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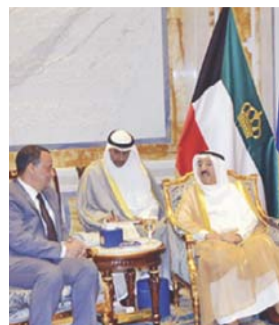
THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

MONDAY, APRIL 18, 2016

RAJAB 11, 1438 AH

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OUTPUT FALLS BY THIRD AS OIL WORKERS STRIKE

GOVT VOWS LEGAL ACTION, UNIONS DEFIANT • MPs SUPPORT WORKERS



Min 19°
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150 FILS
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40 PAGES

DOHA MEETING ENDS WITHOUT OIL FREEZE

SAUDI-IRAN TENSIONS SCUPPER DEAL



DOHA: UAE energy minister Suhail Mohamed Al-Mazrouei (left) walks out of a meeting with Kuwait's Finance Minister and acting oil minister Anas Al-Saleh yesterday. — AFP

DOHA: A deal to freeze oil output by OPEC and non-OPEC producers fell apart yesterday after Saudi Arabia demanded that Iran join in despite calls on Riyadh to save the agreement and help prop up crude prices. The development will revive oil industry fears that major producers are embarking again on a battle for market share, especially after Riyadh threatened to raise output steeply if no freeze deal was reached.

Some 18 countries, including non-OPEC Russia, gathered in the Qatari capital of Doha for what was expected to be the rubber-stamping of a deal - in the making since February - to stabilize output at January levels until Oct 2016. But OPEC's de facto leader Saudi Arabia told participants it wanted all OPEC members to take part in the freeze, including Iran, which was absent from talks. Tehran had refused to stabilize production, seeking

Continued on Page 13



KUWAIT: Striking Kuwaiti oil workers arrive at the oil union's headquarters in Ahmadi yesterday to protest alleged pay cuts and plans to privatize parts of the oil sector. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By B Izzak, A Saleh and Agencies

KUWAIT: Thousands of Kuwaiti oil workers began an open-ended strike yesterday in protest at plans to cut their wages, action which saw the state's crude production plunge. A spokesman for the Kuwait Oil Co (KOC), Saad Al-Azemi, said

on Twitter that "average production reached 1.1 million" barrels in Kuwait yesterday. Daily production in OPEC's fourth largest producer is normally around 3.0 million barrels per day. Azemi also said natural gas production was at 620 million cubic feet, down from Kuwait's daily average of more than 1.3 billion cubic feet. Refinery pro-

duction was also cut from 930,000 barrels a day to just 520,000 barrels.

"Thousands of workers began their strike," the oil workers union chief Saif Al-Qahtani said, adding that production had been partly halted but without clarifying which sites were affected.

Continued on Page 3

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MP Hamdan Al-Azmi makes comments to reporters.



MP Abdullah Al-Tamimi addresses reporters.



Saif Al-Qatani Head of the Oil and Petrochemical Industries Company workers' union makes a statement.



Mohammad Al-Hajri, Head of Kuwait National Petroleum Company workers' union speaks to the press during the strike.

OIL WORKERS GO ON STRIKE TO PROTEST CUTBACKS



KUWAIT: Kuwaiti oil workers arrive at the union headquarters in Al-Ahmadi, 35 km south of Kuwait City, yesterday to protest alleged pay cuts and plans to privatize parts of the oil sector. Hit by the sharp drop in crude prices on world markets, Kuwait is introducing a new payroll scheme for all public employees and wants to include the country's 20,000 oil workers, which would mean an automatic cut in wages and incentives.

—Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat and Fouad Al-Shaikh





Police stand guard as oil workers arrive at the union headquarters in Al-Ahmadi.

OUTPUT FALLS BY THIRD AS OIL WORKERS STRIKE

Continued from Page 1

"Observed since 7:00 am (0400 GMT), this open-ended strike will continue until the workers' demands are met," Qahtani said.

The Cabinet strongly criticized the "unacceptable" strike, calling it a "clear violation of the law", entrusting involved agencies with taking legal action against "unacceptable practices", and with bringing to accountability anybody involved in the disruption of the country's vital utilities. The government also urged Kuwait Petroleum Corp (KPC) to mobilize the manpower needed to ensure continued production. KPC said it closed a petrochemicals plant in order to use the gas to supply power generation plants and insisted that domestic supplies and exports will not be affected.

Minister for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah said the strike was illegal as union members had refused to negotiate ahead of the stoppage. "The members of the union were contacted by the committee headed by the manpower bureau. The members of the union refused to talk with them and went on strike. So they are in breach of Kuwaiti law. They can't strike without this (attempt at discussion)," he said. "With the oil price being what it is, and the fact that oil income is a huge part of the (national) income, it is very difficult if not impossible for the government to provide new financial incentives."

Workers Demonstrate

Thousands of workers gathered for demonstrations at the start of the workweek in Ahmadi, where KOC has its headquarters. Protesters held signs reading "Stop meddling with the rights of the oil sector workers!" and "We will not allow you to take away our rights," witnesses said. Adel Al-Fadhel, a spokesman for the Kuwait Oil Company Workers' Union, said workers opted to picket after government officials failed to meet the unions' demands to keep workers' salaries and benefits untouched from government cutbacks. "The government rejected our proposals and is adamant on decreasing employee salaries. This is not acceptable," he said.

On Saturday, the union turned down an appeal from acting oil minister Anas Al-Saleh to call off the strike. Hit by the sharp drop in crude prices on world markets, Kuwait is introducing a new payroll scheme for all public employees and wants to include the country's 20,000 oil workers, which would mean an automatic cut in wages and incentives.

As the strike began, KPC spokesman Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Sabah said that the national oil conglomerate had activated an "emergency plan" to ensure that local and international markets were not affected by the walkout. "Export operations are going ahead as planned and (KPC) is capable of responding to major international market demands, based on agreements with clients," he said in a statement published on the KUNA news agency's website.

The plan ensures that all petrol stations will continue to be supplied, as will Kuwait's international airport and companies operating there, he said. He urged Kuwaitis "not to listen to rumors that the strike has affected the needs of the local market". He said reserves of gasoline and petrol derivatives were "enough to meet the country's demands for 25 days and strategic reserves could suffice for 31 more days". KPC had offered to suspend all spending cuts if the union agreed to join a committee to negotiate a settlement, but said workers had boycotted negotiations called for Thursday by the social affairs and labor ministry. The union is also protesting against plans to privatize parts of the oil sector.

MPs Support Strike

Meanwhile, a number of lawmakers yesterday declared their total support for the strike, with some of them calling for the dismissal of CEO of Kuwait Petroleum Corp (KPC) Nezar Al-Adasani. MP Talal Al-Jallal called on the prime minister to immediately dismiss Adasani "because he is the cause of the current strike in the oil sector". Jallal claimed that Adasani was not straightforward with oil employees and that he lied to them and that is what led to the strike.

The lawmaker claimed that appointments made by Adasani were based on influence rather than competence and this was another reason that caused the strike. Jallal called for opening new negotiations channels with the workers instead of confronting them.

MP Abdullah Al-Adwani said he supports the rights of workers and urged the government to find a fair solution to their problems that guarantees their rights, adding that he does not want the strike to continue. MP Saud Al-Hurajji held

Saleh responsible for the failure to find a settlement to the dispute with oil workers, but rejected any shocks in the vital sector.

He called for MPs to intervene by holding a special parliamentary session in order to discuss the catastrophic consequences of the strike. Hurajji said he supports the fair demands of the workers but there are some unfair demands that cannot be supported. MP Youssef Al-Zalalah said he believes that the two sides should sit together and settle the dispute peacefully, but also declared his support for workers to demand their rights through strikes.

Cabinet Condemns Strike

The Cabinet earlier urged all workers in the oil sector to show responsibility, sacrifice and positive responsible response by giving top priority to the country's higher interest. It added that it had monitored, with deep sorrow and much resentment, the negative effects of the

to the country's interests, reputation or status, warning that any threat cannot be condoned by all sincere and honest Kuwaitis.

Union Chiefs Stick to Guns

Qahtani and a number of other syndicate chairmen stressed that the strike would continue unless protestors' demands were met. He also stressed that importing foreign laborers was against the law. Speaking at a press conference he attended along with other heads of oil employees' syndicates, Qahtani demanded holding those responsible for creating the problem in the first place. He also called for 'Kuwaitizing' the oil sector.

Chairman of the Petrochemicals Industries employees' syndicate Farhan Al-Ajmi excluded the likelihood of dissolving any of the oil unions or syndicates. "Such a decision will not be made unless by bullying and violating the law," he stressed, noting that if the syndicates were dis-



strike carried out by some oil workers since it targets the disruption of vital oil facilities.

The Cabinet also reviewed relevant dimensions, aftershocks, details and estimated losses, not to mention other direct and indirect harms that could damage the country's reputation and status. It voiced full respect for all constitutional rights, mainly public liberties and freedom of expression, but within specific limits set out by law 11/1996, excluding the right to strike due to its serious impacts on public interest.

This makes the strike an illegitimate act and violation of the law, which should be resolutely addressed and requires legal action against all those involved, the Cabinet said. However, it

solved through litigations, unionists would file counter lawsuits.

"Our boards of directors can be dissolved by either an extraordinary general assembly or by having the concerned ministry file a case before the comprehensive court," he explained, underlining that the strike would not be called off even if the oil syndicates and unions were dissolved, because thousands of oil employees were taking part. He also dismissed threats of prosecuting those taking part in the strike because of their numbers. "The organizing committee decided carrying on with the strike despite the pressure on us," he underlined.

Chairman of the KOC employees' syndicate



appreciated the nature and significance of work and efforts of the workers of this vital oil sector, and highly commended all sincere efforts, distinguished efficient staff and all works of serious and sensitive nature at different positions and levels. The country's critical economic situation triggered by low oil prices and relevant adverse ramifications and challenges at present and in the future, requires that everybody should show national responsibility, sacrifice and positive responsible response to such challenges, and give top priority to higher interests, rather than narrow ones, it said.

Article 103 of Law 6/2010 regarding working in the private sector, which applies to the oil sector, stipulates that employers and their unions must respect all laws in the state and exercise their activities within specific goals, and regulate a dispute-settlement mechanism that does not include labor strikes, the Cabinet added. It emphasized that there should not be any threat

Salah Al-Marzouq said that the strike was held to protect employees' rights. He also assured employees that the "leadership is not far and that it approved of these rights". Head of KNPC's employees' syndicate Mohammed Faleh Al-Hajri stressed that the privileges they were being deprived of would add up to KD 150-180 million in a period of five years, while the daily losses resulting from the strike would be KD 300 million. "We have translated a letter with our demands and sent it to the International Labor Organization and will not call off the strike until those demands are met," he underlined, calling for Kuwaitizing the oil sector and warning that demands would accelerate.

The head of Kuwait Oil Tankers Co employees' syndicate Fayez Al-Mutairi labeled the protestors as the "first line of defending Kuwaiti citizens" and swore that they were all ready to be arrested, and that threats would not make them change their minds.

MOH TO RECRUIT NURSES DIRECTLY FROM INDIA

By Sajeev Peter

KUWAIT: Kuwait's Ministry of Health (MoH) has agreed to recruit nurses from India through India government's e-migrate system of recruiting nurses for its hospitals. A decision to this effect was taken at a high-level meeting between a visiting Kuwaiti delegation and Kerala government officials in Thiruvananthapuram recently. The MoH is in the process of recruiting at least 1,000 nurses from India in 2016, it is learned.

The Kuwait delegation consisted of Dr Mahmoud Al-Abdulhadi, assistant undersecretary for legal affairs at MoH, and Dr Jamal Mansour Al-Harbi, assistant undersecretary for medical services affairs at MoH. The Kuwaiti delegation held discussions with Kerala Chief Minister Oommen Chandy, Minister for Non-Resident Keralites' Affairs K C Joseph and other officials.

Indian Ambassador Sunil Jain told Kuwait Times yesterday that the Kuwaiti delegation's visit came as a sequel to a similar visit by an Indian delegation recently to Kuwait to finalize the modalities of the recruitment

process. An Indian delegation comprising Principal Secretary, Labor, Tom Jose, Norka Secretary Rani George, Chief Executive Officer R S Kannan and ODEPC managing director Dr G L Muralidharan had visited Kuwait in March and held talks with ministry of health officials.

Tests and interviews

According to the decision in Kerala, the officials of the health ministry will directly conduct the licensing tests and interviews to select the candidates. It was decided to advise the contracting agencies and private establishments recruiting nurses in Kuwait to get themselves registered in the e-migrate system. The health ministry will take the initiative to convene a meeting of agencies in Kuwait to brief them on the e-migrate system and the recruitment procedures.

The representatives of the state-owned agencies would be invited to the meetings. Steps to launch the recruitment process through the government-owned agencies for recruitment of nurses for employment in the MoH will be initiated immediately. The Kuwaiti government's decision to utilize the



THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, India: (Left) Dr Jamal Mansour Al-Harbi, Oommen Chandy, Dr Mahmoud Al-Abdulhadi and K C Joseph during a meeting.

services of state-owned agencies will be a great relief to potential candidates who were being exploited until recently by private recruiting agencies both in India and Kuwait.

The Indian government at the center took a crucial decision a year ago to regulate the

recruitment of Indian nurses through government agencies. Indian Embassy in Kuwait led by Ambassador Jain also played a significant role in implementing the Indian government decision, effectively curbing large-scale corruption and cheating in nursing recruitment.

Legalese

WORKING IN KUWAIT

By Attorney Fajer Ahmed

I remember when I first started my career as a lawyer. I got a job in one of Kuwait's finest law firms (technically and morally), and even though it was such an honor, it was overwhelming. There is so much to be nervous about when you first start a job. What to wear? How to treat your colleagues? How will your colleagues treat you? Where should you get your information from? Should you say "I do not know" when you really "do not know" and so on.

I cannot even begin to imagine how overwhelming it would be to start work in a new country. Somewhere you have never been before. To travel a few thousand miles to the Middle East, when you have never been here, never heard the language. To leave your family to face the stereotypes of the Middle East, the stereotypes that are everything from the "luxurious no-tax lifestyle" to the "violent barbarians that oppress women, non-believers and expats".

Expats continue to be the largest working segment in Kuwait's society, but it seems like we still have not figured out how to have them as our workforce peacefully. I have been trying to speak up about issues of expat workers for the past few years and although progress is happening, the issues still remain. So today's article is going to be about the process of getting here.

Contracts

Question: I got an offer letter via email before coming to Kuwait and I signed it - is it now my contract? I was told I would receive a contract when I came to Kuwait, but I never did.

Fajer: Yes, there is a difference between an offer letter and a contract. An offer letter might have terms and conditions of your job position, but is not a contract. When a contract does not exist, the terms and conditions in the offer can be used to prove the conditions of your job position.

Question: I signed a contract before coming to Kuwait, but when I got to Kuwait, I was told to sign another contract. There are differences in the two contracts. Which contract is my valid contract? Both of them? Or just one?

Fajer: Well, your last signed contract (the one in Kuwait) is your contract now. Your previous contract has no legal implications since you agreed on a new one. I know you might have felt forced and I know it's unfair, but do not sign on a new contract if you do not agree to the terms and conditions.

Expectations

Question: I am coming to work in Kuwait in a few months and I want to know what to watch out for when I get in? Any suggestions?

Fajer: Well, the first thing I would suggest you do is check that your visa is correct, as in that it is of the right type. If you are working, you should not be coming in as a tourist. If you are coming to work as a store manager, your visa should not be that of a domestic worker, and so on.

The next thing is please check your work permit. I know that it is in Arabic, but please double check that the information is correct, like your wage and your employer's name. If there are any governmental officials reading this, may I kindly suggest that work permits be in a language understandable to the employee, possibly English? Also, maybe the employee can sign the work permit, agreeing that the information is correct.

Question: I am coming to Kuwait next week and I want to know who to contact in case of a work emergency? I have heard horrible stories and I just want to make sure I am safe.

Fajer: I highly suggest you know if your country has an embassy in Kuwait. If it does not, where is the nearest embassy? UAE? Qatar? Saudi Arabia? There should be one in the GCC. Have their number saved and contact them in an emergency. Also, please contact the Ministry of Labor and Social affairs for any issues that arise.

For any legal questions or queries, email ask@fajertlawyer.com.

ACTIVIST RELEASED ON KD 500 BAIL

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The criminal court yesterday released law activist Rana Al-Saadoun on a KD 500 bail and decided suspending a previous verdict of sentencing her to three years in jail in a case filed against her by the state security. Saadoun was accused of promoting a speech made by former MP Musallam Al-Barak, which was found offensive to state figures. She was accordingly sentenced in absentia before she contested the verdict. Separately, the criminal court acquitted a former minister from charges of public funds' embezzlement along with others when he chaired a major company's board of directors. In other news, the court of appeal seconded a previous verdict sentencing Al-Watan newspaper to pay the chairman of Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Ali Al-Ghanem compensation of KD 15,000 in a case he had filed accusing the newspaper of slandering him.

Electricity prices

MP Ali Al-Khamees stressed that what happened during last Wednesday's session when the parliament voted on exempting private residences from the proposed electricity consumption price increases, was in defense of citizens' rights and gains. Commenting on economists and former lawmakers' talk about privatization, Khamees stressed that the parliament cannot vote on privatizing government companies because the law issued in 2010, when many of the former MPs were in parliament, authorized the government alone to make decisions concerning privatization. "This is your own hands' doing, so why cry about privatizing some compa-

nies when you were the ones who voted on and approved that law giving the government such a right," he said.

Landlords penalized

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry intends to refer six real estate companies to prosecution for violating ministerial rules regulating these companies' work in marketing land and real estate outside Kuwait. The ministry stressed that proper investigations had been conducted to verify the violations had been committed. The ministry had been receiving complaints from citizens and other clients accusing these companies of not respecting the contracts signed with them.

Facial recognition

Capital health zone director Dr Afrah Al-Sarraf revealed intentions to use facial recognition systems for checking in and out of work at Amiri Hospital and various polyclinics in the Capital zone. Speaking on the sidelines of celebrating the International Day for Medical Biological Lab Technicians at the Amiri Hospital, Sarraf said that facial recognition aims at preventing any manipulation of fingerprints. She added that both prints would be used together. Sarraf added that database with information about all Capital health zone employees would be ready soon pending issuing magnetic IDs including all information about holders. Head of the Capital health zone labs Dr Samiya Abdul Salam said Amiri Hospital labs had been automatically linked to the hospital wards so that all test results could be easily and instantly accessed by the doctors requesting them.

MAN ACQUITTED OF DRUG CHARGES DUE TO FLAWED SEARCH PROCEDURES

KUWAIT: The appeals court overruled a court of first instance's ruling which sentenced a suspect for four years in jail and a fine of KD 4,000. The court had found the man guilty of possessing drugs (Amphetamines, and Methamphetamine) for use and sale.

Lawyer Suleiman Al-Duwaisan based his defense at the appeals court on the lack of serious investigations by criminal detectives. He argued that the issuance of the public prosecution's warrant to search the suspect's residence was null and void, because the house was searched during an illegally unpermitted time. Also, he said that investigators alone are not accepted as evidence to convict the suspect, arguing that what was mentioned in the investigations, and testimony of the case officers should not be accepted as evidence on which a criminal ruling can be issued. Duwaisan concluded his defense by asking to cancel the ruling of the court of first instance, and exonerate



Lawyer Suleiman Al-Duwaisan

the suspect from all charges.

The court ruled as the defense has requested and ordered the confiscations of the material found in his house.



KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry's General Department of Special Security Forces celebrated the graduation of trainees from three different courses during a ceremony held under the patronage of Major General Mahmoud Al-Dousary, Assistant Undersecretary for Special Security Affairs. The trainees include 24 officers who underwent a course on security survey, 11 who graduated from a course on proper use of equipment and 15 who passed sports trainer courses.



Crimes

report

NO INJURIES IN FIRES

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Fire broke out in a vehicle in Bayan yesterday. Mishref fire center responded, and found the vehicle was totally in flames. The fire was contained to keep it from spreading. No injuries were reported. Meanwhile, a house in Jahra caught fire, prompting Jahra fire center to respond with backup from the occupational center. The fire started in the kitchen and was put out in 30 minutes. No injuries were reported. Another fire broke out in a South Surra house, prompting Mishref fire center to respond, backed with Subhan center. The fire was contained in the room where it started and kept from spreading elsewhere. No injuries were reported.

Motorist hurt

A motorist sustained several injuries following a car accident on Artal (columns) road's crossroad with Abdaly road. Firemen rushed to the area and found a pick-up truck and a trailer truck had collided. The pick-up truck's driver, Indian, was trapped and injured. Firemen freed him and he was taken to hospital by medevac. Separately, a car collision took place between Mubarak Al-Kabeer and Egaila yesterday. Qaraiwan fire center responded and found an injured driver, who was taken by paramedics to hospital.

PANEL DISCUSSES ECONOMIC AREAS

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: The Municipal Council's technical committee discusses during its meeting tomorrow a number of major developmental projects related to the organizational structure of the northern region (the second regional zone) and a request to approve the feasibility study of building economic areas in Abdaly, Naayem and Wafra. The committee will also discuss a proposal made by member Osama Al-Otaibi on activating the role of mass marine transport along Kuwaiti coasts by building several marine terminals for passengers. In addition, the committee will review a proposal made by members Hassan Kamal and Abdullah Al-Kandari about amending the food charter and allowing municipality inspectors into public and private schools.



KUWAIT: Belgian researcher Koert Debeuf speaks during the lecture.



Ambassador of Belgium to Kuwait Andy Detaille.

BELGIAN RESEARCH LECTURES ON ARAB SPRING AT GUST

By Faten Omar

KUWAIT: "Have the Arab revolutions ended?" It is a question that has been repeatedly asked but never answered. 'A European Perspective,' a lecture by Koert Debeuf, a visiting Belgian researcher at Oxford University, sees that the Arab revolutions were similar to the French Revolution of the late 18th century, especially in their causes, from human rights, democracy, relation between religion and state, rising unemployment and the spread of corruption.

"The Arab revolutions did not fail, but we cannot call it an 'Arab Spring'. These revolutions are not a spring, are not rebellions, but a real revolution and the beginning of a process of change that will take a long time," Debeuf said, pointing at the same time that democratic change is difficult, but possible.

The lecture was hosted by Gulf University for Science and Technology's (GUST) Global Studies Center (GSC) on Wednesday on the 2010 Arab Spring. The session was led by Debeuf with a purpose to provide a European frame of reference to the 2010 uprisings against many ruling governments in the Middle East. Debeuf's lecture was shaped by his extensive time spent in the Middle East, having lived in Cairo since 2011 as a representative of the European Parliament. His past experience also includes acting as an advisor to former Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt. "Five years on from the Arab Spring, our perspectives begin to take shape in a more objective way. Having lived in the Middle East, with a political and historical European

background, I have tried to synthesize a coherent and broad viewpoint," he stressed.

Poverty and oppression

According to Debeuf, 40 percent of the people in countries like Egypt, Tunisia and Libya are living in poverty and face oppression, adding that corruption and unemployment is widespread in these countries. "Around 40,000 people were killed during the French Revolution. The French people needed 80 years to complete their revolution and reach stability," he explained.

Debeuf affirmed that change will occur, but the source of the change cannot be identified accurately, indicating that it may occur through Syria, Turkey, Lebanon or Egypt. He added that "ideas usually come from advanced and high scientific institutions, which can be found in GCC countries, such as the King Abdullah University in Jeddah, the only Arab university in the top 300 global universities".

The lecture was attended by a number of foreign ambassadors to Kuwait including the Ambassador of Belgium to Kuwait Andy Detaille, British Ambassador Matthew Lodge, Brazilian Ambassador Antonio Carlos Donascimento Pedro, Slovak Ambassador Pavel Svetik, Polish Ambassador Grzegorz Olszchak and Maltese Ambassador Patrick Cole. Also present at the event, were Carmen Vazquez, Patricia Isidro and Patricia Maria Olivera Lima, the wives of the Spanish, Mexican and Brazilian ambassadors to Kuwait, respectively.



Ambassadors and other dignitaries attend the lecture.

—Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



SANAA: Pro-government forces sit on a heavily armored vehicle in Sanaa yesterday. —AFP

YEMEN'S WARRING SIDES SIGNAL OPTIMISM FOR KUWAIT PEACE TALKS

GOVERNMENT, HOUTHIS OFFICIALS MAKE CONCILIATORY REMARKS

KUWAIT: Yemen's warring parties are sending conciliatory signals ahead of UN-backed talks starting today, in a rare sign of mutual willingness to end a year-old conflict that has caused one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

A deal may help defuse tensions between regional powerhouses Iran and Saudi Arabia, who are allied to opposing sides in Yemen and whose rivalry has helped fuel wars and political struggles across the volatile Middle East.

Air strikes and heavy combat persist in many parts of the country, while armed forces who could yet play a spoiling role loom throughout Yemen's tangled political scene. Police said they foiled two car bomb attacks in the southern port of Aden on Sunday. In one case a policeman died when a car exploded after police opened fire on it rushing at a checkpoint at high speed.

But the recent rhetoric of the main combatants has been unusually mild. "We are ready for a political transition which excludes no one ... The world now looks to the Kuwait consultations as a landmark of peace for Yemenis, and we will give everything we can to alleviate the suffering of the people," Foreign Minister Abdel Malek Al-Mekhlafi, from the Saudi-backed government now based in Aden, told state news agency Saba.

Consensus authority

Mohammed Abdul-Salam, spokesman for the Houthi movement which controls the capital Sanaa and which Gulf Arab states say is allied to Iran, appeared conciliatory in an interview with Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Rai on Saturday. "There should be a consensus authority during a definite transitional phase to decide every political dispute," he was quoted as saying. "Iran does not have any role in our sovereign decisions and we are not tools in anyone's hands."

In a further sign of goodwill, he said on his Facebook page that his group had received 30 prisoners from the government side. Saudi

Arabia and its Gulf Arab allies joined the war on March 26 of last year to back Yemen's government after it was pushed into exile by the Houthis. UN talks in June and December failed to end the war that has killed about 6,200 people, about half of them civilians. The war has allowed al Qaeda fighters to seize territory and opened a path for Islamic State militants to gain a foothold. A partial naval blockade imposed by the Arab coalition has caused food shortages and prices for necessities to skyrocket in the Arabian Peninsula's poorest country.

An unprecedented calm achieved between the two main antagonists beginning in March suggests that exhaustion over costs and casualties may be mounting. The Houthis agreed with Saudi Arabia to reduce attacks on the kingdom in exchange for a halt to Saudi-led air strikes on Sanaa, and the two sides carried out a prisoner exchange. "This represents the best opportunity to end the war since it started - real progress has been made," said Adam Baron, a visiting fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations.

Saleh's fate

The fate of Ali Abdullah Saleh, Yemen's president of 33 years who was ousted by 'Arab Spring' protests in 2012 and who has formed an alliance with the Houthis, remains unclear and could complicate transition plans.

While Saleh's party will take part in the talks, the former leader has refused to depart Yemen's political scene. The spread of al Qaeda and Islamic State in the south also makes it more difficult to resolve the conflict. "There are a slew of potential spoilers. The past year has seen a proliferation of warlords whose power is tied to the conflict continuing," added Baron.

The Houthis said they were leading a revolution against corruption. They pushed President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi from power in September 2014 and formed an alliance with his predecessor Saleh. Regional Arab countries

accuse the group of a power-grab which would benefit their archrival Iran, and have fought to restore Hadi's government.

Comprehensive peace

Yemen's Prime Minister Ahmed Obaid bin Daghr said meanwhile the Yemeni negotiating team is heading for Kuwait with the aim to make the event a success and achieve permanent and comprehensive peace in Yemen.

During his meeting with the diplomatic staff of the Yemeni embassy in Riyadh, he said the Yemeni legitimate government is exerting efforts to create peace in the country, the Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported.

He added that Yemen's relations with Saudi Arabia emanate from deep historic and strategic dimensions, it added. The Yemeni premier commended military, political and economic support provided by the Saudi-led Arab Coalition.

Earlier yesterday, United Nations Special Envoy for Yemen Islamel Ould Sheikh Ahmad said he was honored to have met His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah ahead of the prospective Yemeni-Yemeni talks. Following his meeting with His Highness the Amir, Ahmad said that he personally thanked His Highness the Amir for hosting this "big gathering" and for Kuwait's tremendous efforts to prepare for these talks, in addition to the logistic preparations.

He added he was also honored to see Kuwait hosting talks at these levels, saying that Kuwait's initiative was soothing for everyone, especially as there is a big tension despite the ceasefire but some violations still persist.

He said that the next stage is up for the warring sides to decide as Kuwait has done its part, adding that he was given assurances from His Highness the Amir and First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister over all preparations for this coming event and make it a success. —Agencies



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Al-Anbaa

REFLECTIONS OF KING SALMAN BRIDGE

By Salah Al-Sayer

For so many reasons, Europe has been rejecting requests from Turkey, which is mainly located on Asian lands, to join the EU, which has stalled to include Turkey despite its repeated requests, and other blows. The same blows happened to Iran when the Soviet Union was dissolved and Iran dreamt of infiltrating further into Central Asia to play a leading role there, but it finally realized that the area was only open for big 'elephants' and that China, US, Russia and Israel were already competing there.

An old international saying suggests that "a bankrupt merchant will always go searching in his old registers," which exactly applies to the heirs of the Ottoman and the Persian empires represented nowadays by the Turkish Republic and the Islamic Republic of Iran. This explains why both countries have been developing ambitions in countries that historically used to be ruled or influenced by them, such as Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt. Well, that would be accepted for countries wishing to enhance their statuses, connections and influence over their surrounding regions according to standard international measures of foreign policies and treaties.

However, those surrounding regions have been violently rocked because of the chaos resulting from the Arab Spring, the American retreat and Russian boldness, which led to regional rarefaction and lack of immunity, which is really a serious matter that calls for immediate formation of a real Arab force to fill the vacancy and convey a message to others that real solutions lie in the future and not in the past and dreams of empires. This is a clear Arab message confirmed by Arabs rejoicing and happy with the visit the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdul Aziz recently made to the Arab Republic of Egypt.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

KFH NAMES WINNERS OF BANKING CARDS CAMPAIGN 13TH DRAW

KUWAIT: Kuwait Finance House (KFH) named seven winners of the thirteenth draw of the new banking cards promotional campaign themed 'Shop and Win Back Up to KD 500,000 with KFH Cards' that had been launched in an attempt to encourage clients to use KFH credit, prepaid and debit cards while making purchases in Kuwait and overseas.

For every KD 10 spent on their KFH cards, clients will get a chance to enter a draw and win back up to KD 500 of their daily spends for 100 days ending April 19th 2016. KFH Credit and Prepaid cards used in domestic and international retail spends and KFH Debit cards used in international retail spends are eligible for the daily draw.

The winners are Sabiha Alenezi, Nora Aljaafar, Khawla Alfahad, Mohammad Alajmi, Khaled Alnajdi, Khaled Alkhusaili and Rawan Asaqabi.

KFH strives to continuously offer its clients new promotions and discounts in order to distinguish them among peers, not to mention to further bolster bank's leading position in the field of banking cards.

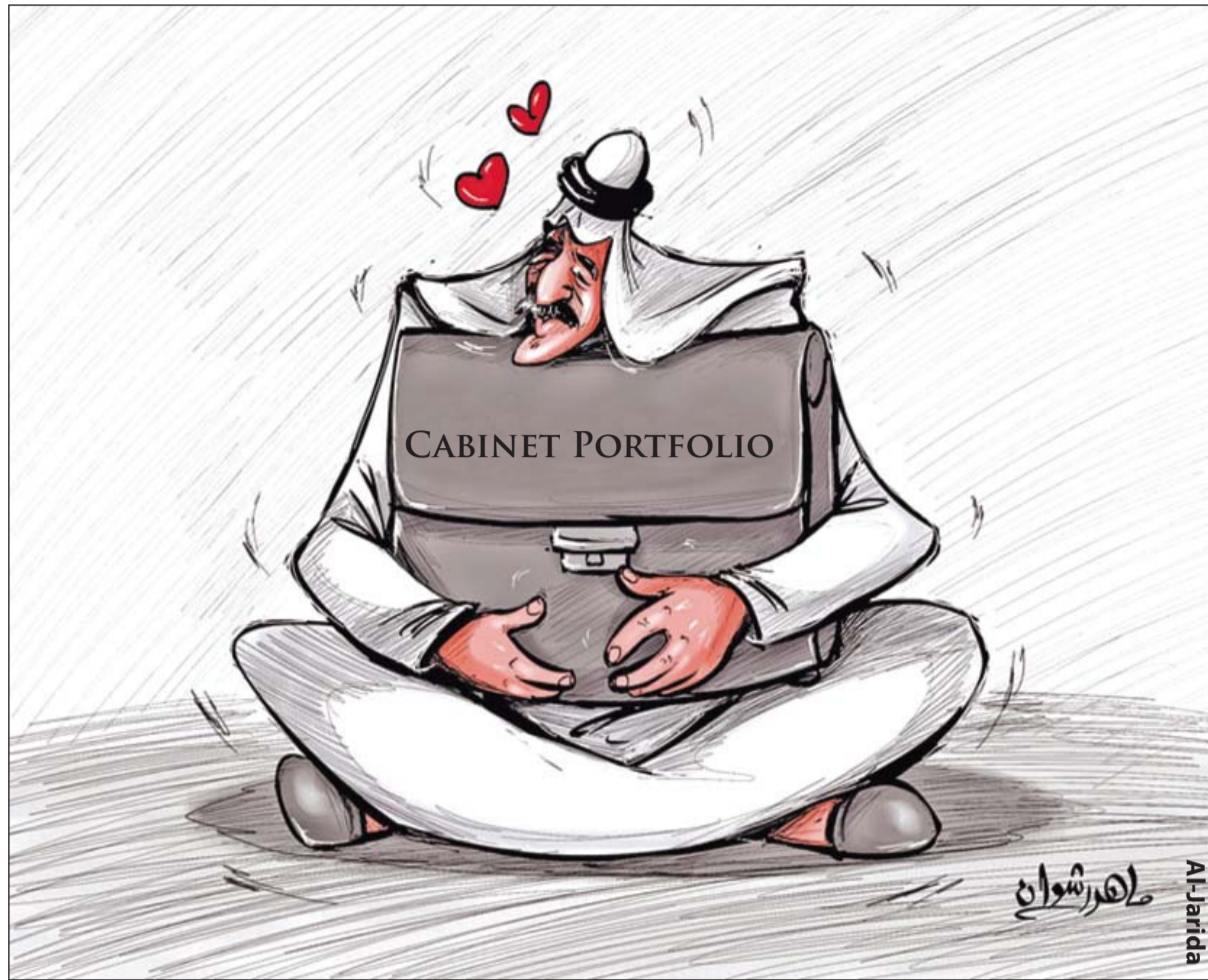
KFH marketing campaigns play a significant role in underlining KFH's principles that include boosting sales, and benefitting clients and merchants.

This new campaign is part of KFH's efforts to reward its clients and grant them additional value; thus achieving customer satisfaction and boosting their confidence. The campaign also aims at enhancing the bank's presence especially that it dominates the largest market share in the field of banking cards.

It is worth noting that KFH has won several awards in the field of banking cards which reiterates its success and efficiency in banking cards market. KFH enjoys high confidence and leadership in the market in addition to high quality products which have enabled it to achieve growth in cards market and increase the number of customers. KFH occupies the leading position as the issuer of banking cards and one of leading banks at the GCC level.

MINISTER DEFENDS BANNING CASH DONATIONS: 'HELPS DETER INTRUDERS'

KUWAIT: Social Affairs and Labor Minister and State Minister for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih emphasized the importance of using technology in collecting donations "as it helps increase the support offered and makes it easy for donors to donate." It also makes it easier to supervise, be it by the foreign ministry with regards to donations abroad, or the interior ministry with regards to donations inside Kuwait," the minister said. "The social affairs ministry insists on using technology in collecting donations, and that is why it banned cash donations during Ramadan to be able to follow the donations and keep any intruders on humanitarian activities away to safeguard Kuwait's reputation," she added. — Al-Rai



ZAIN ANNOUNCES WINNER OF \$2,000 CASH PRIZE

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced Fatima Nahar Salem Al-Subaie as the winner of the \$2000 final cash prize in the company's latest Draw Campaign for postpaid customers.

Zain also revealed the names of the winners of iPhone 6s devices (128 GB) in the third and final daily draw: Naima Abdulhameed Al-Sharaf, Ali Mohammed Hamad Al-Bassam, Mohammed Mubarak Nasser Al-Sulaim, Shaikha Alyaa Al-Nasser Al-Sabah, Abdulaziz Johar Al-Shatti, Yousef Hussain Mohammed Hussain, Mohammed Abdulaziz Al-Habib, and Bassem Jabra Shuhaibr.

The draw witnessed overwhelming participation from Zain customers, who had a chance to enter the draw for every KD 1 paid through Zain's digital channels, including the company's website and app.

Zain launched this exciting promotional campaign to reinforce its leadership position and its pledge in providing the best services and offers to meet its customers' personal telecommunications needs, who are considered Kuwait's biggest family of subscribers.

This announcement is a testament of Zain's tireless efforts in rewarding its customer base, the largest in the country. The campaign further demonstrates Zain's pivotal role in Kuwait's telecom sector, sparing no effort in introducing exceptional offerings for technology and smartphone enthusiasts.



AHLI UNITED BANK ANNOUNCES WINNER OF KD 250,000 GRAND HASSAD PRIZE

KUWAIT: On March 30, 2016, Ahli United Bank conducted the draw of the quarterly grand prize 'Life Long Salary' which the Bank offers within the Hassad Islamic Saving Prizes Program. The lucky winner, Waleed Khaled Al-Sabej, won the grand prize of the KD 250,000 to be paid in installments over 250 months. The winner expressed his pride in having a Hassad Islamic Account at Ahli United Bank especially as the Bank operates in accordance with Islamic principles. Sabej stressed that his investments in an Islamic bank, whose services and products conform to Islamic sharia, and his good relations with its staff are more important than a prize of whatever value.

Ahli United Bank invites all its customers, new and existing, to take the opportunity of saving with an Al Hassad Account thereby increasing their winning chances in this program. This program offers prizes with the highest total value reaching KD 3.4 million annually, with 26 weekly prizes, the largest number of weekly winners.

All customers interested in winning and achieving profits conforming to Islamic sharia can open a Hassad Account for Islamic Saving with a minimum deposit of KD 100. Minors can also open the account through their legal guardians or custodians.

Ahli United Bank is a leading Islamic Bank in Kuwait with over 74

years history. The Bank successfully converted to operate according to Islamic principles in April 2010. The Bank has received excellent evaluations from major rating institutions, being Fitch with a long term at A+ and a stable outlook, Moody's at A2, with a stable outlook, and Capital Intelligence with a long-term rating of A+ and an enhanced foreign currency short-term rating of A2.

It has also obtained a number of awards including the Best Islamic Bank in Kuwait in 2015 for the third

consecutive year. The award was provided by the International "The Banker" magazine. In addition, Ahli United Bank obtained the title of "The Second Most Secure Islamic Bank in Kuwait for 2015" by "Global Finance" which also included Ahli United Bank in the list of the Most Secure Banks in the GCC. For more information about the "Al Hassad Islamic Saving Program", the prizes and eligibility criteria, please visit any Ahli United Bank branches, or call the 'Hayyakum' service at 1812000.



KUWAIT: The winner Waleed Al-Sabej receives the prize from Amer Najem, head of branches department at Ahli United Bank.

DEMOGRAPHIC RESTRUCTURING DOES NOT TARGET COMMUNITIES: MINISTER

KUWAIT: The demographics issue resurfaced with a recommendation from the parliament's finance committee to deal with the imbalance of the demographic structure and put an end to the overwhelming number of expatriates. As the committee called for correcting the structure so the number of citizens be half the number of the population, a ratio it called 'logical', Social Affairs Minister and State Minister for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih said the issue of dealing with the demographic structure is linked to the issue of dealing with deficits and deficit of the budget, and does not target a community in particular.

She said procedures of implementing the demographic roadmap



Minister Hind Al-Subaih

is in its initial stage and all ministries will participate in it, particularly the planning, interior and social affairs ministries. Subaih said there is more than one procedure, adding that

dealing with demographic structure does not target certain communities, and only seeks to organize the marketplace and reduce marginal labor.

Meanwhile, the Awqaf Ministry designated May 11 as the last day of work for expats who are working on the rewards system, which is an implementation of the ministerial decision in this regard. An official source at the ministry said the termination decision will cause confusion, and will be corrected through redistribution of workers. He said the termination decision excluded some jobs such as guards, Quran teachers, office boys and others among bedoons (stateless). — Al-Rai

SHORT, LONG-TERM PROGRAMS FOR REFORM: FINANCE MINISTRY

KUWAIT: The finance ministry's supreme committee for following and executing the procedures supporting financial and economic reforms discussed means of achieving financial reform. The ministry's undersecretary and committee chairman Khalifa Hamada said in the fourth meeting held with the minister's technical office staff and other ministry officials, the committee reviewed various tasks and the people carrying them out. He added that the committee asked for holding further extensive meetings with concerned government bodies' representatives to review their roles in the reform document that includes reforms to be done on a short term program in 2016-2017/ 2017-2108, in addition to long-term ones up to the year 2020-2021. — Al-Jarida

Crime

Report

Police bust drag race near Zour

KUWAIT: Zour police broke up a drag race during which a driver and three spectators were arrested, and the rest of the drivers are being sought. A security source said a call came in about a race on 'road 270', but the racers escaped when they saw the police, except for one, whose car broke down. Three of those who gathered to see the race were also arrested.

Drug dealer arrested

A drug pusher was arrested by Farwaniya police with 14 drug envelopes in his possession, and was sent to the Drugs Control General Department (DCGD). A security source said a police patrol spotted the man who was clearly nervous, so he was searched and the drugs were found. Meanwhile, three citizens were arrested in Mubarak Al-Kabeer under the influence of drugs and with 47 illicit tablets on them. They were sent to the DCGD.

'High quality liquor'

Meanwhile, Interior Ministry Assistant Undersecretary for Operations Major General Jamal Al-Sayegh sent an expat to the DCGD following his confession to dealing in 'high quality liquor' on behalf of an inmate. The arrest was made by an Ahmadi patrol in Mangaf. Meanwhile, a citizen was arrested with drugs and KD 1,950 near Mina Abdullah.

Fugitives nabbed

Detectives arrested two citizens in Saad Al-Abdullah wanted to serve jail sentences. The first, who was sentenced to five years in jail, was arrested following fierce resistance and several attempts to escape. Police then went to the second convict, who was sentenced to three years in jail, and arrested him. Both were sent to concerned authorities. Separately, a Pakistani who was acting nervously prompted police to check on his status, and found him wanted on theft charges. A security source said policemen arrested him and he was sent to criminal detectives.

'Cross-dresser' caught

A car with tinted windows drew the attention of police, and when they approached it, they found a cross-dresser inside, who was arrested and sent to vice detectives.

