the 20-year-old supermodel said: "Bags are definitely a must-have accessory; they can take your outfit to a whole new level. "Our handbag collection is super modern and pairs really well with pieces from our ready-to-wear and shoe collection for fall." The handbag collection is inspired by the pair's favorite designer brands, holiday destinations, such as Tokyo and London, as well as their individual style; it will channel Kendall's feminine

yet tomboy fashion merged with Kylie's edgy wardrobe. The forthcoming accessories line will feature an array of styles, from sleek leather backpack's, classic satchel, mini bucket bag and evening wear Bobino clutches, made of lavish materials, such as crocodile-embossed leather and premium pony hair, priced between \$75 to \$450, which will grace major retailers worldwide, including Bloomingdale's, Holt Renfrew, Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue and Nordstrom, later this year. Speaking about the collection Kylie, 18, said: "I love that we played with all different sizes, from mini to large. A good handbag is functional and easy to use, without compromising the design or overall look. Each design definitely makes its own statement."

Sir Tom Jones' wife has died

The 'Green, Green Grass of Home' singer's spouse of 59 years, Lady Melinda Rose Woodward, passed away on Sunday morning at Cedars Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles after a "short, but fierce, battle with cancer". A statement released on behalf of Tom, 75, read: "Surrounded by her husband and loved ones, she passed away peacefully at Cedars Sinai Hospital in Los Angeles. Sir Tom and his family have asked for privacy at this difficult time and no further information is currently available." Tom - whose birth name is Thomas John Woodward - and his wife married at the age of just 17 in 1957, when they were expecting their first child together, with their son Mark, now 59, being born a month after their wedding. Throughout his career - which saw the music legend have numerous extra-marital affairs with famous women and groupies - he described Melinda as the "love of my life". He previously said: "She loves being married to me and I love being married to her whatever happened." Tom cancelled all of his planned concerts in Asia in April after discovering Melinda was "seriously ill".



Nayyar says the end of 'The Big Bang Theory' is coming

'The Big Bang Theory' star Kunal Nayyar thinks the show will end in the next five years. The 34-year-old actor has played Rajesh Koothrappali in the US sitcom since it began in 2007, with the show making him and his cast mates, who include Johnny Galecki, Jim Parsons, Kaley Cuoco and Simon Helberg, among the highest paid television actors in the world. Kunal and his co-stars are contracted up until a tenth season and although he wants to portray Rajesh for as long as possible he believes that the show realistic only has few years left. Speaking exclusively to BANG Showbiz at the Asian Awards in London, he said: "We have one more series in our contract, that's Season 10. Other than that I don't know. But I'll keep doing it for as long as they will have me. "We could all have walking sticks doing 'The Big Bang Theory' Season 20. I think realistically there's less time left now than there was on the show before. Maybe it will go to 11, 12 or 13. I will do it as long as I can. But I think it is somewhere in that range." Kunal feels very lucky to have starred on the show for several years and admits every time he gets a new script it feels like "Christmas morning". He said: "You know I wake every day and get a script and I open it and it's like Christmas morning, because I'm just so excited to read it, the writers never let us down, they are such incredible story tellers and they have evolved these characters so beautifully. Sometimes you don't get the time to do what you want but we've had so much time and hopefully we'll have a little bit more. I just trust the writers."

Janet will resume touring in 2017

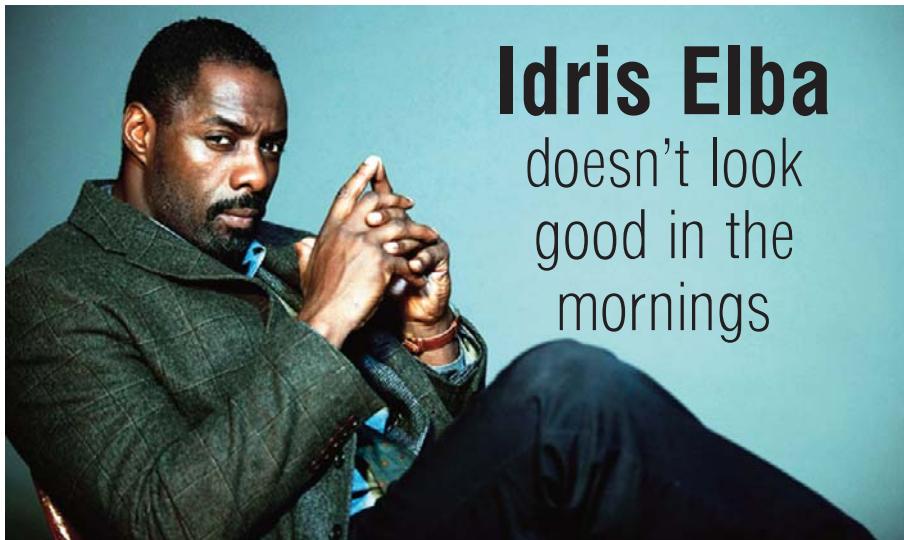
Janet Jackson will return to her 'Unbreakable World Tour in 2017. The 49-year-old singer announced in a video message to fans last week that she is postponing her live dates as she is "planning a family" with her husband Wissam Al-Mana. Now a spokesperson for her promoters Live Nation has revealed when Janet will resume her performances. The statement said: "The Janet Jackson 'Unbreakable' tour in North America will be postponed until 2017. New dates will be announced at a later time, and tickets will be honoured for the rescheduled dates. Refunds are also available at the point of purchase." In the two-minute video message she posted on social media, Janet announced she was postponing the tour because she and her Qatari billionaire husband Wissam Al-Mana, 41, want to become parents and she has been ordered by doctors to rest. She said: "Hey you guys, on August 31 I launched the 'Unbreakable World Tour'. First I want to thank all the fans for coming out and seeing the show, you guys made it so enjoyable each and every night. "We are in the second leg of the tour and there's been a sudden change and I thought it was important you be the first to know. "My husband and I are planning a family so I'm going to have to delay the tour. "Please, if you can, try and understand it's important that I do this now, I have to rest up, doctors orders, but I have not forgotten about you, I will continue the tour as soon as I possibly can."