Break in and theft

A citizen was shocked to find the door of her apartment broken and jewelry worth KD 6,000 stolen. A security source said that the citizen in her 30s went to Jabriya police station and complained about the incident. Police are investigating.

Forgery

Hawally detectives sent a bedoon (stateless) man to the public prosecution on forgery, to be added to another case he will be tried over - swindling for almost KD 750,000. A security source said information was received that a bedoon man forged his papers to be identified as a Saudi national in order to avoid the swindling cases. Detective investigations revealed that he gained Saudi nationality through forgery in a neighboring country then returned to Kuwait using a new name and nationality. The source said the suspect gave detailed information as he confessed to the forgery.

Smokers fight with police

Two brawny men were arrested following a verbal exchange between several pedestrians and an environment policeman. A security source said the policeman stopped the two men in a mall for smoking, then a verbal exchange followed, and some passersby intervened and a fight broke out. — Al-Rai

News

in brief

Students with withdrawn citizenships continue studies

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Education will allow children of people whose nationalities were withdrawn to continue studying in public schools this year, a local daily reported yesterday. It does not clarify however if those students would be allowed to enroll in public schools next year. School administrations have received those instruction through a letter signed by Undersecretary Dr Haitham Al-Athari, which was sent as per orders of Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Al-Essa, Al-Anbaa reported. — Al-Anbaa

Water meters

KUWAIT: Ministry of Electricity and Water's Undersecretary Mohammad Bushehri said a technical committee was formed to discuss the possibility of installing a water meter for every apartment in investment buildings, adding that this is one of the effective means of rationalizing water consumption. "We believe that part of the waste that is taking place in some of these apartments is the result of having one meter in the building and the owner bears the cost of tenants' consumption, and this make some of them overuse water without justification," he said. "We know the building owner adds the value of consumption to the rent contract, but the ministry aims at making tenants rationalize consumption of water and pay for the real amount consumed," he added. — Al-Rai

Second companions

KUWAIT: Health Minister Dr Ali Al-Obaidi amended the treatment overseas conditions concerning allowing each patient to be only accompanied by one companion travelling with an economy class ticket, adding some exceptions. The new amendments exempted three categories of patients from these conditions, including patients older than 65, patients younger than 16 and patients with severe or mild disability proved by a recent disability certificate (not older than three months). The amendments also include patients due to undergo organ transplants, who would be allowed to escort the donor at the health ministry's expense, in addition to one companion giving the donor the same treatment like the patient, in terms of tickets and allowances, for one month and one companion as well. — Al-Anbaa



Iran unveils S-300 missile system parts at army parade

RESCUERS RACE AGAINST LANDSLIDES TO REACH JAPAN QUAKE VICTIMS

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EARTHQUAKE KILLS 233 IN ECUADOR

WORST QUAKE SINCE 1979

MANTA, ECUADOR: The death toll from Ecuador's biggest earthquake in decades soared to at least 233 on Sunday as rescuers using tractors and bare hands hunted desperately for survivors in shattered coastal towns.

The 7.8 magnitude quake struck off the Pacific coast on Saturday and was felt around the Andean nation of 16 million people, causing panic as far away as the highland capital Quito and collapsing buildings and roads in a swathe of western towns.

President Rafael Correa, who was rushing home from a trip to Italy, said the confirmed number of fatalities rose on Sunday to 233. "The immediate priority is to rescue people in the rubble," he said via Twitter. More than 1,500 people were injured, authorities said. Coastal areas nearest the quake were worst affected, especially Pedernales, a rustic tourist spot with beaches and palm trees. Information was scant from there due to poor communications and transport chaos.

"There are people trapped in various places and we are starting rescue operations," Vice President Jorge Glas said on Sunday morning before boarding a plane to the area.

A state of emergency was declared in six provinces. "There are villages totally devastated," Pedernales' mayor Gabriel Alcivar told local radio, adding that "dozens and dozens" had died in the rustic zone. "What happened here in Pedernales is catastrophic."

Pedernales 'destroyed'

Authorities said there were 135 aftershocks in the Pedernales area. One photo on social media purporting to be the entrance to Pedernales showed a torn up road with a crushed car in the middle and people standing behind.

Local TV station Televisión broadcast images from Pedernales showing locals using



PORTOVIEJO, ECUADOR: View of a fallen building after a 7.8-magnitude quake yesterday. — AFP

a small tractor to remove rubble and also search with their hands for people buried underneath. Women cried after a corpse was pulled out. Locals said children were trapped.

One man begged for help: "Pedernales is destroyed." In Guayaquil, Ecuador's largest city, rubble lay in the streets and a bridge fell on top of a car. "It was terrifying, we were all scared and we're still out in the streets

because we're worried about aftershocks," said Guayaquil security guard Fernando Garcia.

About 13,500 security force personnel were mobilized to keep order around Ecuador, and \$600 million in credit from multilateral lenders was immediately activated for the emergency, the government said.

Ramon Solorzano, 46, a car parts merchant in the coastal city of Manta, said he was leav-

ing with his family. Photos from Manta showed Red Cross workers arriving, police hunting through debris, a smashed sculpture and badly-damaged buildings. "Most people are out in the streets with backpacks on, heading for higher ground," Solorzano said, speaking in a trembling voice on a WhatsApp phone call. "The streets are cracked. The power is out and phones are down."

Worst quake since 1979

Parts of the highland capital Quito were without power or phone service for several hours but the city government said those services had been restored and there were no reports of casualties in the city.

The government called it the worst quake in the country since 1979. In that disaster, 600 people were killed and 20,000 injured, according to the United States Geological Survey. Among international aid, Venezuela and Mexico were sending personnel and supplies, the Correa government said.

A tsunami warning was lifted on Saturday night but coastal residents were urged to seek higher ground in case tides rise. "At first it was light, but it lasted a long time and got stronger," said Maria Jaramillo, 36, a resident of Guayaquil, describing windows breaking and pieces falling off roofs.

"I was on the seventh floor and the light went off in the whole sector, and we evacuated. People were very anxious in the street ... We left barefoot." The OPEC member said oil production was not affected, but closed its main refinery of Esmeraldas, located near the epicenter, as a precautionary measure.

The Ecuadorean quake followed two large and deadly quakes that struck Japan since Thursday. Both countries are located on the seismically active "Ring of Fire" that circles the Pacific, but according to the US Geological Survey large quakes separated by such long distances would probably not be related.

"Even the earth's rocky crust is not rigid enough to transfer stress efficiently over thousands of miles," it said on its web site. Quakes can cause other big quakes within a range of hundreds of miles, but can cause only small, brief quakes at a distance of thousands of miles, it said. — Reuters

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TEHRAN: A long-range, S-300 missile system is displayed by Iran's army during a parade marking National Army Day at the mausoleum of the late revolutionary founder Ayatollah Khomeini yesterday.—AP

IRAN UNVEILS S-300 MISSILE SYSTEM PARTS AT ARMY PARADE

'OUR MILITARY POWER IS NOT DIRECTED AGAINST THE ISLAMIC WORLD'

TEHRAN: Iran used its annual Army Day parade yesterday to showcase parts of a long-awaited air defense system ordered from Russia, a move likely to irk critics of the arms deal.

The S-300 system has been on order since 2007 but Russia postponed the sale three years later after the UN Security Council passed a resolution relating to Iran's nuclear program. A deal between Iran and six world powers over its nuclear activities which lifted sanctions in January removed the barriers to delivery but the fully operational system is still awaited.

According to pictures published by the semi-official ISNA news agency, S-300 missile tubes and the radar equipment were shown during the military parade held in southern Tehran. Iran insists the system is necessary to defend itself from threats of attack, including possible bombing of its nuclear facilities, and the S-300 would allow early detection of

approaching aircraft. Israel and the United States have hit out at the sale, which is seen as a means for Russia to maintain influence in the Middle East. Iran and Russia are also in talks on a sale of the Sukhoi SU-30 fighter, another proposal criticized by the US. Iran's current air force fleet dates from the pre-revolutionary era of the Shah.

President Hassan Rouhani view

Speaking at Sunday's parade, President Hassan Rouhani insisted Iran's plans to upgrade its military capabilities were defensive in nature, referring to the worst conflicts in the Middle East. "Our military, political and economic power is not directed against neighboring countries and the countries of the Islamic world. "When Baghdad was threatened by terrorists, the Islamic Republic of Iran responded to the call of the people, the army and the Iraqi

government to defend Baghdad and the holy places," he said, referring to the surge of the jihadist Islamic State group in June 2014.

The same action was taken in Syria, where Iran has supported President Bashar al-Assad's regime with military and financial aid, he added. The upgrading of Iran's military following the nuclear deal has also alarmed Saudi Arabia, Tehran's regional rival. Riyadh routinely accuses Iran of interfering in Arab countries. Saudi Arabia cut diplomatic ties with Iran in January after a row broke out over the execution of Shiite cleric and activist Nimr Al-Nimr by the Sunni kingdom.

Angry Iranian mobs stormed and set fire to Saudi Arabia's embassy in Tehran and its mission in Mashhad, Iran's second city. The attacks were immediately condemned by Rouhani and, a few weeks later, by the Islamic Republic's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.—AFP

OIL FREEZE DEAL FACES TROUBLE AS SAUDI-IRAN TENSIONS SPIKE

DOHA: A spike in tensions between arch-rivals Saudi Arabia and Iran appeared yesterday to ruin prospects of the first binding oil output deal in 15 years between OPEC and non-OPEC nations, and looked set to prompt another fall in the price of crude.

Some 18 OPEC and non-OPEC oil producers, including Russia, had been meant to meet in the Qatari capital of Doha yesterday morning and quickly rubber-stamp a deal to freeze output at January levels until October 2016. But the meeting was postponed after OPEC's de facto leader Saudi Arabia told participants it wanted all OPEC members to take part in the freeze, according to OPEC sources.

Riyadh had earlier insisted on excluding Iran from the talks because Tehran had refused to freeze production, seeking to regain market share after the lifting of Western sanctions against it in January. With the deal running into trouble, oil ministers in Doha met with the Qatari emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani - who was instrumental in promoting output stability in recent months.

But a new draft seen by sources there after contained none of the binding points of the previous outline. Ministers are due to start talks at around 1200-1230 GMT, according to sources. "I am not sure you can call it a freeze," one OPEC source said.

A senior oil industry source said: "The problem now is to come up with something that excludes Iran, makes the Saudis happy and doesn't upset Russia." Failure to

reach a global deal would signal the resumption of a battle for market share between key producers and likely halt a recent recovery in prices.

"If there is no deal today, it will be more than just Iran that Saudi Arabia will be targeting. If there is no freeze, that would directly affect North American production going forward, perhaps something Saudis might like to see," said Natixis oil analyst Abhishek Deshpande. Brent oil has risen to nearly \$45 a barrel, up 60 percent from January lows, on optimism that a deal would help ease the supply glut that has seen prices sink from levels as high as \$115 hit in mid-2014.

Saudi Arabia has taken a tough stance on Iran, the only major OPEC producer to have refused to participate in the freeze. Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman told Bloomberg that the kingdom could quickly raise production and would restrain its output only if Iran agreed to a freeze.

Iran's oil minister Bijan Zanganeh said on Saturday OPEC and non-OPEC should simply accept the reality of Iran's return to the oil market: "If Iran freezes its oil production ... it cannot benefit from the lifting of sanctions."

Although a freeze would be a significant step for oil producers, it would have only a limited impact on global supply and the market is unlikely to rebalance before 2017, the International Energy Agency said on Thursday.—Reuters

ASSAD PARTY WINS AS EXPECTED IN SYRIA PARLIAMENTARY VOTE

DAMASCUS: Syria's ruling Baath party and its allies won a majority of seats in parliamentary elections last week across government-held parts of the country, the national electoral commission announced late Saturday. In a widely expected victory in polls labeled a "farce" by Syria's opposition, President Bashar al-Assad's Baath movement and its allies ran under the "National Unity" coalition and won 200 of the parliament's 250 seats.

Syria's national electoral commission published the names of all candidates who had won seats in the April 13 vote, according to Syria's state news agency SANA. Every candidate on the 200-strong "National Unity" list had won. "Out of 8,834,994 eligible voters, more than five million cast their votes," commission head Hisham al-Shaar was quoted as saying.

A record 11,341 candidates initially sought to run in the elections. But about

3,500 candidates remained after the rest withdrew "saying they had no chance of winning," al-Shaar said.

The ruling Baath party has governed Syria with an iron fist for the past half-century. The vote is the second parliamentary ballot since the beginning of the war in 2011 — but the UN says it will not recognize the election.

More than 270,000 people have died since Syria's conflict broke out, and millions more have been forced to flee their homes. The country's economy has all but collapsed and swathes of territory remain out of government control.

Syria's government and opposition are in Geneva this week for UN-backed peace talks to put an end to the violence. The talks are aiming to lead to a political transition, a new constitution, and fresh presidential and parliamentary elections by September 2017.—AFP



CAIRO: Egyptian President Abdelfattah al-Sisi and his French counterpart Francois Hollande review the honor guard during a welcome ceremony at the Al-Quba presidential palace yesterday.—AFP

FRANCE'S HOLLANDE BEGINS TWO-DAY VISIT TO EGYPT BOOST FOR PRESIDENT SISI

CAIRO: French President Francois Hollande arrived in Cairo yesterday for a two-day visit seen as a boost for President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, with security and economic cooperation on the table.

Hollande arrived from Beirut, as part of a regional tour that will also take him to Jordan. A beaming Sisi greeted the French president at Cairo airport, live footage on state television showed. Hollande brings a delegation of business leaders in tow, and he and Sisi are expected to also discuss Middle East crises including the war against the Islamic State group and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

He went straight to the historic Al-Qubbah palace, where his car, flanked by a cavalry guard, pulled up to a gun salute. Hollande and Sisi were to hold a meeting and were expected to give a press conference later yesterday. The question of human rights will be in the background. Hollande has been among Sisi's strongest supporters in Europe, since the former army chief overthrew his Islamist predecessor and launched a bloody crackdown on

protesters in 2013. France has already signed major arms contracts with Egypt since, and Hollande and his delegation are expected to agree economic deals throughout the visit. These agreements will include deals on funding transportation and renewable energy, the French presidency has said.

On the eve of the visit, human rights groups including Amnesty International had criticized what they called France's "deafening silence" on rights violations in Egypt. Since the overthrow of president Mohamed Morsi in 2013, police have waged a bloody crackdown on Islamists that has killed more than 1,000 protesters.

The crackdown has spread to secular and leftwing dissidents who had supported Morsi's overthrow but then turned on Sisi. Meanwhile, jihadists have staged an insurgency based in the Sinai Peninsula that has killed hundreds of soldiers and policemen.

The Islamic State group's Egypt affiliate has also claimed responsibility for bombing a plane carrying Russian holidaymakers over

Sinai last October, killing all 224 people on board. Sisi, who won a presidential election in 2014, has manoeuvred his country into being a cornerstone in the fight against the Islamic State group, which a US-led coalition is battling in Iraq and Syria.

IS has taken over the city of Sirte in neighboring Libya, more than five years after French-led air strikes helped rebels there defeat dictator Moamer Kadhafi's regime. For many governments in the West that initially condemned the overthrow of Morsi-Egypt's first democratically elected president—the fight against jihadists has become the main concern rather than pushing democracy.

For France, Egypt has also become a key market, especially for military hardware. Egypt was the first country to buy French Rafale warplanes, and also purchased two Mistral helicopter carrier ships. After his Cairo trip, Hollande will on Tuesday visit Jordan's Prince Hassan air base, where French aircraft taking part in the coalition battling IS in Syria and Iraq are stationed.—AFP

TERRORIST ELEMENT ARRESTED IN W IRAN

TEHRAN: Minister of Intelligence Mahmoud Alavi announced that a terrorist element has been arrested in west of the country. According to the terrorist's confessions, he had been given a mission from terrorist groups to carry out explosion operation in Iran, said the

minister. Iran's intelligence forces, particularly those in western provinces, have full control over the areas and arrested a member of terrorist groups on April 15, he added. The minister said investigations will continue in this regard.—KUNA

NETANYAHU SAYS ISRAEL WILL NEVER WITHDRAW FROM GOLAN HEIGHTS

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday his country will never withdraw from the Golan Heights and the strategic plateau bordering Syria will forever stay in Israeli hands. In a ceremonial Cabinet meeting in the Golan marking the one-year anniversary of his current government's formation, Netanyahu said he doubts Syria will ever return to what it was before the devastating civil war that has gripped it for more than five years. He said he would not oppose diplomatic efforts to stabilize Syria so long as they didn't come at the expense of Israel's security. Netanyahu added that, regardless, the border would not change and it was time for the world to finally recognize Israel's sovereignty over the Golan.

"I chose to have this festive Cabinet meeting on the Golan Heights to send a clear message: The Golan Heights will forever remain in Israeli hands," he said. "It's time, after 50 years, that the international community finally recognizes that the Golan will forever remain under Israeli sovereignty."

Israel captured the Golan from Syria in the 1967 Mideast war and annexed it in 1981. An Israeli withdrawal was long seen as a key to any Israel-Syria peace agreement. But as Syria began to disintegrate, the odds of Israel giving up the Golan - never a popular prospect among Israelis - have dimmed.

Since the aftermath of the 1973 Mideast war, the Golan has been the quietest of Israel's front lines, a place of hiking trails, bird-watching and winery tours. Constantly looming in the background was the prospect of the Golan eventually returning to Syria as part of a peace accord. A plateau that looms over northern Israel, the Golan is considered by Israelis to be vital to their security and, unlike the West Bank, has carried far less political baggage.

Israel has largely stayed on the sidelines of the Syrian civil war and refrained from directly intervening. However, Netanyahu last week confirmed for the first time that Israel, as long suspected, had in fact struck a number of advanced weapon shipments from Syria to Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon.—AP



GOLAN HEIGHTS: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu chairs the weekly cabinet meeting in the Israeli controlled Golan Heights on yesterday.—AP

HILLARY CLINTON RAISES HUGE SUMS AT GEORGE CLOONEY'S HOUSE

LOS ANGELES: Hillary Clinton raised money for her campaign and the Democratic party from an array of Hollywood figures at the homes of George Clooney and Jeffrey Katzenberg on Saturday, in what was expected to be her most successful evening of showbiz fundraising so far in the 2016 presidential race.

Clinton attended a fundraising dinner on Saturday evening at the Studio City home of Clooney and his wife Amal, with Ellen DeGeneres, Jane Fonda and Jim Parsons among the attendees. The event was widely publicized, as the campaign held a contest to win tickets to the fete. At the event, Clinton floated between two head tables, one hosted by the Clooneys and another hosted by Katzenberg and his wife Marilyn. Others at the event included Jim Gianopoulos, Tom Rothman and Bryan Lour.

In the afternoon, Clinton attended an event at Katzenbergs' Beverly Hills home, where she was joined by Casey Wasserman, Haim Saban, the Clooneys, and Steven Spielberg and Kate Capshaw. All were cohosts. Also present: James Cameron, and George Lucas and his wife Mellody Hobson, according to source briefed on the event.

About 150 people attended the events, with tickets priced at \$33,400 per person. Co-hosts contributed \$50,000, and event co-chairs contributed \$353,000. Money went to the Hillary Victory Fund, a joint committee for the Clinton campaign, the Democratic National Committee and state party committees. According to a Clinton aide, she talked about "building on the progress we made under President Obama. She does not believe that we live in a single issue country and she is not a single issue candidate."

Completely enthusiastic

An attendee at the Clooney event described Clinton as "completely enthusiastic," as she talked about the Supreme Court, marriage equality, income inequality and mass incarceration. The Clooneys and Katzenberg each gave remarks before she spoke. "She spent more time talking about the dangers of Trump than beating up on Bernie," an attendee said.

Clinton also attended a \$2,700-per-person event earlier in the day at the LINE Hotel in Koreatown, and a free campaign rally in the morning at Los Angeles Southwest College.

This weekend, campaign of her rival for the Democratic nomination, Bernie Sanders, bought time to run an ad spot, called "\$27," on Los Angeles stations to contrast the average contribution to Sanders' campaign to that of some of the high-dollar events that Clinton has held.

Clooney himself agreed with Sanders' criticism of the high dollar amounts being raised. In an interview with NBC's "Meet the Press" that will air on Sunday, he noted that when he pulled up to a fundraising event he also was co-hosting on Friday night in San Francisco, there were Sanders protesters present and "they're right to protest."

"They're absolutely right," he told Chuck Todd. "It is an obscene amount of money. The Sanders campaign when they talk about it is absolutely right. It's ridiculous that we should have this kind of money in politics. I agree completely." A group of Sanders supporters held their own fundraising event at a home just down the street from the Clooneys. Dubbed the "99% Party," it was being held at the residence of Howard Gold-of the family that founded the 99 Cents store chain. Radio host Cary Harrison, actor Andrew Keegan and director Matthew Cooke were among the co-hosts, and contributions were \$27 per person.

About 110 Sanders supporters gathered in front of Gold's home and lined both sides of huge street. As Clinton's motorcade went by, they threw \$1,000 in real dollar bills at the vehicles. After it passed, they danced in the street to "Dancing in the Streets" as Secret Service agents and LAPD officers looked on. Among those present was actress Frances Fisher, a longtime Sanders supporter who held a "Feel the Bern" sign.

The money

She told The Hill that the ticket price for the Clooney event "is more than minimum wage [annual salary] would be if we went up to \$15 nationwide." Other demonstrators held signs that read, Goldman Sachs Loves Hillary."

The view of many other Hollywood Democrats, however, is that as much as they decry money in politics, they are also pragmatic, and do not want to cede the money race to Republicans. Clinton has called for overturning Citizens United, the landmark 2010 Supreme Court decision that removed restrictions on unlimited outside spending in presidential contests.



LOS ANGELES: US Democratic Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton waves to the crowd during a campaign rally at the Southwest College on Saturday. — AFP

IN RACE FOR WHITE HOUSE, CRUZ SCOOPS UP 14 MORE DELEGATES

WASHINGTON: Republican Ted Cruz picked up more delegates in the race for the White House Saturday, winning all 14 that were up for grabs at his party's state convention in Wyoming.

The sweep comes as the Texas senator is attempting to chip away at rival Donald Trump's lead in the contest for the Republican presidential nomination. "Thank you Wyoming!" Cruz tweeted after the victory in the western state.

"We had a tremendous show of grassroots support that resulted in a critical victory at today's Wyoming Republican Convention," he said in a statement. "This is another step in our drive to win a majority of Republicans to be the nominee."

Cruz was expected to do well in the conservative state because of a solid ground operation and because he had been campaigning there—unlike rival Trump, who has

focused on the delegate-rich New York primary. Cruz told party members before they picked delegates that he expected a battle at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio in July to determine the nominee. Cruz now has 553 delegates against 758 for Trump, according to CNN. A candidate needs 1,237 delegates to win the party's presidential nomination.

Trump, speaking ahead of the vote on Fox News, blasted "the rigged and boss controlled" Republican primaries that he says are stacked against him. Party leaders in Wyoming however said that the rules were set long ago.

"Every presidential candidate for the last 40 years has managed this process and has worked through this process and has followed the process that we have in Wyoming," state Republican Chairman Matt Micheli told Fox News. — AFP

CANADA'S TRUDEAU EXPLAINS QUANTUM COMPUTING IN VIDEO

WATERLOO, ONTARIO: A video has gone viral of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau showing off his geek side by nailing a reporter's question about quantum computing.

Speaking Friday at the Perimeter Institute in Waterloo, Ontario, where he



WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: Canada Prime Minister Justin Trudeau speaks at a briefing at the Nuclear Security Summit in on April 1, 2016. — AP

was making a funding announcement, Trudeau dared reporters to ask him about how quantum computing works during a question period.

When a reporter obliged, Trudeau, a former teacher, gave a detailed and elaborate mini-lesson on the difference between normal and quantum computing, drawing laughter and applause from an audience of some of Canada's smartest theoretical physicists.

"Regular computer bit is either a one or a zero. On or off. A quantum state can be much more complex than that because, as we know, things can be both particle and waves at the same times and the uncertainty around quantum states allows us to encode more information into a much smaller computer.

"So that's what's exciting about quantum computing," he said as the audience again burst into applause. "Don't get me going on this or we'll be here all day. Trust me." Trudeau was welcomed to the institute by renowned British physicist Stephen Hawking via recorded video. — AP



BRASILIA: Anti-government protesters light candles outside Congress where lawmakers debate whether to oust the Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff on Saturday. — AP

DEBATE TURNS VITRIOLIC IN BRAZIL AS IMPEACHMENT VOTE NEARS

'PUTCHISTS' AND 'THIEVES' ARE THE TERMS USED

BRASILIA: Friends and foes of Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff called each other "putchists" and "thieves" ahead of yesterday's vote in Congress' lower house on whether to proceed with her impeachment, as unprecedented levels of vitriol sparked fears of violence.

Emotions have been running high since the impeachment proceedings began in the Chamber of Deputies on Friday, with lawmakers holding raucous, name-calling session. Outside the legislature, waves of pro- and anti-impeachment demonstrators were expected to flood the capital of Brasilia on Sunday. A metal wall was installed to keep the rival sides safely apart.

If 342 of the lower house's 513 lawmakers vote in favor of the impeachment on Sunday, the proceedings move to the Senate, where a separate vote could suspend Rousseff and hand over the top job to Vice President Michel Temer, who Rousseff has blasted in recent days as being part of the push against her.

If they choose to impeach

If lawmakers vote against impeachment, this bid to oust Rousseff would be dead and any subsequent process would have to start over again. Newspapers have been updating their tallies on an almost hourly basis. With the result appearing to hang on the votes of a couple dozen undecided lawmakers, it was too close to call.

Brazil's president is facing impeachment over allegations she broke fiscal laws. Her detractors describe the sleight-of hand accounting as a bid to boost her government's floundering popularity amid a tanking economy and a corruption scandal so widespread it has taken down top public figures from across the political spectrum, as well as some of the country's richest businessmen. Rousseff denies wrongdoing, pointing out that prior presidents have used similar accounting techniques. The allegations, she insists, are part of a "coup" spearheaded by Brazil's traditional ruling elite to snatch power back from her left-leaning Workers' Party, which has governed the

nation for the past 13 years.

The key vote comes as Latin America's largest nation is dealing with problems on many fronts. The economy is contracting, inflation is around 10 percent and an outbreak of the Zika virus, which can cause devastating birth defects, has ravaged parts of northeastern states. Rio de Janeiro is gearing up to host the Olympics in August, but sharp budget cuts have fueled worries about whether the country will be ready to host. As Rousseff's impeachment has gone from a remote to a concrete possibility, worry about her potential replacements has grown. There has also been increasing anger over the irony that many of the people pushing to oust her face serious allegations of corruption themselves.

Temer, a 75-year-old with the Brazilian Democratic Movement - a party bereft of any concrete ideology that has a reputation for backroom wheeling and dealing - has tried to cast himself as a statesman above the fray and a unifying force that can heal a scarred nation.

However, he has been linked to the massive corruption scheme centered at the state-run Petrobras oil company. Also, because he signed off on some of the questioned accounting maneuvers, Temer could later potentially face impeachment proceedings.

Who will replace

The second in line to replace Rousseff is Chamber of Deputies Speaker Eduardo Cunha, the driving force behind the impeachment and a long-time Rousseff enemy. He's facing money laundering and other charges for allegedly accepting some \$5 million in kickbacks in connection with the Petrobras scheme and could also be stripped of office over allegations he lied when he told a congressional committee he didn't hold any foreign bank accounts. Documents later emerged linking him and his family to Swiss bank accounts.

The third in line, Senate head Renan Calheiros, is also facing multiple corruption alle-

gations in the Petrobras probe. More than half the 65 members of the committee in the lower house that endorsed the impeachment are also facing corruption and other charges, as are some 60 percent of the country's 594 members of Congress.

Under the special legal status afforded to Brazilian legislators and other top politicians, they must be tried by the Supreme Court, largely shielding them from prosecutions.

Rousseff has made much hay of the corruption allegations dogging her enemies, insisting that she's the only one not besmirched by corruption. The argument appears to have struck a chord, even with the ardent impeachment supporters. "I would feel much more comfortable if someone clean - with no charges, no allegations - were leading this process, but that's hard to find in the Brazilian Congress," said Douglas Sandri, a 25-year-old electrical engineer who traveled from the southern city of Porto Alegre to take part in pro-impeachment demonstrations. "If Temer is found to be corrupt, he will have to go, and all the others too."

But while much of the public appears to share Sandri's toss-them-all-out attitude, the corruption allegations casting a pall on Rousseff's potential substitutes don't appear to bother impeachment's backers inside the Chamber of Deputies. "The presumption of innocence is a fundamental clause of our Constitution. Being charged or being the defendant in a case doesn't make a person dishonest," said Hiran Gonçalves, a representative from the Amazonian state of Roraima who has come out in favor of impeachment.

Deputies planning to vote against impeachment have highlighted the alleged corruption of their colleagues, particularly Cunha, during the debate over the weekend.

Rousseff is "an honest woman and Cunha is corrupt," said Moema Gramacho, a representative from Salvador who wore a sash with the words, "Out with Cunha!" — AP

GOP OFFICIAL RAILS OVER EFFORT AIMED AT NOMINATION RULES

WASHINGTON: In an extraordinary display of internal discord, the chairman of the Republican Party's rules committee accused top GOP officials Saturday of "a breach of our trust" by improperly trying to impede a proposed change in bylaws that would make it harder for party leaders to nominate a fresh candidate for president.

Bruce Ash, RNC committee chairman from Arizona, wrote the harshly worded email to the other 55 members of the GOP rules committee that he chairs. The confidential email, obtained by The Associated Press, was written days before party officials gather in Hollywood, Florida, for preliminary discussions about what rules the GOP will use at its presidential nominating convention this July.

Ash wrote the note at a time when some top Republicans consider the party's two leading presidential contenders, billionaire Donald Trump and Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, to be likely November election losers and have discussed how to replace them with alternatives at the summer convention in Cleveland, Ohio. It is possible that no contenders will have the 1,237 delegates needed to clinch the nomination at that gathering, which would produce the first GOP convention without a presumptive nominee since 1976.

Trump vs. the party

Trump has bitterly clashed with party leaders over rules that he claims have been rigged against him, a charge party leaders deny. Ash said he has "become troubled" during discussions with RNC Chairman Reince Priebus and other party officials that by not making the proposed change, GOP officials "could use their power to attempt to achieve a political result" at the nominating convention.

He said the convention's presiding officer could use existing rules to "unilaterally reopen nominations to allow a candidate to be nominated that is viewed as more acceptable, which is exactly what so many rank-and-file Republicans across America fear." His email did not mention that House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wis., is expected to be presiding offi-

cer for much of the convention. Some opponents of Trump and Cruz have suggested that Ryan, his party's 2012 vice presidential candidate, would be a preferable presidential nominee this year, but Ryan has said he doesn't want to be tabbed.

In an email sent hours later, RNC chief counsel John Ryder said the controversial amendment would in fact be included among the items given priority consideration when party officials discuss convention rules this week in Florida. But echoing the view of Priebus and some other Republicans on the party's rules committee, Ryder added, "Major changes now are dangerous and not a good idea, in my humble opinion."

Many Republican leaders have said party officials should not change current convention rules for fear of being accused by the competing presi-

dential candidates of tilting the bylaws to influence the outcome. They have noted that the final decisions on the rules will be made anyway by the convention's 2,472 delegates, probably on July 18, the gathering's first day.

When Republicans meet in Florida next week to discuss their rules, Oregon RNC committeeman Solomon Yue wants to propose not running full convention meetings under the rules of the House of Representatives. Instead, Yue wants to use Roberts Rules of Order. Yue and others say under the Roberts rules, it would be easier for the convention's delegates to vote to block an effort by the convention's presiding officer to consider new nominees for president. Under House rules, the presiding officer has more power to make decisions about the proceedings. — AP



WATERTOWN, NEW YORK: Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks during a campaign event at Watertown International Airport on Saturday. — AP

POLAND FEELS THE PAIN OF ITS LOVE AFFAIR WITH COAL

'CUTS IN WAGES WOULD BE AN ACT OF SELF-DESTRUCTION'

WARSAW/BRUSSELS: For generations, the region of Silesia has been at the heart of Poland's love affair with coal as a source of pride and heroism.

Election to Poland's top job has depended on maintaining coal's special national status and Prime Minister Beata Szydlo, a coal miner's daughter from Silesia, swept to office in October on a promise she would ring-fence the industry's 100,000 jobs.

It is a pledge she is now under almost as much pressure to break as to keep. The energy ministry has said the nation's biggest mining firm, headquartered in Silesia, risks running out of cash at the end of the month. It is a familiar cry, and in the past, funds somehow appeared.

This time, however, they may not. Coal miners became heroes in Silesia when nine of them were shot dead in 1981 in an anti-communist protest against martial law. Now they are being asked to accept cuts in salaries that are among the highest in Poland because of the dangers of the job.

Energy ministry officials supervising Kompania Weglowa (KW), the European Union's biggest coal mining company, say it cannot pay salaries in May if trade unions reject a plan to cut the company's costs, more than half of which go on staff.

The plan is a condition for other state-run companies to inject 1.5 billion zlotys

(\$394.36 million) at the start of May, a deal which could be questioned by the European Commission if it looks like illegal state aid. To pass muster, there needs to be a convincing business plan showing the miner will start to make profits.

The government also wants KW's creditors - including the Polish unit of Spain's Banco Santander BZ WBK and France's BNP Paribas to convert their debt into KW shares. "The talks are held on the highest level," a government source said, adding that the banks' final decision is expected early in the coming week. This was confirmed by another person. BZ WBK and BNP Paribas declined to comment.

Risk

Together, BZ WBK and BNP Paribas hold 150 million zlotys of KW's debt. Any exposure coal is considered financial risk and the European Union is considering "carbon stress-testing" its financial firms.

The trade unions at KW accept cost-cutting in principle, but refuse to agree to wage cuts or layoffs. "Cuts in wages would be an act of self-destruction," Boguslaw Hutek, the head of KW's biggest trade union, said. "Now young people are thinking in a different way from the older generation. If they don't get decent earnings, they will go elsewhere."

Mining's financial woes mean Silesian students are already switching to classes in solar and wind energy and away from the mining studies that traditionally guaranteed a job for life.

Poland's pits have clocked up losses of billions of zlotys as world coal prices sunk to record lows. It is not the only country affected: Peabody, the world's largest privately owned coal producer, declared bankruptcy this month after a debt-fuelled expansion into Australia.

Part of Poland's problem is the depth of the seams - up to 1,200 meters compared to 465 meters on average in China, the world's biggest coal producer and consumer. Deeper pits are more costly because more energy and time is required to extract coal and cool the shafts to make working conditions bearable.

Despite lower costs compared with Poland, the Chinese government has said it is shifting to cleaner fuel. Michal Wilczynski, a former chief geologist in Poland and former deputy environment minister, said trying to rescue Kompania Weglowa was futile.

"It's too late to rescue it. Poland's coal mines will not be effective, no matter how deep the cost cuts are, because of geology," Wilczynski said. "Rejecting the global trends would take us back to the Communist era with an isolated economy."

Last year Poland's three biggest mining firms, including Kompania Weglowa, KHW and the listed JSW as well as three state-run power producers, which burn the mines' coal booked a net loss of almost 10 billion zlotys (\$2.6 billion).

Collateral damage

That might be manageable, but for all the collateral damage. The market capitalization of Poland's biggest power group, the state-run PGE fell by over a third, or more than 11 billion zlotys in 2015, mostly because politicians involved it in helping to bail out Kompania Weglowa (KW).

Even Polish firms that have sought to move away from coal were sucked in. Among Poland's utilities, Energa has the biggest portfolio of renewables; its shares fell by more than 10 percent, or more than 500 million zlotys, when it announced it would invest in KW on March 16.

Two sources, one official and one from the industry, said the ministry has also been trying to convince Poland's refiner PKN Orlen to get involved in KW. The low price of coal on international markets compounds the problem. Poland lost almost 30 zlotys on every ton of coal its mines produced last year, according to industry figures.

Before he was sacked in February, KW's CEO Krzysztof Sedzikowski was battling in

Brussels for EU approval to use public money to keep open loss-making mines. There is little sign Brussels will approve that, EU officials say. The Competition Commissioner has said she can only allow funding of uncompetitive mines on condition they are being phased out, which is at odds with Szydlo's electoral promise that she would not close any mines.

Industry analysts say the smart approach would be to plan an orderly retreat from coal - currently nearly 90 percent of the energy mix - to more diverse supplies, including solar and wind, which they say is often the cheapest new source.

But the government is working on regulations that would make new onshore wind next to impossible, something critics say makes no sense. "This is as if someone said - we are done with the mobile phones technology, we will only have fixed lines from now," Zbigniew Prokopowicz, the CEO of Polenerga, a privately owned Polish utility said.

The previous government began a long-term energy strategy to 2050. The Energy Ministry did not answer Reuters questions on whether the current government was formulating its own. Earlier this year the prime minister said Poland needed to diversify for the sake of energy security, but coal would remain the basic fuel. — Reuters



LESBOS, GREECE: Pope Francis, center, is flanked by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox Christians, left, and Archbishop of Athens and All Greece Ieronymos II as they meet refugees at the Moria camp on Saturday. — AP

'FRANCIS GAVE US A NEW LIFE': SYRIAN REFUGEES TAKEN IN BY VATICAN

THE PONTIFF HAILED AS A "SAVIOR"

ROME: The Syrian refugees taken in by Pope Francis following his visit to the Greek island of Lesbos have hailed the pontiff as a "savior" for offering them a new life.

In a hugely symbolic move seen as a lesson in solidarity for Europe, Francis, who is himself the son of Italian migrants in Argentina, on Saturday took 12 Syrians from three families—all Muslims—home with him from Lesbos to the Vatican. "All refugees are children of God," the 79-year-old pope said on the flight back to Rome referring to their religion, adding that though his gesture was "a drop in the ocean" he hoped "the ocean will never be the same again".

In an interview with Italian daily La Stampa, the families, who spent their first night in Rome at a Catholic charity, expressed their gratitude to the pontiff for his "gesture of hope". "We saw friends and relatives die in the rubble, we fled Syria because we no longer had any hope," said Hasan, an engineer from Damascus, who arrived in Italy with his wife Nour and two-year-old son.

After fleeing to Turkey, Hasan and his family joined the migrant trail to Europe, piling into a rubber dinghy that set out from the Turkish coast for Greece. "But it was overloaded," said Hasan, recalling the pitch black of the sea at night and the waves rocking the vessel.

Escape from Lesbos 'prison'

"In Lesbos, we understood that we were stuck in a place that we could not leave, (we were) in a trap, a prison," he said describing the pope as "our savior" for whisking them off the island, where thousands of migrants risk being sent back to Turkey under a new EU-

Turkey deportation deal.

Wafa, who was also on the papal flight from Lesbos with her husband Osama, eight-year-old daughter Masa and six-year-old son Omar, together with her husband, described the "constant bombardments" in recent months around their home.

"Since then (my son) has barely spoken... he is locked in an impenetrable silence," she said. "Even today, he wakes up every night crying and we cannot get him to play with his sister." Wafa said she and her husband, who are from Damascus suburb of Zamalka, had opted to cut ties with the past. "But we know we took the right decision," she said. After their stay on Lesbos, which seemed interminable, "Francis gave us a new life," she said.

Ramy, a 51-year-old teacher from the eastern Islamic State-occupied city of Deir Ezzor, fled Syria with his wife Suhila and three children — sons Rashid, 18 and Abdelmajid, 16, and seven-year-old daughter Al Quds—after their home was destroyed in the war.

"We discuss a lot and find it hard to imagine what life will be like in the future: we don't know whether we will start over in Europe or whether, one day, we will be able to return to Syria free of war and violence," he told La Stampa.

Vatican leading by example

"We are grateful to the pope, we will prove ourselves worthy of this opportunity and the gift he gave us," he told La Stampa, while adding he did not know whether he would remain in Europe for the long-term or "one day, return to a Syria that is free of war and violence."

The three families, who had initially set their

sights on reaching Germany or another European country, are now expected to seek asylum in Italy. Their arrival brings to around 20 the number of refugees living in the Vatican, which has under 1,000 inhabitants. A similar intake across Europe would see six million people given asylum on the continent of 300 million. Last year, the pope had appealed to every Catholic diocese in Europe to take in a refugee family—an appeal that fell on deaf ears in most parts of the continent.

Migrant arrivals in Greece have drastically fallen since Turkey agreed to take back all irregular migrants landing on the Greek islands in return for billions in EU cash and other concessions. Over 1.1 million people have crossed clandestinely from Turkey to Greece since the start of 2015, with hundreds drowning en route.

Christian woman killed for her faith

Pope Francis says one of the refugees he met on the Greek island of Lesbos was the Muslim widower of a Syrian Christian woman killed by extremists for refusing to renounce her faith.

Francis told the faithful in St. Peter's Square on yesterday that "she is a martyr." Departing from his prepared remarks, Francis shared his experiences of the day earlier with thousands of people gathered for his blessing. He says among the 300 refugees he greeted Saturday on Lesbos was a Syrian widower with two children.

The pope said: "He is Muslim, and he told me that he married a Christian girl. They loved each other and respected each other. But unfortunately the young woman's throat was slashed by terrorists because she didn't want to deny Christ and abandon her faith." — Agencies

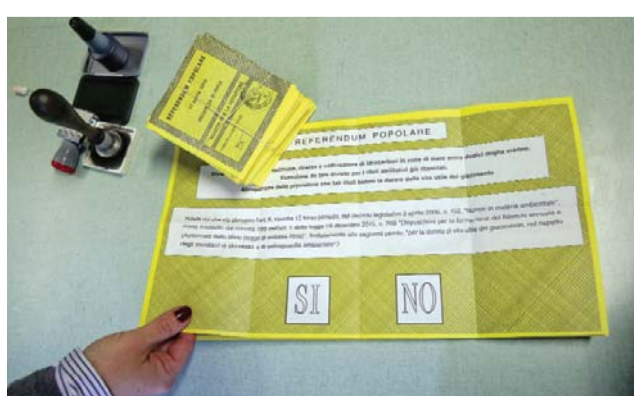
ITALIANS VOTE IN REFERENDUM ON DURATION OF OIL CONCESSIONS

MILAN: Italians are voting in a referendum on the duration of offshore drilling concessions in territorial waters, as nine regional governments seek to wrestle some influence over energy policy away from the central government in Rome.

Premier Matteo Renzi says he will abstain from voting, sending a signal that could kill the vote that requires a quorum of 50 percent plus one to make the balloting valid.

The battle began when Renzi's government in December extended all existing 30-year concessions within 12 kilometers of shore until resource exhaustion. That angered regional governments, who were concerned about safety, the environment and pushing for a more renewable energy policy.

The amount of resources at stake is equal to 3 percent of Italy's annual domestic demand for gas and 1 percent of annual demand for oil. — AP



PAVIA, ITALY: A polling station officer shows a ballot for a referendum on the duration of offshore drilling concessions yesterday. — AP

SCOTLAND COULD HOLD NEW REFERENDUM IF FORCED OUT OF EU

LONDON: Scotland should have the right to hold a new referendum on independence if the country is taken out of the European Union "against our will", the leader of the Scottish National Party (SNP) said yesterday.