Professor Green tweets about 'lost love'

Professor Green has tweeted about "lost love" following the breakdown of his marriage to Millie Mackintosh. The rapper - who parted ways with the television personality after two and a half years as man and wife in February - opened up about love and heartbreak as he took to his Twitter account late on Sunday night. He wrote: "Where's all the heart gone... To have a heart. So much distraction. Having the realist discussion." The pair have stopped following each other on Twitter and while the 'Lullaby' rapper's mind is clearly on the former 'Made In Chelsea' star, the brunette beauty has been spotted partying with pals after she jetted off to sunny Los Angeles last week. Millie, 26, posted

a rear view photograph of her stunning figure and flaunted her bum in a pair of skin-tight jeans that featured a rip in the derriere. She captioned the image: "Tearing it up tonight #britsinLA #sorrymumrymum (sic)" The TV star is also rumored to be seeing her former 'Made in Chelsea' co-star Hugo Taylor - who she dated in 2011 - and the couple were said to have shared a sneaky smooch at the British Polo Day event in Dubai last month. Meanwhile, her 32-year-old ex-fiancee with the beautiful singer Sinead Harnett on Thursday at London restaurant Som Saa.



Idris Elba doesn't look good in the mornings

The 43-year-old heartthrob doesn't see himself as a sex symbol and can't understand why so many people praise him for his looks, especially as when he looks at his reflection in the mirror after just waking up he looks less than handsome. He quipped: "When I wake up in the morning and look in the mirror, I don't look god. I don't know what everyone else is looking at." The world's obsession with the hunky London-born actor - who also performs as a DJ under the name Big Driis - is yet to subside as he's been dubbed "the Sexiest Actor Alive" by Glamour magazine for the second year in a row, in its May 2016 issue. However, Idris isn't interested in "the whole fame thing" and is concentrating on

taking care of his family, which includes his two children Isan, 14, with his ex-wife Kim Norgaard and toddler Winston, his son with former girlfriend Naiyana Garth. The 'Luther' star told the first issue of Balance magazine: "I'm not into the whole fame thing. I don't have celebrity friends. I have the same ones I had from when I was a kid and for me, it's about my family. I would like to my entire family happy and secure. That's a lifelong dream of mind: to make them happy."

Howard Marks has died aged 70

The cannabis smuggler turned author - who was also known as Mr Nice - sadly passed away at his home in Bridgend, South Wales after a battle with bowel cancer. Confirming the news, Howard's pal and the founder and co-creator of Loaded magazine, James Brown tweeted: "Lovely, entertaining, inspiring man. Like our loaded mag Dad. A true rogue & Great writer. We all adored him RIP HM (sic)" Howard was arrested in Spain in 1988 and was extradited to Florida, where he was sentenced to 25 years at a notorious prison in Terre Haute, Indiana. He was released on parole after seven years for good behaviour. In the years following, he

penned his most well known book, 'Mr. Nice, releasing a follow up, titled 'Senor Nice', 10 years later in 2006. He was also the subject of a movie of the same name, where he was played by Rhys Ifans. Speaking last year, Howard revealed he had come to terms with his illness. He shared: "It's impossible to regret any part of my life when I feel happy and I am happy now, so I don't have any regrets and have not had any for a very long time. "Smuggling cannabis was a wonderful way of living - perpetual culture shock, absurd amounts of money, and the comforting knowledge of getting so many people stoned."



Aaron Paul: Being at home is like a vacation

Aaron Paul considers being at home to be like a vacation. The 36-year-old actor, who is best known for portraying Jesse Pinkman in 'Breaking Bad', lives in Los Angeles but spends so much of his time working outside the city, it feels almost alien to him. He shared: "Any chance I have to be at my house, I take it. I'm never at home, I'm always travelling. I never work in Los Angeles. "Being at home really is a vacation for me and my wife." Aaron married his wife, director and actress Lauren Parsekian, in 2013 and revealed their mutual appreciation of music helped to bring the two of them together in the first place. In fact, the duo have since turned their home into a makeshift music venue of their own. He told the Observer newspaper: "Music is our obsession. I fell in love with my wife at a music festival. We have concerts inside our living room. "Whenever we're in town, we track down artists playing in Los Angeles and just reach out to their tour manager and see if they'd like to play our living room."

Turner hits back at ‘Game of Thrones’ critics

Sophie Turner is bemused by the negative attention ‘Game of Thrones’ receives. The 20-year-old actress, who stars as Sansa Stark on the HBO fantasy television series, has defended the show’s graphic portrayal of real-life events, insisting it is important to provide an accurate account of things that go on in the real world. She said: “The thing is, ‘Game of Thrones’ does not shy away

from things that happened in those times. “The oppression of women happened, and rape still happens, particularly in wars and arranged marriages. Why is there so much attention when it happens on television and not when it happens in the real world? It happens every day all over the world and you never hear about it.” Sophie started working on the popular series at the age of 14 and admits it was

strange living the life of a child actor. The British star told the Sunday Times newspaper: “On set, you’re treated very much like an adult, so then you go back to school and you’re suddenly back to being a little schoolgirl, getting told off if you’re naughty. It’s a totally different mindset.”