Nicola Sturgeon said her party's manifesto before a local election next month would say there should be a referendum "if there is clear and sustained evidence that independ-

ence has become the preferred option of a majority of the Scottish people".

"Or if there is a significant and material change in the circumstances that prevailed in 2014, such as Scotland being taken out of the EU against our will," she added in a statement. Britain is to hold a referendum on June 23 on whether to remain in, or leave, the 28-member EU bloc. — Reuters

GERMAN POLICE KEEPING OPEN MIND IN SIKH TEMPLE BLAST PROBE

BERLIN: Police in the western city of Essen say they are keeping an open mind about the reasons for an apparently deliberate explosion at a Sikh temple that injured three people late Saturday.

Essen police spokesman Lars Lindemann said yesterday that a masked man reported to have fled the scene hadn't yet been apprehended. Three people detained late Saturday were released after no link to the

explosion was found.

Lindemann said police were investigating "in all directions" but there were no indications of a terrorist motive. He said a 60-year-old man suffered serious but not life-threatening injuries in the blast and remains hospitalized. Two men aged 47 and 56 suffered slight injuries. The victims were members of a wedding party that had held a ceremony at the temple earlier Saturday. — AP



ESSEN, GERMANY: A police officer passes by a Sikh temple after three people have been injured in an apparently deliberate explosion Saturday evening. — AP

GERMANY HOLDS MEMORIAL FOR LONGTIME DIPLOMAT GENSCHER

BERLIN: Senior German leaders have gathered in the former capital of Bonn for a memorial to honor the country's longest-serving foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

Among those paying their respects to Genscher at the rare state occasion Saturday are German President Joachim Gauck and Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Foreign dignitaries included James A. Baker III, who served as US President

George Bush's secretary of state. Baker worked closely with Genscher as the Iron Curtain fell and East and West Germany were reunited.

Baker praised the diplomatic skills of Genscher, who was foreign minister from 1974 to 1992, recalling that the jovial German "could be as tough as leather on a cowboy's boots." Genscher died March 31 at age 88 at his home near Bonn. A private funeral is planned. — AP



BONN, GERMANY: From left, President of German Upper house, Stanislaw Tillich, Andreas Vosskuhle, the president of the Constitutional Court, Chancellor Angela Merkel and Parliament President Norbert Lammert stand in front of the casket of former German foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher during a memorial service in the former parliament building yesterday. — AP

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AFGHAN CHILD CASUALTIES SOAR AS URBAN WARFARE ESCALATES

KABUL: Child casualties have soared in Afghanistan this year as the Taliban stepped up attacks in urban areas, the United Nations said yesterday, branding the figures "appalling".

Between January and March, 161 children were killed and 449 others injured a 29 percent increase from a year earlier—the UN's mission in Afghanistan said in a

report. Danielle Bell, the mission's human rights director, said women and children have suffered the most as the insurgents have launched more bomb attacks in populated areas. "In the first quarter of 2016, almost one third of civilian casualties were children," said Bell in the report. "If the fighting persists near schools, playgrounds, homes and clinics, and parties

continue to use explosive weapons in those areas... these appalling numbers of children killed and maimed will continue.

"Increased fighting in populated areas continues to kill and injure women and children at higher rates than the general population." The figures come days after the Taliban launched its spring offensive by trying to retake control of Kunduz, the

northeastern provincial capital they briefly captured last year.

The militants have intensified their insurgency since the end of NATO's combat mission in 2014, launching brazen attacks on urban areas that saw last year become the bloodiest for civilians on record. In the first three months of 2016, 600 civilians were killed and 1,343 were

injured, the report said. The number of deaths fell 13 percent from a year ago, while the number of injuries rose by 11 percent. The Taliban were responsible for six out of every 10 casualties, according to the UN's report. Last year, there were 11,002 civilian casualties, including 3,545 deaths, according to UN figures released in February.—AFP

PHILIPPINE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ATTACKED OVER RAPE JOKE

MANILA: Leading Philippine presidential candidate Rodrigo Duterte, whose campaign promises a ruthless war on crime, was angrily condemned yesterday after a video surfaced of him joking about a murdered Australian rape victim.

Duterte, who promises mass killings of suspected criminals if elected next month, appears in a video uploaded on YouTube making the joke about the female Australian missionary. The missionary, who was ministering in a prison in Davao in the southern Philippines, was raped and killed during a riot by inmates in 1989.

Duterte was the city mayor at the time. "They raped all of the women... There was this Australian lay minister... when they took them out... I saw her face and I thought, 'Son of a bitch. what a pity... they raped her, they all lined up. I was mad she was raped but she was so beautiful. I thought, the mayor should have been first,'" Duterte is shown telling a crowd of laughing supporters at a campaign rally.

Duterte, who boasts of the extra-judicial killings of suspects by vigilantes during his time in Davao, is the preferred candidate in the run-up to the May 9 election, according to the latest opinion survey on April 3.

His rivals, women's groups and commentators on social media quickly denounced his remarks. President Benigno Aquino's spokesman Herminio Coloma said the comments show "his lack of fitness for the presidency" and his "utter lack of respect for women".

Aquino, who under the constitution cannot seek a second term, is supporting another candidate, his former interior secretary Mar Roxas who trails Duterte in opinion surveys. Rival presidential candidate Vice President Jejomar Binay called Duterte's remarks "simply revolting". "You are a crazy maniac who doesn't respect women and doesn't deserve to be president," Binay told Duterte in a statement.

Another candidate Senator Grace Poe, who is just behind Duterte in the surveys, called his comment "distasteful and unacceptable, and reflects his disrespect for women". One Filipino remarked on Twitter: "I broke down after watching Duterte on Aussie rape. I can't fathom how his followers can laugh at it."

Women's group Gabriela attacked Duterte's remarks, saying rape or any other form of sexual abuse was not a joke "nor something to be trivialized in a joke", especially by someone seeking the presidency.

Many Filipinos have embraced Duterte for his vulgarity-laced speeches, his boasts of sexual conquests and his promised war on crime. Even when he called Pope Francis a "son of a whore," in a speech last November, his followers in the devoutly Catholic nation quickly forgave him.

Spokesmen for Duterte had no immediate comment when approached by AFP. Many of his followers brushed off the controversy. "We won't apologize for he has done nothing wrong, it was a clear joke for God's sake," one Filipina supporter said on Twitter.—AFP



MINAMIASO, JAPAN: Japan Self-Defense Forces members conduct a search operation at the site of a landslide caused by an earthquake yesterday.—AP

RESCUERS RACE AGAINST LANDSLIDES TO REACH JAPAN QUAKE VICTIMS

'MULTIPLE LOCATIONS WHERE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN BURIED ALIVE'

MINAMIASO, JAPAN: Rescuers used shovels to dig through mountains of soil yesterday as they raced against the threat of more landslides to reach people still trapped by two big earthquakes in Japan.

At least 41 people are known to have died in the double disaster, with 11 still missing—buried in shattered houses or under torrents of mud. Heavy rain forecast for the area around Kumamoto did not materialize yesterday, offering qualified relief for officials who cautioned that continued aftershocks might spark further mudslides.

Tens of thousands of people had spent the night in temporary accommodation, or huddled in makeshift shelters as the rescue effort stepped up a gear. Up to 25,000 personnel fanned out through stricken villages where scores of traditional-style houses were shattered by the quake, or buried in the earth and rock that cascaded down hillsides.

In badly-hit Minami-Aso, dozens of rescuers worked with hand-shovels in a delicate operation to reach at least one person who has not been seen since the 7.0 magnitude quake struck in the small hours of Saturday. Where four houses had once stood on a ridge, only three remained; the fourth washed away by a tide of earth that swept through the settlement.

Yoko Eto, 38, said her neighbor, whom she identified as Mr. Katashima, had been found dead with his dog, but his wife was missing. Still visibly shaken, she spoke of her horror as a torrent of muddy water from a nearby reservoir gushed through her home.

"I could hear a rumbling sound soon after the quake. It felt like only a few minutes before the water came rushing through the ground floor," she told AFP. Eto scrambled to safety with her elderly father, but has been left with nothing. "I thought I might be able to find some important things, like ID documents," she said as she scoured the ruins of her home. "But I could only find old photo albums."

Evacuated

In nearby Mashiki few of the traditional style wooden houses remained intact. "I sleep in a car and stay in this tent during the day," Selya Takamori, 52, told AFP, gesturing to a shelter made from a blue plastic sheet. "In this area, we all knew there was an active fault running underneath the town of Mashiki, but no one really cared about it. "We always said to each other that a big quake would hit at some point, but didn't really take it seriously."

More than 90,000 people have been evacuated, including 300 from an area near a dam thought to be at risk of collapse. Isolated villages in mountainous areas were completely cut off by landslides and damage to roads. Aerial footage showed a bridge on a main trunk road had crashed onto the carriageway below, its pillars felled by the huge seismic jolt.

The government had said Saturday that there were "multiple locations where people have been buried alive", and reports suggested scores were missing, but the number was sharply down by Sunday. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Japan's rescue effort was to be augmented by the United States military. "Our defense minister informed me that the US military said aerial transportation is available. We are grateful for the offer," he said. The US has almost 50,000 servicemen and women stationed in Japan.

Aftershocks

More than 400 aftershocks have rocked Kumamoto and other parts of central Kyushu, an area unaccustomed to the powerful quakes that regularly rattle other parts of Japan.

Thursday's initial quake affected older build-

ings and killed nine people, but Saturday's brought newer structures crashing down. It also looked set to affect industry, with car giant Toyota announcing the gradual suspension of assembly lines nationwide, citing problems with parts suppliers in the area.

Honda said its motorcycle plant in Kumamoto will also remain shut on Monday, the Yomiuri Shimbun reported. Around 63,000 households were still without electricity by Sunday afternoon. Japan is one of the world's

most seismically active countries. A huge under-sea quake in March 2011 killed around 18,500 people when it sent a devastating tsunami barreling into the northeast coast, and sparking a nuclear disaster at Fukushima.

This week's quakes provoked renewed debate among seismologists about the likelihood of a mega quake many expect to hit over the coming decades. Experts predict that the so-called Nankai Trough quake could claim as many as 320,000 lives.—AFP



LINGAYEN, PHILIPPINES: Davao City Mayor and Presidential Candidate Rodrigo Duterte speaks to reporters during his campaign sortie on March 2, 2016.—AFP

JOURNALIST CLOSE TO OPPOSITION QUESTIONED IN BANGLADESH

DHAKA: Police in Bangladesh questioned a prominent journalist and close aide of opposition leader and ex-Prime Minister Khaleda Zia over the weekend for his alleged role in a conspiracy to kidnap the only son of the current prime minister.

Shafiq Rehman, head of the Foreign Affairs Committee of Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party, was sent to police detention Saturday for five days after a court in Dhaka approved his interrogation about the plot to kidnap Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's son, Sajeb Wazed Joy.

Rehman, 81, who also holds a British passport, was picked up in a raid at his home. His wife, Taleya Rehman, said the detectives initially posed as journalists from a local television station before identifying themselves and taking her husband away with them.

She said the British High Commission in Dhaka was informed of the arrest. Police spokesman Maruf Hossain Sorder told reporters that Rehman would be questioned to get more details about the plan to kidnap and kill Joy. According to the details of the case filed in August last year, several people close to Zia were part of the conspiracy and met in Britain, the United



DHAKA: Bangladesh's former prime minister and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leader Khaleda Zia, looks on at a protest rally to mark the second anniversary of a general election boycotted by a major opposition alliance on Jan. 5, 2016.—AP

States and Bangladesh to discuss the plot.

Zia strongly condemned Rehman's arrest and demanded that he be released immediately. She said in a statement that the arrest was meant to divert people's attention from "terrible misrule" of the impoverished South Asian nation's current government.—AP

RENEWED VIOLENCE FLARES IN INDIAN PM'S STATE OVER CASTE

AHMEDABAD, India: Stone-throwing protesters clashed with police firing tear gas in Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state yesterday, the latest caste violence over demands for preferential treatment for jobs and university places.

Police also fired water cannon when violence flared after a rally in the Gujarat state town of Mehsana by thousands of members of the Patidar, or Patel, caste. Television footage showed police armed with sticks known as lathis chasing crowds through the streets after demonstrators tried to march to a local jail where several caste leaders were being held.

Some 25 protesters were arrested and authorities slapped a curfew on the town and blocked mobile Internet access to try to calm the situation, Mehsana district collector

Lochan Sahera said. "After the rally the Patidars who had gathered in their thousands started marching towards the district jail and when the police tried to stop them, they pelted stones at them," Sahera told AFP.

Protesters told media they were hit by police with sticks after taking part in a peaceful rally. Rioting by Patidar members erupted last year in Gujarat over the same issue, leaving at least 10 people dead in the worst violence to hit the state for more than a decade.

The Patidars are one of the western state's most affluent communities, but they say they are struggling to compete with less privileged castes for jobs. Local leaders had organized Sunday's rally to press their demands for changes to the policy by the Gujarat state government and for the release of local leaders.—AFP



BEIJING: Chinese suspects involved in wire fraud are escorted off a plane at the Beijing Capital International Airport on Wednesday.—AP



People walk and fish along the pier in Mytilini port as the sun rises on the Greek island of Lesbos yesterday. Mytilini port was founded in the 11th century BC. — AP

TRUMP FOREIGN POLICY ALARMING THE WORLD

PARIS: US Republican presidential frontrunner Donald Trump has rung alarm bells around the world with his proclamations on foreign policy, but his targets are increasingly shrugging off his barbs. By suggesting that NATO is "obsolete" and that Japan and South Korea should acquire nuclear weapons to rid the United States of the burden of protecting those countries, Trump has called into question some of the cornerstones of US foreign policy for decades.

Korea as an "aberration". Kazuhiro Maeshima, professor of politics at Sophia University in Tokyo, said Trump's comments were "a bluff based on unrealistic views" because the US-Japan security alliance is clearly "contributing to the US national interest".

If Trump became president, "it would at the very least create confusion and carries the risk of triggering a major turning point for the Japan-US alliance and Japan's overall diplomacy," Maeshima said. Although Trump leads

The comments appear to have been an attempt to play to the pro-Israel lobby in the United States because Israel ferociously opposed the deal. "When I become president, the days of treating Israel like a second-class citizen will end on day one," Trump told the powerful American Israel Public Affairs Committee. Nimrod Goren, chairman of the Israeli Institute for Regional Foreign Policies (Mitvim), said that even with such overt support for the Jewish state, "when it comes to Trump there are a lot of question marks as he is not a traditional Republican politician".

He said Trump - and his closest Republican rival Ted Cruz, who has also called into question the Iran deal - was actually unlikely to win votes from the pro-Israel lobby by talking tough on the issue. "It is not by chance you don't hear about the Iran deal in the Israeli debate any more. It is considered a done deal. I don't think any people think you can reverse it," Goren said.

In Iran, most people believe that if Trump somehow wins the presidency, the Washington machine will curb his ambitions, a Tehran-based academic said. "Candidates like Trump, despite their tough and hostile stances, once they take office, the body of expertise in the State Department, the Pentagon, the CIA, and the UN Security Council etc will prevent him from making just any decision he desires," Nasser Hadian, professor of international relations at the University of Tehran, told AFP.

The analyst also said Trump had less "credibility" than Clinton and so as president would find it hard to persuade the rest of the world to follow his lead if he tried to impose new sanctions on Iran.

Some of Trump's comments - short on research but big on headline-grabbing potential - have allowed his opponents to label him unfit to be commander-in-chief. This week, Kerry swung into action again to say the United States must never again resort to torture. —AFP



NEW YORK: Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump poses for a picture with supporters at the end of a press conference with members of the New York Veteran Police Association in Staten Island yesterday. — AFP

have earned sharp rebukes from President Barack Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry. An exasperated Obama said he was "getting questions constantly from foreign leaders about some of the wackier suggestions that are being made". Obama said Trump "doesn't know much about foreign policy, or nuclear policy, or the Korean peninsula, or the world generally".

When Kerry visited the Hiroshima atomic bomb memorial on April 11, he described Trump's proposals to provide nuclear weapons to Japan and South

the Republican primary race, he is projected to lose an election against the likely Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton. But the question is whether Trump's campaign could cause lasting damage to America's foreign relations, or at the very least worry its allies and exacerbate strains with unfriendly nations. For example, he caused widespread consternation when he said his "number one priority" if he became president was to dismantle the carefully crafted deal between global powers and Iran on its nuclear program.

DOHA MEETING ENDS WITHOUT OIL FREEZE

Continued from Page 1

to regain market share after the lifting of Western sanctions against it in January. After five hours of fierce debate about the wording of a communique - including between Saudi Arabia and Russia - delegates and ministers announced no deal had been reached. "We need more time to reach an agreement among all OPEC members and main producers to freeze production, which can be by June," one OPEC source said.

The failure to reach a global deal could halt a recent recovery in oil prices. "With no deal today, markets' confidence in OPEC's ability to achieve any sensible supply balancing act is likely to diminish and this is surely bearish for the oil markets where prices had rallied partly on expectations of a deal," said Natixis oil analyst Abhishek Deshpande. "Without a deal, the likelihood of markets balancing are now pushed back to mid-2017. We will see a lot of speculators getting out next week," he added.

Brent oil has risen to nearly \$45 a barrel, up 60 percent from January lows, on optimism that a deal would help ease

the supply glut that has seen prices sink from levels as high as \$115 hit in mid-2014. Saudi Arabia has taken a tough stance on Iran, the only major OPEC producer to refuse to participate in the freeze. Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman told Bloomberg that the kingdom could quickly raise production and would restrain its output only if Iran agreed to a freeze. Iran's oil minister Bijan Zanganeh said on Saturday OPEC and non-OPEC should simply accept the reality of Iran's return to the oil market: "If Iran freezes its oil production ... it cannot benefit from the lifting of sanctions."

Kuwait's acting oil minister Anas Al-Saleh told reporters on arrival in Doha that "he was optimistic" about the success of the conference, which took place as thousands of oil workers in Kuwait began an open-ended strike yesterday to protest against a government proposal to cut their wages. Kuwaiti oil expert Kamel Al-Harami had said a freeze agreement was still possible even without Iran.

"Iran is unable to add more than 500,000 barrels per day (bpd) to its production by the end of the year," Harami told AFP in Doha. "I believe this will not greatly impact the meeting," he said. — Agencies

FIRST AIR FRANCE FLIGHT IN 8 YEARS LANDS IN IRAN

TEHRAN: The first Air France flight between Paris and Tehran for eight years landed in the Islamic republic's capital yesterday, bearing a government minister and a business delegation. The airline's route had been suspended since 2008 because of international sanctions against Iran over its controversial nuclear program. However, sanctions have been lifted under an accord with world powers that has now been in force for three months.

Flight AF738 from Roissy-Charles de Gaulle touched down at Tehran's Imam Khomeini international airport at 1530 GMT, 20 minutes ahead of schedule, an AFP journalist said. French Transport Minister Alain Vidalies was on board, along with members of a delegation some 15-strong who will spend two days in the Iranian capital. At a welcoming ceremony Vidalies said he was "proud of the resumption of these direct flights"



TEHRAN: An Air France airliner arrives at the Imam Khomeini international airport in the Iranian capital yesterday. — AFP

and said being "able to move between Paris and Tehran was crucial... for entering into partnerships".

Iran's deputy transport minister, Ali Abedzadeh, said he was happy to see the Air France service resume. Frederic Gagey, the airline's chief executive, spoke of its "great pride in returning to Iran". However, resumption of the service caused controversy in France as unions said the airline sent an internal memo saying female cabin crew would have to wear trousers on board with a loose fitting jacket and must cover their hair with a scarf when they leave the plane. —AFP

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Focus

SANDERS' ISRAEL
CRITICISM SPLITS
US-JEWISH VOTE

By Jennie Matthew

When Bernie Sanders called Israel's response in the 2014 Gaza war disproportionate and urged America to be more balanced on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, he smashed a presidential campaign taboo. His remarks at the April 14 Democratic debate ahead of New York's decisive primary on Tuesday amounted to unprecedented criticism of Israel and promotion of Palestinian rights from a canvassing US presidential candidate. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "is not right all of the time," said the Vermont senator. "We cannot continue to be one-sided."

He criticized Democratic frontrunner Hillary Clinton for not saying that she would do more to promote Palestinian rights when she addressed the powerful rightwing American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) lobby in Washington in March. "If we are ever going to bring peace to that region, which has seen so much hatred and so much war, we are going to have to treat the Palestinian people with respect and dignity," Sanders said.

Sanders, who is the only Jewish presidential hopeful this year, has lived in Israel. In other countries the remarks would have been considered run of the mill, said Daniel Sieradski, national organizer of the group "Jews for Bernie" which has 8,000 supporters on Facebook. "But because the discourse in American Jewish politics has been pulled so far to the right in the last couple of decades, Bernie is being made to sound like some anti-Israel extremist."

During the last contested Democratic New York primary in 1992, it might have been political suicide, The New York Times wrote. Sieradski disagreed. "I don't think it's political suicide," he told AFP. "But it definitely didn't help him among people who have hard-line views on Israel."

'Breath of Fresh Air'

He said Jewish Americans make up 20 percent of the New York electorate. The majority of them are Democrats, meaning that air-tight support for Israel has long been considered a campaign must. But Sanders' words reflect changing attitudes among Jewish voters, particularly millennials who grew up seeing Israel as a strong state and for whom the horrors of the Holocaust are more removed. Democrat Sharon Goldtzyk, 29, told AFP she was "really excited" to see a presidential candidate bring up the issue of Palestinian dignity. She founded and runs Uprise, a communications firm which works with non-profit groups and focuses on human rights and the Middle East. Goldtzyk has lived in Israel, is married to an Israeli, and describes Sanders as "a breath of fresh air." "I'm under 30. People in my cohort were not willing to accept (that) there is only one way to support Israel, so I do think that he represents the views of many, many Jews and a growing number of Jews."

According to a Pew Research Center poll, 35 percent of Democrats thought Israel had gone too far in its response during the 2014 Gaza. Sanders has "at least opened up the discourse so the conversation can shift in the Democratic Party, and that's a big deal," said Sieradski. Polls show that Sanders trails Clinton 40-60 percent among Jewish Democrats in New York City, and 13 points behind his opponent on a state-wide average.

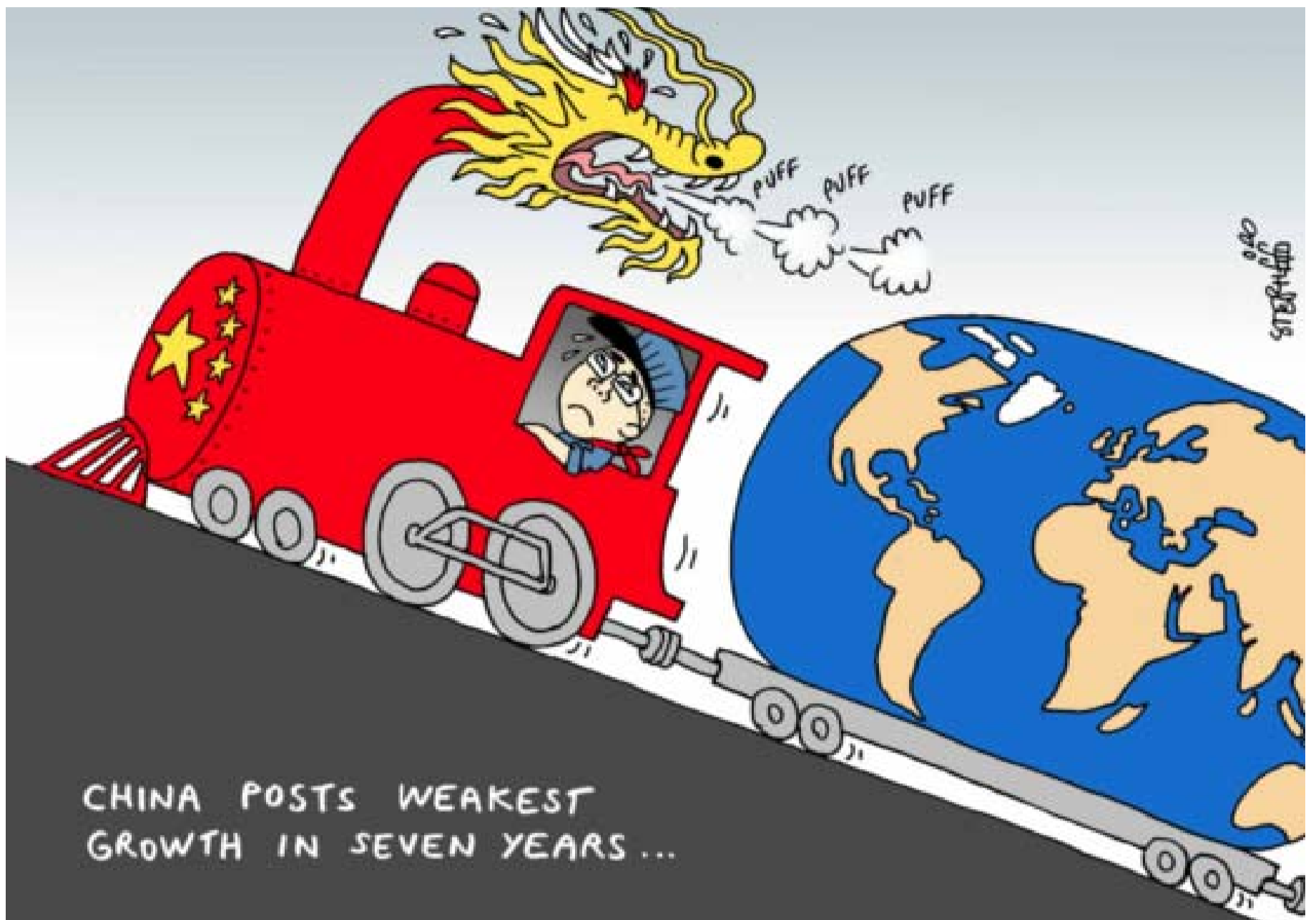
'Losing Anyway'

Documentary filmmaker Gaylen Ross is voting for Clinton and believes she is the candidate best able to negotiate a two-state solution. "Frankly if that's the kind of language that he comes to a negotiating table with he is already 10 steps behind," she told AFP. "You don't play your hand before you get to the table and you don't play your hand before you get to a national election."

Sanders' suspension of his Jewish outreach director for referring to Netanyahu in vulgar terms also signals a lack of experience or suggests he is not informed, Ross said. Sanders was the only the candidate who declined to speak at the AIPAC event in Washington on March 21. He also told the New York Daily News - mistakenly - that he thought more than 10,000 civilians were killed in Gaza in 2014.

Howard Graubard, a New York lawyer active in Democratic politics in the state, does not expect Sanders to suffer much at the ballot box "because he was going to lose anyway". It won't alienate his progressive Jewish supporters, but his criticism of Israel gives Orthodox and rightwing Zionist Democrats, who feel little enthusiasm for Clinton, a reason to get out and vote. "They're nominal Democrats and need a motivator," Graubard said. "People are being emailed, fliers will be going up this weekend, there will be phone banks, and the message about Bernie and Israel is going out to pull those people out to vote." — AFP

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BULLFIGHTERS LOCK HORNS IN PATERNITY SUIT

By Patrick Rahir

Legendary Spanish bullfighter Manuel Benitez, "El Cordobes", is locked in a legal battle with another popular matador who openly uses the same nickname and has for years claimed to be his son. The scandal broke in February when Manuel Diaz told "Hola!" magazine he had filed a paternity suit against his supposed father in the southern city of Cordoba after trying in vain to form a relationship with him. "I thought that being a matador I would be able to reach him, but my father remains elusive," the 47-year-old told the celebrity magazine.

"The straw that broke the camel's back was the day when he was asked about me during a television interview. Benitez turned away from the camera as if I were the devil. My children asked me 'Why doesn't your father want to talk about you?'" he said. Diaz says Benitez, 79, who revolutionized the conservative bullfighting world in the 1960s with his acrobatic style, had a brief affair with his mother when she worked as a maid in Madrid. But when she became pregnant, Benitez did not want to have anything to do with the child, according to the younger "El Cordobes". Diaz says he does not want to make any claims on Benitez's estate and just wants to claim a lineage that he is proud of. Benitez, whose fame in the bullring lifted him out of poverty, has five children with his wife Martina Fraysse, whom he divorced earlier this year.

Napkin DNA Evidence

The two men bear a striking resemblance



This combination of file pictures shows a photo taken on Oct 12, 2013 of Spanish matador Manuel Diaz "El Cordobes" (left) during a bullfight at La Misericordia bullring in Zaragoza, and a photo taken on May 5, 2001 of Spanish matador Manuel Benitez "El Cordobes" during a bullfight in Palavas-les-Flots, France. — AFP

which Spain's eager gossip press like to highlight regularly. To file a paternity suit, Diaz needed evidence to back up his claim so he turned to a detective who seized a napkin used by the senior matador at a bar to wipe his lips, Diaz's lawyer Fernando Osuna said. Diaz said DNA analysis of the napkin indicated with 99.9 percent certainty that he is Benitez's son, and the paternity suit was

accepted in December by a court, which will rule on the case on April 28.

Osuna said both bullfighters had separately taken DNA tests on Friday, and the results are due next week.

Benitez, whose fame transcended Spain at the height of his career in the 1960s, now avoids the media. His rise from an illiterate youth who was caught by police stealing

chickens to top matador was narrated in the 1967 best-selling book "Or I'll Dress You in Mourning: The Extraordinary Story of El Cordobes". His good looks also helped him secure a number of film roles.

'Revolutionary'

In the arena, Benitez adopted an unorthodox but spectacular style - he would sometimes jump on the back of the bull - which earned him criticism from experts but delighted the crowds.

"He arrived at bullfighting at a time when Spain was depressed, when the economy was doing badly," said Carlos Crivell, who covers bullfighting for daily newspaper El Mundo. "He lifted spirits, not so much bullfighting fans but the people in general, because they saw in him a matador of humble origins, very poor, who became very important because he earned a lot of money."

Benitez was the best paid matador of his era, according to Crivell. He added that Benitez was the first matador to earn over a million pesetas for each bullfight at Seville's prestigious arena - a small fortune in even the inflation-prone former Spanish currency. "Everyone who understands bullfighting recognizes that he was a revolutionary, who dominated the arena with his popularity as well as his bullfighting skills, especially his ability to fight bulls using his left hand," Crivell said. The younger El Cordobes also has an exciting style and his own public following, but "his popularity is based more on the gossip press than his bullfighting qualities," he added. — AFP

KASHMIR 'FEARLESS MOBS' HELP MILITANTS ESCAPE

By Parvaiz Bukhari

In a graveyard at his school in Indian Kashmir, principal Ghulam Ahmed Bhat stares sadly at a mound of freshly dug earth after another former pupil was killed in the region's conflict. University student Shaista Hameed was caught in crossfire during a gun battle between soldiers and militants in February, after she joined scores of residents who poured onto the streets to help the rebels escape. Senior police officers say locals' efforts to help militants - by putting themselves in harm's way - is a worrying recent development in the decades-long insurgency in the disputed Himalayan territory.

"She had been one of the brightest students of the school," Bhat said of the 22-year-old, whose grave is adorned with flowers in Kakapora town in the Kashmir Valley. Hundreds of mainly angry youth have converged in recent months on the scene of gun battles that regularly erupt between government forces and militants opposed to Indian rule of the Muslim-majority region.

Often pelting stones and hurling abuse, they attempt to distract security forces to help trapped rebels escape their cordon. In several instances they have succeeded, security officials say. Three people including Hameed have been killed and scores injured. "It becomes an extremely difficult task dealing with humongous mobs turning up during our counter-insurgency operations," Nalin Prabhat, inspector general of the paramilitary Central Reserve Police Force, told AFP. "They try to take away our actual focus at hand which is to neutralize the terrorists."

Indian forces have been battling militants wanting independence or a merger of the territory with Pakistan since an armed insurgency erupted in 1989.

Tens of thousands of people, mainly civilians, have been killed. Violence has sharply declined in recent years following a major crackdown by the hundreds of thousands of forces deployed in the region.

But mass protests were staged in 2008 through 2010 against Indian rule. Today, about 200 militants, mostly locals, are active across Indian Kashmir, down from several



In this photograph taken on April 6, 2016, Kashmiri villagers gather during the funeral of suspected militant Bilal Ahmed Bhat in the village of Karimabad in Pulwama district, south of Srinagar. — AFP

thousand in the 1990s, according to security officials.

'Huge New Challenge'

A recent uptick in militant attacks has galvanized frustrated young Kashmiris, many of whom deeply resent the military's presence, and regularly hear allegations of rights abuses and repression, political historian Siddiq Wahid said. "How can we forget what has been done to generations of Kashmiri people?" said a student in Kakapora taking part in the street actions. Last Tuesday, angry residents in northern Handwara stormed an army bunker after a soldier was accused of molesting a local girl. Soldiers fired into the crowd, leaving three people dead, while two others have been killed in protests against the firing in recent days. Bhat said it is difficult to stop his former students

taking part in the distraction efforts or even joining the militants' ranks. Three ex-students turned rebels are also buried in the graveyard on the school's grounds. "The militants may be underground but everyone knows who they are. They (locals) identify with them and their cause. They choose to be a part of fighting all this (through street action)," he said.

In March, a group of nine heavily armed rebels were trapped in an open field not far from Kakapora as troops moved in. Hundreds of villagers armed with stones descended on the field, as word quickly spread.

"Yes, it is a huge new challenge," Prabhat said, confirming the incident. He said residents' efforts to thwart security operations were being orchestrated by "stooges and agents of Pakistan".

Government forces have been forced to

change their counter-insurgency operations, becoming even more clandestine, to avoid tipping off villagers and causing civilian casualties, he added. "We are now having to fight two-way battles, with the armed militants on one hand and fearless mobs on the other," another senior police officer told AFP on condition of anonymity. A month before the March incident, police and the army ordered residents within a two-kilometre radius to stay indoors during gun battles.

On the day Hameed died, local rebel Adil Ashraf was killed in the gunfight. "My sons left home to safeguard their self-respect and fight for the nation," Ashraf's mother Rafiq, whose second son is also a militant, told AFP. "Stones are the people's weapon," she said, referring proudly to the support her sons have received from locals. — AFP

SCHUMACHER JNR FOURTH AS MAWSON CLAIMS SECOND WIN

BERLIN: Mick Schumacher again missed out on a podium place with another fourth place in the second round of Germany's Formula 4 races at Oschersleben yesterday. The 17-year-old son of Formula One legend Michael Schumacher came within 0.539 seconds of third having also had to settle for fourth by a similarly narrow margin in Saturday's opening race of the new season. Australia's Joey Mawson, 20, who won Saturday's first race, claimed his second victory even though Sunday morning's race got off to a chaotic start with three safety car phases. The race had to be restarted and was reduced from 30 laps following a serious accident in the opening circuit as Mawson covered the 15 laps in 41:40.630 minutes. "It's a perfect start to the new season. I am very happy. It's great to already have two victories in the bag on the first weekend of the season," said Mawson, who drives for Van Amersfoort Racing. Schumacher Jnr, who races for the Italian Prema Power team, has a last chance to get on the podium in yesterday afternoon's final race on the Oschersleben circuit, near Hannover. Schumacher will race in both the German and Italian competitions in 2016. —AFP

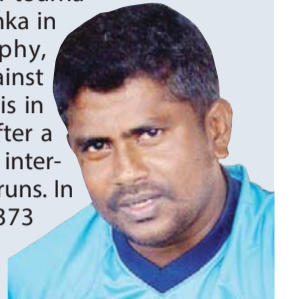


SIX-TIME WORLD SNOOKER CHAMPION DAVIS RETIRES

LONDON: Six-time world snooker champion Steve Davis announced his retirement from the sport yesterday. The 58-year-old Englishman lost to Fergal O'Brien in the first round of qualifying for this year's World Championship and later decided that would be his final competitive match. "That was my last match as a professional," Davis told the BBC. "So I'm calling it a day. I phoned up Barry (Hearn, his long-time manager) and told him it was on my mind to enter the World Championship and make that the last. I said, 'Barry, I think it's time to retire from professional snooker.' "And he said, 'Steve, you retired 10 years ago we just didn't have the heart to tell you,'" added Davis, who won the last of his world titles in 1989. Yesterday saw Davis take a bow in front of spectators at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield, northern England, the venue for all his world title successes and where this year's edition is ongoing, with the World Championship trophy. —AFP

SRI LANKA'S HERATH QUILTS ODI AND T20

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan veteran bowler Rangana Herath yesterday announced his retirement from the two shortest forms of cricket, saying he wanted to focus on Test matches. "Every cricketer has to stop at the right time," Herath said in a statement issued through Sri Lanka Cricket. "I feel it's time to make room for fresh talent to be groomed with the 2019 World Cup in view." The 38-year-old, left-arm off spinner said Test cricket was his "personal passion," on which he wanted to concentrate for the remainder of his playing career. Herath has suffered from knee injuries in recent years and has largely only played limited-overs cricket at the major tournaments. Herath was one of the stand-outs for Sri Lanka in 2014 when they lifted the World Twenty20 trophy, including taking five for three in the semi-final against New Zealand. But Sri Lanka failed to reach the semis in the just finished 2016 edition of the tournament after a lacklustre campaign. Herath has played 71 one-day internationals, claiming 74 wickets and conceding 2,362 runs. In the Twenty20 form, he has taken 18 wickets for 373 runs in 17 matches. —AFP



Group photo of shooters with officials.



Group photo of female shooters with officials

LATE SHEIKH FAISAL AL-DUAIJ AL-SABAH CUP TOURNEY CONCLUDES

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Olympic Shooting Complex saw the conclusion of the late Sheikh Faisal Al-Duaij Al-Sabah Cup tournament, in which 90 shooters of both genders participated.

The closing ceremony was attended by President of Kuwait and Arab Shooting Federations, Engineer Duaij Khalaf Al-Otaibi, Sheikh Sabah Faisal Al-Sabah, and

Secretary General of Arab and Kuwait Shooting Federations Obaid Munahi Al-Osaimi.

In his speech Al-Osaimi said the tournament carries the name of a dear person for the shooting community, as he participated in the first national shooting team and made the first international shooting achievement for Kuwait. He, following liberation, with his personal efforts established the first Olympic shooting range, allowing

Kuwaiti youth to practice this noble sport according to Olympic rules.

Al-Osaimi thanked the family of the late Sheikh Faisal Al-Duaij Al-Sabah for their generous support of Kuwait shooting and encouraging outstanding youth.

Results of the tournament are as follows: Double trap - men: Jarrah Al-Shuwaier, Ahmad Al-Afasi, Hamad Al-Afasi. Skeet - men: Saud Habib, Nasser Al-Daihani, Abdallah Al-Rashidi.

Skeet - women: Sheikh Al-Rashidi, Iman Al-Shamma, Fatima Al-Zaabi.

Trap - men: Abdelrahman Al-Faihan, Khid Al-Mudhaf, Tami Al-Rashidi.

Trap - women: Shahad Al-Hawal, Sarah Al-Aawal, Ismaa Al-Qatami.

Skeet - juniors: Hamad Al-Ablani, Ahmad Al-Azmi, Hamad Al-Khalidi.

Trap - juniors: Mohammad Al-Hamli, Fares Al-Mutairi, Khalid Al-Murad.

Engineer Duaij Khalaf Al-Otaibi, spoke to

journalists following the ceremony, and said Kuwait Shooting Sports Club continues its activities as usual at the Arab and international levels. He said this tournament is an important one and carries the name of one of the founders of the club.

Al-Otaibi said that Kuwait national team participated in the Arab championship that was held in Egypt, where Kuwait won several medals. He said most Arab countries participated.



Eng. Duaij Al-Otaibi hands a memento.



Shahad Al-Hawal and Sheikh Al-Rashidi.



Shooter Saud Habeeb with his medal and trophy.

TOULOUSE DOWN RACING 92 AS MONTPELLIER END STADE HOODOO

PARIS: Toulouse boosted their chances of making the end-of-season play-offs with a commanding 14-3 win over Racing 92 yesterday. Racing, who rested New Zealand legend Dan Carter for the trip south, appeared to be suffering a hangover from their European Champions Cup victory over defending champions Toulon last weekend and never appeared to get going. The defeat left them fourth and in danger of missing out on a top two spot and by into the play-off semi-finals after Montpellier recorded their first ever

Top 14 win over defending champions Stade Français. Their 26-20 victory moved them back a point above Toulon into second, seven points behind leaders Clermont but four points ahead of Racing. Fly-half Benjamin Dambielle kicked Racing into an early lead at the Ernest-Wallon stadium but Toulouse took control with a try from Yacouba Camara and then a penalty try just before the break, both being converted by scrum-half Sebastien Bezy. The second period was scoreless but Toulouse pushed hard for the

third try that would have earned them an attacking bonus, while Racing never seriously threatened the home side's tryline. In Paris, Jake White's team earned a seventh consecutive league triumph, against a side that has struggled this season and is currently lying 12th having lost 14 of 21 games so far.

ATTACKING BONUS POINT

Since the creation of the Top 14 in 2005, Montpellier had lost nine times in the French capital, shipping an average of 35 points, but that changed at the Stade Jean Bouin without the visitors being in particularly brilliant form. "They are champions now, they won that tournament last year. We'd never won before against Stade Français in Paris since 2005," said White, who nonetheless lamented the loss of an attacking bonus point due to Stade's last minute try. "I'm disappointed with the last action but if you'd have asked everyone before the match if they'd have been happy with the win, they'd have said yes." Montpellier fly-half Ben Lucas traded two first-half penalties with Stade counterpart Jules Plisson, visiting hooker Mickael Ivaldi scoring the half's sole try.

Fiji flanker Akapusi Qera extended Montpellier's lead in the second period with a second try off the back of another strong rolling maul. Plisson scored three more penalties in an error-free kicking display to one from Benoit Pailhaguet to keep Stade in the game. —AFP



TOULOUSE: Toulouse's French number eight Gillian Galan (C) and Toulouse's French hooker Christopher Tolofua fight for the ball with Racing's Racing Metro 92 Welsh scrum-half Mike Phillips and Racing Metro 92 South African flanker Bernard Le Roux during the French Top 14 rugby union match Toulouse vs Racing Metro 92 yesterday at the municipal stadium in Toulouse, southern France. — AFP

KENYA STUN FIJI TO WIN SINGAPORE SEVENS TITLE

SINGAPORE: Kenya pulled off a stunning 30-7 upset victory over Fiji in the final of the Singapore Sevens yesterday to capture their first World Series event.

The East Africans, who had twice finished runner-up in tournaments, blew the Fijians off the park with four unanswered tries in the first half, including two by Collins Injera.

They added two more in the second half while the South Pacific Islanders only managed a consolation touchdown from Jerry Tuwai. Despite being weary after winning in Hong Kong last week and missing a handful of their top players, Fiji were still overwhelming favourites to win the final at Singapore's National Stadium because of their comeback powers. In yesterday's quarter-final Fiji scored two tries in the last minute to overturn a nine-point deficit and beat Australia 19-14. Then they scored another two tries in the last minute to defeat South Africa 26-21 in the semis.