Barrymore and Kopelman to stay close following split

Drew Barrymore and Will Kopelman will stay close following their split. The ‘Miss You Already’ star and her husband of four years announced their separation last week but they plan to stay friends as they reportedly still have a lot of mutual respect for each other. A source told the New York Post’s Page Six column: “Will became close with all of her friends, and she his. They have never at any point [in their marriage] lived separate lives... This is just a case of two people mutually falling out of love, and while opposites may attract, it’s often unsustainable. “He travelled to live with her on every set on her movies, to help take care of their kids on those locations. He was also always present as a fixture in support of her beauty and wine businesses. His father [former

Chanel president Arie L. Kopelman], has even been an active sounding board for her make-up line.” Meanwhile, the 41-year-old actress is keen to keep things “cordial” for the sake of their two daughters, Olive, three and Frankie, 23 months. An insider shared previously: “[Drew] really wanted to give her daughters a normal family life, and she will do everything to make sure they [have one]. They’re on good terms and are trying to keep everything cordial for the sake of the girls. “They’ll keep their apartment they have on the Upper East Side [of New York City] for now. Olive is in school here [in NY], but also is enrolled in LA. Drew was never really based full-time in NYC - they were always back and forth.”



Underwood making more effort with marriage

Carrie Underwood has to make more “effort” with her marriage now she is a mother. The ‘Church Bells’ singer and husband Mike Fisher are parents to 13-month-old Isaiah, and she admits she and her spouse are “mindful” of making time for one another, rather than focusing all their attention and efforts on their son. She said “Sometimes you have to make more of an effort to be with each other because it’s really easy to put all of your time and energy into your baby. “It’s been not challenging, but just something that we’ve really just trying to be mindful of and try to make time for each other. We’re planning a vacation right now - we need it!” The 33-year-old singer has truly learned what unconditional love is since becoming a mother. She told People magazine: “He’s the best thing. I never really knew what it was like to love something or someone unconditionally until I had him. “He’s so sweet and so smart. He’s a little sponge just growing and learning every day. He’s just the best thing.” The former ‘American Idol’ star is amused that her son wants to imitate everything his parents do. She said: “He’ll hear you say something and then he’ll mock you. Right now he walks around the bus and he’s like ‘OK, OK.’ It’s adorable.”

Chastain promoting Hollywood equality

Jessica Chastain is “changing” Hollywood’s perception of women. The ‘Interstellar’ star is keen to break the “long fairy-tale that women don’t get along” and uses the example of when she was pitted against Jennifer Lawrence because they were both up for the same Oscar. She said: “I remember reading this article that talked about the ‘fight’ between me and Jennifer Lawrence, how we were rivals because we were up for the same Oscar [for ‘Zero Dark Thirty’ and ‘Silver Linings Playbook’, respectively]. They never say that when men are nominated in a category. “So I went on my Facebook and said it wasn’t true, because I thought, I’m not standing for this anymore; because that being out there tells women that other women are not supportive. “In fact, if you see a movie like ‘Brooklyn’, with Saoirse Ronan, and what a great job she did - the more incredible performances there are out there, the more parts for women there are going to be, because audiences are going to want to see it. So why would it benefit anyone to deny accolades for others? It’s this long fairy-tale that women don’t get along. But we’re changing that.” And the 39-year-old actress is feeling more “positive” now about the future despite her “disappointment” that no movies with female leads were nominated for Best Picture at last year’s Academy Awards. She added to The Guardian newspaper: “I feel really positive about where we are right now. Last year at the Oscars, I was so disappointed - all the best picture nominees, not one of them had a female protagonist. I was so tired. And the women nominated for best actress were really in a supporting role, because there weren’t enough movies with best actress roles made that year to nominate.”



Dame Helen Mirren: Alan Rickman would be proud of movie

Dame Helen Mirren thinks the late Alan Rickman would have been “really, really proud” of ‘Eye in the Sky’. The 70-year-old actress thinks her friend - who lost his battle with cancer aged 69 in January - perfectly showcased his “wit, humanity and intelligence” in the drone warfare drama. She said: “The Alan we see on the screen in ‘Eye In The Sky’ is Alan. It’s Alan as I remember him. His wit, his humanity, his intelligence. “I think Alan would have been really, really proud for this to have been his last film.” Helen also praised the actor as a “genius” who was particularly “amazing” when it came to playing baddies. Speaking on ‘The Andrew Marr Show’, she said: “Alan was a genius character actor and he could play all these amazing baddies.” Elsewhere on the show, the veteran actress jokingly dismissed suggestions she could again play Queen Elizabeth during the monarch’s 90th birthday pageant later this year. She said: “No, the Queen will be the Queen. She’s much better at it than I am.” Helen recently admitted she is still in a “state of shock” over the ‘Harry Potter’ star’s passing. She said: “I’m still in a state of shock about it. I looked at a picture of him just today and thought, ‘I can’t believe that I’m not going to see him again.’” — Bang Showbiz



Paltrow thinks she and Martin ‘better’ as friends

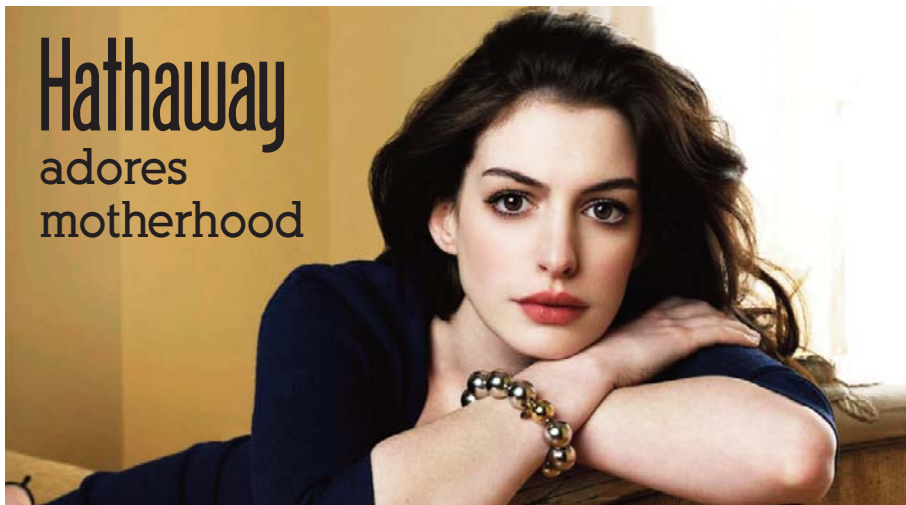
Gwyneth Paltrow thinks she and Chris Martin are “better” as friends. The 43-year-old actress split from the Coldplay frontman - with whom she has children Apple, 11, and Moses, 10 - in March 2014 but they have remained “very close” and still feel like a family as they get on so well. She said: “I think we are better as friends than we were [married]. We are very close and supportive of one another. “It hasn’t always been easy for us because you have good days and bad days as you do in life with anything, but I feel lucky because Chris has been willing to push himself for the sake of the kids and help me co-create this new