Kenya also had to work hard to reach just their third final, and the first since 2013, with Injera landing a 40-metre drop goal penalty after the siren for a 15-12 win over Argentina in the semis. But they saved their best for the decider.

Oscar Ayodi scored in the first minute then Injera crossed twice and Samuel Oliech once to give Kenya a commanding 20-0 lead at halftime. Fiji threatened to fight back when Tuwai scored under the posts shortly after the re-start, but tries from replacements Nelson Oyoo and Frank Wanyama sealed the upset.

Despite the shock loss, Fiji still extended their lead at the top of the series standings to eight points after eight of the 10 rounds. South Africa leapfrogged New Zealand into second spot after beating Argentina 28-0 in the third-place playoff while the Kiwis finished sixth overall in the tournament.

"We can only look at the mistakes we've made and learn from them. I know it's tough for the boys because that's five tournaments we've been on the wrong end of a close call," South

Africa coach Neil Powell told AFP after his team's defeat in the semis.

"Sometimes you need a bit of motivation just to show you're doing the right things but I can assure you we're on the right track and the boys know it's just one or two mistakes, one or two bounces of the ball, and it could be different."

Samoa beat New Zealand 26-21 in the Plate final while Scotland defeated the United States 14-10 in the Bowl final and Russia downed Wales 24-7 in the Shield final. — AFP



LANGFORD: New Zealand (black) vs Spain (red) action on the first day of HSBC World Rugby Women's Sevens Series, in Langford, BC, on Saturday. — AFP

VETTEL SLAMS KYVAT'S 'SUICIDAL' CHINA DRIVE

SHANGHAI: Sebastian Vettel labelled Red Bull's Daniil Kvyat "a madman" after a first-corner clash between them and Vettel's Ferrari team-mate Kimi Raikkonen at the Chinese Grand Prix yesterday. Kvyat's aggressive charge into turn one where the Ferraris were already wheel-to-wheel forced Vettel to take evasive action, the German hitting Raikkonen, who had to pit to repair damage to his car.

Vettel was left languishing near the back after the clash but fought back to

overtake Kvyat in the final stint and finish second behind Nico Rosberg's Mercedes. "You came like a torpedo," the German raged at Kvyat, confronting his rival as they walked to the podium. "If I'd kept going on the same line, we'd have crashed. You were lucky this time," Vettel added, jabbing his finger in the direction of Kvyat, who simply shrugged: "That's racing." Vettel reacted angrily after his brush with disaster, accusing Kvyat for driving "like a madman" in a furious rant over the team radio.

"Kvyat's attack was suicidal," he fumed before apologising for bumping into Raikkonen. "Massive apologies to the team. I feel very, very sorry about Kimi but there was no way out!"

Vettel and Kvyat continued to exchange heated words on the podium as Rosberg made his victory speech, the latter showing little remorse when asked about the incident.

"You see a gap, you go for it," said the Russian. "Yeah, it was a risky move, I agree with Seb. But this kind of move

can bring you podiums. "He's on the podium, I'm on the podium, it's fine," he added. "I will keep on risking like this, and I hope he respects that." Vettel had calmed down a little at the official post-race interview. "I was very lucky to continue because it was a big hit with Kimi," said the four-time world champion. "It's a shame because you don't want the same colour cars touching." Raikkonen cut a forlorn figure after a battling fifth-place finish. "Obviously I got hit and it was a disaster after that," said the Finn. "I just

had to make the best of it and at least we got some points." Team boss Maurizio Arrivabene bemoaned Ferrari's latest setback after reliability problems in the season's first two races in Australia and Bahrain, but refused to blame Kvyat.

"It was an accident," he said. "Pointing the finger at somebody is not correct. This is racing, not Monopoly. I think in normal circumstances we would have had a very, very good chance to win the race but when things like this happen, you have to accept it." —AFP

OLYMPICS SHOULD BE MIXED MATCHPLAY EVENT: REID

LONDON: European Solheim Cup player Melissa Reid believes Olympic organisers missed a trick by not opting for a mixed matchplay event when golf returns to the Games in August following a 112-year absence. The 28-year-old Briton says the players would have preferred a different format to the separate men's and women's 72-hole strokeplay competitions scheduled for Rio de Janeiro.

"I just wish they would have done it in a matchplay situation," Reid told Reuters in an interview held at Woburn, home of the Ricoh Women's British Open from July 28-31. "If it all goes well this year hopefully they will think about re-doing the format."

"Us players would love to play with the guys and to have something like a mixed matchplay would be amazing and I know that certainly all the players feel that," Reid, a member of the European team narrowly beaten by the United States at the Solheim Cup in Germany last year, is nonetheless excited at the prospect of going for gold in Rio. First, though, she needs to concentrate on working her way up the rankings. Each team will contain two players and Reid, who is 92nd in the world, needs to overhaul 70th-placed Catriona Matthew in order to replicate her Solheim pairing with fellow Englishwoman Charley Hull (25) in Britain's Games lineup.

GOLD MEDAL

"I'd love to be a part of the Olympics," said the part-time snowboarder and soccer player. "I pride myself on being a bit of an athlete and to be part of something as special as the Olympics would be the highlight of my career."

"I'm going to have to play quite well in the next few tournaments to give myself an opportunity to get in. I have to try and overtake Catriona but it would be amazing to be a part of the Olympic village and

everything like that." Reid, a five-times winner on the Ladies European Tour, never imagined as a youngster that there might one day be a chance to drape a gold medal around her neck.

"Growing up I never thought about the Olympics, it was all about winning British Opens and U.S. Opens," she said. "To now have that opportunity is something that certainly drives you. It's very, very exciting."

Reid said golf's Olympic comeback could be just the boost the game needs. "Look what it has done to cycling, athletics, diving," she added. "If we have a successful Olympics it would be great for our sport."

"We need to get more young kids, and more adults as well, involved in the game. I feel that golf isn't peaking as much as it should," said Reid.

"It's a fantastic sport for people of all ages to be part of and hopefully the Olympics will get people watching who don't normally watch it and think, 'I'll give that a go'."

Reid, who won last year's Turkish Airlines Open, wants to see women's sport given more international prominence. "Women's golf is moving in the right direction, women's sport in general is moving in the right direction, but it's not going as quickly as we'd like," she said.

"I think all women's sport, cricket, rugby, football ... I feel for it to excel the way everyone wants it to, we need to integrate together. "We need to invite cricket, rugby, football, girls to golf pro-ams, they need to invite us to watch them play and maybe have a little knockabout with them and really promote women's sport as a whole rather than just individual sports," added Reid. "That is happening a lot more than it used to. We did some work with the England cricket girls last year which was great for both sides. That's the way women's sport needs to be approached to get the exposure that it needs." — Reuters



SHANGHAI: Mercedes AMG Petronas F1 Team's German driver Nico Rosberg (R) celebrates on the podium after winning the Formula One Chinese Grand Prix as second-placed Ferrari driver Sebastian Vettel (L) of Germany congratulates him in Shanghai yesterday. — AFP

ROSBERG WINS WILD CHINESE GP FOR SIXTH STRAIGHT VICTORY

SHANGHAI: Nico Rosberg of Mercedes escaped unscathed from a wild first lap at the Chinese Grand Prix yesterday, and then showed why he's the driver to beat this year in Formula One. Rosberg started on pole position and led nearly the entire race by a wide margin to extend his perfect start to the season with a third consecutive win - and his sixth straight dating back to last season.

He becomes just the fourth driver in F1 history to win six straight races, joining Sebastian Vettel, Michael Schumacher and Alberto Ascari. Vettel, who collided with Ferrari teammate Kimi Raikkonen at the first corner of the chaotic opening lap, finished 37.7 seconds behind Rosberg in second place, while Red Bull's Daniil Kvyat used an aggressive race strategy to take third - only the second podium of the 21-year-old's career. Every driver who has started an F1 season with three straight wins has gone on to win the title that year. Rosberg now has a 36-point lead over Mercedes teammate and reigning world champion Lewis Hamilton in the drivers' standings, but he's not looking too far ahead yet. "It's the longest season in F1 history. We have 21 races, so that's 18 to go," Rosberg said.

"Of course, I'm happy with the way it's gone and I'm feeling good and the car is there, but I don't want to say more than that."

"Lewis is not many points behind ... and he's as focused and motivated as ever." It was a weekend to forget for Hamilton, a four-time winner at the Shanghai circuit. First, he got a five-place grid penalty for an early gearbox change and then he was forced to start the race in the back row after an engine problem on Saturday prevented him from setting a time in qualifying. To make matters worse, he also got tangled up in the first-corner accident between Vettel and Raikkonen on Sunday, losing a front wing that brought the first of an extraordinary five pit stops in the race and a seventh-place finish.

A CREDITABLE SECOND WIN

"Of course, it's not a great feeling," Hamilton said. "But I have the utmost confidence in this team. I know that we will recover from this at some point."

Vettel worked his way through the field after the collision by running his first 16 laps on super-soft tires to claim a creditable second.

"Disappointed that I made contact in lap one. Lucky that the car was still intact," Vettel said. "We had a different strategy from most people with the super-soft tire, which helped me to clear the traffic and make progress. It was good fun - a lot of cars. I didn't count but it felt like a lot." Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo led the race initially after getting off the line better than Rosberg, but he suffered a puncture on lap three and finished fourth for the third straight race. Raikkonen finished fifth after having been knocked to the back of the field by the collision with Vettel.

"(Vettel) didn't try to do that on purpose," Raikkonen said. "It wasn't ideal for me or the team, but sometimes it goes like that, unfortunately. I paid a price for it - it was a disaster after that." The collision came when Kvyat made an aggressive pass on the inside of Vettel, causing the German to swerve and hit Raikkonen on the outside. An angry Vettel fumed on his radio, "Kvyat's attack was suicidal, there was no way he could have made the corner with that speed."

When Raikkonen returned to the track,

Sauber's Felipe Nasr swerved to avoid him and collided with Hamilton, dislodging the front wing of his Mercedes, which briefly got trapped beneath his car.

Vettel exchanged angry words with Kvyat after the race, but the Russian was unapologetic. "It was a risky move, of course," Kvyat said. "But these kinds of moves can bring you a podium, so I'm on the podium, (Vettel's) on the podium, it's fine. I will keep on risking like this and everyone should expect that."

Hamilton also methodically moved his way up through the field after the early setback, but he was unable to hold off Ricciardo and Raikkonen as both drivers passed him late in the race. He also couldn't overtake Williams driver Felipe Massa, who held him off for sixth place. Max Verstappen and Carlos Sainz took eighth and ninth place, respectively, for Toro Rosso, while Williams driver Valtteri Bottas finished 10th. —AP



SINGAPORE: Sony Dwi Kuncoro of Indonesia returns a shot to Son Wan Ho of South Korea during the men's singles final match at the Singapore Open Badminton championship yesterday in Singapore. —AP

KUNCORO, RATCHANOK WIN SINGAPORE OPEN

SINGAPORE: Indonesia's Sony Dwi Kuncoro beat Korean Son Wan-Ho to win the Singapore Open yesterday as Thailand's Ratchanok Intanon also triumphed, becoming the world's top female shuttler in the process. The unfancied Kuncoro, who stunned two-time Olympic champion Lin Dan in the semi-finals, took the first set 21-16. But some bad decision making cost the 31-year-old dearly when he succumbed 13-21 in the second set. Recovering his composure, the 2004 Olympic Games bronze medalist claimed the deciding set 21-14. Kuncoro, ranked 56th in the world, said he was surprised by his fairy tale run.

"It's really unexpected that I won. It's such a big achievement to pass the qualifiers and eventually win this tournament," he said. "I just enjoyed today's game and was able to play well." This is Kuncoro's second title in the city-state after winning the tournament in 2010. In the women's singles, Thai star Ratchanok beat defending champion Sun Yu of China to claim her third successive Superseries win in as many weeks after triumphs in India and Malaysia.

Ratchanok, the 2013 world champion, will displace Spain's Carolina Marin as number one when the weekly world rankings are updated Thursday. Despite losing 18-21 in the first set as the lanky Sun Yu put her superior reach to better use, Ratchanok coasted to a 21-11 victory in the second.

She clinched the third set 21-14 as her opponent appeared rattled by several errors and a yellow card shown by the match referee. "I think I performed better in the first set but I got nervous during the last two," Sun Yu, ranked 14th in the world, told reporters after the match.

Ratchanok, who has now established herself as one of the favourites for Olympic gold, said the win would give her a boost for Rio. "Now I am more confident to get a gold at the

Olympic games," she said. "I thought that today would not be my day and she was playing well. My body was tired from the past few weeks but I just wanted to do my best." Top-ranked players were scalped early on in the tournament. On Friday world number ones Chen Long of China and Carolina Marin of Spain crashed out in the quarter-finals, unceremoniously shown the door by young upstarts. Chen fell to Hong Kong's 21-year-old Angus Ng, while Marin succumbed in three sets to Japan's Akane Yamaguchi.

Lin Dan became the latest casualty on Saturday when he suffered a stunning semi-final defeat at the hands of eventual winner Kuncoro. —AFP



SINGAPORE: Ratchanok Intanon of Thailand poses for the media after winning the women's singles final against Sun Yu of China at the Singapore Open badminton tournament in Singapore yesterday. — AFP

LEE RALLIES TO CAPTURE LOTTE CHAMPIONSHIP

LOS ANGELES: Australian teenager Min-Jee Lee saved her best for last Saturday by fashioning a 10-shot improvement in the fourth round to claim her second career LPGA Tour victory. The 19-year-old from Perth closed with a bogey free eight-under par 64, just 24 hours after shooting a two-over 74 at the Lotte Championship. "I had a not-so-great round yesterday," Lee said. "I just came out with a fresh mindset." She finished at 16-under 272 to beat South Korea's Chun In-Gee and American Katie Burnett by one stroke at the Kapolei, Hawaii golf course. Burnett was the lone American golfer in the top six. Thailand's Moriya Jutanugarn, 21, finished in sole possession of fourth at 14-under after firing a 68 on Saturday. Jan Su-Yeon of South Korea rounded out the top five at 13 under after posting a final-round 71.

Lee chipped in for eagle on the par-five 13th hole and had six birdies during a seven-hole run that launched her up the leaderboard. She rolled in a birdie putt on the par-four 17th hole and saved par with an up and down from off the green at No. 18 to claim her second North American win to go with a victory at the 2015 Kingsmill Championship. "I eagled the 13th hole and

that was kind of the turning point," Lee said.

I made that eagle then followed it with two birdies." Lee became the fifth player to win twice before her 20th birthday, joining Lydia Ko, Lexi Thompson, Marlene Hagge and Sandra Haynie. She also finished in the top 10 (tied for ninth) at last year's Women's British Open. The red-hot Chun could have finished in a tie at the top but missed a 20-foot birdie putt on No. 18. "It had a chance to go in but it was a very tricky green," Chun said. The defending U.S. Women's Open champion Chun had six birdies en route to a 67 as she finished runner-up in just her second start after a freak collision with a suitcase that sidelined her for a month. Chun was riding the escalator at Singapore's Changi Airport when she was struck by the hard cased suitcase that got away from the father of fellow South Korean Jang Ha-Na. She sat out with an injured back but tied for second two weeks ago in her return. The 26-year-old Burnett was unable to hold on to the lead and finished with a 70. Her undoing was a three-putt bogey on the par-three 16th hole and missed birdie putts on 17 and 18. Ko, the top-ranked women's player in the world, closed with a 69 to tie for 23rd at five-under, her worst finish this year. — AFP



KAPOLEI: Minjee Lee (L) of Australia has water dumped on her by Haru Nomura (C) of Japan and Sei Young Kim (R) of South Korea after Minjee won the LPGA LOTTE Championship Presented By Hershey at Ko Olina Golf Club Saturday in Kapolei, Hawaii. — AFP

BELOW-STRENGTH US BEAT AUSTRALIA IN FED CUP

BRISBANE: A below-strength United States booked a place in the Fed Cup World Group in 2017 when Coco Vandeweghe came from a set down to beat Australia's Samantha Stosur yesterday. Vandeweghe's 2-6, 7-5, 6-4 win in the first of the reverse singles gave the Americans an unassailable 3-0 lead in their World Group play-off match on Pat Rafter Arena in Brisbane.

The Americans later made it a clean sweep when Vandeweghe teamed with Bethanie Mattek-Sands to down Australian pair Daria Gavrilova and Arina Rodionova 6-1, 6-4 in the doubles.

The US came to Australia without their three best players, Serena and Venus Williams, and Sloane Stephens, but won both opening singles matches on Saturday as Madison Keys downed Gavrilova and Christina McHale outlasted Stosur. US captain Mary Joe Fernandez said the American team had stepped up in the absence of the Williams sisters and Stephens.

"It's a team effort and everybody worked really hard all week with each other, supporting each other," Fernandez said. Fernandez said it was important to give some of the lower-ranked players experience in the Fed Cup environment.

"The more you put yourself in these positions, the more comfortable you get

in them," she said. "Experience helps so it's good to put everybody out there as much as possible so when that pressure moment comes they're ready." Vandeweghe, who stepped in for Keys in the first of the reverse singles on Sunday, looked in big trouble early as Stosur raced through the first set in only 28 minutes then went up 2-0 in the second. But the American broke back to get the set back on serve, then began to find her range with both her serves and groundstrokes. She broke Stosur in the 11th game of the second set to level the match, then broke the Australian at the start of the third to gain the vital advantage.

Stosur refused to give in and battled hard to get back into the match. However, Vandeweghe kept her nerve and, despite facing two break points when serving for the match, the American held on to win in two hours, 18 minutes and clinch the tie for the visitors.

Stosur denied she had felt the pressure of leading a young and inexperienced Australian team. "I've been in that position for a while," she said. "It's not really anything new. If that's there, you want to come through it. I've been able to do that many, many times. Unfortunately, this weekend I came up a little bit short." — AFP



BRISBANE: Bethanie Mattek Sands (R) and Coco Vandeweghe of the US embrace following their victory against Daria Gavrilova and Arina Rodionova of Australia in their women's doubles match at the Federation Cup World Group play-off tennis tournament in Brisbane yesterday. — AFP



ADIDAS' MOST ICONIC BOOT GETS AN UPDATE WITH THE COPA SL

KUWAIT: Football's most iconic boot has been brought into the 21st century with the release of the COPA SL, the latest product from the Limited Collection - a range of exclusive boots released in limited quantities to show adidas' flair, innovation and creative spirit.

Worn by some of the games most decorated players - including Franz Beckenbauer and Franco Baresi - the COPA Mundial graced some of football's biggest stages following its release in 1982. From European Cups to World Cups, the COPA Mundial was the boot of choice for the world's greatest players in the 80's and 90's and the perfect choice of boot to pay homage to in adidas' latest release from the Limited Collection.

The COPA SL has been stripped back to its lightest form whilst still keeping some of the design elements that creat-

ed the iconic boot. Synthetic materials replace the black leather to offer a more lightweight, streamlined look and feel, whilst still paying homage to the original model. When speaking about the creation of the boot, Sam Handy, VP of design, said: "When we looked at recreating a classic boot, the COPA Mundial was the stand out option. The brand has a huge depth of heritage in our back catalogues but this is the boot that stood out above the rest. Redeveloping this classic icon was a rewarding project that allowed us to add a modern take on a true football icon. We're fiercely proud of the Mundial but wanted to inject a new twist on the boot - something I can proudly say we've achieved with the COPA SL."

The COPA SL will be available to purchase in limited quantities from today.



PHILADELPHIA: Bryce Harper #34 of the Washington Nationals swings at a pitch in the seventh inning during a game against the Philadelphia Phillies at Citizens Bank Park on Saturday in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Nationals won 8-1. — AFP

NATIONALS WIN AT PHILLIES TO IMPROVE TO 9-1

PHILADELPHIA: Max Scherzer threw seven impressive innings and hit a two-run double, Bryce Harper hit another homer and the Washington Nationals beat the Philadelphia Phillies 8-1 Saturday night. The Nationals are off to a 9-1 start, best in franchise history. Scherzer (2-0) allowed one run and five hits, striking out seven. Harper connected in the fifth, sending a deep drive out to right for his fifth homer. The reigning NL MVP has gone deep in his last five games in Philadelphia, dating to last year. Aaron Nola (0-2) was the second Phillies starter roughed up by the Nationals in two games. He gave up seven runs and seven hits in five innings.

TIGERS 5, ASTROS 3

Jarrod Saltalamacchia hit a go-ahead two-run homer in the sixth inning and Detroit rallied for a win over Houston. Detroit trailed 3-0 after George Springer and Tyler White both homered off Justin Verlander (1-1) in the first inning. Detroit scored a run in the second and cut the lead to 1 in the fifth when White was charged with an error after a throw busted through the webbing of his glove, allowing another run to score. There was one out in the sixth when Saltalamacchia connected against Collin McHugh (1-2), launching his two-strike shot off the foul pole in right field to make it 4-3. Victor Martinez added an insurance run with an RBI double in the ninth inning.

RANGERS 8, ORIOLES 4

Mitch Moreland's go-ahead double off the right-field fence and Rougned Odor's two-run single highlighted a six-run seventh inning, leading Texas to a victory over Baltimore. Delino DeShields and Nomar Mazara each had three hits for the Rangers. Mazara, promoted from Triple-A Round Rock last week, has two three-hit games in seven starts. Keone Kela (1-0), who turned 23 on Saturday, worked a scoreless seventh inning in relief, striking out two and walking one. The Rangers' big seventh inning helped them overcome solo home runs by Manny Machado, Adam Jones and Chris Davis, who increased the Orioles' major league-leading homer total to 23. A.J. McFarland (0-1) took the loss after retiring only one of the four batters he faced in relief of starter Yovani Gallardo.

CUBS 6, ROCKIES 2

Jake Arrieta threw eight scoreless innings and Chicago hit three home runs to beat Colorado. Arrieta (3-0), the reigning NL Cy Young winner, struck out eight and allowed five hits in his home debut. He has not allowed a run in his last 48 2/3 innings at Wrigley Field. Dexter Fowler hit a three-run homer in the seventh, and Anthony Rizzo and Jorge Soler hit back-to-back shots in the fourth. The Cubs have won nine of 11 for their best start since they went 10-1 in 1969. The Rockies saw their three-game winning streak end. Carlos Gonzalez hit a two-run home run, his fourth, off Travis Wood in the ninth. Christian Bergman (0-2) matched a career high of seven strikeouts and allowed two runs in five innings in his first start of the season.

PIRATES 5, BREWERS 0

Andrew McCutchen hit his first home run of the season and Jon Niese combined with two relievers on a three-hitter as Pittsburgh blanked Milwaukee to end its four-game losing streak. McCutchen's solo shot off Taylor Jungmann in the fifth inning increased the Pirates' lead to 40 after they scored three runs in the fourth. The drive to left field came in the star center fielder's 54th plate appearance. McCutchen was so happy that he stopped in front of dugout after rounding the bases, broke into a big smile and raised his hands skyward. Niese (2-1) won his second straight start, giving up all three hits while walking three and striking out three in seven innings. Jungmann (0-2) had his road woes continue as he allowed four runs and six hits in six innings.

BRAVES 6, MARLINS 4

Nick Markakis drove in three runs with three hits and Atlanta won for the second consecutive night after losing their first nine games, beating Miami. The Braves came to Miami mired in their worst start since 1988, but they're now 27-12 at Marlins Park and will try for a three-game sweep yesterday. Miami fell to 0-4 at home under first-year manager Don Mattingly. Markakis put the Braves ahead to stay in the fourth when he drove in a run with his eighth double, most in the majors. He led off the game with a single and hit

a two-out, two-run single in the second. Adeiny Hechavarria and Justin Bour each hit his first homer off Bud Norris (1-2), who allowed four runs in 5 1/3 innings. Tom Koehler (0-2) lasted only 3 2/3 innings and allowed nine hits and six runs.

RAYS 7, WHITE SOX 2

Brandon Guyer homered to end Tampa Bay's scoreless drought, Brad Miller added a two-run shot and the Rays stopped Chicago's five-game winning streak. Desmond Jennings also hit his first home run of the year for Tampa Bay, and Erasmo Ramirez pitched 5 2/3 shutout innings. In his first start of the season, Ramirez (2-0) gave up three hits and no walks while striking out four, becoming the first Rays starter to win in 2016. Guyer's home run off Chicago starter John Danks in the third halted Tampa Bay's streak of 21 scoreless innings. Miller's two-run drive in the fourth gave the Rays a 4-0 lead after an RBI single by Steven Souza Jr. Evan Longoria singled home a run in the seventh.

INDIANS 7, METS 5

Jason Kipnis and Cleveland handed New York's Matt Harvey his third straight loss to begin the season. Josh Tomlin pitched five solid innings for Cleveland after allowing a home run to the first batter he faced this season. Kipnis had an RBI double off Harvey and scored twice, and Mike Napoli drove in two runs. Harvey (0-3) retired his first 13 batters before Cleveland scored twice in the fifth. The Indians added three runs in the sixth, and Harvey was charged with five runs in 5 2/3 innings. Jose Ramirez tied the game with a double and scored on Juan Uribe's RBI single. Kipnis' run-scoring double and RBI singles by Napoli and Yan Gomes in the sixth finished Harvey.

REDS 9, CARDINALS 8

Brandon Phillips, Zack Cozart and Jay Bruce had two RBIs apiece for Cincinnati, which erased an early four-run deficit against St. Louis ace Adam Wainwright in a victory. Stephen Piscotty had four RBIs for St. Louis, and his three-run homer made it 4-0 in the second. J.J. Hoover allowed a two-run homer to Brandon Moss before finishing for his first save. Wainwright (0-2) retired his first eight before Reds starter Brandon Finnegan (1-0) singled with two outs in the third. The two-time 20-game winner was charged with seven runs in 5 1/3 innings and has struggled mightily with an 8.27 ERA after missing most of 2015 with a torn left Achilles.

MARINERS 3, YANKEES 2

Felix Hernandez looked uncomfortable all afternoon but overcame a career high-tying six walks, and Seattle held off New York for a third straight win. The Yankees lost their fourth in a row when Chase Headley grounded out with runners on second and third to end it, leaving them 0 for 24 with runners in scoring position during the first two games of the series. Alex Rodriguez struck out three times and the 40-year-old heard boos as his hitless slump reached 19 at-bats. Hernandez (1-1) tied Randy Johnson's team record for career strikeouts, but seemed out of sorts throughout his five innings. The ace constantly pawed the rubber, scuffed the mound and tugged his jersey.

TWINS 6, ANGELS 4

Oswaldo Arcia and Byung Ho Park homered in the eighth inning to lift Minnesota over Los Angeles for its second consecutive comeback victory after opening the season with nine straight losses. Arcia broke a 4-all tie with his first home run of the season. It came off reliever Joe Smith (0-1) and was Minnesota's first hit since the fifth inning. One batter later, Park - who had the decisive hit Friday night - added his own solo shot to give the Twins some insurance. Trevor Plouffe had three hits and also homered for Minnesota. Ryan Pressly (1-0) pitched a 1-2-3 eighth for the win in relief of starter Ricky Nolasco. Kevin Jepsen threw a scoreless ninth for his second save.

RED SOX 4, BLUE JAYS 2

David Price rebounded from a rough start in Boston's home opener with seven solid innings, Xander Bogaerts hit a three-run home run and the Red Sox beat Toronto. It was Boston's third straight win. The Red Sox have defeated the defending AL East champs four times in five meetings. Price (2-0) gave up two runs and six hits, struck out nine and didn't allow a walk. He finished by striking out the side. Craig Kimbrel struck out the side in the ninth for his fourth save. Signed to a \$217 million, seven-year deal during free agency, the left-hander had his best start for Boston. In his Fenway Park debut with the Red Sox on Monday, he gave up five runs in five innings after allowing two in six at Cleveland on opening day.

ATHLETICS 5, ROYALS 3

Josh Reddick and Stephen Vogt homered to back Sonny Gray's solid effort, and Oakland ended a four-game losing streak with a victory over Kansas City. Gray (2-1) pitched through trouble, lasting six innings to earn his first victory against the Royals in four starts, leaving the Boston Red Sox as the only AL team he has not yet beaten. Gray gave up two runs and seven hits, walking one and striking out six. He stranded six runners, four in scoring position. Reddick, who hit the ball hard in every at bat, erased the Royals' early lead with a three-run shot in the bottom of the first off Chris Young (0-3), who failed to get through five innings for the second straight start.

PADRES 5, DIAMONDBACKS 3

Melvin Upton Jr. hit a two-run homer with two outs in the 14th inning and the San Diego Padres beat the Arizona Diamondbacks for their first victory in five home games this season. Upton drove the first pitch he saw from Ruby De La Rosa (0-3) over the center-field fence. He was mobbed at home plate by his teammates after ending the game that lasted 5 hours, 25 minutes. Luis Perdomo (1-0) got the win.

GIANTS 4, DODGERS 3

Johnny Cueto pitched 7 1/3 sharp innings and the San Francisco Giants got run-scoring hits from Joe Panik, Brandon Crawford and Brandon Belt in a victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers. Cueto (3-0) helped manager Bruce Bochy celebrate his 61st birthday, allowing a run and three hits with seven strikeouts. Javier Lopez gave up Corey Seager's two-run homer in the eighth on a full count, but Santiago Casilla got the last three outs for his third save in four chances. Scott Kazmir (1-1) was charged with four runs, seven hits and four walks over five-plus innings. — AP

MLB results/standings

Seattle 3, NY Yankees 2; Minnesota 6, LA Angels 4; Cincinnati 9, St. Louis 8; Chicago Cubs 6, Colorado 2; Oakland 5, Kansas City 3; Boston 4, Toronto 2; Cleveland 7, NY Mets 5; Tampa Bay 7, Chicago White Sox 2; Pittsburgh 5, Milwaukee 0; Washington 8, Philadelphia 1; Atlanta 6, Miami 4; Detroit 5, Houston 3; Texas 8, Baltimore 4; San Diego 5, Arizona 3 (14 innings); San Francisco 4, LA Dodgers 3.

American League Eastern Division				National League Eastern Division				
	W	L	PCT	GB				
Baltimore	8	3	.727	-	Washington	9	1	.900
Boston	6	4	.600	1.5	Philadelphia	5	7	.417
Toronto	5	7	.417	3.5	NY Mets	4	6	.400
NY Yankees	4	6	.400	3.5	Miami	3	6	.333
Tampa Bay	4	7	.364	4	Atlanta	2	9	.182
Central Division				Central Division				
Chicago White Sox	8	3	.727	-	Chicago Cubs	9	2	.818
Kansas City	8	3	.727	-	Cincinnati	6	5	.545
Detroit	7	3	.700	0.5	St. Louis	6	5	.545
Cleveland	5	4	.556	2	Pittsburgh	6	6	.500
Minnesota	2	9	.182	6	Milwaukee	5	6	.455
Western Division				Western Division				
Texas	7	6	.538	-	LA Dodgers	7	5	.583
LA Angels	5	6	.455	1	San Francisco	7	5	.583
Seattle	5	6	.455	1	Colorado	6	5	.545
Oakland	5	7	.417	1.5	Arizona	4	8	.333
Houston	4	8	.333	2.5	San Diego	4	8	.333

CAPITALS SCORE 101 FOOT GOAL IN 4-1 WIN OVER FLYERS

WASHINGTON: Washington's Braden Holtby made 41 saves, Philadelphia's Steve Mason gave up a goal from 101 feet away and Alex Ovechkin scored on the power play and the Capitals beat the Flyers 4-1 in Game 2 Saturday night to take a 2-0 series lead. Ovechkin's 37th Stanley Cup playoff goal was as predictable as Jason Chimera's goal from beyond the red line was unexpected. Mason whiffed at the puck on what turned out to be the game-winner. The Flyers outshot the Capitals 42-23 and dominated for much of the game, but came up empty as John Carlson scored his second power-play goal in as many games and Nicklas Backstrom added one at even strength late. Jake Voracek scored the Flyers' only goal. The series shifts to Philadelphia for Game 3 on

Monday night. Mason did the splits to stop Carlson from point-blank range early in the second period and was slow to get up. He remained in the game, but less than a minute later made the mistake that will be shown on bad-goal blooper reels for decades. After Karl Alzner backhanded the puck from his goal line, Chimera tipped it from the Capitals' side of the red line. It slid five-hole on Mason, who wrenched his head back in dismay.

RANGERS 4, PENGUINS 2

Keith Yandle and Derick Brassard scored 18 seconds apart in the second period and Henrik Lundqvist looked just fine dealing with an eye injury and New York stopped Pittsburgh to even the Eastern Conference quarterfinal series at

one game. Mats Zuccarello and Chris Kreider also scored for the Rangers. J.T. Miller added three assists and New York handed Pittsburgh just its third loss in its past 18 games. Lundqvist finished with 29 saves and showed no ill effects after getting accidentally slashed in the right eye by a teammate in Game 1, forcing him to leave after the first period. Game 3 is Tuesday in New York. Phil Kessel scored his first two playoff goals in three years, but the Penguins' defense broke down in front of backup goaltender Jeff Zatkoff, who made 24 saves.

SHARKS 2, KINGS 1

Captain Joe Pavelski scored his third goal in two games, Martin Jones made 27 saves and San Jose took a 2-0 series lead on Los Angeles with a victory in

Game 2. Logan Couture also scored for the Sharks, who largely dominated their California rivals in their second straight road victory. Jones made several key stops against his former Los Angeles teammates and hung on after losing his shutout bid on Vincent Lecavalier's power-play goal with 5:01 to play. Jonathan Quick stopped 21 shots while losing to his former backup again. Neither team has forgotten the Kings lost the first three games of their first-round series with San Jose in 2014, only to win four straight. Game 3 is Monday night at the Shark Tank.

STARS 2, WILD 1

Antoine Roussel scored from behind the net without the puck touching a stick and Jamie Benn had an unassisted

goal and Dallas beat Minnesota for a 2-0 lead in the Western Conference playoff series. The Stars scored first on Roussel's strange goal about 4 minutes into the second period, when the puck ricocheted off the skates of Ales Hemsky and Roussel without either getting a stick on it. Benn scored on a breakaway that he ended with a backhand to make it 2-0 with 9:37 left in the game, and that was big since the Wild got their first goal of the series soon after that. Marco Scandella scored on a power play, making a slap shot from well above the left circle with 7:18 left. The first-round series shifts to Minnesota for Game 3 on Monday night. Kari Lehtonen stopped 25 of 26 shots, including a last flurry by the Wild with an extra skater in the final seconds. —AP

English Premier League results/table

AFC Bournemouth 1, Liverpool 2; Leicester City 2, West Ham United 2; Chelsea 0, Manchester City 3; Everton 1, Southampton 1; Manchester United 1, Aston Villa 0; Newcastle United 3, Swansea City 0; Norwich City 0, Sunderland 3; West Bromwich Albion 0, Watford 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leicester City	34	21	10	3	59	33	73
Tottenham	33	18	11	4	60	25	65
Manchester	33	18	6	9	61	33	60
Arsenal	32	17	8	7	55	33	59
Man United	33	16	8	9	40	30	56
West Ham	33	13	14	6	54	42	53
Southampton	34	14	9	11	45	35	51
Liverpool	32	14	9	9	52	43	51
Stoke City	33	13	8	12	37	43	47
Chelsea	33	11	11	11	49	45	44
Everton	33	9	14	10	53	44	41
Watford	33	11	8	14	32	37	41
AFC Bournemouth	34	11	8	15	41	57	41
West Bromwich	33	10	13	11	40	40	40
Swansea City	34	10	14	10	34	45	40
Crystal Palace	33	10	8	15	35	42	38
Norwich City	34	8	7	19	35	60	31
Sunderland	33	7	9	17	39	57	30
Newcastle United	33	7	7	19	35	61	28
Aston Villa	34	3	7	24	23	65	16

Borussia Dortmund 3, Hamburg SV 0; Bayer Leverkusen 3, Eintracht Frankfurt 0; Bayern Munich 3, Schalke 04 0; FC Augsburg 1, VfB Stuttgart 0; Hoffenheim 2, Hertha Berlin 1; SV Darmstadt 98 2, FC Ingolstadt 04 0; Werder Bremen 3, VfL Wolfsburg 2.

Bayern Munich	30	25	3	2	72	14	78
Dortmund	30	22	5	3	72	30	71
Bayer Leverkusen	30	15	6	9	47	33	51
Hertha Berlin	30	14	7	9	40	36	49
Moenchengladbach	30	14	3	13	59	47	45
Mainz	29	13	6	10	40	36	45
Schalke 04	30	13	6	11	41	43	45
VfL Wolfsburg	30	10	9	11	42	41	39
FC Ingolstadt 04	30	10	9	11	27	33	39
SV Darmstadt 98	30	8	11	11	34	44	35
Hamburg SV	30	9	7	14	35	43	34
Cologne	29	8	10	11	29	37	34
Hoffenheim	30	8	10	12	35	45	34
FC Augsburg	30	8	9	13	38	48	33
VfB Stuttgart	30	9	6	15	46	60	33
Werder Bremen	30	8	7	15	42	61	31
Eintracht Frankfurt	30	6	9	15	29	49	27
Hanover 96	30	6	3	21	26	54	21
Getafe	33	7	7	19	29	61	28

Italian Serie A table

MILAN: Italian Serie A table ahead of yesterday's late games (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Juventus	33	25	4	4	62	17	79
Napoli	33	21	7	5	66	29	70
Roma	33	18	11	4	70	36	65
Inter Milan	33	18	7	8	44	30	61
Fiorentina	33	17	8	8	54	36	59
AC Milan	32	13	10	9	42	35	49
Sassuolo	32	12	12	9	41	38	48
Lazio	32	12	9	11	42	42	45
Chievo	33	12	9	12	38	40	45
Torino	33	11	9	13	42	44	42
Genoa	33	11	7	15	38	41	40
Empoli	32	10	9	13	36	43	39
Bologna	33	10	7	16	31	38	37
Atalanta	33	9	9	15	34	41	37
Sampdoria	32	9	9	14	46	49	36
Udinese	33	8	16	29	48	55	31
Carpi	33	7	10	16	33	51	31
Frosinone	33	8	6	19	31	61	30
Palermo	33	7	7	19	29	61	28
Verona	33	3	13	17	28	56	22

Note: Top two qualify for Champions League, third place into Champions league qualifying, next two into Europa League.

La Liga results/standings

Malaga 0, Athletic Club 1; Celta Vigo 1, Real Betis 1; Eibar 2, Real Sociedad 1; Getafe 1, Real Madrid 5; Las Palmas 1, Sporting Gijon 1; Levante 2, Espanyol 1.

Barcelona	32	24	4	4	87	27	76
Real Madrid	33	23	6	4	98	30	75
Athletic Madrid	32	23	4	5	54	16	73
Villarreal	32	17	9	6	41	26	60
Athletic Club	33	16	6	11	51	40	54
Celta Vigo	33	15	8	10	46	53	53
Sevilla	32	13	9	10	45	39	48
Malaga	33	10	11	12	30	30	41
Eibar	33	11	8	14	45	49	41
Real Sociedad	33	11	8	14	41	44	41
Las Palmas	33	11	7	15	38	45	40
Real Betis	33	9	11	13	30	46	38
Valencia	32	9	10	13	36	39	37
Deportivo Coruna	32	7	16	9	41	47	37
Espanyol	33	10	6	17	34	62	36
Rayo Vallecano	32	7	10	15	43	64	31
Granada CF	32	7	9	16	33	57	30
Sporting Gijon	33	7	8	18	33	54	29
Levante	33	7	7	19	30	56	28

Bundesliga results/standings



HAMPDEN PARK: Rangers goal keeper Wes Foderingham makes a save at the feet of Celtic's Leigh Griffiths, right, during the Scottish Cup semi-final soccer match at Hampden Park, Glasgow, yesterday. — AP

RANGERS BEAT CELTIC, BOOK CUP FINAL BERTH

GLASGOW: Rangers booked a place in the Scottish Cup final after a dramatic penalty shoot-out yesterday in an action-packed semi-final against Old Firm rivals Celtic that ended 2-2 after extra-time at Hampden. Australian international Tom Rogic blasted the decisive spot-kick over the bar to hand Rangers a 5-4 victory after Callum McGregor and Scott Brown had also missed.

Rangers could now end their four-year exile from Europe if they can defeat Hibernian in May's final. The match at Hampden was just the second time in four years that the Glasgow giants have clashed since Rangers were forced to start life again in the country's bottom tier following an amazing fall from grace that resulted in liquidation in June 2012. Rangers manager Mark Warburton was delighted with victory in his first experience of the Old Firm derby. "We deserved to win the game of football. That's the most pleasing thing," Warburton said. "I'm just delighted for the fans. They've been in some dark places over the last four or five years so it's tremendous that they can enjoy days like today." The defeat by a side a division below them heaps more pressure on under-fire Celtic manager Ronny Deila. "It was a real rollercoaster of a football game. It was up and down and in the end down," said Deila, whose side remain on course for a fifth successive league title. "I am very disappointed we lost the match but I am not satisfied with our performance."

POWERFUL HEADER

Veteran striker Kenny Miller, who has played for both sides of the Old Firm divide, had fired Rangers into a 16th minute lead before Patrick Roberts blew a golden chance to level for Celtic before the break when he missed an open goal. Substitute Erik Sviatchenko had Celtic level five minutes after the break with a bullet header as the game headed to extra time. Barrie McKay restored Rangers' lead in the 96th minute before Rogic, who was to end the afternoon as the villain, rifled home a 106th minute leveller. Their last meeting in January 2015 saw Celtic cruise to a 2-0 victory in the semi-final of the League Cup.

However, Rangers are unrecognisable from then with the new manager leading his side to the Championship title and promotion back to the top flight. With the resumption of regular Old Firm matches in the Scottish Premiership from next season, the match was seen as a gauge of how big the gap between the sides is.

However, Rangers, with several Old Firm debutants in their side, coped well as the noise levels were cranked up and it was the Ibrox club that drew first blood through Miller.

A free-kick was only cleared as far as Halliday whose pass into the box was deflected into the path of Miller by Celtic skipper Brown and the former Hoops players swivelled to lash the ball beyond Gordon. Celtic's half-time team talk seemed to do the trick as they found themselves on level terms five minutes into the second half. Roberts floated a corner into the box that Sviatchenko met with a powerful header that flew into the top corner over Danny Wilson on the line. Rangers restored their advantage six minutes into the first half of extra time with a fabulous strike from McKay. Referee Craig Thomson controversially overruled his assistant to give a throw-in to Rangers which was quickly taken to McKay who smacked an unstoppable swerving strike into the top corner from 20 yards.

Celtic levelled the match in the 106th minute as Rogic got on the end of Tierney's cut-back to slam

the ball past Foderingham before suffering heart-break as he missed the vital spot-kick. — AFP

CURRY LEADS WARRIORS PAST ROCKETS IN PLAYOFF OPENER

OAKLAND: Stephen Curry dazzled from long range and drove to the hoop with fire and flair, scoring 24 points before tweaking his ankle as the Golden State Warriors beat the Houston Rockets 104-78 on Saturday in their playoff opener. Draymond Green added 12 points and 10 rebounds as top-seeded Golden State carried momentum from setting the all-time wins record Wednesday night with No. 73 into a testy playoff opener some 60 hours later. The Warriors topped the Michael Jordan-led Bulls of 1995-96, then immediately made one thing clear: That mark will mean nothing if they don't bring home back-to-back titles to the East Bay. James Harden scored 17 points for cold-shooting Houston, held to six field goals in the first quarter of the rematch from last year's Western Conference finals, won by Golden State in five. Game 2 in the best-of-seven series is Monday night at Oracle Arena, and Warriors coach Steve Kerr said Curry is questionable for that one. He will be re-evaluated Sunday.