family. “It’s like we are still a family, but not a couple.” Gwyneth is now dating TV producer Brad Falchuk and has been having some “amazing” experiences. Speaking about her new romance, she told Australia’s Marie Claire magazine: “I don’t want to say too much, but I will say you just never know what is going to happen, what people you are going to meet, what amazing lessons you are going to learn.” And the ‘Mortdecai’ star hasn’t ruled out marrying again in the future. She added: “I think marriage is a really beautiful and noble institution, but it is not like I am holding a goal of getting remarried.”



Alec Baldwin makes baby vow

Alec Baldwin has vowed not to have a fourth child with wife Hilaria. The 58-year-old actor and his spouse - who already have kids Carmen, two, and Rafael, nine months, together - are expecting their third child and think it would be “very stressful” if they went on to expand their brood even further. Alec - who also has daughter Ireland, 20, with ex-wife Kim Basinger - said: “We had our daughter and we said, ‘How could another one of these be wrong?’ Then we had our son, and we said, ‘How could another one of these be wrong?’ “But now we’re thinking, if we had another one, it wouldn’t be wrong, but it would be very stressful. We’re very lucky, we’re very happy.” The ‘30 Rock’ star is keen for his yoga instructor wife to have some “time off” from being pregnant and is planning “a lot of vacations” once she’s given birth. He told People magazine: “I’m very excited, but I want my wife to have some time off... “I just worry about my wife and I want her to rest. So after this is over, we’re going to work hard and play hard. A lot of vacations.” Hilaria joked the couple’s baby making was the result of having nothing else to do in their bedroom. She quipped: “I told him we need to put a TV in our bedroom.”



Anne Hathaway is “enjoying every second” of parenthood. The ‘Devil Wears Prada’ actress and husband Adam Shulman welcomed son Jonathan Rosebanks into the world on March 24 and are completely smitten with the new arrival. A source said: “Anne is just enjoying every second with her baby boy. They are loving every minute being new parents. “He is such a sweet and happy baby. He looks like a mixture between Anne and Adam. “Adam has been such a great husband and really supportive to Anne.” The couple welcomed their child into the world in Los Angeles and have opened their doors to a number of visitors. The source told E! News:

“They have many friends and family coming in and out of their home in LA this past two weeks. “Anne and Adam’s parents have been very helpful with the baby. Anne plans on breastfeeding and wants to experience and feel everything about being a new mother. “The new parents have been taking turns taking care of their son during the nights. The 33-year-old actress is currently “taking it easy” and will return to yoga in the next few weeks, the insider revealed. Though the family are currently based in Los Angeles, they are planning to visit New York once Jonathan is able to travel.

Asia falls for S Korean military romance

Millions across Asia will sit down this week for the finale of a hit South Korean drama series that has triggered relationship health warnings in China, a thumbs-up review from Thailand's junta chief and a trans-regional passion for its two young stars. "Descendants of the Sun" tells the story of an army captain sent on a peace-keeping mission to a fictional war-torn country, Uruk, where he meets and falls in love with a surgeon working with a medical NGO.

The 16-episode show has garnered impressive domestic ratings for broadcaster KBS, but its real success has been overseas and the series has been hailed for reviving the so-called "Hallyu" (Korean Wave) of k-pop and k-drama that started spreading across Asia in the early 2000s. It has proved particularly popular in China, where it has been simulcast on the video-streaming site iQiyi.com and has notched up more than 2.0 billion accumulated views, while becoming one of the top-ranked search and discussion topics on Weibo, China's version of Twitter.

"Will I be able to find an acceptable husband if I keep watching K-dramas?" said one Weibo user, describing herself as "totally in love" with lead actor Song Joong-Ki's character.

'Song Joong-Ki sickness'

Such obsessive yearnings triggered a tongue-in-cheek warning from China's Public Security Ministry about thousands of women who were suffering from "Song Joong-Ki sickness." "When chasing male or female stars, do not become too infatuated with them, because sometimes your casual words could end up hurting those who really care for you," the ministry advised on its own Weibo account. And it is not just China. In Singapore, advertising executive Jamayne Lam, who described Song as "every girl's dream," confessed to getting hooked on the drama after just 10 minutes and binge-watching all 11 available episodes in two days.

In Hong Kong, where it's shown on Viu TV-a free-to-air



South Korean actress Song Hye-Kyo in a scene from the hit South Korean drama series 'Descendants of the Sun'. — AFP photos

channel that also has an online portal-the series is popular with commuters who like to view it on their smartphones while travelling to and from work. "After watching the first episode, I could not help but chase it," said Susan Yuen, a 30-year-old clerk, adding that waiting for the latest episode upload had become a weekly routine for her and many colleagues in her office. Korean dramas normally begin airing before later episodes are filmed-allowing for ratings-boosting script adjustments.

Risky marketing strategy

But "Descendants of the Sun" was pre-recorded in its entirety — a major "risk", according to its South Korean



South Korean actor Song Joong-Ki in a scene from the hit South Korean drama series "Descendants of the Sun".

producer Next Entertainment World (NEW). "None of the pre-recorded dramas have been successful in the past," a spokeswoman for NEW told AFP. "But it was necessary to pass Beijing's censorship rules for our first simulcast in China." Censors did make some changes to the Chinese-version of the drama, including deleting a fight between South and North Korean soldiers in the first episode.

Pre-recording paid off by allowing a strong pre-broadcast marketing strategy that included airing movie-like teasers in South Korea and China three months in advance. The drama has now been sold to 32 countries, including non-Asian broadcasters in the United States, England, France and Russia. Its success is built on the same staples

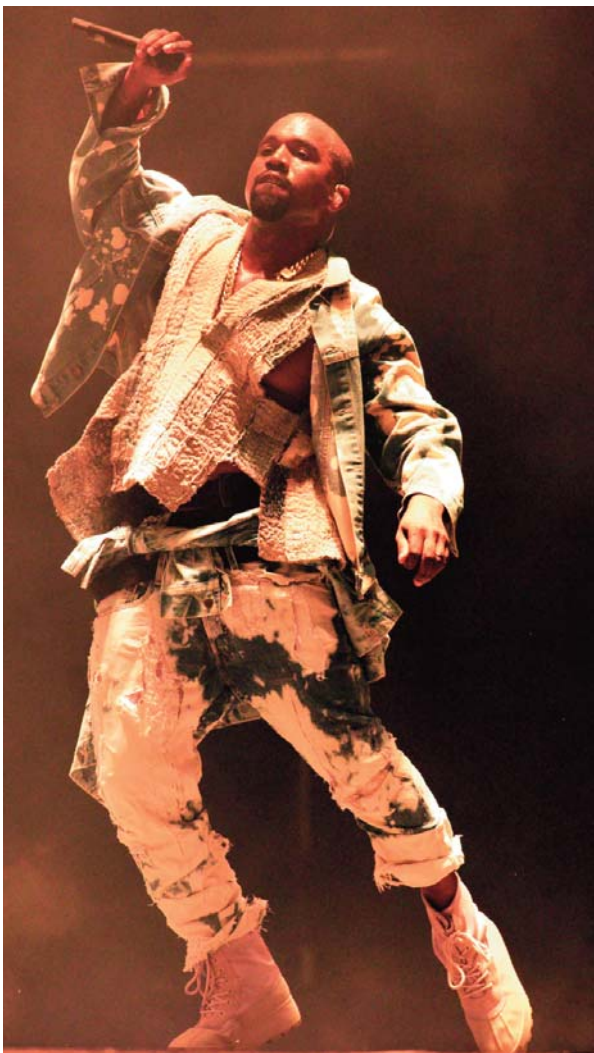
that have made k-dramas a lucrative cultural export: attractive lead actors, melodrama and romance. What sets it apart, experts say, is its modern-day setting of military peace-keeping, upbeat patriotism and, perhaps most crucially, the fact that it's a k-drama that isn't "too Korean."

"At a time when Asia has seen scores of natural disasters like tsunamis and earthquakes, the series projects a sense of universal humanity," said Yun Suk-Jin, professor of Korean Literature at Chungnam National University. "And because it is set overseas rather than in Korea, it appeals more to international viewers," Yun said.

Popular export

It has spawned a mini industry, with Chinese fans snapping up cosmetics, clothes and fashion accessories favoured by the show's stars-especially the female lead Song Hye-Kyo-and sold on iQiyi.com's online shopping site. The South Korean city of Taebaek-the location for the military barracks in the drama-is opening the film set to the public after President Park Geun-Hye told senior officials that the drama could fuel a boost in tourism. Park was just one of a number of political leaders to applaud the drama for helping to "instill a sense of patriotism among young people."

In Thailand, former army chief-turned-Prime Minister Prayut Chan-O-Cha praised the series for its sense of sacrifice, obedience and duty. "So please watch it and if anyone wants to make such a drama I will financially sponsor it to make people love government officials," Prayut told delegates at a government function in Bangkok. His only criticism was that Song Joong-ki was possibly too young and handsome. "In real life a captain must shoulder a lot of burden and would look older," he suggested. — AFP



File photo shows American singer Kanye West performs on the Pyramid Stage at the Glastonbury Festival of Music. — AFP

Kanye makes history with streaming-majority number one

Rapper Kanye West made history on Sunday as the creator of the first album to reach number one in the United States mostly through streaming. The feat is the latest turn in a highly unusual release for album "The Life of Pablo," which the brash rap star debuted at a fashion show at New York's Madison Square Garden and initially distributed only through the Tidal streaming service. But the album earlier this month became available on rival sites such as Spotify, bringing in so many streams that "The Life of Pablo" not only appeared for the first time on the benchmark Billboard chart-nearly two months after its release-but opened at number one.

Tracking service Nielsen Service said that "The Life of Pablo" sold the equivalent of 94,000 copies in the week though Thursday, 70 percent through streaming-the fast-growing sector of unlimited, on-demand music online. West far exceeds the previous record for the level of streaming behind a number one album-set recently by Rihanna, with streaming accounting for nearly a third of the sales of her "Anti." Both West and Rihanna are partners in Tidal, the streaming service led by rap mogul Jay-Z that has billed itself as aimed at artists and audiophiles.

But Tidal remains much smaller than its rivals and, for reasons that remain unclear, did not report initial figures in February for "The Life of Pablo" to Nielsen Music. In the week through Thursday, Nielsen Music said songs off "The Life of Pablo" were streamed in the United States some 99 million times-more than 30 times the global subscriber base of Tidal. While West has relented on releasing the album to other streaming sites, he still does not sell it on CD, vinyl or Apple's iTunes-a rare commercial move even amid the growth of streaming.