PACERS 100, RAPTORS 90

Paul George scored 33 points, Monta Ellis had 15 and Indiana beat Toronto in Game 1 of their first-round playoff series. Jonas Valanciunas fouled out after scoring 12 points and setting a Raptors' playoff record with 19 rebounds. All-Star guards Kyle Lowry and DeMar DeRozan both struggled for the second-seeded Raptors. Lowry made 3 of 13 field goal attempts while DeRozan made 5 of 19. The pair went 1 for 10 from 3-point range and 8 for 15 at the free-throw line. DeRozan finished with 14 points and Lowry had 11. Cory Joseph scored 18. Toronto dropped to 0-8 in the first game of an opening-round playoff series.

THUNDER 108, MAVERICKS 70

Russell Westbrook had 24 points and 11 assists, Kevin Durant added 23 points, and the Thunder opened the Western Conference series with their most dominant postseason performance since moving to Oklahoma City. Serge Ibaka had 17 points and nine rebounds, and Enes Kanter added 16 points and 13 rebounds for the Thunder. It was Oklahoma City's largest victory margin in a playoff game since moving from Seattle before the 2008-09 season, and the lowest point total the franchise has allowed in a postseason game, in Seattle or Oklahoma City. Dallas scored its fewest points ever in a playoff game, and its .298 field-goal percentage was the worst ever in a postseason game for a franchise that has existed since 1980. Dirk Nowitzki led the Mavericks with 18 points. Game 2 will be Monday in Oklahoma City.

HAWKS 102, CELTICS 101

Jeff Teague stymied another big Boston comeback, taking matters into his own hands in the closing minutes to lead Atlanta in Game 1 of the opening-round playoff series. Teague scored 23 points and doled out 12 assists, making sure Atlanta maintained the home-court edge after the gritty Celtics rallied from a 19-point deficit. With the game tied at 88, Teague worked the pick-and-roll to set up a layup for Al Horford. The Celtics missed and the Hawks again got the ball to Teague, who found Paul Millsap alone under the basket for a dunk that pushed Atlanta to a 92-88 lead with 2:56 remaining. The Celtics had a chance to tie in the final minute, but Evan Turner missed an open 3-pointer. Game 2 in the best-of-seven series is Tuesday night in Atlanta. — AP



OAKLAND: Houston Rockets' Dwight Howard (12) tries to shoot between Golden State Warriors' Draymond Green, bottom left, and Marreese Speights, bottom right, during the first half of Game 1 of a first-round NBA basketball playoff series Saturday, in Oakland, Calif. — AP



FOOTBALLERS' DREAMS TURN INTO REALITY WITH RED BULL NEYMAR JR'S 5

KUWAIT: Kuwait will be hosting Red Bull Neymar Jr's Five's international tournament which was launched in 2016, the Brazil and Barcelona great Neymar Jr is giving thousands of young football players the chance to step up their game by staging a unique knockout tournament starting on May 2. Fresh from his nomination for Fifa's World Player of the Year award last week, Neymar invites players at the ages of 16 to 25 years in more than to team up for his five-a-side tournament, 'Neymar Jr's Five'.

The qualifying process will start this month in several areas in Kuwait, such as Hassan Abdul courts (on 2nd - 3rd May) and Goal! court at Fahaheel (11th - 12th May), Shaab (15th - 16th May), Jahra (19th May) followed by Kuwait University - Adailiya (23rd May). The 16 qualified teams will compete during the final game held on Thursday 26th May. Later, Kuwait's winning team will participate in the World Final held in Brazil to compete with the other teams from around the world, advancing to the finals in July in Praia Grande, where Neymar Jr. grew up, started his professional career and lately founded "Instituto Projeto Neymar Jr".

"I always dreamed of putting on my own signature tournament and invite the best teams over to my hometown. I'm really looking forward to see what these players

can do - and have a great time doing it," said Neymar.

He added: "It's a fun, fast and technical game - it's the kind of football I've always loved to play and this time we play it with a special twist to it: the five-player teams lose one player each time they concede a goal until there are no players left, or the 10-minute game ends. This will be even more exciting". This was Neymar's feedback when it comes to the competition. Neymar Jr, who alongside Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez has lit up La Liga with Barcelona this season, helped invent the format and will have the winning team as his guests at a match at the Camp Nou in Barcelona, Spain.

The world final will be held in July at the Instituto Projeto Neymar Jr in the state of Sao Paulo, Brazil. The institute's aim is to offer extracurricular educational and sporting activities to the most socially disadvantaged children and families to promote social inclusion and encourage participation in the community. The Instituto Projeto Neymar Jr was opened in 2014 and is the second 'FutbolNet' program in Brazil in partnership with FC Barcelona Foundation after a first was set up in the favelas in Rio de Janeiro two years earlier.

Teams of 5 to 7 players can sign up now via www.neymarjr5.com to represent Kuwait in Brazil and meet Neymar there!

TOTTI TO THE RESCUE AS ROMA DROP POINTS AT ATALANTA

MILAN: Francesco Totti came off the bench to hit a late, precious leveller as Champions League-chasing Roma dropped two points in a thrilling 3-3 draw away to Atalanta yesterday. Roma travelled to Bergamo feeling the pressure after Inter Milan stunned Napoli 2-0 on Saturday to close the gap on third place to three points. But despite taking a 2-0 lead by the 27th minute with goals from Lucas Digne and Radja Nainggolan, Luciano Spalletti's visitors let their guard slip, allowing an enterprising Atalanta back into the game. Marco D'Alessandro reduced arrears on 33 minutes and Roma reject Marco Borriello returned to haunt his old club by hitting a brace that gave Atalanta a 3-2 lead by the 57th minute.

Totti replaced Daniele De Rossi on 78 minutes and eight minutes later the 39-year-old club icon slammed the ball through traffic and past Marco Sportiello to secure a share of the spoils. Although Roma remain in third place, 11 points behind Juventus ahead of their home game against Palermo later Sunday and five points behind Napoli, Inter are closing in.

With five games remaining, Roberto Mancini's Inter side are only four points behind Roma in fourth as they bid to end a five-year wait to return to Europe's premier club competition. "At 2-0 up, we should have put the match beyond reach," Roma coach Luciano Spalletti told Mediaset.

"But we lost focus at certain points,

we took our foot off the pedal, lost our shape and allowed them back into it. "When that happens, your opponents obviously want to capitalise and that's what they did."

SCRAPPY AFFAIR

It was a scrappy affair at the Atleti Azzurri d'Italia stadium, although French left-back Digne settled Roma nerves on 23 minutes when he finished off a well-worked move to roll a right-footed shot past Sportiello at his far post. Roma looked to be cruising when Belgian international Nainggolan chipped Mohamed Salah's cut-back past Sportiello on 27 minutes. But Atalanta fought back valiantly, Alejandro Gomez sprinting down the

left to collect a long ball from midfield and fire in a cross for D'Alessandro to bundle past Wojciech Szczesny on 33 minutes. Roma's defence really should have done better on that occasion, and Szczesny had more reason to complain when Borriello rose above De Rossi and Kostas Manolas at a corner to level with a powerful header four minutes later. Roma could have put the match beyond reach soon after, but Edin Dzeko ballooned over from eight yards and minutes later the Bosnian's crisp volley was tipped over by Sportiello at full stretch.

At the other end, Roma's defence was nowhere when Gomez fired in a cross that Ervin Zukanovic should have easily swept to safety. Instead, Borriello

stole a march on the defender to bundle in at the near post. It was the first time Atalanta had hit three goals at home since a 3-0 rout of Palermo in December, but more was to come from the hosts. Borriello could have added to his ally but ballooned over from Gomez's delivery and then saw a backheel flick go over from close range. Roma were only saved from a potentially costly defeat when, as the ball ricocheted in the Atalanta area, Totti's drive sneaked past Sportiello and inside the 'keeper's near post in the closing minutes. It was his 245th goal in Serie A but in what could be Totti's 23rd and final season with the club, he remains 29 behind the all-time record of Silvio Piola (274). —AFP

PULISIC NETS AS DORTMUND BREAK HAMBURG BOGEY

BERLIN: American teenager Christian Pulisic scored his first Bundesliga goal yesterday as Borussia Dortmund kept some pressure on leaders Bayern Munich with a 3-0 win over 10-man Hamburg.

Dortmund bounced back from the heart-break of their last-gasp 4-3 defeat at Liverpool on Thursday, which ended their Europa League campaign at the quarter-final stage.

It was their first win over Hamburg in five league games having last beaten Bruno Labbadia's side back in September 2013. Pulisic turns 18 in September, but having only played his first German league game in January, the left winger made his senior international debut for the USA in March. He has now scored his first Bundesliga goal on only his third start after being promoted from the Under-17 side by head coach Thomas Tuchel in the winter break. Dortmund look to have uncovered another star just as they seem set to lose one. Reports on Sunday in both the German and UK media suggest defensive midfielder Ilkay Gundogan is set to join Manchester City for the start of next season. But Dortmund stayed in the hunt for the German league title as Colombia striker Adrian Ramos scored twice at Signal Iduna Park. Hamburg were reduced to ten men early in the second half when goalkeeper Rene Adler was shown a straight red after bringing down Shinji Kagawa.

After a great pass from Dortmund captain Mats Hummels, Pulisic gave Dortmund the lead with a strike which beat Adler at the near post on 38 minutes.

"It's an amazing feeling to get my first

goal. Mats put in a great pass to set me up," said Pulisic. "It's hard to put into words what it felt like to score." Ramos then made it 2-0 when he also put in a superb strike across the face of the Hamburg goal on 44 minutes.

Hamburg had Adler sent off on 52 minutes and Ramos added his second on 86 minutes when Japan's Kagawa put in the final pass.

Dortmund now have the chance to book their place in the German Cup final when they play Hertha Berlin away in the semi-final on Wednesday.

"We were all very sad (after the Liverpool defeat), but the coach told us we have to go on and now we'll have to wait and see what happens in Berlin," added Pulisic. Dortmund's win trims Bayern's lead to seven points with only four games left after Pep Guardiola's side beat Schalke 3-0 at home on Saturday.

Poland hot-shot Robert Lewandowski netted twice in Munich to leave him as the league's top scorer with 27 Bundesliga goals this season. Later yesterday, Cologne came from 2-0 down to pull off a stunning 3-2 win at Mainz. The hosts would have climbed to fifth and closing on a Europa League place for next season after goals by striker Jhon Cordoba and defender Leon Balogun.

But Cologne roared back at Mainz's Coface Arena with goals from Marcel Risse and Milos Jovic before French striker Anthony Modeste netted the dramatic winner in the dying stages.

The win moves Cologne up to 10th while Mainz remain sixth. — AFP



LONDON: Arsenal's Alexis Sanchez, left shoots at goal as Crystal Palace's Joel Ward attempts to block during the English Premier League soccer match between Arsenal and Crystal Palace at the Emirates stadium in London, yesterday. — AP

BOLASIE PUNCTURES ARSENAL'S CHAMPIONS LEAGUE BID



LONDON: Yannick Bolasie put a dent in Arsenal's hopes of qualifying for the Champions League with an equaliser for Crystal Palace nine minutes from time in a 1-1 draw at the Emirates Stadium yesterday. Arsene Wenger's side appeared on course for victory following Alexis Sanchez's headed goal in first-half stoppage-time.

But Palace, second best throughout in this all-London Premier League clash, hung on in and were rewarded when Bolasie's edge-of-the-box shot beat Petr Cech, who should have saved it, at the Arsenal goalkeeper's near post in the 81st minute. The result effectively ended the Gunners' already slim title hopes, with Arsene Wenger's side now 13 points behind leaders Leicester City, with only a maximum of 15 on offer from their final five league games.

More significantly it meant Arsenal, bidding to play in the Champions League for a 19th consecutive season, failed to regain third place from Manchester City and were left four points in front of fifth-placed Manchester United, with only the top four at the end of the season guaranteed a place among Europe's elite.

Arsenal, jeered off the field by their own fans at full-time, were the only team that had something meaningful to play for, with Palace all but safe and more focused on their looming FA Cup semi-final against Watford.

That it took until the 24th minute for a meaningful attempt was down to a Palace side content to sit back and soak up pressure.

Palace, especially away from home, like to defend deep and hit teams on the break and Bolasie did just that but his low drive was smothered by the returning Cech.

For all Arsenal's dominance, Palace goalkeeper Wayne Hennessey didn't have to make a save for much of the first half.

Arsenal's Lauren Koscielny flashed his header from Mesut Ozil's 36th minute corner wide before Sanchez's free-kick drifted just past the post. But Wales international Hennessey was called upon to thwart Mesut Ozil with a low stop after the German playmaker exchanged passes with Sanchez. Arsenal's pressure was, however, rewarded just before half-time.

JEDINAK DEPARTS

Moments after Connor Wickham had headed over for Palace, Sanchez was more accurate when he nodded Danny Welbeck's pass in from six yards out after Mile Jedinak had been caught in possession.

That was the Australian midfielder's final act as he was replaced at the break, with Palace manager Alan Pardew sending out a more attacking side. The danger was that Arsenal could pick the south Londoners off and Welbeck and Alex Iwobi both missed early chances as the Gunners took advantage of the extra space.

Ozil was then inches away with a 58th minute free-kick as the home side looked to kill off

Palace. The Eagles then introduced former Arsenal striker Emmanuel Adebayor, who received a hostile reception from fans of his old club. Arsenal saw Sanchez head Ozil's quickly taken free-kick just wide but Palace, who had created little, served notice they could still snatch an unlikely point in the 77th minute. Yohan Cabaye's corner was glanced on by

Bacary Sako but Cech turned over the near-post header. But Cech was beaten via Bolasie's 81st-minute strike against the run of play. The winger had been relatively quiet before he cut inside and saw his shot squirm beyond Cech's grasp to stun the Emirates and earn Palace a point that all but guaranteed their Premier League status. —AFP



DORTMUND: Dortmund's midfielder Christian Pulisic and Hamburg's Japanese defender Gotoku Sakai vie for the ball during the German Bundesliga first division football match BVB Borussia Dortmund vs Hamburg SV in Dortmund, western Germany, yesterday. — AFP

JUVENTUS BEAT PALERMO TO MOVE 9 POINTS CLEAR

MILAN: Juventus continued its march toward a fifth successive Serie A title as it beat relegation-threatened Palermo 4-0 to move nine points clear yesterday.

Sami Khedira gave Juventus the lead in the 10th minute but Palermo kept pushing for an equalizer before Paul Pogba and Juan Cuadrado sealed the result shortly after the 70th minute. Substitute Simone Padoin added a fourth late on.

Second-place Napoli lost 2-0 at Inter Milan on Saturday. There are five rounds left. The only negative note for Juventus was an injury picked up by Claudio Marchisio who was stretched off in the 15th with a knee injury.

Tests revealed he has torn the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee and the Italy midfielder, who will miss the European Championship, will be operated on in the next few days.

"At the moment there is no margin for error because we are in the final sprint," Juventus coach Massimiliano Allegri said. "The title is not yet won. We have a nine-point advantage, a good goal difference but we still need two wins and a draw."

"Now we have Lazio and Fiorentina, which will be two very difficult matches. Our rivals have an easier run-in." Earlier, third-place Roma missed the chance to close the gap to Napoli to three points as it drew 3-3 at Atalanta.

Roma is four points above Inter in the race for the final Champions League qualifying place, with Fiorentina two points further back after a 3-1 win over Sassuolo - thanks in part to a comical own goal from visiting goalkeeper Andrea Consigli.

At the other end of the table, a stop-

page-time winner from Alessandro Frara gave Frosinone a crucial 2-1 victory at bottom side Hellas Verona.

Frosinone leapfrogged two points above Palermo and one behind Carpi, which occupies the last position of safety in Serie A.

CHIEVO VERONA DREW 0-0 AT UDINESE.

Later, AC Milan's new coach Cristian Brocchi takes charge of his first match in his senior managerial career, at Sampdoria.

He will be hoping to do as well as Lazio counterpart Simone Inzaghi, who has now started his senior coaching career with two wins out of two following a 2-0 victory over Empoli on Sunday.

Juventus knew that victory would leave it with one hand on the trophy and it seemed to be going to plan when Khedira chested down Pogba's chipped pass and volleyed it over Stefano Sorrentino.

Juventus appeared shocked by Marchisio's injury and lost its rhythm, allowing Palermo to create pressure, although Pogba did have an effort tipped onto the crossbar by Sorrentino.

Palermo almost leveled when Franco Vazquez sent Aleksandar Trajkovski through and although his shot beat Juventus goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon, defender Andrea Barzagli got back to clear off the line. It took Juventus until the 71st minute to double its lead when a corner came through to the back post for Pogba to tap in. Cuadrado sealed the match three minutes later after a delightful dummy and Padoin completed the rout, stroking an Alvaro Morata assist into the far bottom corner. —AP

TORRES ON TARGET, ATLETICO JOIN BARCA ATOP LA LIGA

MADRID: Fernando Torres struck his fourth goal in as many games as Atletico Madrid moved level with Barcelona at the top of La Liga with a routine 3-0 win over Granada yesterday. Koke ensured Atletico would have no hangover from their efforts in dispatching Barca from the Champions League in midweek as he swept home the opener on 15 minutes before teeing up Torres to dink home just before the hour mark.

Substitute Angel Correa rounded off the scoring with a cool finish seven minutes from time. Victory takes Atletico back a point clear of third-placed Real Madrid and level with Barca on 76 points with the Catalans aiming to halt an alarming dip in form later at home to Valencia. Atletico were met by a euphoric full house at the Vicente Calderon just four days after dumping Barca out the Champions League at the quarter-final stage for the second time in three seasons.

And Koke almost got the hosts off to the perfect start when he flashed a shot inches over from Juanfran's cut-back in the first minute. However, the Spanish international was dead accurate with his next chance as he rifled home his fifth goal of the season after Torres' initial effort had been blocked.

Atletico's rock-solid defence was rarely troubled as they held out for a 30th clean sheet of the season, but Ruben Rochina was inches away from an equaliser on the half

hour mark when he smashed a long-range shot against the post.

All of Torres' goals in his last four outings have come from Koke assists and that combination worked a treat once more for Diego Simeone's men when the former Liverpool and Chelsea striker latched onto an inch-perfect pass before lifting the ball over the onrushing Andres Fernandez. Simeone then withdrew top-scorer Antoine Griezmann and Koke with Wednesday's difficult trip to Athletic Bilbao in mind. Correa was one of those introduced and the Argentine international showed great composure to slot home the third from Saul Niguez's flick-on. Elsewhere, Athletic Bilbao moved to within six points of Villarreal in the fight for the fourth Champions League place with a hard-fought 1-0 win at Malaga thanks to Raul Garcia's second-half header. Villarreal lost 2-1 at Rayo Vallecano in a result with huge ramifications at the bottom of the table.

Miku's brilliant header handed the Madrid side all three points after Adrian Lopez had cancelled out Javi Guerra's early opener for Rayo. Victory moves Rayo five points clear of the relegation zone with just five games remaining. Sevilla will almost certainly have to win a third consecutive Europa League to make it back into the Champions League as they were held 1-1 at home to Deportivo La Coruna to stay 11 points behind Villarreal. —AFP



MADRID: Atletico Madrid's forward Fernando Torres (R) scores a goal past Granada's goalkeeper Andres Fernandez during the Spanish league football match Atletico de Madrid vs Granada CF at the Vicente Calderon stadium in Madrid yesterday. — AFP

Sports

Late Sheikh Faisal Al-Duaij Al-Sabah Cup tourney concludes



Pulisic nets as Dortmund break Hamburg bogey



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NATIONALS WIN AT PHILLIES TO IMPROVE TO 9-1

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LEICESTER: Leicester City's Wes Morgan leaps up to head the ball down during the English Premier League soccer match between Leicester City and West Ham United at the King Power Stadium in Leicester, England, yesterday. — AP

LEICESTER SALVAGE DRAW AGAINST WEST HAM



LEICESTER: Leicester striker Jamie Vardy was bemused and then furious, jabbing his right finger toward the referee who had just brandished the red card. Vardy had not only been denied a penalty but Leicester's top scorer received a second booking after being adjudged to have dived.

With more than 30 minutes still to play, the leaders had to cope with 10 men while protecting a 1-0 lead that had been secured in the first half by Vardy's 22nd goal of the season. West

Ham did seize a 2-1 lead at the King Power stadium but Leicester, a team that was fighting relegation this time last season and was expecting to struggle again, refused to surrender.

In the fourth minute of stoppage time, still pursuing a leveler, fortune favored Leicester again. This time referee Jon Moss did award the hosts a penalty when Jeffrey Schlupp was shoved off the ball by Andy Carroll. Substitute striker Leonardo Ulloa sent West Ham goalkeeper Adrian the wrong way to salvage a 2-2 draw.

"I feel like he has tried to equal it out," Carroll said of the referee's third and final penalty call. The five-game winning streak was over but for now Leicester extended its lead to eight points ahead of second-place Tottenham's match at Stoke today. "I'm always asking my players to give their heart and soul until the end," Leicester manager Claudio Ranieri said.

"We are never worried. We were worried at

the beginning of the season to achieve 40 points (to avoid relegation) but now we enjoy. We enjoy and never I speak with my players about the gap ... everything is in our hands."

Leicester only needs to collect eight points from its last four matches to clinch the first league title in the 132-year history of this central England team. Next Sunday against Swansea, though, Leicester will have to cope without Vardy as the striker serves a suspension.

Perhaps losing Kasper Schmeichel would have been more damaging. The goalkeeper had kept five consecutive clean sheets before Sunday and he made a decisive save in the first minute against West Ham, pushing Cheikhou Kouyate's header onto the post and saving Michail Antonio's header before Vardy's opener.

VARDY BOOKED

Then Schmeichel launched the trademark

Leicester counterattack that produced the 18th-minute opener.

Schmeichel threw the ball to Riyad Mahrez, who charged down the right flank before releasing N'Golo Kante. West Ham couldn't contain the speedy move and Kante fed Vardy, who struck across the face of goal into Adrian's net.

But Vardy was booked 10 minutes later for a late sliding challenge on Kouyate. It would prove costly. Just before he was sent off, though, Vardy had come close to scoring again but he couldn't make a connection with Shinji Okazaki's cross.

Then as Vardy was surging through on goal he was held back by Angelo Ogbonna, tangled with the West Ham defender and tumbled to the ground. Moss decided that Vardy had dived and brandished that second yellow card.

"He never dived ... always he goes very fast and at this speed if you touch a little (the player goes down)," Ranieri said.

Moss did point to the penalty spot in the 84th when he punished Leicester captain Wes Morgan for shoving Winston Reid over and Carroll converted from the spot.

It was the first goal Kasper Schmeichel had conceded in 574 minutes and he was beaten again two minutes later. Michail Antonio's cross from the right flank was cleared by Leicester defender Danny Simpson to Aaron Creswell, who unleashed a shot into the top corner of the net.

The drama wasn't over, with Ulloa's equalizer in the fifth minute of stoppage time summing up Leicester's calmness under pressure in this unprecedented pursuit of Premier League glory. For the first time since Blackburn won the title in 1995, the Premier League trophy could yet be going to a team outside Manchester or London. "We showed again our team spirit and togetherness," Leicester's Simpson said. "We know we always fight to the death and that's what we did." — AP

STURRIDGE STARS AS LIVERPOOL BEAT BOURNEMOUTH



BOURNEMOUTH: Daniel Sturridge provided more evidence his fitness problems are behind him after an injury-scarred season, setting up Robert Firmino's opening goal before adding the second in Liverpool's 2-1 victory at Bournemouth yesterday.

The England striker proved to be the difference with Sturridge's header in first-half added-time putting Liverpool in control five minutes after Firmino had opened the scoring.

That allowed Jurgen Klopp's side to survive a late Bournemouth rally after Joshua King's stoppage-time reply towards full-time.

Sturridge was starting his fourth successive Premier League game for the first time in four years. After struggling with muscle and hip problems this season, the forward looks as though he is nearing his best, news which will be welcomed by England coach Roy Hodgson.

The striker had started on the bench in Thursday's dramatic Europa League win over Borussia Dortmund and was handed a starting chance as Klopp rang the changes, with the manager's team selection reflecting Liverpool's demanding week.

Of the starting eleven that lined up against the Bundesliga side, only Firmino retained his place as former Dortmund manager Klopp drew on the fringes of his squad to protect the legs of some of his senior players while Emre Can was ruled out with an ankle injury that will keep him sidelined for four weeks.

Danny Ward, the 22-year-old goalkeeper, came in for Simon Mignolet while youngsters Brad Smith, Connor Randall, Kevin Stewart and Sheyi Ojo also started.

Klopp's side were hoping to maintain the momentum generated by successive victories and a run that had brought just one defeat in the previous 15 games in all competitions.

Bournemouth, meanwhile, came into the

game safe in the knowledge they had long since erased any concerns they might get drawn into the relegation battle and having won four of their previous six games.

Eddie Howe's side, though, have been less impressive at home in recent weeks, losing four of their previous seven games at Dean Court and were anxious to improve a rare blot on their record for the campaign.

UNFAMILIAR LIVERPOOL

It was perhaps unsurprising given the changes to the Liverpool line-up that it was the home side who started the game in more convincing fashion.

While Klopp's side struggled to find their feet, Bournemouth quickly began to test Ward who was relieved to see Steve Cook's header float over from Simon Francis' early cross.

Midway through the half, Howe's side again served notice of their aerial strength, this time when Cook's fellow central defender Tommy Elphick outjumped the Liverpool defence before looping a header into Ward's arms.

Slowly, Liverpool's unfamiliar line-up began to click with Randall testing Bournemouth keeper Artur Boruc after a teasing run by Ojo opened up the home defence.

Sturridge had operated on the fringes of the game during the opening stages but finally received some meaningful service when Joe Allen picked out the forward with an excellent chipped pass and it took the intervention of Boruc to snuff out the danger.

The keeper was caught out, however, five minutes before the break when a piece of Sturridge improvisation set up Firmino for the opening goal. The striker's back-heel forced Boruc into a full-length save and Firmino was on hand to tap in from close range.

Then in first half added time, Sturridge made it 2-0, rising to meet Jordan Ibe's floated free-kick and head beyond Boruc.

Sturridge missed a glorious chance to score what would have been Liverpool's third goal when he chipped wide at the start of the second half.

But his goal proved crucial when Bournemouth finally gained reward for their second-half efforts when King produced a fine finish to halve the deficit in added time. — AFP

NADAL DEFEATS MONFILS FOR NINTH MONTE CARLO TITLE

MONTE CARLO: Rafael Nadal needed nearly three hours to defeat Gael Monfils 7-5, 5-7, 6-0 yesterday and win a record ninth title at the Monte Carlo Masters.

The Spaniard claimed his first trophy in the Principality since 2012 as he played in his 100th final and tenth in Monte Carlo. The win pulled Nadal level with ATP leader Novak Djokovic on 28 trophies at the Masters 1000 level.

Winning a first Masters honour since Madrid in May, 2014, Nadal improved to 12-2 over Monfils the pair were plagued by unforced errors in the tight contest, with the winner striking 36 while Monfils made more than 50. The match was also riddled with 34 break points, with Nadal converting on eight of 21 while Monfils managed five of 13.

"It's great to win a Masters title again," Nadal said. "I had a tough season last year, but I've had better preparation this year, even with a tough start to the season. I hope this week will help me a lot," the Spaniard said as he prepared to move onto his home clay of Barcelona next week. "I'm very happy to win a tough match. The defence in the first two sets was just unbelievable. In the third I told myself I had had to hit my forehand harder. I went for winners, but at times it was tough to find the right feeling."

GREAT VICTORY

"This is a great victory for me and a very emotional one. It's just amazing to win here again. This is an event I love so much, I've been struggling in the past and I came here and am able to play well." This victory means a lot to me. I hope it helps my season with confidence for the next few tournaments. I've been able to play well for two events in a row - Indian Wells and here - and I'm very happy about that."

Nadal now owns 68 titles and will carry on in the run-up to the French Open with renewed confidence; Monfils can take small consolation after winning his first-ever set against Nadal on clay. The opening set took almost an hour and a quarter and set the stage for the second, which at one point featured three consecutive breaks of serve out to 4-4.

Monfils moved into winning position with a



MONTE CARLO: (LtoR) Prince Albert II of Monaco, Princess Charlene of Monaco, winner Spain's Rafael Nadal, Elisabeth Anne de Massy and second placed France's Gael Monfils pose during the awarding ceremony following the final tennis match at the Monte-Carlo ATP Masters Series Tournament in Monaco yesterday. Nadal defeated Monfils 7-5, 5-7, 6-0 to win a record ninth title at the Monte Carlo Masters. — AFP

break for 6-5 and kept the struggle alive as he won the set for one apiece.

"I'm feeling good. I'm not trying to assess the tournaments here and there. I just want to continue the work I'm doing, which is good work. I'm trying to improve my intensity in the tournaments match after match," Monfils said. "I try to play better and develop better tennis. I even try also to feel better. Today, it was a beautiful final. It was a high level of tennis," said Monfils. "In two weeks I'm hoping to be better. In three weeks,

too, and be better for the French Open."

But the third was all Nadal as the Spanish fifth seed swept to a love finish to win his eighth clay match against the Frenchman without a defeat. Nadal improved his superlative tournament record to 58-4 after winning eight straight titles from 2005-2012. His last finals appearance here was in 2013 when he lost to Novak Djokovic.

Nadal's specialist record on his favoured clay is all but untouchable, with the 14-time Grand Slam winner standing 48-8 in clay finals. — AFP

Kuwait Times BUSINESS

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NBK REPORTS NET PROFITS OF KD 78.9M FOR Q1

AL-SAYER: NBK CONTINUES DELIVERING SOLID PERFORMANCE

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) reported net profits of KD 78.9 million (\$262million) for the first quarter of 2016 compared with KD 96.5 million (\$320million) for the same period in 2015.

Adjusting for gains recognized in 1Q 2015 from the sale of NBK's 30 percent stake in International Bank of Qatar (IBQ), net profits recorded a growth of 6.7 percent year on year. Net operating income grew at 7.6 percent year on year to reach KD 179.2 million

by 4.9 percent for the same period to reach KD 12.3 billion (\$40.6 billion).

NBK asset quality remained exceptionally strong with NPLs/Gross loans improving to 1.32 percent as of end of March 2016 from 1.47 percent a year ago, and NPL coverage increasing to 335 percent from 281 percent in March 2015.

Provision charges remained relatively high in 1Q 2016 resulting mainly from additional precautionary provisions in light of

solid growth of the core banking activities. Adjusting for the exceptional gains from the sale of IBQ, NBK's net operating income grew at 7.6 percent year-on-year to KD179.2 million (\$594.0 million) confirming the Bank's strong position to seize growth opportunities locally and regionally.

Al-Sayer also added that "The impact of the large drop in oil prices on the domestic operational environment remains limited compared to other regional economies. Kuwait has ample buffers making the impact of lower oil prices relatively less and allowing the government to move forward with its expansionary policies and the execution of its development plan."

Isam Al-Sayer, NBK's Group Chief Executive Officer said "NBK continues with its strategy that aims to better diversify the sources of income and strengthen the Bank's position at the local and regional level. At the local level, NBK continues to defend its market share, achieving growth across all business lines. Moreover, NBK continues to reap the benefits from its acquisition of 58.4 percent of Boubyan Bank in 2012. Boubyan Bank has achieved strong growth and high performance since its acquisition increasing its market share year on year."

Al-Sayer also added that the performance of NBK's international operations remains very lucrative despite the challenges that came with lower oil prices and uncertainty in global economic outlook. NBK Group generated 28.3 percent of the year's profits from its branches, associates and subsidiaries outside Kuwait affirming the banks' successful strategy of regional and international diversification. "NBK enjoys a wide regional presence as an extension of the Kuwaiti market and continues to strengthen its position in those mar-



Nasser MUSAED AL-SAYER



Isam Al-Sayer

kets to focus on promising growth opportunities to achieve complementarity and integration across international operations" Al-Sayer added.

It is worth mentioning that during 1Q 2016 NBK's General Assembly approved increasing the bank's authorized capital to KD 600 million. More recently, the Board of Directors approved increasing the bank's issued and paid-in capital by 6.5 percent through a rights issue, issuing 344 million shares priced at 400 fils per share (a nominal value of 100 fils/share in addition to a premium of 300 fils/share).

This issuance aims to boost NBK's capital base and enhance the Bank's leading role in financing mega projects. The capital increase is a significant addition to NBK's position being the largest financial institution in Kuwait with the most systemic importance. As of end-March 2016, NBK's

capital adequacy ratio (CAR) reached 16.4 percent exceeding regulatory requirements.

NBK continues to enjoy collectively the highest ratings among all banks in the Middle East from the three international rating agencies Moody's, Fitch Ratings and Standard and Poor's. The Bank's ratings are supported by its high capitalization, prudent lending policies, and its disciplined approach to risk management, in addition to its highly recognized and very stable management team. NBK maintains its position among Global Finance's list of the 50 safest banks in the world for the tenth consecutive time. NBK enjoys the widest banking presence with a local and international network reaching 4 continents. NBK's international presence spans many of the world's leading financial centers including New York, Europe, GCC, Middle East, Singapore as well as China (Shanghai).



(\$594 million) after adjusting for the sale of NBK's stake in IBQ. Total assets as of end of March 2016 reached KD 24.7 billion (\$81.7 billion) up 5.8 percent compared to end of March 2015, while total shareholders' equity increased by 1.7 percent to KD 2.6 billion (\$8.8 billion). Customer loans and advances reached KD 13.6 billion (\$44.9 billion) as of end of March 2016, growing at 9.6 percent year-on-year, while customer deposits grew

the ongoing uncertainty in global economic outlook and as oil prices remain under pressure. Nasser Al-Sayer, NBK Chairman, said "NBK's first quarter profits reflects NBK's strong financial position, high asset quality, conservative management and the bank's successful strategy as well as its conservative policy."

Al-Sayer affirmed that the strong set of results in 1Q 2016 are driven mainly by the

78.9

**Million KD Net Profit
for the 1st Quarter, 2016**

31/03/2016

Net Profit

78.9
Million KD

**Net Operating
Income**

179.2
Million KD

**Shareholders'
Equity**

2.6
Billion KD

Total Assets

24.7
Billion KD

Moody's Aa3 FitchRatings AA- Standard & Poor's A+

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DOHA: Nigerian oil minister Emmanuel Ibe Kachikwu (center) arrives for the organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) meeting, in the Qatari capital Doha yesterday. —AFP



DOHA: Saudi Oil Minister Ali Al-Naimi (center right) arrives at an oil-producers' meeting in Doha yesterday. — AP

PROPERTY INVESTMENT IS A TRUE ASSET CLASS

By Hayder Tawfik

Thanks mainly to central banks actions and falling inflation; dismal returns on cash and negative bond returns are making property investment the choice for those who are looking for income. As big investors such as pension funds and Sovereign Wealth Funds are looking for income, the pressure to invest in property is unlikely to go away for years to come.

Pension fund managers are not the type of investors that you usually take seriously. Why? Because they are long-term investors who look for income generating stocks. But the investment world follows their investment strategy for any hint of changing their investment style. Like Sovereign Wealth Funds, they manage trillions of the US dollar and they are much bigger than those funds. They also have huge inflow of money. So, investors should take note of what they are up to.

Over the past few years, they have been busy investing in income generating properties all over the world. Admittedly, coming from a low base. This implies that for them and Sovereign Wealth Funds, property investments have become a good and reliable asset class. There has been a big factor behind this shift into property investments. I believe it is structural and will be lasting for a long time.

The ever-increasing demand on pension fund managers to generate income to satisfy ever-increasing retirees has made the industry look beyond their traditional investment classes. In doing so they are venturing out beyond their safe zones. The flow of pension money looking for those safe income generating properties have increased throughout the world. The Sovereign Wealth Funds is another player in this investment field. Most of the Sovereign Wealth Funds are based in the commodity producing countries. The collapse of commodity and oil prices has forced some of the Sovereign Wealth Funds to look to diversify their asset holdings and shift some of the money into property investments. Historically, these investors, focused on equity and bond investments. At present both bonds and stocks look very expensive. For reasons of structural and demographic factors, the pension fund industry and the Sovereign



Wealth Funds are faced with difficult decisions. Their greatest priority is just to meet their financial liabilities. For them at present they have a mix of stocks and bonds. So, shifting into property investments should not make them worry about forgoing any potential upside in equities or bonds. On the contrary property investments has low correlation to other asset classes and at the safe time have good income generation.

Property investment, in particular, has big and lasting potential to be taken much further. Investors should be aware that low correlation or no correlation at all does not mean these investments are safe. It just means that different investors for different reasons hold them.

Since the 2008 financial crises, high net worth investors, who suffered badly during the crises have changed their investment approach and have since started investing aggressively in properties. They are looking for absolute returns and for regular cash flow - and real estate has emerged as their most favored asset class, having risen sharply in popularity since 2011. Now that their priority has shifted to preserving their capital, so their asset allocation has changed, and they are looking increasingly at property. In my opinion this is a sound investment approach. It has happened before. Whenever there is a big shift in structural and demographic changes investors look for safe and reliable income generating investments. There are risks when structural factors force money into new asset classes, which many investors may not understand. But the pressure to invest in property or infrastructure is unlikely to abate for many years to come. — Rasameel

SAUDI PULLS BACK AS DOHA DEAL IN DOUBT

MIDEAST STOCK MARKETS

DUBAI: Uncertainty at talks among oil producers in Doha dampened Gulf stock markets yesterday, with Saudi Arabia pulling back after a 4 percent jump last week. Egypt edged up as local investors returned to buy shares. Early yesterday it appeared that producers were close to agreeing an oil output freeze, but negotiations were later delayed into the afternoon as a new proposal called for all OPEC members to agree even though Iran has said it will not take part.

"Investors interpreted the delay to possibly mean a lack of a solid deal," said a Jeddah-based trader, adding that investors would prefer to wait until an agreement was reached. Saudi Arabia's stock index shed 1.5 percent to 6,412 points, falling back from a three-month high hit on Thursday.

But Saudi banks' first-quarter results continued to surprise on the upside, with the largest lender by market value, Al Rajhi Bank, posting a first-quarter net profit of 2.02 billion riyals (\$538.7 million), a 32.8 percent jump, as it cut wage costs and fee income increased. Six analysts surveyed by Reuters had on average forecast quarterly profit of 1.84 billion riyals. Shares in the Islamic lender jumped 1.3 percent. Al Rajhi is the best performer among its peers year-to-date, up 10.6 percent while the banking sub-index is down 5.5 percent in 2016.

Saudi Kayan Petrochemical jumped 2.9 percent to 5.35 riyals after the company made a net loss of 216.3 million riyals in the three months to March 31; the average estimate of three analysts polled by Reuters was for a quarterly loss of 373.8 million riyals. Analysts at NCB Capital, who had estimated Kayan would make a net loss of 391 million riyals, said in note on Sunday that the improvement was due to better gross margins, although they remained "neutral" on the stock with a target price of 5.20 riyals.

"Operational issues, a weak outlook and high debt levels are key risks for the stock," the note added. Saudi Basic Industries, the majority shareholder in Kayan, is scheduled to report earnings in the next few days and fell 1.0 percent. Food manufacturer and retailer Halwani Brothers slumped 6.5 percent after posting a 46.3 percent drop in first-quarter profit to 13.9 million riyals. The company said the sharp decline was mainly due to the devaluation of the Egyptian pound. Halwani derived close to half its total revenue from Egypt in 2015, according to Thomson Reuters data. Another Saudi food manufacturer with a large presence in Egypt, Savola, which has yet to publish its quarterly report, dropped 4.3 percent.

Dubai's index fell 0.7 percent as local investors cashed out of mid- to large-cap stocks. Emaar Properties and Dubai Financial Market fell 1.5 and 1.9 percent respectively.

But Shuaa Capital, which has been volatile over the past month, jumped 9.7 percent in heavy trade. There have been rumours that a

major shareholder might be interested in buying out the financial firm. Abu Dhabi-listed Dana Gas jumped 3.6 percent and was the most heavily traded share on that bourse. The Abu Dhabi index rose 0.5 percent. In Qatar, the main index slipped 0.5 percent, with vessels operator Qatar Gas Transport down 0.3 percent.

EGYPT

Cairo's main index gained 0.7 percent as local investors bought shares after being net sellers last week, bourse data showed. Orascom

Telecom Media, the most heavily traded stock, recovered Thursday's 2.6 percent loss and added 2.8 percent. Investment bank EFG Hermes added 3.0 percent after the company said it had acquired Egyptian Gulf Bank's 17.3 percent stake in Tanmeyah Micro Finance for 77.9 million Egyptian pounds (\$8.77 million), taking its total ownership to 94 percent.

Juhayna Food Industries rose 1.4 percent after reporting first-quarter net profit of 80.4 million Egyptian pounds versus 65.2 million in the same period last year. — Reuters

A BUST HITS THE OIL PATCH AS REST OF NATION ENJOYS CHEAP GAS

HOUMA, La: It might sound strange, but the penny-pinching folks in Louisiana's Oil Patch can't wait for the price of gasoline to go back up. Cheap gas at the pump - though a welcome cash infusion for millions of American households - is a way of saying "recession" in south Louisiana, where oil wells are as common as shrimp nets and alligators.

Since 2014, Louisiana has lost about 12,000 oil and gas jobs as prices have declined, according to the Louisiana Workforce Commission. Nationwide, about 100,000 jobs related to the oil and gas industry have been lost since January 2015, the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics reports.

Many are left wondering when prices will rise again. "Yesterday, I paid \$1.87 for gas," Patti Lafont said, shaking her head while waiting on tables at a restaurant in Houma, deep in the Oil Patch. "I would rather pay any day \$3.87 per gallon because, over here, that's what we live on: fishing and the oilfield." Houma is a city of 34,000 people in the steamy Cajun swamps southwest of New Orleans. It's transformed itself from the sleepy farming and fishing town it was in the '50s into a bustling hub serving the needs of oil drillers in the field, whether extracting oil on land or far out in the Gulf of Mexico. Now - as is happening in other oil-dependent states such as Texas, Wyoming, North Dakota and Alaska - Louisiana is being clobbered by an unexpected worldwide oversupply of crude oil - a glut that has wreaked havoc on those economies.

Among factors making oil so cheap: a slowing Chinese economy, Saudi Arabia's decision to not reduce oil production and, more recently, the lifting of the embargo on Iran's oil. Adding to the over-supply are advances in drilling techniques like hydraulic fracturing. And then there's the growth in wind, solar and natural gas. A barrel of Brent crude oil closed at \$43.10 Friday. So far, cheap gas is considered to be helping the US economy more than

it's hurting. Not here, though. Oil-producing Louisiana, where drilling jobs are vital, has been crippled as it no longer makes sense to drill. The severe drop in oil prices has hammered a state government already struggling with budget problems and considering cutting funding for colleges, hospitals and public services to make up for lost revenues.