But he has made it available for download purchase both through Tidal and his own website, accounting for non-streaming sales in the past week. It is the seventh number one album for West, the husband of reality television star Kim Kardashian who has likened himself to Michelangelo, pursued a side career in fashion design and vowed to run for president in 2020. A prolific user of Twitter, West encouraged fans to subscribe to Tidal after revealing that he was \$53 million in debt and needed money to bring his "beautiful ideas to the world." Breaking the traditional concept of an album release, he kept fine-tuning "The Life of Pablo" even after it went live on Tidal. — AFP



These photos provided by the Rohnert Park, Calif, Department of Public Safety shows a goat that wandered into a Starbucks in the Northern California town. — AP photos

Goat breaks free, goes on Starbucks run in California

Police say a goat apparently needed a caffeine fix when it wandered into a Starbucks in Northern California. Rohnert Park police Sgt Rick Bates says dispatchers received several calls Sunday morning about a goat named Milly wandering around a strip mall on the city's eastern edge. Bates says employees who were opening the Starbucks tried to give Milly a banana, but she walked past them and began chewing on a box.

Bates took Milly into custody and brought her to the animal shelter - but not before snapping photos of her sniffing around the Starbucks and posting them on the police department's Facebook page. He says word spread to Milly's owner, and she has made it home. She didn't travel far; her owner Alan Ergenbright says the 11-year-old pet goat lives just two doors down. "When we heard, we thought she was a little crazy," Ergenbright told the Santa Rosa Press Democrat. "She's a really happy and sweet goat. She's also pretty curious." Rohnert Park is about 50 miles north of San Francisco. — AP

Turkey's favorite comic on trial for 'insulting' official

Turkey's most popular comedian went on trial yesterday accused of insulting a provincial governor, the latest in a string of such court cases seen as clamping down on free speech in the country. Cem Yilmaz, who is also an award-winning actor, is facing up to two years in jail for a series of tweets criticizing the governor of northwestern Yalova province over the death of a mathematics teacher. The governor, Selim Cebiroglu, had harshly berated a mathematics teacher in March last year in front of his students over his clothes and beard, saying he could be "mistaken for a beggar".

The teacher, Halil Serkan Oz, 42, died of a heart attack a week later at a protest against the governor. After his death, Yilmaz tweeted: "Crushing a man by using the power of an official position and fatally breaking his heart... What a shame that the poor teacher died. May you rise to even more important positions, Mr Governor!" Yilmaz was not in court yesterday, however his lawyer Rengin Gonenc Yuksel argued that the comedian "had not committed any crime", according to the state-run Anatolia news agency. "At no point in his tweet does he say 'you did it'. What he did was criticize," the lawyer said, adding that Yilmaz was

commenting "in his capacity as a humorist, an artist."

Many similar cases are under way in Turkey, mostly against those charged with insulting President Recep Tayyip Erdogan who has been accused of brooking no criticism and sliding towards authoritarianism. "Leaders must be more tolerant towards criticism," said Yuksel. The court cases have raised concerns over freedom of expression in Turkey and Erdogan has also been accused of seeking to muzzle the press, NGOs and academics. 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" after two journalists were put on trial.

In response Erdogan defiantly declared he would not take "lessons in democracy" from the West. The comedian Yilmiz is a household name who has won several awards for his roles in movies in Turkey, and also starred alongside Russel Crowe in the 2014 movie "The Water Diviner" set after the end of World War I. He is also a musician and a cartoonist. — AFP



This file photo shows Turkish comedian Cem Yilmaz arriving at a premiere screening in Hollywood. — AFP

William makes dosa, royal couple meet top Indian fan

Britain's Prince William helped cook a dosa in Mumbai yesterday after he and wife Kate met perhaps their biggest fan in India, making the 93-year-old's dream come true. The Duke of Cambridge met entrepreneurs and inventors in the western city before making the Indian pancake using an innovative automatic device called DosaMatic. After watching a demonstration, William gladly poured some batter and waited for the dosa to cook before tasting a bit and declaring it "not bad", although the Duchess could not be tempted with a bite. "The Duke said he would love to have the machine in his palace," Eshwar Vikas, device inventor and chief executive of Mukunda Foods, told reporters afterwards.

Day two of their tour of the Indian subcontinent came after the royal couple met Boman Kohinoor, owner of Mumbai's most famous Parsi cafe, on Sunday evening. Kohinoor, 93, has a strong claim to be India's biggest fan of the British royal family-giant cardboard cutouts of William and Kate adorn his restaurant-and he told AFP on Friday he was desperate to meet them. His dream came true after William and Kate were made aware of a social media campaign with the hashtag #WillKatMeetMe. "TRH (their royal highnesses) were very touched and invited him to their hotel before last night's charity gala," Kensington Palace tweeted yesterday, accompanied by a photo of them meeting Kohinoor.

'Namaste Mumbai'

William also got behind the wheel of a racing car simulator yesterday, as he and Kate chatted with entrepreneurs at Social-a trendy meeting place in Mumbai. The

prince met officials from Mahindra Racing, which manufactures Formula One-style electric cars, and tested their latest invention. William rounded off the morning's event by making a short speech to launch an awards program for Indian startups called the Tech Rocketship Awards.

After walking onto the stage he started by bowing slightly as he put his hands together and said "Namaste (hello), Mumbai". "Catherine and I are very impressed by the energy and ideas we have just seen. Being here today, it is clear that India is leading the way in so many areas of innovation and technology," he said. "Your ability to innovate is not just good news for India but it's great news for the world. With one sixth of the world's population, young innovators like you must play a major role," William added.

The 33-year-old then pressed a button to officially launch the program, setting off exploding confetti. "All this innovation and we get this!" William quipped to laughing guests. The couple later flew to New Delhi where they were due to visit India Gate before a dinner to mark Queen Elizabeth's birthday. In Delhi, they will also have lunch with Prime Minister Narendra Modi today before heading to Kaziranga National Park in the country's remote northeast to see endangered rhinos. The couple will also spend two days in Bhutan, where they will meet the Himalayan nation's king and queen and embark on a six-hour hike. They will return to India to finish their tour in Agra on Saturday by visiting the famous Taj Mahal. — AFP



Britain's Prince William, Duke of Cambridge (center) and his wife Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge (center front) talk with schoolchildren during a visit to Gandhi Smriti, an Indian museum dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi in New Delhi. — AFP



This file photo shows French designer Thomas Jacob (right) posing with inmates before the presentation of creations made in the framework of his social project 'Pieta', at the San Pedro prison in Lima. — AFP photos



French designer Thomas Jacob (center) stamping his fingerprints upon arriving at the San Pedro prison.



French designer Thomas Jacob (left) walking before the presentation of creations made in the framework of his social project 'Pieta'.

Peru prisoners launch fashion label behind bars



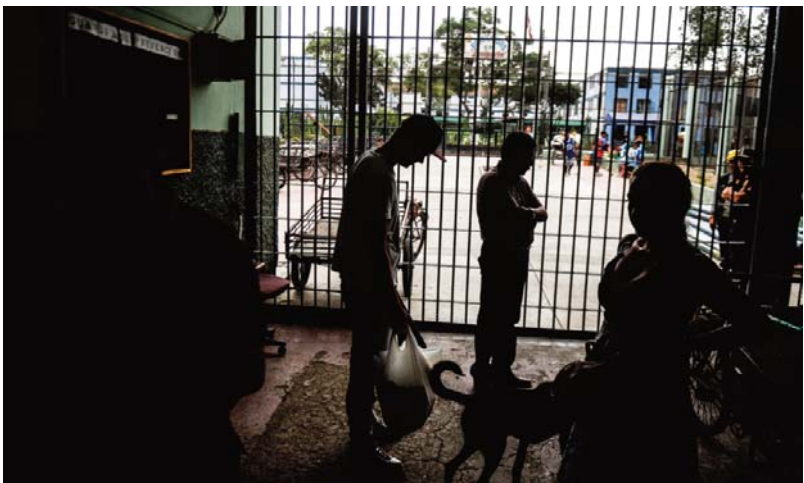
Inmates sewing as part of the social project 'Pieta'.



French designer Thomas Jacob arriving at the San Pedro prison to work in his social project 'Pieta'.



A T-shirt in the foreground as inmates sew as part of the social project 'Pieta'.



French designer Thomas Jacob (left) arriving at the San Pedro prison to work with inmates.

Santos Arce Ramos is doing 18 years for aggravated robbery, but today he is carefully cutting organic cotton cloth in a workshop at San Pedro, a notorious prison in Peru's capital Lima. With the help of a French designer who cut his teeth at Chanel, inmates at two Peruvian prisons have launched their own clothing label, seeking to bring their urban style to the world and find redemption in fashion. "It's like putting together a puzzle," said Arce, 46, as he maneuvered pieces of cloth into place on a beat-up work bench.

Arce is one of 30 inmates at San Pedro and a women's prison across town, Santa Monica, who make the clothes sold by Pieta, a label that describes itself as socially conscious and was set up by 29-year-old French fashionista Thomas Jacob. The label specializes in a gritty urban look: T-shirts, hoodies and jackets in black, white and army green, stamped with stark black designs. Jacob, a graduate of French business school INSEEC, got the idea for Pieta in 2012, when a friend who taught French lessons to inmates at San Pedro invited him to tag along with her.

Galvanized by the visit, he plunged head-first into an ambitious new project. He asked prison officials for permission to set up a tailoring workshop for inmates, and then quit his job at revered fashion house Chanel to dedicate himself to his new label. "Prison inspires me—the dark side of humankind," he said. It was slow going at first, but within a year the inmates were making "high-quality, competitive" products, he told AFP, speaking nearly perfect Spanish.

Pieta takes its name from a sculpture by Renaissance master Michelangelo in which the Virgin Mary cradles the lifeless body of Jesus. The name "represents the final step before resurrection, the rebirth of a man who never gives up. That's the hope of these inmates," Jacob said.

Designs from the dark side

Jacob designs the clothes and the inmates make them. "The idea is to do everything within the prison walls," he said as a group of inmates modeled the 2016 collection, which will be sold online. His designs recall the work of Alexander Rodchenko, the Russian artist whose angular lines and stark colors epitomized the 20th-century movement known as constructivism. In one T-shirt, the outline of a black padlock is barely perceptible against a black background. In another, the jagged shape of an industrial building bears the inscription "Factory of Tears."

The brand's logo is four bars with a diagonal slash through them, evoking hash marks carved into a prison wall to tally the days of lost freedom. "It's an authentic concept, with different designs. There's nothing false. We use organic cotton and natural materials," said Jacob. Pieta produces some 100 T-shirts a week and has sold more than 12,000 items in just over three years. The T-shirts go for \$35 online. At San Pedro, the inmates' small workshop sits in a recreation area that was the scene of one of the worst prison massacres in history 30 years ago, when inmates from the Shining Path, a leftist guerrilla group, staged a mutiny that left more than 100 people dead.

The crowded space is packed with sewing machines the inmates use to turn the materials Jacob brings twice a week



into clothes. The prisoners receive a percentage on every sale. Carlos Uribe, who is serving 15 years for drug dealing, said the money helps the inmates care for their families on the outside. "We need people like Thomas, people who believe in us," said Uribe, 67. "We're a potential labor force. Working helps redeem us, provides money for our families and makes us feel productive. We're not useless." — AFP

An inmate sewing as part of the social project "Pieta".



An inmate presenting creations made in the framework of the social project 'Pieta'.



French designer Thomas Jacob showing a T-shirt.



French designer Thomas Jacob waiting before the presentation of creations made in the framework of his social project 'Pieta'.



French designer Thomas Jacob (right) working with inmates participating in his social project 'Pieta'.