"Louisiana is in a recession," said economist Walter Lane, at the University of New Orleans. "Oil prices are the primary reason." In Houma, the mood is grim. "Reduced hours and layoffs are all around us," said Greg Fakier, who runs a Main Street jewelry shop.

People are making comparisons with what happened in the 1980s. That infamous bust left high-rise buildings empty shells in New Orleans as people left in droves: Louisiana lost about 7 percent of its population then, according to a Louisiana State University study. "I see no light at the end of the tunnel for business to pick back up any time soon," said Mike Moncla, head of a Lafayette-based oil services company with a fleet of barge rigs. In 2015, the company topped 633 employees, while today it's down to 270. "We are just producing too much oil."

In Houma, workers are doing anything to make ends meet. "People are going back to fishing," said Roger Boudreaux, a 39-year-old oilfield machinist. "I got friends losing homes." He recently lost his job but found work changing oil at a drive-thru garage. Boudreaux now makes about \$7 an hour. At the machine shop, he earned \$20 an hour. He said the salary drop hit him hard while he raises three children left to his care when his brother died.

At a nearby gas station, Douglas Randall - a fisherman-turned-oilfield truck driver - stood beside his long-idle semi-truck awaiting his next job. He's paid per load and works for oil companies.—AP

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.777
Indian Rupees	4.572
Pakistani Rupees	2.886
Srilankan Rupees	2.092
Nepali Rupees	2.847
Singapore Dollar	225.390
Hongkong Dollar	38.975
Bangladesh Taka	3.853
Philippine Peso	6.581
Thai Baht	8.642

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.643
Qatari Riyal	83.070
Omani Riyal	785.473
Bahraini Dinar	803.110
UAE Dirham	82.335

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	33.675
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	34.427
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.411
Tunisian Dinar	151.430
Jordanian Dinar	426.090
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.015
Syrian Lira	2.155
Morocco Dirham	31.883

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	302.250
Euro	344.870
Sterling Pound	432.220
Canadian dollar	237.710

Turkish lira	107.180
Swiss Franc	317.320
Australian Dollar	234.240
US Dollar Buying	301.050

GOLD

20 Gram	252.300
10 Gram	129.070
5 Gram	65.380

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer

US Dollar	302.750
Canadian Dollar	238.170
Sterling Pound	431.240
Euro	342.830
Swiss Frank	294.080
Bahrain Dinar	800.935
UAE Dirhams	82.670
Qatari Riyals	83.880
Saudi Riyals	81.410
Jordanian Dinar	426.480
Egyptian Pound	33.996
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.094
Indian Rupees	4.543
Pakistani Rupees	2.886
Bangladesh Taka	3.851
Philippines Peso	6.553
Cyprus pound	576.640
Japanese Yen	3.775
Syrian Pound	2.375
Nepalese Rupees	3.850
Malaysian Ringgit	78.575
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	47.070
Thai Bhat	9.580
Turkish Lira	107.505

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY BUY SELL

Europe		
British Pound	0.423826	0.432826
Czech Korune	0.004659	0.016659
Danish Krone	0.041927	0.046927
Euro	0.0336505	0.0344505
Norwegian Krone	0.032761	0.037961
Romanian Leu	0.086817	0.086817
Slovakia	0.009018	0.019018
Swedish Krona	0.033278	0.038278
Swiss Franc	0.3086740	0.316940
Turkish Lira	0.100708	0.111008

Australasia

Australian Dollar	0.225860	0.237360
New Zealand Dollar	0.203553	0.213053

America

Canadian Dollar	0.230991	0.239491
US Dollars	0.298550	0.303050
US Dollars Mint	0.299050	0.303050

Asia

Bangladesh Taka	0.003440	0.004014
Chinese Yuan	0.045169	0.048669
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036949	0.039699
Indian Rupee	0.004350	0.004740
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002701	0.002881

Kenyan Shilling

0.003113	0.003113	
Korean Won	0.000253	0.000268
Malaysian Ringgit	0.073622	0.079622
Nepalese Rupee	0.002884	0.003054
Pakistan Rupee	0.002669	0.002949
Philippine Peso	0.006458	0.006738
Sierra Leone	0.000067	0.000073
Singapore Dollar	0.219759	0.225759
South African Rand	0.014875	0.023375
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001696	0.002276
Taiwan	0.009248	0.009428
Thai Baht	0.008289	0.008839

Arab

Bahraini Dinar	0.796216	0.804216
Egyptian Pound	0.030692	0.035810
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000192	0.000252
Jordanian Dinar	0.422863	0.430363
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.000251
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020643	0.044643
Nigerian Naira	0.001248	0.001883
Omani Riyal	0.779684	0.785364
Qatar Riyal	0.082419	0.083632
Saudi Riyal	0.079820	0.080770
Syrian Pound	0.001283	0.001503
Tunisian Dinar	0.147693	0.155693
Turkish Lira	0.100708	0.111008
UAE Dirhams	0.081419	0.082568
Yemeni Riyal	0.001368	0.001448



Mercedes customer visual.

Getting you back on the road

Mercedes-Benz Kuwait



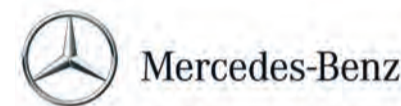
Mercedes Benz body parts

KUWAIT: Whether a minor scratch or major collision, Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Alkazemi's new Expert Repair Programme combines a range of smart services to bring your car back to its original condition quickly, professionally and at an affordable cost. Offered at authorised Mercedes-Benz workshops and carried out by well-trained specialists using modern manufacturing processes and the latest repair techniques, the Expert Repair Programme not only helps in preserving a car's value, but also ensures it is maintained well into the future.

The use of Mercedes-Benz GenuineParts guarantees superiority in terms of strength and shape; fit and installation; durability and corrosion protection; and value and warranty. Precision-manufactured parts also fit perfectly into the existing structure to ensure the original level of crash protection is restored. Highly trained repair experts evaluate each case individually and determine the optimum repair process to ensure even the most complex damages do not impair the stability and functionality of the vehicle, nor the technical and visual appeal.

"Driving is an enjoyable part of everyday life but accidents do occur. Ensuring your vehicle not only looks good, but is safe to drive after an accident is of para-

mount importance, and with Mercedes-Benz's new Expert Repair service, customers will now have one less thing to worry about. Our experienced specialists are familiar with our complex vehicle system, modern manufacturing processes



Mercedes-Benz body panels.

and latest repair techniques and will ensure the repair process restores any vehicle to its original, if not better state" said Thomas Garbarek, senior manager after sales at Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Alkazemi.

Mercedes-Benz authorized workshops use state of the art paint systems developed by long-standing partners in the vehicle paint industry, keeping cars protected from the elements, maintain-

ing a strong body and maximizing service life. Paint systems have been thoroughly tested and approved for use on Mercedes-Benz vehicles, having complied with all quality standards. Customers also benefit from paint partners offering high level support to authorized workshops, from paint damage diagnosis and product advice to user and material training.

To ensure the smoothest process possible the inspections and insurance claims are processed in cooperation with the representative from the authorized service centres. Then the expert technicians perform repair work using only Mercedes-Benz GenuineParts and conduct quality checks to ensure all work meets stringent company standards. A 24-hour service hotline also assures Mercedes-Benz customers have access to immediate support in case of breakdown.

A R Albisher and Z Alkazemi's Mercedes-Benz expert repair workshop is located in Al-Rai.

All Mercedes-Benz service centres are open from Sat-Wed 07:30 am to 06:00 pm and on Thursdays from 07:30 am to 12:00 pm. Service centre numbers are: Shuwaikh 1-833-111 Ext. 200/254, Alrai 1-833-111 Ext. 806/832 and Ahmadi 2398-2111. Mercedes-Benz 24 hour service hotline number is 9728 8814.

GERMANY AND FRANCE OPTIMISTIC FOR SOLUTION TO GREECE IMPASSE

WASHINGTON: The finance ministers of Germany and France said Saturday they were hopeful of a deal soon to move Greece's bailout ahead, reiterating that the IMF needs to be involved.

Speaking a day after the International Monetary Fund questioned the viability of current proposals, Germany's Wolfgang Schäuble said that a resolution between Athens and its official lenders could be struck following next weekend's meeting of European finance ministers in Amsterdam.

Schäuble said that even before arriving in Washington this week for the Spring Meetings of the IMF and World Bank "my optimism was already big." "And it surely hasn't become smaller," he added.

He did not detail how differences with the Greeks over their commitment to reforms—especially on pensions—and their need for debt relief would be resolved. Still, Schäuble said, "it is the common will of all three institutions, the EU commission, ECB (European Central Bank) and IMF to negotiate with the Greek government on the basis of a unified position." "Everybody knows that the maneuvering space for the Greek government is limited," he said. "But all say at the same time Greece must do more and can do more." Also in Washington, France's Finance Minister Michel Sapin said an agreement on Greece could come out of the Ecofin meeting in Amsterdam.

"It is crucial to resolve the Greek issue now or we will always be on the edge of a cliff," he told reporters. "We have taken advantage of the presence in Washington of many political and financial leaders to move forward."

He stressed the need for the IMF, which has repeatedly expressed frustration with Greece and the EU after taking part in the previous two financial rescues for Greece, to take part again in funding the current plan. "If the IMF is no longer on board it would weigh negatively on resolving the problem," he added. On Friday the IMF's Europe Department chief Poul Thomsen said the Greek fiscal forecasts and debt relief plans currently under discussion might not be plausible.

Troubled talks

Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras on Saturday said reform talks with the country's EU-IMF creditors, delayed by disagreements over pension cuts and bad loans, could conclude by May 1. "I believe the target I have specified, to conclude (the talks) by Orthodox Easter (on May 1)... is feasible," Tsipras told state television ERT. "We are on the verge, I believe we will have an agreement very soon," he said. He added that Athens has already carried out "three-fifths" of its obligations under the latest EU bailout.

Greece has so far adopted economising measures worth 63 billion euros since the start of the crisis in 2010, and will now economise another 5.4 billion euros (\$6.1 billion), Tsipras said. However, the International Monetary Fund says some 8.0 billion euros in savings are needed to meet fiscal targets. The IMF worked with the EU on two previous bailouts for Greece since 2010 but the Washington-based lender has said it would not participate in the third rescue plan Tsipras brokered with the EU last summer without credible reforms and an EU agreement to ease Greece's soaring public debt. — AFP

DOLLAR INDEX BOUNCES OFF ITS EIGHT-MONTH LOWS

KUWAIT: Financial leaders from the Group of 20 nations said last week they were encouraged by a recent recovery in financial markets, but cautioned that global growth was "modest and uneven" and threatened by weakness of commodities based economies. Additionally, the G20 finance ministers and central bank governors repeated their pledge to refrain from competitive currency devaluations.

Last week, the dollar index dropped sharply reaching an eight month low of 93.62 as the Federal Reserve persistently cautious stance on rate hikes weighed on the greenback. By mid-week, the dollar index recovered to a two and a half week high of 95.20, after the US labor department said the number of individuals filing for initial jobless benefits declined to a 42 year low. However, the recovery was short lived and the dollar index slipped lower after US manufacturing output unexpectedly declined in March by the most since February 2015. The dollar index closed at 94.71.

The euro opened the week at 1.1405 and rallied strongly reaching a five month high of 1.1464 where it found lots of resistance. The euro later dropped sharply reaching a low of 1.1230, as a set of strong economic data eased fears of a global slowdown, supporting the falling dollar. The currency closed for the week at 1.1285. The sterling pound quickly weakened last week as concerns regarding the likelihood of a 'Brexit' scenario would still hurt the currency. After opening the week at 1.4122 and reaching a high of 1.4347 amid strong inflation data, the currency fell to a low of 1.4153 and closed the week at 1.4200 against the dollar.

The Japanese yen also declined against the greenback week as positive data from the US economy continue to keep the dollar supported. The pair opened the week at 108.05 and quickly reached a low of 107.61. However, positive data released from the US pushed investors to buy the dollar, pushing it to a high of 109.70 against the Yen. The pair closed the week at 108.75.

US crude futures fell slightly last week, as traders adopted a cautious approach ahead of today's meeting of oil producers in Doha. Brent oil dropped to a low of \$42.86 a barrel while Crude oil dropped to a low of \$ 40.37 a barrel. However, oil prices have risen by 15 percent in the last ten days in anticipation that a production freeze can be agreed.

Unemployment claims

US consumer prices climbed modestly in March for the first time in four months, representing little urgency for the Federal Reserve to increase interest rates in the short term. CPI index rose by 0.1 percent last month as a recovery in gasoline prices was partially offset by a decline in the cost of food. While the measure rose the most since November, it came in against economists' expectations for a 0.2 per-

NBK MONEY MARKETS REPORT

cent gain. Americans filing for unemployment benefits declined to a 42 year low indicating that employers are upbeat about the US economy. The US labor department said Initial Jobless Claims for state unemployment benefits decreased 13,000 to a seasonally adjusted 253,000 for the week ended April 9.

Industrial production

Industrial production in the US dropped more than expected in March, dampening optimism over the health of the economy. The Federal Reserve said that industrial production decreased by a seasonally adjusted 0.6 percent last month, worse than expectations for a decline of 0.1 percent. Manufacturers are still under pressure from week overseas markets while last year's surge in the dollar and plunge in commodities prices continue to effect exports.

On another front, US consumer confidence unexpectedly dropped in April to the weakest level in seven months as Americans were upset

decisively end a long phase of debilitating deflation.

Europe's final CPI improves

Euro zone consumer prices stopped dropping in March, giving hope to the ECB that its efforts to increase low inflation will pay off once energy prices stabilize. The February's 0.2 percent drop had strengthened concerns that Europe was heading for a new period of falling prices, despite the ECB's aggressive stimulus measures. However March's reading restored ECB's hopes that inflation will start moving closer to its target of just below 2 percent once the recent small rebound in the market price of crude oil starts filtering through to the real economy.

Eurozone production deteriorating

Eurozone industrial production dropped more than expected due to lower output of non-durable goods. Industrial production in the EU was 0.8 percent lower in February than in



by unsatisfying wage growth and concern over how the upcoming presidential election would impact the economy. The University of Michigan's preliminary sentiment index for this month fell to 89.7, the lowest since September, from 91 in March.

Europe & UK

Financial leaders from the Group of 20 major economies discussed ways to keep global growth from stalling and the fading effectiveness of loose monetary policy. In parallel to the Group of 20 meetings in Washington, Japan's Finance Minister Tarō met with US Treasury Secretary Lew expressing deep concerns over the one-sided currency moves that earlier this week saw the yen hit its strongest levels in more than 17 months against the Dollar. He also indicated that the BOJ is struggling to achieve its 2 percent inflation target, which is a key part of premier Abe's efforts to

January, a slightly greater decline than the 0.7 percent average economists forecasted. Eurozone yearly industrial production rose by 0.8 percent, below the average market expectation of a 1.2 percent increase.

The Bank of England has decided to hold rates at 0.5 percent once again, a record low for seven years. All nine members of the BoE's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted to hold on to low rates amid concerns over global growth and uncertainty ahead of a Brexit vote. The BoE issued its clearest warning yet that a British exit from the EU would probably hurt the economy and cause sterling to slide, angering pro-Brexit campaigners.

On a different front, UK's CPI rose by 0.5 percent in the year to March 2016, compared with a 0.3 percent rise in the year to February. The inflation rate has risen gradually since October 2015 although it is still relatively low in the historical context. Rises in clothing prices and air fares

were the main contributors to the increase. However, inflation rate are still well below the Bank of England's 2 percent target. The BoE said in February it expected inflation to stay below 1 percent all year and to undershoot its target until 2018, due to the global slump in oil prices and weak wage growth.

Australia's business confidence

Australian Business confidence survey climbed to +6 in March from +3 in the prior month. The increase in business conditions will be an important input for the Reserve Bank of Australia updated predictions on the economy due in the quarterly statement on monetary policy in May. The market is currently pricing in around a 40 percent chance of a 25 basis-point cut at the May meeting and this data are likely to lead to a retreat in pricing.

The unemployment rate also came at 5.7 percent, beating expectations of 5.9 percent from 5.8 percent in February. The number comes the lowest level since September 2013. In details, the economy gained 26,100 jobs in the month versus economists' expectations that it would gain 17,000. However it lost 700 jobs in February, a downwards revision from an earlier estimate that it had added 300 positions. Part-time employment was responsible for much of this boost as there were an additional 34,900 positions that are not full-time, whereas 8,800 full-time positions were lost.

China's GDP unchanged

China's economy grew by 6.7 percent year-on-year in the first quarter of 2016, marking the slowest pace of growth since the height of the financial crisis in 2009, according to the figures released by the China's National Bureau of Statistics. Despite the slight deceleration in growth, analysts suggested that the economy had a 'good start' to the year, since the outlook has improved with both the manufacturing and property sectors rebounding strongly.

China's fixed-asset investment growth accelerated to 10.7 percent year-on-year in the Jan-March period, well above market expectations of a 10.3 percent rise and Industrial output growth accelerated to 6.8 percent, surpassing analysts who expectation of a 5.9 percent on an annual basis after a rise of 5.4 percent.

Japan's core machinery orders dropped less than expected in February in a sign that capital expenditure is starting to stabilize, but a strong yen still clouds the outlook. The 9.2 percent monthly decline in core orders was less than analyst's median estimate for a 12.4 percent drop. However, if recent gains in the yen continue, companies could curb investment plans on worries that corporate profits will fall.

Kuwait
Kuwaiti dinar at 0.30165
The USDKD opened at 0.30165 yesterday morning.

G20 PLEDGES FORCEFUL RESPONSE TO BOOST ECONOMY

WASHINGTON: Finance officials on Saturday pledged a more forceful effort to stimulate a sluggish global economy. The hope is that stronger growth can boost long-stagnant wages and combat a rising backlash against globalization.

The finance leaders said they will use all the policy tools available to them to promote "strong, sustainable, inclusive, job-rich and more balanced global growth." The commitment came in a joint statement from the policy-setting panel of the 189-nation International Monetary Fund at the end of its spring meeting in Washington. Markets have stabilized after a chaotic start to the year, when fears were growing about a possible new global recession. But

the IMF's communique cited a long list of threats, from terrorist attacks and the Syrian refugee crisis to the shock to global confidence from a potential exit by Britain from the European Union.

"Against this backdrop, it is important to buttress confidence in our policies," the IMF said. The IMF discussions followed two days of talks among finance officials of the Group of 20 major economies. Representing the United States were Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew and Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen. The concern about economic growth was heightened at the beginning of this year by tumult in financial markets. Investors feared that China's economy, the world's second biggest, was slowing more

than expected, raising the possibility of a global recession.

Agust Carstens, the head of the Bank of Mexico and chairman of the IMF's policy panel, said finance leaders realized "there was no room for complacency" even though markets have stabilized.

New threats may imperil efforts to promote greater trade and capital flows between countries. Many nations buffeted by the forces of globalization have lost jobs and workers' wages have stagnated. In the United States, this anger has propelled the presidential candidacy of Republican front-runner Donald Trump. In Britain, voters will decide in June whether to leave the European Union.

The finance leaders said they believed their actions would help stimulate growth and boost jobs and wages. But they acknowledged there was no time to waste in producing results.

"Clearly the question is how much is going to get done back home," IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde said. The IMF policy group and the G-20 leaders also worked on a stronger response to international tax evasion, stepping up efforts to penalize countries that do not share tax information.

This issue came under renewed scrutiny after the leak this month of 11.5 million confidential documents from a Panamanian law firm. The Panama Papers show how some of the world's richest people hide assets in shell companies to avoid paying taxes.

Iceland's prime minister resigned after it was revealed that he and his wife set up a company in the British Virgin Islands, a tax haven. British Prime Minister David Cameron was forced to release his tax returns for the first time after the papers raised questions about his family's affairs. Even as the G-20 and IMF pledged greater cooperation, differences among nations remained. Lew warned countries to avoid manipulating their currencies to increase trade. He urged countries with large trade surpluses to boost spending to bolster global demand.

But German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schaueble said that uncertainty in financial markets warranted a "high degree of caution" and control of government

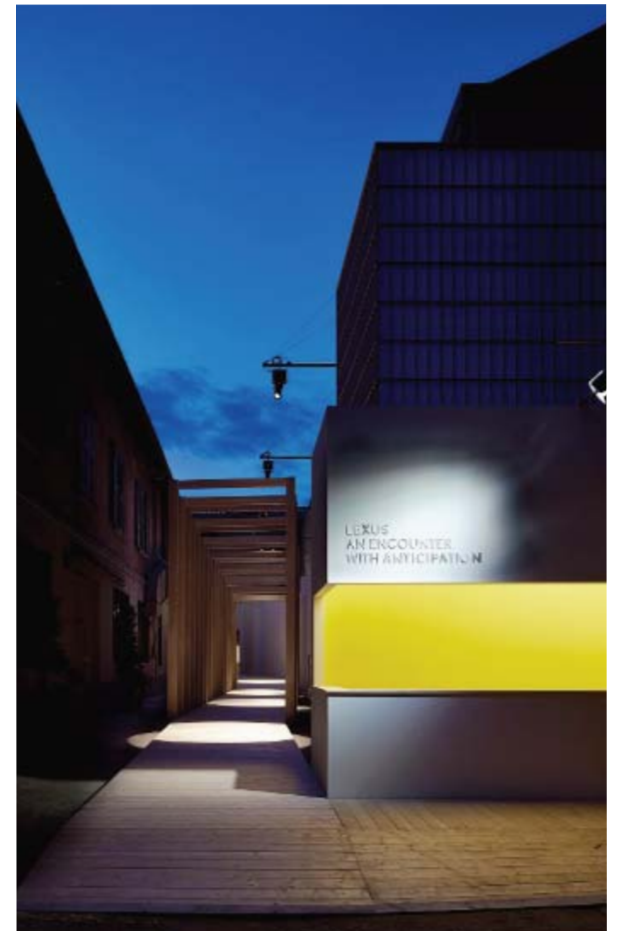
spending. In remarks to the IMF panel, Lew said at a time of "slow and uneven global growth, avoiding beggar-thy-neighbor exchange rate policies" was essential. The United States has in the past worried about currency manipulation by China and Japan to help their exports.

Schaueble said Germany intended to stick to its plans for a balanced budget, warning that rising budget deficits can drag down growth. World markets were rattled in January by a drop in the Chinese currency and by tumbling oil prices, potential signs of deep trouble for the global economy. Since then, the yuan and oil prices have stabilized. On Friday, China said its economy registered solid 6.7 percent growth the first three months of 2016.

Still, the IMF this past week downgraded its outlook for the economy this year and cited risks that could make things worse: conflict in the Middle East, the refugee crisis in Europe, Britain's possible exit from the EU, and the growing political backlash in the United States and Europe against international trade. Japanese Finance Minister Taro Aso told reporters that financial markets are starting to regain "composure." But he expressed concern about risks from volatility in capital flows and foreign exchange rates.

Even China's solid first-quarter numbers raised fears that Beijing is backsliding on commitments to reform its economy. Critics worry it pumped up those figures by investing heavily in inefficient state-owned companies. — AP

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report															
Sunday 17 April 2016															
Index	Change	Closing	Last Closing	High	Low										
Price Index	▲ 15.96	5,316.47	5,300.51	5,318.43	5,279.53										
Weighted Index	▲ 1.15	366.22	365.07	366.24	363.02										
KXSX 15	▲ 3.24	866.38	863.14	866.38	857.92										
Trades															
Security	High	Low	Volume	Value (KD)	Trades	Last	Change	Security	High	Low					
MARIN	102	102	5550	566	1	102	▲ 0.0	SOKOUK	36.0	35.5	1196147	42,694	34	36.0	▲ 0.5
IKARIUS	58	58	430,510	24,970	25	58	▼ -5.0	KRE	49.0	48.5	3,165,500	154,369	28	49.0	▼ -0.5
IPG	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	320	▲ 0.0	URC	85	84	7,627	842	3	85	▲ 1.0
NAPESCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	680	▲ 0.0	NRE	90	88	906,361	81,471	18	90	▲ 1.0
ENERGYH	42.0	42.0	500	21	1	42.0	▲ 1.5	SRE	355	350	1,500	530	2	355	▼ -5.0
GPI	42.0	40.5	4,010,858	164,389	79	41.5	▲ 0.0	TAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	550	▲ 0.0
ABAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	104	▲ 0.0	AREEC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	138	▲ 0.0
Oil & Gas			4,447,418	189,946	106	760.42	▼ -1.90	MASSALEH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	43.5	▲ 0.0
KFOUC	190	186	51,698	9,703	10	190	▲ 2.0	ARABREC	31.0	30.5	640,200	19,645	16	31.0	▼ -0.5
BPC	520	520	6,010	3,125	2	520	▲ 0.0	ERESCO	56	54	199,357	10,886	6	56	▲ 0.0
ALKOUT	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	610	▲ 0.0	MABANEE	860	850	63,858	54,386	6	860	▲ 0.0
ALQURAIN	208	204	622,367	129,027	25	208	▲ 4.0	INUZZAT	80	80	100	8	1	80	▲ 0.0
Basic Materials			680,075	141,855	37	978.26	▼ 10.05	INVESTORS	23.0	22.5	4,649,884	104,655	57	23.0	▲ 0.5
KCEM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	380	▲ 0.0	IRC	30.0	29.0	1,047,166	30,519	36	30.0	▲ 1.0
REFRI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	305	▲ 0.0	ALTJARIA	77	76	377,764	28,714	16	77	▲ 1.0
CABLE	355	350	1,815	636	4	355	▲ 0.0	SANAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	35.5	▲ 0.0
SHIP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	144	▲ 0.0	AAYANRE	69	68	197,068	13,402	4	68	▼ -1.0
PCEM	1,040	1,040	2,000	2,060	1	1,040	▲ 0.0	AQAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	60	▲ 0.0
PAPER	310	310	10,000	3,100	1	310	▼ -25.0	ALQAARIA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	22.5	▲ 0.0
MRC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	64	▲ 0.0	MAZAYA	118	116	1,570,000	185,190	23	118	▲ 0.0
ACICO	280	280	2,000	560	1	280	▲ 5.0	ADNC	16.5	15.5	32,137,981	513,754	232	15.5	▼ -1.5
GGMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	450	▲ 0.0	THEMAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	90	▲ 0.0
HCC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	134	▲ 0.0	TUARA	36.5	35.0	433,025	15,705	7	36.0	▲ 0.0
KBMMC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	250	▲ 0.0	TAAMEER	22.5	22.0	1,607,500	35,378	44	22.0	▼ -0.5
NICBM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	240	▲ 0.0	ARKAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	94	▲ 0.0
EQUIPMENT	58	56	1,997,328	113,372	58	58	▲ 1.0	ARGAN	162	160	347,655	56,879	18	162	▼ -2.0
NCCI	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	99	▲ 0.0	ABYAAR	25.5	25.0	1,287,200	32,656	18	25.0	▼ -0.5
GYPSUM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	▲ 0.0	MUNSHAAT	50	48.5	819,870	40,255	22	50	▲ 0.0
SALBOOKH	78	73	2,002,094	152,622	96	78	▲ 5.0	FIRSTDUBAI	56	53	1,790,612	97,804	93	56	▲ 3.0
AGLTY	495	480	912,409	445,632	39	495	▲ 10.0	KBT	43.0	42.5	1,131,607	48,589	31	43.0	▲ 0.0
EDU	200	200	5	1	1	200	▲ 10.0	REAM	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	146	▲ 0.0
CLEANING	39.0	39.0	62,700	2,445	5	39.0	▲ 0.0	MENA	23.0	22.0	340,300	7,493	16	22.0	▲ 0.0
CITYGROUP	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	530	▲ 0.0	ALMUDON	31.0	30.0	1,704,000	51,866	32	31.0	▼ -0.5
KGL	46.5	46.0	101,825	4,724	6	46.0	▼ -1.0	MARAKEZ	26.5	23.5	9,989	236	5	23.5	▼ -2.5
KPC	216	216	649	140	1	216	▲ 8.0	REMAL	34.5	33.5	435,500	14,744	21	34.5	▲ 0.5
HUMANSOFT	600	600	10	6	1	600	▲ 40.0	MASHAER	85	80	97,804	8,232	8	80	▼ -5.0
NAFAIS	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	144	▲ 0.0	Real Estate			56,165,575	1,649,703	797	841.83	▼ -0.89
SAFWAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	280	▲ 0.0	KIN	90	85	6,676	762	2	90	▲ 0.0
GFC	33.0	33.0	500	17	1	33.0	▼ -0.5	FACIL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	190	▲ 0.0
MAYADEEN	24.0	23.5	1,034,744	24,319	19	24.0	▲ 0.0	IFA	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	30.5	▲ 0.0
CGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	790	▲ 0.0	NIN	126	118	6,421,406	786,859	162	122	▲ 0.0
MTCC	81	80	40,100	3,208	4	81	▲ 0.0	KPROJ	570	560	80,346	45,197	8	570	▲ 0.0
UPAC	720	720	200	144	1	720	▲ 30.0	COAST	52	47.0	13,688,194	689,630	244	52	▲ 3.5
ALAFCO	212	212	350,000	74,200	10	212	▲ 0.0	SECH	46.5	45.0	3,477,761	158,004	79	46.5	▲ 1.5
MUBARRAD	65	64	81,250	5,203	9	65	▲ 0.0	SGC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	83	▲ 0.0
LOGISTICS	72	71	134,520	9,625	9	72	▼ -1.0	ARZAN	31.5	30.5	2,623,101	80,421	56	31.0	▲ 0.0
SCEM	81	81	1,369	111	2	81	▲ 0.0	MARKAZ	91	91	19,912	1,812	3	91	▲ 0.0
GCEM	77	77	21,461	1,652	1	77	▼ -1.0	KMEFIC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	27.5	▲ 0.0
QCEM	68	68	17,000	1,156	2	68	▼ -1.0	ALAMAN	53	51	124,430	6,386	7	52	▲ 0.0
FCEM	73	72	29,000	2,093	3	72	▼ -3.0	ALOLA	52	50	751,754	38,490	33	52	▲ 0.0
RKWC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	91	▲ 0.0	ALMAL	35.5	34.0	9,541,168	329,211	177	35.5	▲ 1.0
SPCC	77	67	80,600	5,451	8	77	▲ 5.0	GIH	28.0	26.0	7,333,815	199,623	107	27.5	▲ 1.0
Industrials			6,883,579	852,498	283	974.83	▲ 9.05	AAYAN	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	39.5	▲ 0.0
KSH	166	166	10,000	1,660	1	166	▲ 0.0	BAYANINV	36.5	35.5	2,607,540	93,189	62	35.5	▼ -1.0
NSH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	64	▲ 0.0	OSOUL	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	45.5	▲ 0.0
PAPCO	110	110	1,930	212	2	110	▲ 0.0	KPIC	34.5	34.5	560	19	1	34.5	▲ 0.0
CATL	132	132	1,078	142	2	132	▲ 0.0	KAMCO	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	102	▲ 0.0
DANAH	73	71	243,410	17,409	17	73	▲ 1.0	NIH	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	49.0	▲ 0.0
POULT	176	176	252	44	1	176	▲ 0.0	ISKAN	31.0	29.5	6,238,886	190,872	87	31.0	▲ 1.0
FOOD	2,640	2,520	21,073	54,781	24	2,620	▲ 20.0	MADAR	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	16.0	▲ 0.0
Consumer Goods			277,743	74,249	47	1084.84	▲ 3.37	ALDEERA	40.5	37.0	699,984	27,467	41	40.0	▲ 0.0
MHC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	200	▲ 0	ALSALAM	36.0	35.0	3,045,438	108,400	54	35.5	▼ -1.5
ATC	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	920	▲ 0	EKTTITAB	32.5	31.5	694,105	22,192	20	32.5	▲ 1.0
YIACO	200	200	5	1	1	200	▲ 10	ALMADINA	37.5	36.0	3,051,186	112,784	74	37.0	▲ 0.0
Health Care			5	1	1	964.23 </									



Garden overview.

AGAR PLASTICITY wins the Lexus Design Award 2016

Lexus International announced recently that an elite judging committee has named 'AGAR PLASTICITY - A Potential Usefulness of Agar for Packaging and More' by AMAM, the Grand Prix winner of the Lexus Design Award 2016.

"This is a bold and ambitious experiment, which aims to address one of the biggest pollution problems of our time. The designers have made tremendous progress during the course of the award cycle, particularly in devis-

ed the AMAM team for their winning project, stating "they have displayed great imagination and creativity in creating this project while keeping in mind the theme of 'Anticipation' for this year's award. The emergence of such talented designers is a fitting tribute to the objective of the Lexus Design Award which is to encourage and find worthy designers and help them to make an impact on the world of design."

Yoshitsugu continued: "At Lexus, design is

twelve finalists are on display, including the Grand Prix winner's prototype, the three other prototype works, and the eight panel displays of the remaining finalists. This year's Lexus Design Award drew 1,232 submissions representing a wide variety of highly innovative ideas from 73 countries. In keeping with the theme of 'Anticipation', many submissions were designed as yet unseen or undefined concepts that are likely to be realized in the near future.

Lexus International currently has a public exhibit called 'Lexus - An Encounter with Anticipation' in Torneria, Milan. The exhibit will present a unique encounter that features a special collaboration between the widely acclaimed design team Formafantasma and Michelin Star winning chef Yoji Tokuyoshi.

Lexus - An Encounter with Anticipation

'Lexus - An Encounter with Anticipation' provides an unexpected and incomparable encounter that invites visitors to experience the world of anticipation. Visiting Japan, Formafantasma was impressed by Lexus' commitment to excellence in craftsmanship, integrity in its production and responsibility in its use of technology. Anticipating the future, Lexus invites visitors to imagine what is yet unseen, and to see how Lexus delivers surprise and enchantment that create amazing experiences.

Lexus designed the three areas within the exhibition space to provide an immersive experience as visitors take a journey into its world of anticipation.

Area 1: Discovering Craftsmanship

Lexus enables visitors to discover its commitment to craftsmanship and building fine cars in this area. The 18 beautiful stools positioned here are finished using the same paint process as that used on the Lexus LF-FC flagship concept, which was premiered at the 2015 Tokyo Motor Show. By viewing and touching these stools, visitors are able to experience the quality and depth of the colours. Also on display are the works of the twelve finalists, including the four prototypes, from which 'AGAR PLASTICITY - A Potential Usefulness of Agar for Packaging and More' by AMAM was named the Grand Prix winner, as well as eight panel displays.

The winning designs of Lexus Design Award 2016 evoke a sense of anticipation, inviting visitors to walk through and discover the next generation of creators.

Area 2: Revealing the Unexpected

Lexus brings shape to previously unimagined designs, and does so in unexpected fashion. In the centre of a room with walls inspired by Japanese shoji, a dynamic floating three-dimensional image of the LF-FC takes shape in an unexpected way. The design creates a sense of anticipation as the viewer watches the concept assume physical dimensions. The display pays homage to the constant search for perfection demonstrated by the Lexus design team as they anticipate the future of mobility.



Area 3: Sensing Innovation

Lexus continually anticipates the needs of people and the environment as it demonstrates a keen sense for forward thinking and innovation. Inspired by the hydrogen-powered LF-FC, the installation uses advanced

hydrogen fuel cell technology to light a kinetic sculpture inspired by the shape of a hydrogen atom, anticipating a future with clean technology that generates electricity while producing clear water as its only emission.

Clear water then becomes the inspiration for culinary treats, as Chef Yoji Tokuyoshi integrates water's buoyancy and transparent properties to create a unique taste experience served with the spirit of Japanese hospitality. His first dish presents nasturtium leaves topped with a sweet and sour berry paste floating on a pool of clear water. The two flavours mix in the mouth, delivering an unexpected taste experience. The ingredients of his other dish symbolise things that may be seen or may remain imperceptible but hint at the unexpected. As the visitor consumes the clear seafood broth, a transparent ball of natural gelatine is revealed, delivering an unanticipated treat as it fills the mouth with a fresh citrus flavour.

LEXUS DESIGN AWARD

Lexus Design Award logo.



ing a wide range of possible practical applications for the material. Their success in doing so gives us confidence in their ability to tackle the many challenges and complexities they will face in continuing the development of the project," said Alice Rawsthorn, Lexus Design Award 2016 Judge.

Takayuki Yoshitsugu, Chief Representative, Middle East and North Africa Representative Office, Toyota Motor Corporation congratulat-

not only an essential cornerstone of making superlative vehicles, but also a way of using innovative design to make the world a better place. We would like to thank our customers in the Middle East for their support of our initiatives related to shaping the future of design."

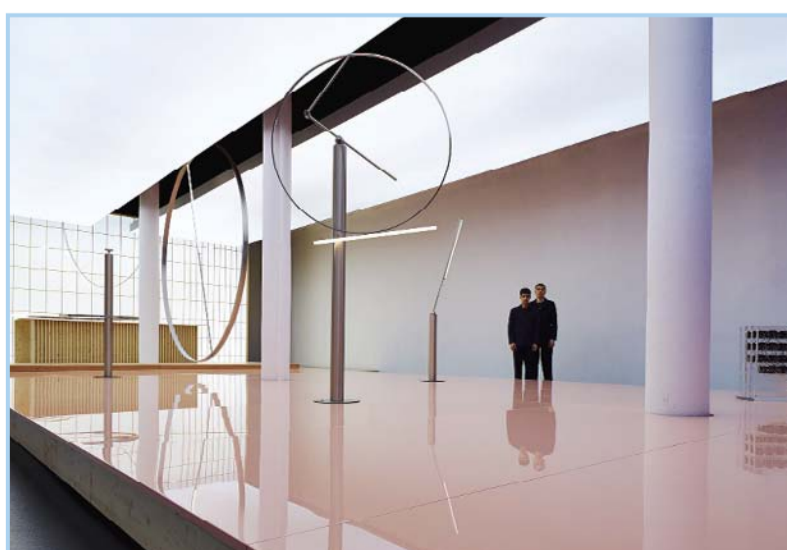
The selection was made based on presentations by the four prototype finalists at the 'Lexus - An Encounter with Anticipation' exhibit at Milan Design Week 2016. The works of all



Discovering Craftsmanship



Lexus Design Award 2016 Grand Prix Winner + Mentor



Sensing innovation



Lexus Design Award 2016



Lexus Design Award 2016 Grand Prix winner team.



Nissan Al-Babtain thanks its loyal customers at aftersales customer award ceremony 2015

KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al-Babtain Co, the exclusive agent of Nissan vehicles in Kuwait, celebrated the success of its key customers during the "7th Annual Aftersales Customer Award Ceremony 2015-2016" which was held at the Crown Plaza Hotel, on March 30, 2016.

The event was held for the seventh consecutive year to recognize and thank the loyal customers who support "Nissan" and Al-Babtain group in their journey to success on Kuwait roads.

The 7th Annual Aftersales Customer Award Ceremony was attended by Mohammad Shalaby, Chief Operating Officer of Al-Babtain

group, David Graves - Aftersales Director of Nissan Gulf Free Zone Co (NGF) and his team, business community leaders from different industries, senior officials of the corporate world, government officers and Nissan vehicle owners. All were eager and enthusiastic to cheer the success of the loyal winners from different categories.

Awards during the evening were presented under different categories, which were, Best Fleet Customers, Best Wholesale Customers, Best Insurance Companies, and Best Garage Customers for both service and parts, presented to customers who contributed to the growth and success of the organization.

During the evening an emphasis was made to spread awareness to all Nissan/Infiniti vehicles owners that there are a lot of fake products now available in the market which are identical in appearance and hard to differentiate, but extremely risky for usage due to its poor quality and unreliability. Therefore, all vehicle owners should always support the purchase of genuine parts.

Chief Operating Officer of Al-Babtain group - Mohammed Shalaby said, "Al-Babtain Group gained its success and excellence due to the continuous support, confidence, trust and loyalty of its customers to its products, services, people and management. Today we celebrate

the partnership with our loyal customers and we are building on future partnerships with different businesses. We look forward to achieve many more accomplishments in the future through cooperation.

Today Nissan Kuwait has the largest Aftersales Service and Parts Network in Kuwait with 9 Service Centers and 14 Parts Centers. Nissan aftersales took many new initiatives during 2015 including thrust on digital marketing such as Facebook, Instagram and radio. Shortly new parts product lines including Nissan oil, Nissan Battery and more will be added.

Al-Babtain group places high emphasis on training and development of its staff. Their

technicians attended the body repair and paint training in Japan, and advances technical skills training N Step3 through Nissan Motors Co, Japan's Certified Trainer. Technical trainings were also held for their fleet customers.

Nissan Al-Babtain also displayed the gold and bronze medals received during Nissan's regional skills contest. Infiniti Al-Babtain also won three Service Hero Awards this year, First Place "Car Servicing 2015" (Infiniti Service) for the third year consecutive year, First Place "New Car Sales 2015" for the second consecutive year, and for the first time an automotive company receives the title of First place "Country Winner 2015".



JAZEERA AIRWAYS SHAREHOLDERS APPROVE KD3M CASH DIVIDEND

AIRLINE HOLDS 14TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

KUWAIT: Jazeera Airways shareholders yesterday approved a board proposal for the distribution of a cash dividend of KD3 million, equivalent to 15 percent of the share's nominal value, for the year 2015 during the company's 14th Annual General Meeting of Shareholders at the company's headquarters.

Jazeera Airways had registered a net profit of KD15.4 million for 2015, an operating profit of KD 13.6 million representing a 2 percent increase from 2014, and an operating revenue of KD58.6 million. Operationally, the company saw a 4.5 percent increase in passengers and an on-time performance of 94.3 percent, making it one of the most on-time airlines in the Middle East.

Jazeera Airways Chairman, Marwan Boodai, said: "2015 was another profitable year for Jazeera Airways, and a transformational one too. We successfully readjusted the airline's capital to match its size, issued record shareholder payouts worth KD52.7 million in cash, and settled all debts. The company is now debt-free, has over KD30.9 million in cash and operates a grow-



Jazeera Airways Chairman Marwan Boodai

ing, profitable business; the balance sheet has never been as strong as it is today. Last year was indeed transformational for the balance sheet, and 2016 will be the year this transformation extends to our product through a series of new and game-changing product enhancements."

Full-year results highlights:
 • Operating revenue: KD58.6 million
 • Operating profit: KD13.6 million, up 2 percent from the previous year
 • Net profit: KD15.4 million
 • Passengers: up 4.5 percent
 • On-time Performance: 94.3 percent

Shareholders also approved:
 • A recommendation by the Board of Directors to not pay a bonus to the board members for the fiscal year ended 31/12/2015.[1]

• Allocating 10 percent (KD1,607,146) of 2015 net profits to the statutory reserve account.

• A recommendation by the Board of Directors to not allocate funds for the voluntary reserve account.

Established in 2005, Jazeera Airways is a Kuwait Stock Exchange-listed company serving popular destinations in the Middle East. The airline operates a fleet of Airbus A320 aircrafts with two class cabins comprising a Business Class and an Economy Class. Business Class travelers get both an upgraded experience and exclusivity, starting with exclusive check-in lines, business lounge access, up to 60 kilograms in free baggage allowance, and an exclusive on-board cabin. The airline's Economy Class offers travelers free baggage allowance of 40 kilograms and free on-board meals with a changing menu every month.

AL-DAWLI'S SAVINGS ACCOUNT REALIZES FASTEST GROWING RETURN IN 2015

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced that the Savings Account has achieved competitive returns during 2015 reaching 0.978 percent compared to 0.365 percent in 2014. The account is compliant with the Islamic Sharia principles and specifically designed for individuals, offering them the opportunity to save and invest.

Commenting on this breakthrough, the AGM Retail Banking at KIB, Waleed Jaafar Al-Qattan stated that Al-Dawli strives to provide innovative Islamic products and solutions along with an array of features and benefits that meet clients' expectations. "The savings Account combines the benefit of investment and savings, as well as competitive features like the ability of opening the account in Kuwaiti Dinar or any other major foreign currencies, no minimum balance to be maintained, free Visa Debit Card, freedom to withdraw and deposit into the account and Murabaha financing facilities", he added.

Al-Qattan pointed out that the Savings Account is the suitable choice for those who would like to save and invest their funds in accordance with the Islamic Sharia principles and get competitive returns. Customers can open the



Jaafar Al-Qattan

account at any KIB branch, or they can contact the 24/7 "Al-Dawli Weyak" service on 1866866, visit the bank's website at www.kib.com.kw or follow the bank's accounts on Facebook facebook.com/alDawliBank or Twitter and Instagram @alDawliBank to learn more about the bank's innovative services and products.



Ali Al Shamsi, Etihad Airways Vice President Emiratisation Strategy, giving a keynote speech to celebrate the 5 year anniversary of the Etihad Airways' Al Ain Contact Centre.

ETIHAD AIRWAYS HIGHLIGHTS CONTRIBUTION OF EMIRATI WOMEN ON AL AIN CONTACT CENTRE'S 5TH ANNIVERSARY

ABDU DHABI: Etihad Airways, the national airline of the UAE, is marking the 5th anniversary of the opening of its Al-Ain Contact Centre by celebrating the achievements of its 160 Emirati female employees.

One third of the centre's employees are working mothers, reinforcing the airline's commitment to empowering women, and in particular UAE nationals, by providing a wide range of training and development opportunities to ensure they can pursue challenging and rewarding careers whilst upholding their social and cultural values.

The airline's contact centres in Al-Ain, Abu Dhabi and Manchester serve a total of 40 markets. Last year, the Al Ain Contact Centre handled 17 per cent of Etihad Airways' 3 million global phone calls for 14 countries, across three continents.

The Al-Ain Contact Centre generates revenue of more than \$40 million annually and since the centre's launch the volume of calls answered by agents has increased by 187 percent. Opened in March 2011, the centre began its operations with 85 highly qualified and fully trained Emirati women. By the end of 2012, the number of

employees at the centre had increased by 150 per cent - and since then a further 30 Emirati women have joined.

Ali Al-Shamsi, Etihad Airways' Vice President - Emiratisation Strategy said: "We envisaged a highly efficient contact centre that would combine world class customer service with the highest level of Arabian hospitality. We are extremely proud of the service that our employees are providing to thousands of our guests every day.

"The centre's 5th anniversary is the perfect opportunity for us to showcase and celebrate the immense talent of our Emirati female workforce, the important impact that they are having on our airline and the crucial role they are playing in the economic diversification of Al Ain."

All of the women employed at the centre completed a series of rigorous assessments prior to being offered a position. On joining the company, employees were enrolled in several training programs to further enhance their IT, English language and employability skills. The centre has also worked with Abu Dhabi University Knowledge Group to find the brightest graduates and the Abu Dhabi Human Resources Authority (previously known as Abu Dhabi

Tawteen Council) to source candidates from the 'future of Al Ain' scheme.

Samia Barj, Etihad Airways' Al Ain Contact Centre Manager said: "I am extremely proud to be able to lead a team of inspirational Emirati women who are doing so much to strengthen our national identity and make a real impact

within the company and in the city of Al Ain. It is due to their impressive capabilities that the centre is able to provide a superior service to hundreds of thousands of Etihad Airways' guests each year and I am confident that we will continue to exceed all expectations as we keep striving for excellence."



Ray Gammell, Etihad Airways' Chief People and Performance Officer, with members of Etihad Airways' senior management team during the cake cutting ceremony to celebrate the Al Ain Contact Centre anniversary.

AMC U-TURNS; TEXTING IN THEATERS NOW ON 'CUTTING ROOM FLOOR'

LOS ANGELES: Oops. The idea lasted about as long as a Snapchat text: The head of AMC Theatres mullied openly about creating texting-friendly movie theaters to appeal to smartphone-addicted youngsters. Two days later, after a backlash on social media, the company says it's leaving the idea on "the cutting room floor."

Adam Aron, who became CEO of AMC Entertainment Holdings in December, told Variety magazine for a story Wednesday that the company would consider allowing cellphone use in some theaters to appeal to millennials. "When you tell a 22-year-

old to 'Turn off the phone, don't ruin the movie,' they hear 'Please cut off your left arm above the elbow. You can't tell a 22-year-old to turn off their cellphone. That's not how they live their life,' he said.

That's when the Twitter-verse unleashed a torrent of criticism on the plan. "AMC Theaters want to allow texting in movie theaters. In other news, I'll never go to AMC Theaters ever again," tweeted Fox News reporter Jake Hamilton. Blogger Perez Hilton tweeted the plan made sense "because everything is the worst." Lucasfilm story executive Pablo Hidalgo mullied a day when he

"brings enormous durian fruit to AMC theater; live-tweets and periscopes self-eating it while movie plays."

Before the spasmodic social media outrage continued much longer, AMC released a statement from Aron early Friday saying he had "instantaneously" reversed his thinking. "With your advice in hand, there will be NO TEXTING ALLOWED in any of the auditoriums at AMC Theaters. Not today, not tomorrow and not for the foreseeable future," he said. "Unlike the many AMC advancements that you have applauded, we have heard loud and clear that this is a concept our audience

does not want."

Peace was restored to the movie-going galaxy. "I love when rational thought wins out," tweeted Holly Overton. "Thanks @amctheaters for respecting moviegoers!" "yay! Amc is literally the only theater chain in my area, so I'm relieved," tweeted Benji Montegudo.

And some had moved on to the next issue: the lengthy ads before a movie plays. "OK guys we did it," tweeted Brian Collins. "Now let's yell at them for 3 days re: their 22 minute trailer/concession ad before the movie." — AP



TOKYO: This picture shows a collapsed road in Minami-Aso, Kumamoto prefecture yesterday. At least 41 people are known to have died in the double disaster, with up to eight still missing - feared buried in shattered houses or under torrents of mud. — AFP

SOCIAL NETWORKS OFFER COMFORT, CONFUSION IN JAPAN QUAKE

TOKYO: People trapped under buildings that collapsed in Japan's double earthquakes used social media to chat to friends and keep their spirits up while they awaited rescue, reports said yesterday.

Networking apps like Line and Facebook proved a boon to victims of the powerful quakes that brought down homes, bridges and hillsides-but they were also conduits for racist scaremongering and rumours about escaped zoo animals. One family of seven found themselves buried under debris after a 7.0-magnitude quake felled their home, barely 24 hours after the first major tremor had rocked southern Kumamoto prefecture.

Hiroki Nishimura told Sports Nippon daily he and his family were sleeping in their hometown of Mashiki when Saturday's quake struck, bringing the roof crashing in and leaving them with just 30 centimetres (12 inches) of space. The 19-year-old university student said he had been able to reach his smartphone and had fired up Line, a South Korean-owned instant messaging app.

He said he had sent messages to his friends explaining his predicament and telling them where he was.

"Everybody sent them round through other social networking apps and we got messages back that really cheered us up under there," he told the Sports Nippon.

An hour after the collapse, he and his family had been rescued and were at an evacuation centre. At least 41 people are known to have died in the double quakes, which sparked enormous landslides that sent tons of mud and rocks crashing through settlements. Up to 11 people are still missing, and there are fears of further

mudslides after heavy overnight rain and with continuing aftershocks.

Lion escape

In picturesque Minami Aso, employees of the Seifusou hot spring hotel kept the venue's Facebook page updated with information about 50 guests and staff who were cut off when landslides severed roads. "The windows are shattered and the walls cracked," they wrote on the hotel's official Facebook page on Saturday.

"Our supplies, especially water and food, will run out in a day," they wrote, uploading a picture showing guests in the hotel parking lot, where they had erected a makeshift shelter using blue plastic sheets. Later, as troops brought in a helicopter to evacuate them, the Facebook page was updated to show the staff's relief.

"Herewith a rescue! Guests first. We're breathing easily," it said. But in amongst the messages of hope, there was also a darker side to social media.

"Because of the quake, a lion escaped from the nearby zoo," user @Nanahosi1222 tweeted, along with a picture of the animal. The account was later deleted. A similar tweet indicating the escape of a gorilla also made the rounds. There were no reports of animals escaping from zoos in Kyushu in the wake of the disaster.

Another tweet claimed "Koreans" were poisoning water supplies in Kumamoto, the Sankei Shimbun reported on its website. That tweet, which was not immediately accessible, was a modern-day echo of the rumors that spread in the aftermath of the 1923 earthquake that levelled large parts of Tokyo, which led to the lynching of scores of ethnic Koreans. — AFP



BERKELEY: San Francisco State psychologist and company CEO David Matsumoto, right, and colleague looking at the non-verbal behavior of another employee on video as part of their analysis for deception and emotional clues, in Berkeley, California. Scientists say we all lie, and this year, politicians are bending the truth big time, with real consequences. — AP

WE ALL LIE, SCIENTISTS SAY, BUT POLITICIANS EVEN MORE SO

WASHINGTON: This is the season of lies. We watch with fascination as candidates for the world's most powerful job trade falsehoods and allegations of dishonesty.

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump routinely calls rival Ted Cruz "Lying Ted." Cruz retorts: "Falsely accusing someone of lying is itself a lie and something Donald does daily." News organizations such as The Associated Press and PolitiFact dedicate enormous resources to separating candidates' truthful wheat from their dishonest chaff.

But if we've come to expect office-seekers who seem truth-averse, many of us have given little thought to our own fibs, and how they compare with politicians' deceptions. For more than two decades, researchers of different stripes have examined humanity's less-than-truthful underbelly, and this is what they have found: We all stretch the truth. We learned to deceive as toddlers. We rationalize our fabrications that benefit us. We tell little white lies daily that make oth-

ers feel good. "I feel more worried about lying in public life (specifically by politicians, and in particular, Trump) than I ever have before," psychology researcher Bella DePaulo at the University of California, Santa Barbara, said in an email. When lies succeed, they make it "more tempting to lie. Lies can stick.

They can have a lingering effect, even if they are debunked." Children learn to lie at an average of about 3 years old, often when they realize that other people don't know what they are thinking, said Kang Lee, a professor at the University of Toronto.

He has done extensive research on children and lying. Lee set up an experiment in a video monitored room to see if he could catch children lying about peaking at a toy when an adult left the room.

At age 2, only 30 percent lie, Lee said. At age 3, half do. By 5 or 6, 90 percent of the kids lie and Lee said he worries about the 10 percent who don't. This is universal, Lee said. — AP

QUALITYNET WINS AWARD FOR 'BEST DIGITAL EXPERIENCE'

5TH ANNUAL CEM ME SUMMIT

KUWAIT: IQPC, a well-known organization specialized in conducting worldwide conferences, seminars and learning programs, held its 5th Annual Customer Experience Management Summit in Telecoms for the Middle East region, in Dubai - UAE. Qualitynet was awarded with the 'Best Digital Experience' award for the entire Middle East region, for its competitiveness in successfully engaging customers and managing high service levels across Social Media and Web Channels.

This is the second time Qualitynet has participated in the Customer Experience Management Summit, and the 2nd time it has won at the event. Now in its fifth year, the event saw participation from regional and global brands such as Zain, Etisalat, Huawei, Viva, STC and Du among others. The Summit, considered to be a crucial event among Customer Experience Management experts, creates a venue for Industry veterans to network and discuss the latest methods and trends in building and maintaining high levels of Customer Experiences.

Ali E AIEsmail, GM - Customer Services & Information Systems at Qualitynet was happy to receive the award. He stated that the award, which Qualitynet won from among Regional and International companies, certifies its relentless commitment and passion in providing the highest levels of Customer Experience, to its clients and fans. "We are pleased that our submission was well received by the panel. We have two decades on experience in managing customers in different levels of the Industry, and our pursuit for excellence will only help us reach higher lev-



els of service, contributing to the Industry and to the economy of the nation," said Ali.

He also added that the Industry employs the highest standards comparable to worldwide practices, in spite of its Infrastructure lacking the development it deserves for a nation like Kuwait. "With the new TRA in place, we are hopeful for a positive change in the Industry. The TRA has the power to bring changes in the sector, not only by solving

issues and improving what's currently available to customers, but also in helping the nation reach its true potential on a global level" said Ali.

Nevein Saad, Marketing Manager - Qualitynet said "We are extremely happy on winning the award. We are committed to creatively using our digital platforms in elevating the overall experience of customers with Qualitynet. We are engaged in keeping our customers and fans informed on the trends and news in the Industry, and in using the platform to give back to the community. We are especially proud of our Marketing Team, who works closely with multiple departments in the company to enrich the overall Customer Experience using the latest in digital media.

IQPC's judging panel, consisting of selected professionals and industry veterans, presented Qualitynet from among many established brands competing for the same title. The judge's panel set a very high benchmark for the competition, which lead to a shortlist of well established brands that are setting trends in Innovation and creative Digital Experiences both regionally and internationally. Qualitynet expressed its pride in being recognized for its practices and operations at a regional level, adding the achievement to those it has amassed since being established in 1998.

For more information, contact Qualitynet's Marcom & PR Office at 2290 2139. You can also follow their official Social Media channels at Qualitynetkw (Youtube), Qualitynetkw (Facebook), Qualitynet_q8 (Instagram & Twitter) and Qualitynet (LinkedIn & Google Plus).

CHINA'S LIVE-STREAMING SITES OFFER CHANCE TO GAIN CASH AND FAME

AN ENTERTAINING NEW ALTERNATIVE FOR MILLIONS OF VIEWERS

BEIJING: China's live-streaming sites have become a burgeoning cottage industry, offering money-making opportunities and even stardom to their mostly female hosts and an entertaining new alternative for millions of viewers to online dramas and stodgy state-controlled TV.

Zhang Qige, a 23-year-old woman who plays computer games and chats on her webcam, attracts hundreds of thousands of real-time viewers at once. She has more than 2 million subscribers on the website Douyu TV and an average viewership of 400,000 for each nightly show.

"They like me chatting with them," explained Zhang, who says she earns more than 1 million yuan a year (\$150,000) from her performances. "They feel like I'm talking to them face to face."

The proliferation of such shows and sites demonstrate the entrepreneurial drive of young Chinese as well as the financial potential of social media in the country, which has 668 million people online - the world's largest. But their popularity also reflects the loneliness of Chinese urban life as well as the growing surplus of single men, blamed in part on the country's former one-child policy.

Much of the content on various live streaming sites could be considered seedy, and some goes well beyond the borders of good taste. Many female broadcasters wear revealing costumes, and authorities recently cracked down after live pornographic scenes were broadcast on at least two sites. In one case, 34 people in the central province of Anhui were arrested for taking part.

The spread of such platforms has drawn close government scrutiny, with the Ministry of Culture saying Thursday that Douyu and other sites have been added to a list of websites found broadcasting pornographic and other objectionable content and will be handed unspecified penalties. The ministry said online live-streaming platforms draw around 200 million users, with major sites running several thousand live-streaming "studios" simultaneously. These sites derive a small proportion of their revenue through advertising. They survive primarily through a practice invented by Chinese companies: virtual gifting.

Viewers can buy these imaginary gifts such as images of flowers or bottles of beer for their favorite performers, who receive a portion of the cash, with the site getting a hefty cut. Viewers can also send comments that pop up onscreen, giving them the perception they are interacting with the host. "I think everyone, without exception, likes to watch beautiful girls," said a 28-year-old single office worker who asked that he be identified only by his surname, Zhai. He said he spends 500-800 yuan (\$80-120) a week purchasing virtual gifts on four or more different sites.

This business model works in China because it builds on the traditional culture of giving red envelopes stuffed with money at weddings and fruit, cigarettes or bottles of booze at Lunar New Year. "Gifting is a common practice offline, and having that happen online to make it easier to form social relationships seems quite natural," said Hans Tung, a managing partner at GGV Capital, a venture capital firm.

US players are paying attention, but so far haven't gotten this model to work. "There are a lot more ways people can make money now online ... that is not as prevalent outside of Asia," Tung said. One of the biggest Chinese hosting sites, YY, is listed on the Nasdaq stock exchange and saw its rev-



SHANGHAI: Web performer Zhang Qige broadcasts a live streaming session at an Internet broadcasting studio in Shanghai. Zhang, a 23-year-old woman who plays computer games and chats on her webcam, attracts hundreds of thousands of real-time viewers at once. — AP

enues rise 60 percent to 5.9 billion yuan (\$910 million) last year, according to unaudited financial results announced in March. It claims more than 120 million active users who spend an average of 48 hours per month on the site.

Young Chinese see virtual gifting as a fun way to spend their disposable income, said Dong Mengyuan, head of entertainment content at China Renaissance, an investment bank that focuses on Internet and technology companies. "They don't just only pay for their clothes, food and some other basic demands," she said. "They also want to pay for something like entertainment."

Many young people are exploiting the trend simply to make some money. Eighteen-year-old Wang Weiyang has turned to one live broadcast site, Huajiao, to earn money to study abroad. She pulls in around 2,000 yuan (\$310) each month for 20 hours of broadcasts, sometimes talking into her

mobile phone as she walks along the street.

"I'm dressed very cute today," she says in one broadcast, showing her pink painted and bejeweled nails to her invisible fans. The competition is already stiff. In the quest to draw viewers, Wang has sometimes broadcast 100 hours a month or more. "After classes, I'm already tired but I have to compete with others in terms of the time I broadcast for," she said. "I have to keep a smile on my face even though I'm already exhausted. I get depressed at times."

In the US, there are live streaming services like Meerkat and Twitter's Periscope that allow people to use their smartphones to shoot video, and Facebook has recently expanded its own version - Facebook Live - to all users. Initially, the feature was just for celebrities and other public figures. One woman who has made it big in China is Papi Jiang, whose real name is Jiang Yilei. — AP

LOS ANGELES BODY CAMERA PROGRAM DELAYED BY 'STICKER SHOCK'

LOS ANGELES: A \$58 million plan to equip nearly every Los Angeles police officer with body cameras by the end of the year has been delayed by concerns over the price tag.

Mayor Eric Garcetti had pledged to have the cameras on thousands of officers by the end of 2016. But the department doesn't expect to outfit 7,000 officers until the fall of 2017 at the earliest, the Los Angeles Times reported. Councilman Mitch Englander told the newspaper that he wants the department to start the bidding process over and plans to introduce a formal proposal next week. "This is too big to get wrong," said Erlander, who heads the council's public safety committee. "It's more important that we get it right and not just do it quickly."

Board of Police Commissioner Steve Soboroff, a longtime advocate of the cameras, said city lawmakers are "horribly underestimating the ramifications" of delaying the program for what

could be years. "This is an unequivocal disaster for public safety in Los Angeles," Soboroff said. City Hall has been scrutinizing the camera plan over the costs, with one council member saying he was experiencing "sticker shock" over the price tag of \$57.6 million over five years.

Technology companies complained that they were unfairly left out of the police department's selection process, which in part relied on a separate search for body cameras for a much smaller nearby sheriff's department.

Garcetti said through a spokesman that he hoped the council would act as quickly as possible. The police department has about 860 cameras, bought through private donations. Last year, the department negotiated a contract with Scottsdale, Arizona-based Taser International to provide thousands more, as well as replacement equipment, digital storage of the recordings and thousands of Tasers. — AP

JOHNSON & JOHNSON ENDS CONTACT LENS POLICY AMID PRICE WARS

SALT LAKE CITY: Johnson & Johnson is ending a policy to set minimum prices for contact lenses, a move that will likely have ripple effects on legal battles and bitter price wars in the \$4 billion industry. The decision by one of the country's largest contact-lens makers removes a protection for eye doctors who are increasingly competing with discount sellers such as 1-800 Contacts and Costco for contact lens sales. It's not yet clear whether other companies will follow suit, but Johnson & Johnson executives say they believe they're setting the pace.

The company says it's committed to helping optometrists, but it's pivoting to focus on supporting federal legislation that aims to quash attempts at deregulating the industry. "The important thing is that we make sure we keep a regulated contact lens industry so patients have a safe experience with contact lenses," said Millicent Knight, Johnson & Johnson's vice president of professional affairs. But opponents say

that contact lens makers want to stifle competition, and that hurts customers. Discount retailers took aim at minimum-price policies last year, and the Utah-based discount giant 1-800 Contacts helped convince the state Legislature to pass a bill banning the practice.

Contact lens makers called foul and sued to strike down the law. Alcon, Johnson & Johnson and Bausch & Lomb said it was crafted to benefit the homegrown 1-800 Contacts and had the unconstitutional effect of changing lens pricing nationwide through online sales. Utah argues those are considered in-state transactions, no matter where the customer is. The case reached the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in August. Though the appeals court hasn't made a final ruling, the judges did allow the law to take effect as the case unfolds. 1-800 Contacts has since dropped its prices by up to \$15 a box on some brands that were subject to the manufacturers' minimum prices. Eye doctors prescribe contact lenses by spe-

cific brand, and patients often buy their contacts in the doctor's office. But with the rise of discount sellers, more people have been filling their prescriptions at online retailers to save money.

That's led to a protracted battle in courts and Congress. Contact lens manufacturers are aligned with optometrists against discounters, in part because the doctors can introduce patients to new products while discounters sell them what's been prescribed. Johnson & Johnson's move will replace their minimum-price policy with a rewards program that will let people save money by buying contacts from their eye doctor. They'll also have programs for people who buy through discount retailers. "We want to be relevant to where our patients are receiving and gaining our products," said Peter Menziuso, North America president at Johnson & Johnson Vision Care. 1-800 Contacts says they're pleased with Johnson & Johnson's move and hope other manufacturers do the same. — AP



Salt Lake City: In this file photo, a contact lens is displayed in front of a 1-800-Contacts shipping box in Salt Lake City. — AP

LATEST BATTLE TO WIPE OUT POLIO BEGINS WITH VAST VACCINE SWITCH

INCURABLE DISEASE CAUSES PARALYSIS, VACCINES PREVENT IT

LONDON: In a huge immunization effort in 150 countries, health teams will launch what they hope will be the final push against polio. Stopping transmission of the contagious viral disease that has infected millions is possible within a year, experts say. And full, official, global eradication could be declared by the end of this decade. First, however, the vaccine that has successfully fought polio for more than 30 years needs to be switched for one that targets the last few areas of risk. It won't be easy, or cheap, but the World Health Organization's director of polio eradication, Michel Zaffran, says failure now - when there have only been 12 cases worldwide this year, in Pakistan and Afghanistan - means the virus could spread across borders again.

Success would make polio only the second human disease to be eradicated since smallpox was banished in 1980. "Taking our foot off the pedal now could mean polio will within a few years spread straight back into large parts of the world and create 100,000 or 200,000 cases," Zaffran told Reuters. "The job has not been done and will not be done until we have fully eradicated the virus."

Vaccine complexities

For the endgame in polio to succeed, a coordinated and complex vaccine switch is crucial. Until now, many countries have been using a shot that protects against the three types of wild polio virus - type 1, type 2 and type 3 - but type 2 polio transmission has been stopped since 1999, meaning immunizing against it now makes no sense. In rare cases it also poses a risk that the weakened type 2 virus in the vaccine can seep into circulation and cause "vaccine-derived" polio infections.

So from April 17 to May 1, some 150 countries

will engage in a synchronized switch to a bivalent, or two-strain, vaccine that contains no type 2 virus but targets types 1 and 3. It's a massive undertaking and a major step towards eradication, says Zaffran. "We're entering into uncharted territory. This has never been done before. But there's no going back now." That's partly because polio vaccine manufacturers - among them France's Sanofi Pasteur - have moved production to the bivalent shot and would find it tricky, costly, and time-consuming to reverse that move.

Anil Dutta, a vaccine expert at British drugmaker GlaxoSmithKline, which also makes polio shots, is looking beyond eradication to 2019 or 2020, when all "live" oral polio vaccines need to be discontinued. Then the world will switch again, to "inactivated" polio vaccine, or IPV, to further reduce any risk of causing disease through immunization. Scaling up IPV production to meet the needs of the entire world takes years, he warns, and work must start now to avoid potential supply concerns.

History of misses

But prediction has never been easy in the fight to wipe out polio, and health authorities have missed targets along the way. The Global Polio Eradication Initiative, launched in 1988, originally aimed to end all transmission of the disease by 2000. And while there has been a 99 percent reduction in cases worldwide since the GPEI launch, fighting the last 1 percent of polio has been far tougher than expected. In 2013, the GPEI said the global fight against polio would require \$5.5 billion in funding, and more will be needed beyond that to keep a lid on the disease.

The virus, which invades the nervous system and can cause irreversible paralysis within hours, spreads

rapidly among children, especially in unsanitary conditions in war-torn regions, refugee camps and areas where healthcare is limited. In Pakistan and Afghanistan, the last two countries where polio currently remains endemic, conflict and propaganda have hampered progress, and in the past posed risks to others.

The campaign to eliminate polio in Pakistan is fraught with risk, with Islamist militants attacking health teams they accuse of being Western spies. A polio worker was shot and wounded in February and in January a suicide bomber killed 15 people outside a polio eradication center in the city of Quetta. In 2011, a polio virus from Pakistan re-infected China, which had been polio free for more than a decade. In 2013, the disease re-emerged in Syria after a 14-year absence, prompting the need for a vast and expensive regional emergency vaccination campaign.

And last year, cases of type 2 vaccine-derived polio posed new threats in Ukraine and Mali. David Salisbury, an immunization specialist and associate fellow at Britain's Chatham House Centre on Global Health Security, says the last 1 percent is a "very long tail" on a stubborn epidemic. "The original date for interruption of transmission was 2000. The next target was 2014 and it's currently 2016," Salisbury told Reuters, adding that even with case numbers as low as they are now, "2016 may be optimistic." Liam Donaldson, head of the Independent Monitoring Board of the GPEI, agrees that celebrating the expected extinction of polio virus "would not just be premature, it would be folly." "Polio is still out there," he told a meeting in London. "It has fought back with a vengeance at every stage of the game. And it's still fighting." — Reuters

PERU REPORTS FIRST SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED ZIKA CASE

LIMA: Peru has suffered its first case of sexually transmitted, locally contracted Zika virus, authorities said Saturday. Health Minister Anibal Velasquez said that after a woman tested positive for Zika officials went to see if she could have been bitten by a transmitter mosquito at her home. When they found no mosquito presence, they tested her partner's sperm. He tested positive for the virus, Velasquez told reporters.

The woman and her partner were treated in hospital and are now healthy, he added. The virus has been linked to cases of microcephaly in babies born to

mothers who have Zika, as well as to Guillain-Barre, a disorder that causes the immune system to attack parts of the nervous system that controls muscle strength. Brazil, where the Zika virus was first detected in Latin America in early 2015, has had a surge in cases of microcephaly coinciding with the Zika outbreak. On Thursday, neighboring Colombia reported the country's first two cases of microcephaly associated with Zika. Some 70,000 clinical cases of Zika have been reported to date in Colombia, and as many as 200,000 cases are expected before the epidemic peaks. — AFP

LONG VIEWS, DEEP POCKETS: DANISH FOUNDATIONS KEEP PHARMA GROUPS HEALTHY

COPENHAGEN: Denmark's biopharmaceutical sector, led by insulin giant Novo Nordisk, is experiencing a golden age as researchers reap the rewards of a unique ownership structure: deep-pocketed, non-profit foundations. In a country where pigs outnumber humans, the story began with "a very early move into industrialization of agriculture on a scientific basis" leading to an expertise in fermentation, said Allan Kristensen, chief consultant at the Danish Association of the Pharmaceutical Industry (LIF).

That end, Novo Nordisk was founded in 1923 when insulin was extracted from the pancreatic glands of pigs and cattle. But its longevity may have more to do with its ownership: The group is controlled by the non-profit Novo Nordisk Foundation, which owns just 24.9 percent of its shares but holds 75.1 percent of the voting rights. Other Danish pharmaceutical groups like Lundbeck specialized in psychiatric and neurological disorders and dermatology treatment maker LEO Pharma have similar arrangements.

Splitting a company's ownership between an industrial foundation and regular shareholders "is a good model because it requires a company to have a short-term and a long-term vision at the same time," said Lene Skole, chief executive of the Lundbeck Foundation. For Lundbeck, the patience of the non-profit foundation that controls it had probably been a boon when some of its most valuable patents expired, according to Sydbank analyst Soren Lontoft Hansen.

Takeover protection

The ownership structure "helped to protect Danish companies against hostile takeovers by 'big pharma,'" said Sven Frokjaer, the vice-dean of the medical sciences faculty at the University of Copenhagen. A short drive to Denmark's northern neighbour illustrates the perils of being taken over by one of the industry giants: The mood is decidedly less upbeat on the Swedish side of Danish-Swedish life sci-

ences cluster Medicon Valley. The takeover by Britain's Zeneca of Sweden's Astra in 1999 led to the number of jobs in the sector eventually falling by half, according to data from the Oresund Institute, a Danish-Swedish think tank.

Being listed was an advantage for the company when it was expanding "and the capital need was great," said the institute's chief executive, Johan Wessman. "But at the same time it moved the ownership and headquarters out of Sweden," he said. Swedish talent is now increasingly looking to Denmark, where medications are the number one export at over 11 billion euros (\$12.5 billion), accounting for 12 percent of last year's total.

The number is expected to double by 2020 according to the Danish Trade Council, having quadrupled since 1999, and 30 percent of private investment in Danish research and development is in the life sciences. After years of strong growth, the sheer size of Novo Nordisk compared to the rest of the economy largely explains those figures. On its own, the national champion accounts for two thirds of the employees in the Danish biopharmaceutical sector and for two thirds of private investment in research and development in the life sciences.

Synergy effects

Its dominance was "for the benefit of everybody" in the industry since it attracted investment and talent to Denmark, argued the group's head of research and development, Peter Kurtzals. That view was echoed by Christian Johansen, a partner at EY in Copenhagen. "There is a big mobility in the Danish biopharma cluster... It's a very fruitful symbiosis between young and more mature companies," he said. Across the nation, the number of people working for private employers in the industry has doubled since 1990, with 26,000 being directly employed and another 64,000 employees working for firms linked to those companies, according to LIF. — AFP



COLUMBUS, Ohio: In this photo, Tara Cordle poses with her son, Waylon during a visit to Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. — AP

MEDICAL POT ACTIVISTS FEAR EPILEPSY DRUG COULD UNDERCUT THEM

COLUMBUS, Ohio: An experimental epilepsy drug made from cannabis plants grown in England is complicating the medical marijuana debate in hospitals and statehouses. Epidiolex is a nearly pure extract of cannabidiol, or CBD, with little of the tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, that gets traditional pot users high. CBD products are the current rage in medicinal pot products, and activists fear that if the maker of Epidiolex manages to get FDA approval it could undercut the political momentum of the medical marijuana movement. Anup Patel, a pediatric neurologist who oversees Epidiolex (pronounced eh'-pih-DYE'-uh-leh) clinical trials at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, insists the drug contains the optimal known marijuana compound for treating seizures. He cited a study that found children can be hurt by using the whole plant.

Patel laments that children with epilepsy are being used - including during an unsuccessful Ohio ballot campaign last year - to push for medical marijuana legalization. "People are mixing terms, mixing ideas," he said. "I'm not sure if that's just because of confusion, lack of knowledge or on purpose." Karmen Hanson, the expert on marijuana policy for the nonpartisan National Conference of State Legislatures, said the two sides are at odds. "The argument for traditional (whole-plant) medical marijuana is that people know

what works for them - whether they're going to make their own concentrates or vape or combust, use flowered products, oils, you name it - so they want to protect their ability to do that," she said. "The other camp wants to see the head-to-head science, to give it more scientific validity, to elevate the products that are produced in terms of reliability and consistency."

Covered by insurance

Patel is in Camp 2. He personally lobbied to get US patients access to Epidiolex, which he said is effective, consistent and doesn't get users high. About two years ago, Patel persuaded London-based GW Pharmaceuticals to give him enough of the medicine for a single patient, and his hospital's study was born. Last month, the company released positive results of late-stage testing. It plans to take Epidiolex to the US Food and Drug Administration later this year. The FDA has not yet found any botanical form of marijuana to be safe or effective to treat any disease or condition, spokesman Michael Felberbaum said. If approved, Epidiolex would be the first. Two synthetic cannabinoids - Marinol and Cesamet - are available. FDA approval would allow any doctor to prescribe Epidiolex to any patient, and it would be covered by insurance. No law or ballot issue would be required.

Many medical marijuana activists fear Epidiolex

approval will mark the beginning of Big Pharma's takeover of the marijuana plant, undercutting patients' ability to treat themselves as they see fit. "We are not concerned with the pill (actually oil) form of a natural plant," said Wendy Johnson, who represents the Cannabis Safety Association in Ohio, where medical marijuana legislation was introduced last week. "In fact, it is looked upon very unfavorably and as a stumbling block on our way to whole plant." Twenty-three states now have comprehensive medical marijuana and cannabis programs - but 17 others have chosen only to permit use of "low THC, high cannabidiol" products, mostly mom-and-pop cannabis oils or hemp extracts.

Political pushback

Since marijuana can't be legally grown in those 17 states, the narrower bills aren't much more than legal protections for people who are able to access the products, Hanson said. A low-THC, high-CBD strain of medical marijuana called Charlotte's web is grown in Colorado, for example, where marijuana is legal. "They're worried about political pushback. That's it in the end," said John Hudak, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution who studies marijuana law. "They're worried about an ad being run against them." — AP

MANY OLDER BLACK WOMEN MISS OUT ON TARGETED BREAST CANCER DRUG

NEW YORK: Older black women with human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2)-positive breast cancer are less likely than their white peers to receive targeted therapy with trastuzumab (Herceptin), a US study suggests. When researchers examined data from Medicare, the US health program for people over age 65, they found just 40% of black women with HER2-positive tumors received trastuzumab, compared with 50% of white women.

"A very substantial racial disparity exists," said study leader Dr Katherine Reeder-Hayes of the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center. "Although we don't know for sure why this is happening, the fact that the treatment is relatively new, expensive, and lengthy may all be contributing," Reeder-Hayes added by email.

Reeder-Hayes and colleagues looked data on about 1,400 women diagnosed with HER2-positive breast cancer in 2010 and 2011 and examined how many of them received trastuzumab in the year after their diagnosis. After adjusting for tumor characteristics, poverty and patients' other medical problems, black women were 25% less likely to get trastuzumab than white women, researchers report in the Journal of Clinical Oncology, online April 7.

It's possible that some of the women didn't receive trastuzumab because of the risk of heart damage and other side effects that come with the drug, said Erica Warner of Massachusetts General Hospital. "I think concerns about toxicity, particularly cardiotoxicity, in women (who) may have other chronic diseases and limited life expectancy gives some clinicians pause," Warner, who wasn't involved in the study, said by email.

Ethnic minority

Because many women over age 70 don't receive chemotherapy or targeted treatments like trastuzumab, the racial disparities found in the study might not look the same among younger women, noted Dr Richard Bleicher of Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia. "At the extremes of older age, patients may die of other causes," Bleicher, who wasn't involved in the study, said by email. "That having been said, if the patient is appropriate for it, it should be offered." One limitation of the study is that Medicare data can't provide a full picture of medical conditions that might influence whether doctors give women trastuzumab, the authors note. In particular, they lacked data on heart conditions that might make this treatment too risky. — AP

PUBERTY TIMING INFLUENCED BY BOTH PARENTS

NEW YORK: Boys and girls may go through puberty sooner if their mothers and fathers were early bloomers, a recent Danish study suggests. Researchers studied the timing of puberty for 672 girls and 846 boys relative to their parents and found kids who developed pubic hair and other hallmarks of adulthood at an unusually young age tended to have mothers and fathers who also matured early.

"Both genetic and environmental factors undoubtedly influence puberty timing," said lead study author Dr Christine Wohlfahrt-Veje, a growth and development researcher at the University of Copenhagen. "Our study shows that both boys and girls inherit from both mothers and fathers, but indicates that the early pubertal markers - onset of breasts and pubic hair - in girls are less dependent on genetic and hence more on environmental factors such as childhood growth patterns and possibly other environmental exposures," Wohlfahrt-Veje added by email.

Children who go through early puberty may be shorter than average adults because after their early growth spurt their bones may stop growing at a younger age, and they are also at increased risk of obesity as adults. During adolescence, they may face an increased risk of social and emotional problems and earlier sexual experiences.

Some recent research points to earlier puberty onset in general, especially in girls in developed countries. Environmental factors like diet, obesity and chemicals that mimic human hormones have all been suspected of playing a role. To look at the contribution of genetics to puberty timing, Wohlfahrt-Veje and colleagues examined medical records from annual checkups kids received between 2006 and 2013 as well as data on parental puberty timing from questionnaires completed by their parents.

When fathers matured early, boys tended to develop pubic hair almost one year ahead of boys with fathers who went through puberty late. Sons

of men who developed early also grew enlarged testes about 9.5 months sooner than sons of fathers who went through puberty late. Girls with fathers that matured early started menstruating about 10.5 months sooner than girls with late-bloomers for fathers, and the girls of fathers who went through early puberty also developed pubic hair around 7 months before girls whose fathers developed late. Early breast development in girls, however, didn't appear to be tied to early puberty in their fathers.

Relative influence

When mothers went through puberty early, their sons and daughters tended to follow suit. Daughters of women who matured early typically started menstruating about 10 months sooner than girls with late-blooming mothers. Sons of women who went through puberty early typically went through genital maturation about 6.5 months before boys with mothers who developed

late. One shortcoming of the study is that researchers relied on parents to accurately recall and report on when they went through puberty many years earlier. They also got more data from mothers than fathers, which may have affected the relative influence of each parent in the results.

Because the study didn't find as strong an association with parental puberty timing and breast development in girls, this suggests that other factors beyond genetics may influence puberty in girls, the authors conclude in the Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism. "A broad normal variation exists within timing of puberty," Wohlfahrt-Veje noted. Still, when kids develop early, they quite likely came from a long line of early bloomers. "A large proportion of this variation seems to be explained by genetics," Wohlfahrt-Veje added. "If either the mother or father had early or late pubertal development it is likely to influence the timing of pubertal onset in both their sons and daughters." — AP

SOUTH AFRICANS SWEET ON SUGARY DRINKS DESPITE FAT TAX

JOHANNESBURG: South Africa plans a new "fat tax" on sugary drinks to combat an obesity epidemic-but sweet-toothed consumers say its chances are slim of making them cut down. Ranked as one of the most obese nations on the continent, South Africa is joining a growing list of countries around the world, such as Britain and Mexico, trying to put a cap on fizzy drinks. But even health experts, who welcome the proposed levy, don't believe the tax will single-handedly discourage South Africans from popping open bottles of sugar-packed soda and sweetened juices.

The levy, announced by Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan in his budget in February, will come into effect in April next year. It is aimed not only at saving people from their own unhealthy appetites but at offsetting the economic costs of diseases related to obesity. In Zandspruit, a township west of Johannesburg, 30-year-old insurance broker Thulani Masango scoffs at the levy. "We know sugar causes diabetes and obesity, but... we cannot survive without sugar," said Masango, as he strolled down a dusty street. "As we speak, the price of meat has gone up, but we continue braaing (barbecuing). Alcohol goes up almost every year, we still drink.

"It's the same with sugar. It's something that is uncontrollable," said Masango. A Zandspruit supermarket supervisor and mother of two, Anastacia Tshabalala, 53, agrees. She believes that sugar is addictive. "Sugar is sugar! We are going to take it no matter what. Even if the price goes up, we have to take sugar everyday-you can't live without it," she said. South African endocrinologist Professor Tess



JOHANNESBURG, South Africa: This file photo shows soft drinks sold in bulk at a shop in the Township of Zandspruit, Greater Johannesburg, South Africa. — AFP photos

van der Merwe, who says half of adult women and a third of adult men in South Africa are "overweight", is also skeptical.

"These are epidemic proportions," she said, adding that about 15 percent of South Africans are in the "morbidly obese category"-more than 100 pounds or 45 kilograms overweight. "I don't believe

that it will curb the epidemic unless we have a definitive preventative and treatment strategy in place-like tax didn't curb alcohol use," she said.

'Everybody needs sugar'

Obesity rates are rising sharply among African children. A World Health Organization-commissioned study released in January showed that childhood obesity has become an "exploding nightmare" in the developing world, including Africa. The number of overweight or obese children under five nearly doubled from 1990 to 2014, from 5.4 million to 10.3 million. The WHO declared obesity a disease 10 years ago, but people still struggle to accept it as a deadly disease.

"People need to realize that there are more people dying from obesity (related illnesses) than from any other disease in the world," said van der Merwe. Minister Gordhan has yet to reveal the proposed taxation rates, but a Plos-One study published in 2014 projects that a 20 percent tax on sugary drinks will reduce obesity in South Africa by between 2.4 and 3.8 percent for females and males respectively.

Manufacturers of sugar-sweetened drinks in South Africa believe the tax could lead to job losses. "For the treasury to announce a tax on only one category of foods is discriminatory," said Mapule Ncanywa, executive director of the Beverage Association of South Africa. "We don't think that it's going to have the desired result of reducing excessive intake of sugar, let alone obesity for that matter." — AFP



JOHANNESBURG, South Africa: A man drinking soft drink "Coca Cola" in the Township of Zandspruit, Greater Johannesburg.

NEW ABBVIE HEPATITIS C REGIMEN SHOWS HIGH CURE RATES

NEW YORK: An experimental once-daily combination hepatitis C treatment being developed by AbbVie Inc demonstrated very high cure rates across a wide range of disease genotypes, according to data presented on Saturday, likely giving the company a more competitive product if approved. Cure rates of 97 percent to 100 percent over either eight or 12 weeks of treatment were achieved in the clinical trials with the one pill, once-a-day combination of ABT-493 and ABT-530, which use different methods to block virus replication.

The combination would provide greater convenience for a wider variety of patients than AbbVie's Viekira Pak, improving chances of making inroads into the market domination currently enjoyed by Gilead Sciences Inc. Viekira Pak, which is approved for genotype 1, the most common form of the serious liver disease in the United States, consists of four drugs and involves taking three pills in the morning and one in the evening. It currently has only about 5 percent of the market, with Gilead owning about 90 percent. Another AbbVie product treats genotype 4, which is most common in Egypt and other parts of Africa.