People riding on a motorbike react as a boy splashes water on them during the traditional Thai New Year celebrations or Songkran water festival in Bangkok. Thailand's military government is putting a dampener on the annual nationwide water fight. Despite Thailand's worst drought in 20 years, the junta says it has no intention of limiting the virtually around-the-clock water throwing that defines the three-day Songkran festival. Instead, it has decided to impose morality measures. — AP

May Al-Najjar: A woman's passion with a call of healing



May Al-Najjar

By Sahar Moussa

KT: What is Pranik healing?

May Al-Najjar: Pranik healing is a no-touch, energy-based healing modality to help alleviate and heal physical and psychological problems. Pranik healing is very scientific in nature. The word pranik stems from the Sanskrit word "prana" meaning "vital life force", which is an ancient science and art of healing that utilizes prana or ki energy to heal the entire physical body.

KT: Why did you choose to learn Pranik healing?

Najjar: I always wanted to heal people and Pranik healing is very effective in doing it. I had an inner calling to do it and it's very scientific in nature and made sense to me.

KT: How were you introduced to Pranik healing? Where did you learn it and since when are you practicing it?

Najjar: My cousin was suffering from MS and some days were painful for her to walk and move, and every time she was like that she would go to Dubai for Pranik healing sessions with Prakash and come back full of energy and no pain. It got me very curious, so one day we all went there and I booked a session with Prakash. Although I wasn't suffering from anything, I felt incredible after the session - like I was flying, and very happy and relaxed! That's when I decided to learn more and that's how I was hooked. I started by taking basic healing courses in Dubai at the beginning, then I got addicted and took more courses, and started practicing in July 2007. At the beginning, I started healing and practicing at home in a room - it was like a diwaniya - on my family and friends, and this is how people started to know more about it, and I was doing all this for free and enjoying it. Then I quit my job and left everything and decided to be a fulltime healer and teacher.

KT: What is the difference between Pranik healing and Reiki?

Najjar: Reiki focuses a lot on energizing, while Pranik healing focuses a lot on cleansing. Pranik healing focuses on energy hygiene by using a bowl of salt and water to disintegrate, cleaning your hands after healing and cutting from the client after healing, so the healer won't get affected by the symptoms of the patient. In Reiki, they follow seven chakras while Pranik healing follows 11 chakras.

KT: Why do you use salt and water in Pranik healing?

Najjar: Water absorbs energy and salt disintegrates it.

KT: Do you think people nowadays are more open to this kind of healing?

Najjar: Yes, very much so.

KT: Can anyone learn Pranik healing?

Najjar: Yes, anyone who is 16 years and older and has the mental capacity to read and write can learn it.

KT: Is Pranik healing a replacement to tradition medicine?

Najjar: No, Pranik healing complements conventional medicine - it doesn't replace it.

KT: Is there an element of self-hypnosis in this procedure?

Najjar: No, not at all.

KT: What type of crystals do you use while healing and why do you use them?

Najjar: I use a clear quartz laser and pink rose activators. Crystals have more power and strength to do the healing and also prevent the occurrence of contamination from client to healer.

KT: What kind of diseases Pranik healing can heal?

Najjar: Almost anything, as it is based in the body's ability to heal itself, but Pranik healing makes it faster. I have deep faith

that with meditation, forgiveness, special diet and lifestyle and constant Pranik healing sessions (two to three per week for a few months), Pranik healing can cure even cancer patients. I have been doing it for eight years now and I have seen very good results. Really the results stun me, although you can see fast results in healing psychotherapy.

KT: Do people come to you more for physical healing or psychological healing?

Najjar: People come more for psychological healing. But you know that most people who suffer from psychological problems also have physical problems, so as soon as their psychological problems get better, their physical problems get better automatically. So I usually work on both during the sessions.

KT: Who do you have more - students or patients?

Najjar: I think patients, but I would like it to be the other way round.

KT: Can you tell us more about meditation?

Najjar: Since I was a young girl, when I was reading the Holy Quran and hearing about Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) meditating, I always wondered how he used to meditate. I always wondered, did he meditate by only looking? When I read the Quran and read the verse "Then do they not look at the camels - how they are created, and at the sky - how it is raised", I always wanted to know what that meant. I wanted to know more about meditation. When I went to university, I was introduced to meditation. Many things lead me to meditation, especially as I was going through very rough times with my studies and going through depression, so meditation helped me a lot. I started doing meditation in Boston in a small school that offers meditation sessions every Sunday morning, and I loved it, and I think my first meditation experience was the most profound experience of my life. There are so many ways that you can meditate - there is medi-

tation in yoga, and yoga means union - union of many things, union with your soul, incarnated soul, higher soul (realization) and union with your body. There are many methods of yoga, but the whole point of yoga is that your incarnated soul merges with the higher soul. Meditation basically is concentration and awareness.

KT: Does meditation contradict in any way Islamic teachings?

Najjar: Not at all. This is what Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) did. He meditated and meditated. Prayers are basically another aspect or method of yoga and meditation, which is the yoga of devotion and devotion to God. What we do when we pray is that we become devoted to God.

KT: Do you have a center in Kuwait where someone can learn and take courses in Pranik healing?

Najjar: Yes, at Star Salmiya on Salem Al-Mubarak St.

KT: Do you give any certificates after the courses are completed?

Najjar: Yes, the certificates are from the Institute of Inner Studies from Manila.

KT: Are the courses affordable?

Najjar: Yes.

KT: Any last word you would like to add on this subject?

Najjar: We all have the ability to heal others and ourselves and I believe it's the most amazing gift to be able to alleviate the pain and suffering of others. I wish that Pranik healing spreads to every family, so if there is an ailment or emotional issues in the family, it can be alleviated and healed immediately.



Step 1: Scanning



Step 2: Cleansing



Step 3: Energizing



Photo shows May Al-Najjar giving a Pranik healing course in class.