The new one pill combination proved

effective across the spectrum of genotypes 1-6 in the midstage studies presented at a European liver disease meeting in Barcelona. In patients without cirrhosis who were not helped by an older regimen, 97 percent of those with genotype 1 and 98 percent of those with genotype 2 had no detectable hepatitis C virus in the blood 12 weeks after completing eight weeks of therapy, which is considered cured.

Patients with genotype 3 and no cirrhosis receiving treatment for the first time had a 97 percent cure rate with eight weeks of therapy. Cure rates of 100 percent were achieved with 12 weeks of treatment in genotype 3 patients with cirrhosis, and in non-cirrhotic patients with genotypes 4, 5 and 6. "These new data show us the potential of ABT-493 and ABT-530 in genotype 3 patients new to therapy even with the added complication of compensated cirrhosis," Dr Paul Kwo, one of the lead investigators and professor of medicine at the Indiana University School of Medicine, said in a statement. Cirrhosis, a form or severe scarring, is an indication of advanced disease that can lead to diminished liver function or liver failure. The most common side effects were fatigue, headache, nausea and diarrhea, the company reported. — Reuters

SPECIAL WARM UP COULD CUT INJURIES, SAVE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN YOUTH SOCCER

WASHINGTON: Including neuromuscular training in youth soccer warm ups reduces injury rates and could save \$2.7 million Canadian dollars (\$2 million) in healthcare costs over one season in Alberta, Canada, according to a new study. Neuromuscular training targets strength, agility and balance more than a standard warm up routine. "When you have benefit from an intervention and also reduce healthcare costs, there's good on both sides," said lead author Deborah A. Marshall of the University of Calgary, the Alberta Bone and Joint Health Institute and the Health Research Innovation Centre in Calgary.

"A lot of new technologies that are introduced are better but cost more," Marshall told Reuters Health. The researchers studied data from a randomized trial of 744 youth soccer players ages 13 to 17 years, including boys and girls, during the 2006-2007 indoor soccer season in Alberta. The players had been followed through the season and injuries were recorded. Half of the players were led through a 15-minute warm up before play, including five minutes of aero-

bic and dynamic stretching components and 10 minutes of neuromuscular training consisting of eccentric strength, agility and jumping exercises. They were also directed to do 15 minutes of balance training at home using a wobble board.

Players in the comparison group had a "standard of practice" 15-minute warm up before play, including on aerobic components, static and dynamic stretching and a home program that only involved stretching. As had been previously published, players in the neuromuscular warm up group had 38 percent fewer injuries during the season than those in the comparison group. For the new study the researchers estimated direct cost savings related to these injuries, including visits to healthcare professionals, treatments, surgeries, X-rays, supplies and equipment used by injured players. They added direct costs to the healthcare system in Canada to out-of-pocket medical costs incurred by players and their families, which may include physiotherapy, splints, braces, crutches and chiropractic visits. — Reuters

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KAREENA KAPOOR KHAN INAUGURATES MALABAR GOLD AND DIAMONDS' 10TH OUTLET IN OMAN

Bollywood Actress Kareena Kapoor Khan launched 146th outlet of Malabar Gold and Diamonds which is 10th in Oman at Ruwi High Street, Muscat on April 14th in the presence of MP Ahammed, Chairman, Malabar Group, Shamlal Ahamed, Managing Director- International Operations, Malabar Gold and Diamonds, KP Abdul Salam, Group Executive Director, Malabar Group, Asher. O, Managing Director - India Operations, Malabar Gold and Diamonds other well-wishers, invited media and guests.

This elegant showroom conveniently located at Ruwi High Street, Opp. to Ruwi Police Station, will be their 3rd showroom at Ruwi, 10th in Oman and 63rd in the Middle East. Like all other Malabar Gold and Diamonds outlets, this showroom will also display a significantly large collection of traditional as well as contemporary jewelry in gold, certified diamonds, platinum and precious stone jewelry from across the world that can hold you spell-bound with their awe-inspiring beauty for the jewelry lovers in Oman.

To celebrate this occasion, the group introduced fabulous inaugural offers for their customers. With every purchase of diamond jewelry worth OMR 500, the customers will get a 1 gm gold coin absolutely free and the customers can also avail a free gold coin with every purchase of gold jewelry worth OMR 300. These offers are valid at their newly opened outlet in Ruwi until 26 April 2016.

A huge gathering of over 40,000 residents of Muscat thronged the venue to witness the inauguration and to see their favorite celebrity. Malabar Gold and Diamonds partnered with the security consultant Gentur Security to ensure the event was well organized and comfortable and convenient event

for the spectators and the celebrity.

Further expansions

The group is also planning to expand their presence in Oman by opening 2 more showrooms in Barqa, Lulu and Muscat City Center by July 2016.

One of the most important factors driving the group's success are innovation in their strategies, designs, promotions and the trust Malabar Gold and Diamonds evokes. With a rich mix of traditional and trendy jewelry in gold, diamond and platinum, Malabar Gold and Diamonds is one of the most preferred destinations for quality jewelry. The combination of purest jewelry and cutting edge designs combining unmatched grace and style makes their jewelry unique.

The branded jewelry segment of Malabar Gold and Diamonds is renowned globally for their flawless craftsmanship and the impeccable style. The exclusive brands available at Malabar Gold and Diamonds includes Ethnix - Handcrafted Designer Jewelry, Era - Uncut Diamond Jewelry, Mine - Diamonds Unlimited, Divine - Indian Heritage Jewelry, Precia - Precious Gem Jewelry, Solitaire One - An exclusive solitaire brand, NV - Trendy 18K Gold Jewelry, Ago Bay - Pearl Jewelry and Starlet - Kids Jewelry.

The leap from a single store to 146 outlets globally did not happen overnight. It was achieved through consistent effort and an insistence on setting exceptionally high standards to meet the aspiration of customers. Their dedicated and highly skilled employees invest heart and soul in striving to achieve maximum perfection. Absolute customer satisfaction is the overriding promise in every thing they do.



Enough reasons

Ornaments have never been so easier to buy, sell and exchange as it is in Malabar Gold and Diamonds and with their customer friendly policies, they give their customers enough reasons to come back to their stores. The jewelry group also gives their customers the advantage of using their '0% Easy Payment Plan' with selected banks through which they can pay the total amount in 3 to 6 installments

without any interest. Customers can also enroll to the unique 'Gold Purchase Scheme' from the new store as well. It gives customers a unique opportunity to save gold every month equivalent to equal monthly installments for a maximum period of 24 months.

The group is in the forefront when it comes to CSR activities as well. The group sets apart a fixed percentage of its net profit to the benefit of needy and the charity projects of Malabar

Gold and Diamonds have touched the lives of thousands of people across the world. They focus primarily in five priority areas such as health, education, environment, housing and women empowerment. In Oman, Malabar Gold and Diamonds operates showrooms at Darsait, Baushar, Ruwi, Seeb, Salalah and Sohar.



ADAN HEALTH CENTER MARKS WORLD AUTISM DAY

Adan Health Center organized an awareness activity to mark the Autism Awareness month under the patronage of head of Primary Health Care Dr Fahad Al-Azmi and head of Adan Health Center Dr Ali Abbas.

The activity goes along with the goals of the World Health Organization (WHO) that

designated the month of April of each year to address autism, and educate citizens on the early signs and how to correctly deal with autistic children. Posters, leaflets, and videos were distributed to give explanations on autism, the special characteristics of autistic children, what kind of diet they should follow, etc.



The Kuwait Autism Center hosted a lecture recently titled 'personal styles,' presented by Dr Ayoub Al-Ayoub.



The Sabah Al-Ahmad Center for Giftedness and Creativity introduced a braille pen that was invented by Kuwaiti inventor Sheikha Al-Majid and attorney Hanadi Al-Omani, the first lawyer with visual disability in Kuwait. The invention was the result of cooperation between the center and the Kuwait Lawyers Society, the center said in a statement.



GRAND HYPER ANNOUNCES FIRST WEEK WINNERS OF 'GRAND GOLD FEST' PROMOTION

Grand Hyper, one of the leading retailers in Kuwait and Middle East, announced the first week winners of the ongoing Grand Gold Fest 2016. The mega winner of first week draw, Muhammad Farooq Mehdi Khan has bagged 5 gold coins and 50 individual winners have won one gold coin of 8 grams each. The prize distribution for the first week draw was conducted on 13th April 2016, at Grand Mall in Fahaheel.

This spectacular and one of its kind promotion in the retail industry is designed for the holiday season and this year, Grand Gold Fest 2016 rewards winners with 3.6 kilo gold in lucky draws being held between the promotion period 1 April and 30 May, 2016. A total of 444 gold coins are being distributed over this period and the major attraction being the bumper prize of One Kilo gold. Customers can participate in the campaign with a minimum purchase of KD5 at any of the Grand Hyper stores in Kuwait. There will be a total of six draws in different Grand Hyper locations over the promotion period. The draw dates, which are spread over eight weeks, will be held on 11 and 21 April and on 1, 11, 22 and 31 May, 2016.





LULU HYPERMARKET LAUNCHES 'BRITISH FOOD FESTIVAL 2016'

Lulu Hypermarket, the largest retail chain in the region, launched its much-anticipated British Food Festival 2016 with an inauguration ceremony on Wednesday, 13 April, 2016. The UK Ambassador to Kuwait Matthew Lodge inaugurated the festival at the hypermar-

ket's Al-Qurain outlet in the presence of top management of Lulu Hypermarket and a large gathering of shoppers.

The festival, which runs till 23 April at all branches of the hypermarket, introduces shoppers to a wide range of well-known British products at very competitive prices.

Adding to the ambiance of the promotion are several displays of iconic British landmarks. Among the many renowned brands being offered during the promotion are food products from Arla, Baker Street, Bertolli, Delamere, Kipling, Mcvities, Saint Pierre, Tropicana and Walkers. LuLu

Hypermarket is especially proud to showcase products from categories such as dairy, meat, vegetables, fruits, frozen foods, groceries and non-food items from Y International, a leading UK company specialized in sourcing and exporting quality food and non-food items from the UK to

retail and wholesale businesses in the MiddleEast and India.

With the British Festival 2016, LuLu Hypermarket is continuing with its innovative and customer-centric promotions that aim to bring the best from around the world to shoppers in Kuwait.



MILLENNIUM HOTEL, CONVENTION CENTRE HOSTS 'HIGH TEA STORYTELLING'

Library Cafe, the chic hotspot located at Millennium Hotel and Convention Centre, has unveiled a special treat that promises to captivate children's imaginations while offering parents a much-deserved opportunity to enjoy themselves in peace. Taking place every 2nd Saturday of each month, 'High Tea Storytelling' is the first regular event of its kind in Kuwait and is led by a talented storyteller who takes children on a wonderful journey through a variety of fairy tales inside a designated lounge within the cafe. Parents may join in the fun, or alternatively bask in the quiet ambience of the main cafe area where an array of exotic Tchaba tea and delicious delights are on offer.

"High Tea Storytelling at Library Cafe is part of a comprehensive program aiming to offer fresh, surprising and hospitable experiences to guests of all ages," commented Dani Saleh, Area General Manager of Millennium and Copthorne Hotels Kuwait.

Located on the ground floor, Library Cafe's unique ambience has managed to attract a diverse range of customers over the past several months, including business people, students, tea and coffee connoisseurs and book lovers.



Lulua Productions announced that 'Habibul Ard', a Kuwaiti production that narrates the story of martyr Fayeq Abdul-Jaleel, was nominated for an award at the 34th Fajr International Film Festival which takes place in Tehran, Iran on April 20 - 25, 2016.

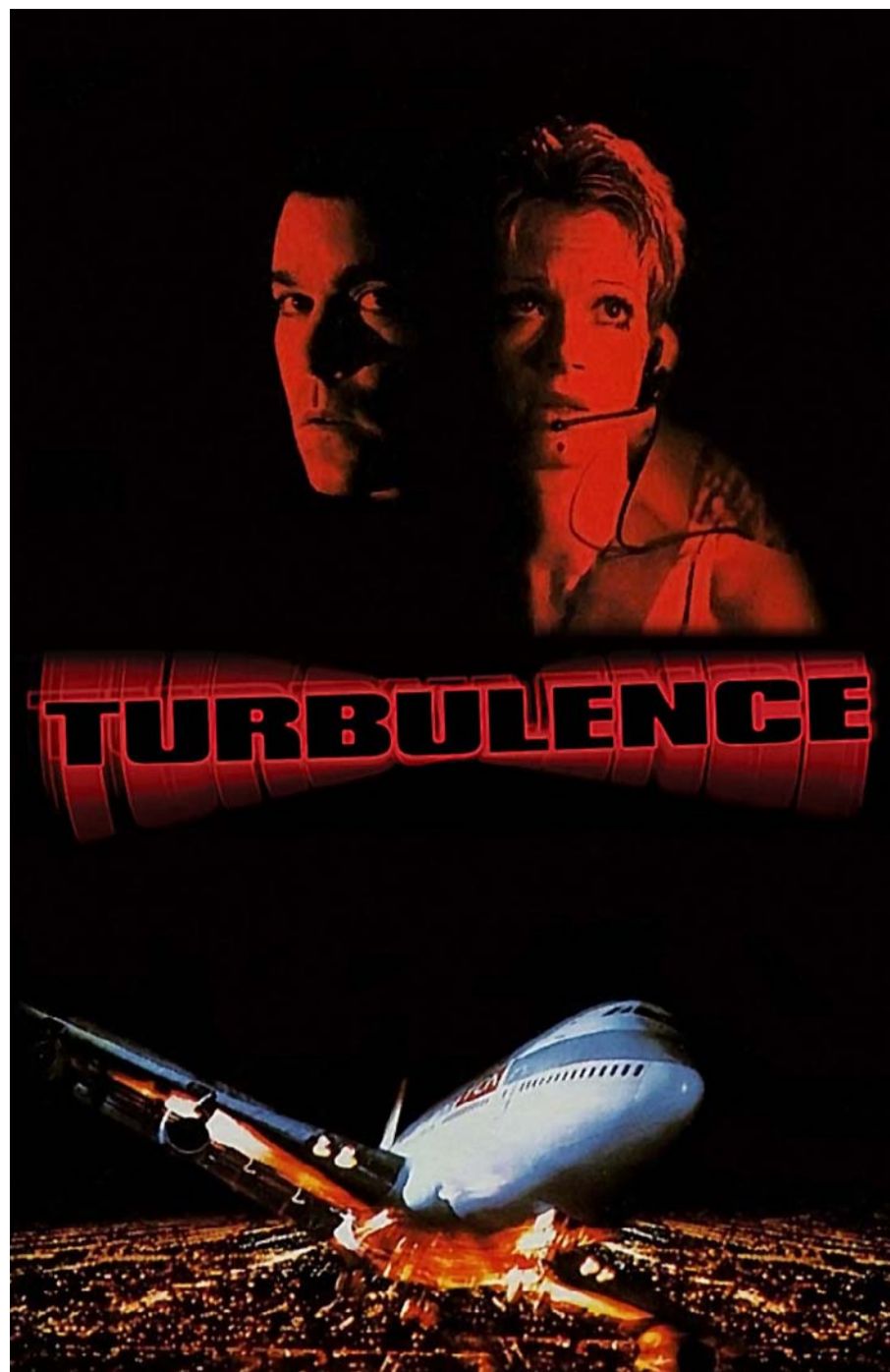


- 00:30 Fear The Walking Dead
- 01:25 Fear The Walking Dead
- 02:20 Fear The Walking Dead
- 03:15 Fear The Walking Dead
- 04:10 Fear The Walking Dead
- 05:10 Saved!
- 06:40 Death Rides A Horse
- 08:35 The People That Time Forgot
- 10:05 Geronimo: An American Legend
- 12:00 Saved!
- 13:30 Waking Up In Reno
- 15:05 The Secret Of Santa Vittoria
- 17:20 Pork Chop Hill
- 18:55 Big Screen
- 19:10 Of Mice And Men
- 21:00 Fear The Walking Dead
- 22:00 Strange Wilderness
- 23:25 Love Or Money?

- 17:00 News Update
- 17:15 World InSight
- 18:00 Asia Today
- 18:30 Culture Express
- 19:00 News Update
- 19:30 Spectrum Asia
- 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



- 00:20 Space Pioneer
- 01:08 Invent It Rich
- 01:55 Da Vinci's Machines
- 02:42 Building The Biggest
- 03:29 Building The Biggest
- 04:16 Building The Biggest
- 05:03 Food Factory
- 05:26 Food Factory
- 05:50 Food Factory
- 06:12 Food Factory
- 06:37 How Do They Do It?
- 07:00 How Do They Do It?
- 07:23 Mythbusters
- 08:08 Eco-Tech
- 08:53 Building The Biggest
- 09:38 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 10:23 Da Vinci's Machines
- 11:08 Space Pioneer
- 11:53 Building The Biggest
- 12:38 Mythbusters
- 13:23 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 14:10 Eco-Tech
- 14:57 Secret Space Escapes
- 15:44 Space Pioneer
- 16:31 Under New York
- 17:18 Eco-Tech
- 18:05 Mythbusters
- 18:50 You Have Been Warned
- 19:40 Space Pioneer
- 20:25 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 21:15 How The Earth Works
- 22:00 You Have Been Warned
- 22:45 Space Pioneer
- 23:35 Mythbusters



TURBULENCE ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

- 05:00 Loopdidoo
- 05:15 Art Attack
- 05:35 Henry Hugglemonster
- 05:50 Calimero
- 06:00 Zou
- 06:20 Loopdidoo
- 06:35 Art Attack
- 08:20 El News
- 09:15 Giuliana & Bill
- 10:15 Giuliana & Bill
- 11:10 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
- 11:35 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
- 12:05 El News
- 13:05 Fashion Police
- 14:05 Hollywood Cycle
- 15:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 16:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 17:00 Christina Milian Turned Up
- 18:00 El News
- 19:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
- 20:00 Botched
- 21:00 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
- 22:00 WAGs
- 23:00 Hollywood Medium With Tyler Henry



- 00:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
- 01:05 Emmerdale
- 01:30 Emmerdale
- 02:00 Coronation Street
- 02:30 Keep It In The Family
- 03:25 Tracey Ullman's Show
- 03:55 Raised By Wolves
- 04:20 Celebrity Exposed: Photography Of Richard Young
- 04:50 Celebrity Exposed: Photography Of Richard Young
- 05:15 Celebrity Exposed: Photography Of Richard Young
- 05:45 Celebrity Exposed: Photography Of Richard Young
- 06:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
- 07:00 Tracey Ullman's Show
- 07:30 Grantchester
- 08:25 The Jonathan Ross Show
- 09:20 Keep It In The Family
- 10:15 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
- 11:10 Art & Doc's Saturday Night Takeaway
- 12:30 Who's Doing The Dishes?
- 13:25 Emmerdale
- 13:50 Eggheads
- 14:20 Coronation Street
- 14:45 Keep It In The Family
- 15:35 Michael Flatley: A Night To Remember
- 16:30 Tracey Ullman's Show
- 17:00 Raised By Wolves
- 17:25 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
- 18:20 Emmerdale
- 18:45 Coach Trip
- 19:10 Coronation Street
- 19:35 Michael Flatley: A Night To Remember
- 20:30 Tracey Ullman's Show
- 21:00 Raised By Wolves
- 21:25 The Doctor Blake Mysteries
- 22:20 Coronation Street
- 22:50 Emmerdale
- 23:15 Who's Doing The Dishes?



- 00:00 Cutthroat Kitchen
- 01:00 Man v Food
- 01:30 Man v Food
- 02:00 Tia Mowry At Home
- 02:30 Tia Mowry At Home
- 03:00 Man Finds Food
- 03:30 Man Finds Food
- 04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 04:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
- 05:00 Chopped
- 06:30 Man Fire Food
- 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
- 15:30 Man Fire Food
- 16:00 Chopped
- 17:00 The Kitchen
- 18:00 Anna Olson: Bake
- 19:00 Anna Olson: Bake
- 19:30 Chopped
- 20:00 Iron Chef America
- 21:00 American Diner Revival
- 21:30 American Diner Revival
- 22:00 Mystery Diners
- 22:30 Mystery Diners
- 23:00 Save My Bakery



- 06:00 Boyster
- 06:10 Super Matrak
- 06:35 Super Matrak
- 07:00 Star vs The Forces Of Evil
- 07:25 K.C. Undercover
- 07:50 Supa Strikas
- 08:15 Amnedroids
- 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
- 12:35 Lab Rats
- 13:30 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 Much Everything
- 17:25 K.C. Undercover
- 17:50 Supa Strikas
- 18:15 Lab Rats
- 18:40 K.C. Undercover
- 19:05 Cars Toons
- 19:10 Amnedroids
- 19:35 Phineas And Ferb
- 20:00 Kirby Buckets
- 20:25 Gamers Guide To Pretty Much Everything
- 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



- 00:20 Pawn Stars Australia
- 00:45 Pawn Stars Australia
- 01:10 American Restoration
- 01:35 American Restoration
- 02:00 Ice Road Truckers
- 02:50 Ax Men
- 03:40 American Restoration
- 04:30 Pawn Stars
- 05:00 Hunting Hitler
- 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 Leupu And Pitbull
- 10:35 Counting Cars
- 11:00 Counting Cars
- 11:25 Hunting Hitler
- 12:15 American Pickers
- 13:05 Storage Wars
- 13:30 Storage Wars
- 14:20 Pawn Stars
- 14:45 Pawn Stars Australia
- 15:10 Pawn Stars Australia
- 15:35 Shipping Wars
- 16:00 Mountain Men
- 16:50 Swamp People
- 17:40 Ice Road Truckers
- 18:30 Hunting Hitler
- 19:20 American Pickers
- 20:10 Pawn Stars
- 20:35 Pawn Stars



- 00:00 The Grace Helbig Show
- 00:30 WAGs
- 01:25 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
- 02:20 El News
- 03:15 Botched
- 04:10 Botched

- 05:40 Yukon Gold
- 06:35 I Wouldn't Go In There
- 07:30 Cesar To The Rescue
- 08:25 Danger Decoded
- 08:50 Danger Decoded
- 09:20 World's Toughest Fixes
- 10:15 Dirty Rotten Survival
- 11:10 Primal Survivor
- 12:05 Dawn Of Humanity
- 13:00 Danger Decoded
- 13:30 Danger Decoded
- 14:00 Cesar To The Rescue
- 15:00 I Wouldn't Go In There
- 16:00 Dirty Rotten Survival
- 17:00 Mine Kings
- 18:00 Billy The Kid: New Evidence
- 20:00 Dirty Rotten Survival
- 20:50 Mine Kings
- 21:40 Billy The Kid: New Evidence
- 23:20 Yukon Gold



- 00:10 Lee Chan's World Food Tour
- 00:35 Lee Chan's World Food Tour
- 01:00 East Bites West
- 01:25 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
- 01:50 Maximum Foodie
- 02:15 Tales From The Bush Larder
- 02:40 Tales From The Bush Larder
- 03:05 The Food Files
- 03:30 The Peninsula: The Making Of A Gala
- 04:20 Top Tables, Top Cities
- 04:45 Top Tables, Top Cities
- 05:10 Fearless Chef
- 06:00 American Food Battle
- 06:25 East Street
- 06:50 East Bites West
- 07:15 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
- 07:40 Maximum Foodie
- 08:05 Tales From The Bush Larder
- 08:30 Tales From The Bush Larder
- 08:55 The Food Files
- 09:20 The Peninsula: The Making Of A Gala
- 10:10 Top Tables, Top Cities
- 10:35 Top Tables, Top Cities
- 11:00 Fearless Chef
- 11:50 American Food Battle
- 12:15 East Street
- 12:40 East Bites West
- 13:05 My Sri Lanka With Peter Kuruvita
- 13:35 Maximum Foodie
- 14:00 Tales From The Bush Larder
- 14:30 Tales From The Bush Larder
- 14:55 Confucius Was A Foodie
- 15:50 Carnival Eats
- 16:20 Top Tables, Top Cities
- 16:45 Top Tables, Top Cities
- 17:15 Fearless Chef
- 18:10 American Food Battle
- 18:35 East Street
- 19:05 Confucius Was A Foodie
- 20:00 Carnival Eats
- 21:50 Storage Wars: Best Of
- 22:15 Storage Wars: Best Of
- 22:40 The Curse Of Oak Island
- 23:30 Storage Wars
- 23:55 Storage Wars



- 00:00 Bones
- 01:00 Scandal
- 02:00 House Of Cards
- 03:00 Satisfaction
- 04:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 05:00 Good Morning America
- 06:00 Suits
- 07:00 24
- 08:00 Prison Break
- 09:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 10:00 Bones
- 11:00 24
- 12:00 Prison Break
- 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 14:00 Live Good Morning America
- 16:00 Suits
- 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 18:00 Prison Break
- 19:00 Scandal
- 20:00 Recovery Road
- 21:00 Quantico



- 00:00 As Above, So Below
- 02:00 Hansel & Gretel
- 04:00 Turbulence
- 06:00 Grosse Pointe Blank
- 08:00 Forget And Forgive
- 09:45 The Bourne Legacy
- 12:15 Turbulence
- 14:00 Airplane vs. Volcano
- 15:45 Grosse Pointe Blank
- 17:45 The Bourne Legacy
- 20:15 Automata
- 22:15 Duplicity



- 00:00 The Babymakers
- 02:00 Idiocracy
- 04:00 The Misadventures Of The Dunderheads
- 06:00 At Middleton
- 08:00 Three Men And A Baby
- 10:00 The Misadventures Of The Dunderheads
- 12:00 Grudge Match
- 14:00 The Trip To Italy
- 16:00 Three Men And A Baby
- 18:00 50 First Dates
- 20:00 Sexuality
- 22:00 Scary Movie 4



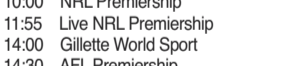
- 01:00 A Beautiful Mind
- 03:30 Bugsy
- 05:45 Beyond The Edge
- 07:15 To Write Love On Her Arms
- 09:00 October Sky
- 11:00 Beyond The Edge
- 12:30 Paradise
- 14:30 Evita
- 17:00 October Sky
- 19:00 How I Live Now
- 21:00 Legends Of The Fall
- 23:30 Dallas Buyers Club



- 01:00 Kristy
- 03:00 A Gift Of Miracles
- 05:00 Ana Maria In Novela Land
- 07:00 Step Up Revolution
- 09:00 Odd Thomas
- 11:00 Kon-Tiki
- 13:00 The Last 5 Years
- 15:00 Step Up All In
- 17:00 Tracers
- 19:00 Taken 3
- 21:00 Green Street 3: Never Back Down
- 23:00 Area 51



- 02:00 Super Rugby Highlights
- 03:00 HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series
- 06:00 Super Rugby Highlights
- 07:00 Golfing World
- 08:00 Super Rugby Highlights
- 10:00 NFL Premiership
- 11:55 Live NFL Premiership
- 14:00 Gillette World Sport
- 14:30 AFL Premiership
- 17:00 Super Rugby Highlights
- 17:30 Super Rugby Highlights
- 18:00 Golfing World
- 19:00 AFL Premiership Highlights
- 20:00 Super Rugby Highlights
- 21:30 Gillette World Sport
- 22:00 The Masters



- 01:00 Super Rugby Highlights
- 02:00 Live NHL
- 05:00 Super Rugby Highlights
- 06:00 Trans World Sport
- 07:00 The Masters
- 12:30 Gillette World Sport
- 13:00 Trans World Sport
- 14:00 NHL
- 16:00 WWE Bottom Line
- 17:00 WWE Superstars
- 18:00 WWE Main Event
- 19:00 WWE Experience
- 20:00 WWE Afterburn
- 21:00 This Week In WWE
- 21:30 NFL Premiership
- 23:30 AFL Premiership Highlights



- 02:30 Inside Sailing
- 03:00 The World Sailing Show
- 03:30 Golfing World
- 04:30 AFL Premiership
- 07:00 Super Rugby Highlights
- 07:30 Super Rugby Highlights
- 08:00 Fight Night: Charles Martin v Anthony Joshua
- 14:00 Super Rugby Highlights
- 14:30 Super Rugby Highlights
- 15:00 The Masters



- 00:45 Gator Boys
- 01:40 Hunt For The Russian Tiger
- 02:35 Wildest Indochina
- 03:25 Bahama Blue
- 04:15 Wild Iberia
- 05:02 Return Of The Great White
- Serial Killer
- 05:49 Biggest And Baddest
- 06:36 Swamp Brothers
- 07:00 Swamp Brothers
- 07:25 Your Pet Wants This
- 08:15 River Monsters
- 09:10 Treehouse Masters
- 10:05 Tanked
- 11:00 Your Pet Wants This, Too!
- 11:55 Bondi Vet
- 12:25 Bondi Vet
- 12:50 River Monsters
- 13:45 Gator Boys
- 14:40 Treehouse Masters
- 15:35 Tanked
- 16:30 Shamwar: A Wild Life
- 17:00 Shamwar: A Wild Life
- 17:25 River Monsters
- 18:20 From WAGs To Riches
- 19:15 Tanked
- 20:10 Killer Ig: Lion vs Hyena
- 21:05 Treehouse Masters
- 22:00 From WAGs To Riches
- 22:55 Gator Boys
- 23:50 River Monsters



- 00:00 Cursed: The Bell Witch
- 01:00 The Haunting Of...
- 02:00 Killer Kids
- 03:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
- 04:00 Nightmare In Suburbia
- 05:00 Cursed: The Bell Witch
- 06:00 The FBI Files
- 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 Martina Cole's Lady Killers
- 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 Martina Cole's Lady Killers
- 20:00 Crime Stories
- 21:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
- 22:00 Britain's Darkest Taboos
- 23:00 Gangsters: America's Most Evil



- 00:05 Destroyed In Seconds
- 00:30 Storm Chasers 2008
- 01:20 Storm Chasers 2008
- 02:10 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 03:00 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
- 03:50 Redesign My Brain
- 04:40 Redesign My Brain
- 05:30 Redesign My Brain
- 06:20 Food Factory
- 06:40 Food Factory
- 07:00 Doki
- 07:25 Kids vs Film
- 07:50 Dogs 101
- 08:40 Redesign My Brain
- 09:30 Food Factory
- 09:55 Food Factory
- 10:20 Storm Chasers 2008
- 11:10 Bondi Vet
- 11:35 Bondi Vet
- 12:00 Dogs 101
- 12:50 Food Factory
- 13:35 Food Factory
- 13:40 World's Toughest Jobs
- 14:30 Dirty Jobs
- 15:20 Mythbusters
- 16:10 Doki
- 16:35 Kids vs Film
- 17:00 Don't Drive Here
- 17:50 Atlas 4D



- 00:30 Studio 1.0
- 01:00 Bloomberg West
- 02:00 First Up With Angie Lau
- 03:00 First Up With Angie Lau
- 04:00 Trending Business
- 06:00 Asia Edge
- 07:00 Bloomberg Best



A GIFT OF MIRACLES ON OSN MOVIES HD

- 06:00 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
- 17:00 Bloomberg Markets
- 18:00 Bloomberg Markets: European
- Close
- 19:00 Bloomberg Markets
- 23:00 What'd You Miss?



- 00:20 Fast N' Loud
- 01:10 Manhunt With Joel Lambert
- 02:00 Manhunt With Joel Lambert
- 02:50 Killing Fields
- 03:40 Extreme Collectors
- 04:05 Storage Wars Canada
- 04:30 Auction Hunters
- 05:00 How Do They Do It?
- 05:30 Fifth Gear
- 06:00 Outback Truckers
- 06:50 Wheeler Dealers
- 07:40 Fast N' Loud
- 08:30 Extreme Collectors
- 08:55 Storage Wars Canada
- 09:20 Auction Hunters
- 09:45 How Do They Do It?
- 10:10 Fifth Gear
- 10:35 Misfit Garage
- 11:25 Overhaulin'
- 12:15 Extreme Car Hoarders
- 13:05 Extreme Collectors
- 13:30 Storage Wars Canada
- 13:55 Auction Hunters
- 14:20 Outback Truckers
- 15:10 Wheeler Dealers
- 16:00 Fast N' Loud
- 16:50 Fifth Gear
- 17:15 How Do They Do It?



- 00:05 Art Attack
- 00:30 Henry Hugglemonster
- 00:45 Calimero
- 01:00 Zou
- 01:15 Loopdidoo
- 01:30 Art Attack
- 01:55 Henry Hugglemonster
- 02:05 Calimero
- 02:20 Zou
- 02:30 Loopdidoo
- 02:45 Art Attack
- 03:10 Henry Hugglemonster
- 03:20 Calimero
- 03:35 Zou
- 03:45 Loopdidoo
- 04:00 Art Attack
- 04:25 Henry Hugglemonster
- 04:35 Calimero
- 04:50 Zou



- 00:00 News Update
- 00:30 Dialogue
- 01:00 News Update
- 01:15 China 24
- 02:00 Americas Now
- 03:00 News Update
- 03:30 China InSight
- 04:00 News Update
- 04:30 Assignment Asia
- 05:00 News Update
- 06:30 Dialogue
- 07:00 News Hour
- 08:00 Americas Now
- 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

CLASSIFIEDS



KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (14/04/2016 TO 20/04/2016)

Area	Time	Programme	Area	Time	Programme
SHARQIA-1	12:45 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	MARINA-2	11:30 AM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
BEFORE I WAKE	3:00 PM	MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	THE JUNGLE BOOK	1:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
CRIMINAL	5:15 PM	BEFORE I WAKE	THE JUNGLE BOOK	4:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
BEFORE I WAKE	7:30 PM	MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	THE JUNGLE BOOK	6:15 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	9:45 PM	BEFORE I WAKE	THE JUNGLE BOOK	8:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
CRIMINAL	12:05 AM		THE JUNGLE BOOK	10:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
			MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	1:00 AM	
SHARQIA-2	1:00 PM	FANAR-2	MARINA-3	12:00 PM	FAN- Hindi
THE JUNGLE BOOK	3:15 PM	FAN- Hindi	FAN- Hindi	3:00 PM	CRIMINAL
THE JUNGLE BOOK	5:30 PM	FAN- Hindi	CRIMINAL	6:00 PM	CRIMINAL
THE JUNGLE BOOK	7:45 PM	FAN- Hindi	MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	8:15 PM	MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)
THE JUNGLE BOOK	10:00 PM		CRIMINAL	12:45 AM	
MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	12:15 AM				
SHARQIA-3	12:30 PM	FAN- Hindi	AVENUES-1	1:15 PM	KUNG FU PANDA 3
FAN- Hindi	1:30 PM	KUNG FU PANDA 3	KUNG FU PANDA 3	3:30 PM	KUNG FU PANDA 3
KUNG FU PANDA 3	3:30 PM	FAN- Hindi	MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	5:45 PM	MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)
FAN- Hindi	6:30 PM	CRIMINAL	MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	8:00 PM	MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)
FAN- Hindi	9:30 PM		MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)	10:15 PM	MA3 AL KHATAR (Kuwaiti Film)
CRIMINAL	12:30 AM			12:30 AM	
MUHALAB-1	11:30 AM	BEFORE I WAKE	AVENUES-3	11:45 AM	MR. RIGHT
BEFORE I WAKE	1:30 PM	CRIMINAL	OBSERVANCE	2:00 PM	OBSERVANCE
CRIMINAL	3:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	MR. RIGHT	4:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
BEFORE I WAKE	6:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK (3D)	THE JUNGLE BOOK	6:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
THE AMERICAN SIDE	8:00 PM	BATMAN V SUPERMAN: DAWN OF JUSTICE	JU ON: THE GRUDGE 3	9:30 PM	OBSERVANCE
CRIMINAL	10:15 PM		OBSERVANCE	11:30 PM	OBSERVANCE
CRIMINAL	12:30 AM			1:15 AM	
MUHALAB-2	11:30 AM	FAN- Hindi	AVENUES-4	11:30 AM	CRIMINAL
FAN- Hindi	2:30 PM	FAN- Hindi	FAN- Hindi	2:15 PM	FAN- Hindi
FAN- Hindi	5:30 PM	FAN- Hindi	NO THU+FRI	5:15 PM	NO THU+FRI
FAN- Hindi	8:30 PM	FAN- Hindi	Special Show "THE JUNGLE BOOK"	5:15 PM	Special Show "THE JUNGLE BOOK"
FAN- Hindi	11:30 PM		THU+FRI	8:15 PM	THU+FRI
			FAN- Hindi	11:15 PM	FAN- Hindi
MUHALAB-3	11:45 AM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	AVENUES-5	11:45 AM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
THE JUNGLE BOOK	2:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	THE JUNGLE BOOK -3D	2:00 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK -3D
THE JUNGLE BOOK	4:15 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	THE JUNGLE BOOK	4:15 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
THE JUNGLE BOOK	6:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK	THE JUNGLE BOOK -3D	6:30 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK -3D
THE JUNGLE BOOK	8:45 PM	BEFORE I WAKE	THE JUNGLE BOOK	8:45 PM	THE JUNGLE BOOK
BEFORE I WAKE	11:00 PM	BEFORE I WAKE	NO THU+SUN	7:00 PM	Special Show "THE JUNGLE BOOK"
BEFORE I WAKE	1:00 AM		Special Show "THE JUNGLE BOOK"	8:45 PM	THU+SUN
FANAR-1	12:30 PM	BEFORE I WAKE			
BEFORE I WAKE	12:05 AM				

ACCOMMODATION

Furnished C/AC room available for an executive bachelor near Shara Amman round, Salmiya. Calm and neat with Christian Malayalee family from May 1st. Contact 66418746. (C 5163) 16-4-2016

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Irene Elias Sequeira holder of Indian Passport No. G3662883, Sai Kripa Chawl R 2 Tembi Pada Lokmanya Nagar Bhandup W Mumbai, hereby change my name to Aisha. (C 5162)

I, Thomas Santano Fernandes holder of Passport No. A8004668 issued at Kuwait on 3/10/1999 resident of (correct address in India) H. No. 97, Seraulim, Banda, Salcete, Goa. Hereby change my name from Thomas Santano Fernandes to Thomas Fernandes with immediate effect. (C 5164) 16-4-2016

FOR SALE

COFFEE SHOP
fully furnished including license with an excellent location in Kuwait City.
Tel: 66225465

SITUATION WANTED

M.Com sixteen years experience in independently handling accounts of medium sized companies upto finalization, familiar with accounting systems, at present working in hospital, seeking suitable position. Mobile: 66019422. (C 5161) 14-4-2016

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)

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr:	03:56
Shorook	05:19
Duhr:	11:48
Asr:	15:22
Maghrib:	18:15
Isha:	19:36



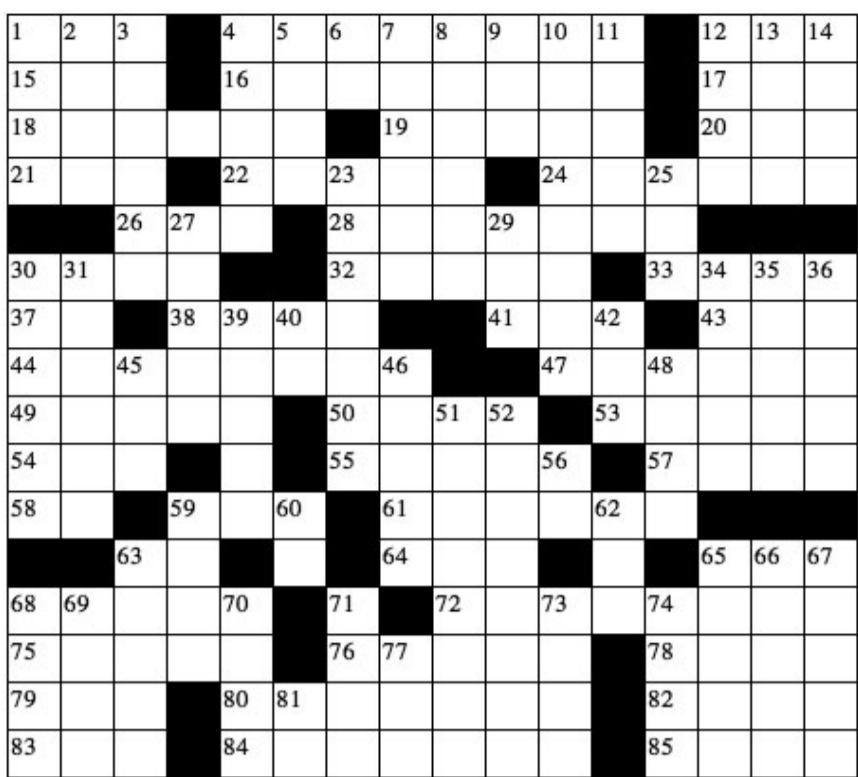
Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

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

Arrival Flights on Monday 18/4/2016				Departure Flights on Monday 18/4/2016			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	AIC	982	Ahmedabad/Chennai	00:05
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10	MSC	502	Alexandria	00:05
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	BBC	044	Dhaka	00:10
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	JAI	573	Mumbai	00:25
KKK	6506	Istanbul	00:55	MSR	615	Cairo	00:30
DLH	635	Doha	01:00	FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15	PIA	206	Lahore	00:40
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20	MSC	404	Asyut	00:55
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40	MSC	416	Sohag	01:05
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	THY	773	Istanbul	01:40
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	THY	765	Istanbul	02:45
ETD	919	Abu Dhabi	02:20	ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45
CEB	018	Manila	02:20	PGT	859	Istanbul	02:55
UAE	853	Dubai	02:25	UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	KAC	417	Manila	03:55
FDB	067	Dubai	03:15	OMA	644	Muscat	04:00
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	KKK	6505	Istanbul	04:05
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:15	FDB	068	Dubai	04:05
QTR	1076	Doha	03:25	ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10
PGT	860	Istanbul	03:30	MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
KAC	544	Cairo	03:40	ETD	920	Abu Dhabi	04:20
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	PGT	861	Istanbul	04:30
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	QTR	1077	Doha	04:35
JZR	529	Asyut	06:00	CEB	019	Manila	04:50
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:25	JZR	560	Sohag	05:00
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	06:30	RJA	643	Amman	06:25
BAW	157	London	06:40	QTR	1087	Doha	06:30
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15	THY	771	Istanbul	06:45
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30	GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:40	FDB	070	Dubai	07:05
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	JZR	165	Dubai	07:15
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	FDB	5062	Dubai	07:55
KAC	354	BLR	08:00	BAW	156	London	08:25
KAC	156	Istanbul	08:00	FDB	054	Dubai	08:30
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20	KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	08:50
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20	KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	KAC	787	Jeddah	09:30
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00	JZR	482	Istanbul	09:40
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	UAE	856	Dubai	09:50
IRA	667	Esfahan	09:15	ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:00
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	IRA	666	Esfahan	10:15
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	FDB	056	Dubai	10:40
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40	QTR	1071	Doha	10:45
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	153	Istanbul	11:00
AXB	890	Mangalore/Bahrain	10:55	KAC	501	Beirut	11:00
MEA	404	Beirut	11:00	KAC	561	Amman	11:20
JZR	561	Sohag	11:25	KAC	165	Rome/Paris	11:25
JZR	164	Dubai	11:50	KAC	741	Dammam	11:35
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	GFA	214	Bahrain	11:55
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30	AXB	890	Mangalore	11:55
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	MEA	405	Beirut	12:00
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	KAC	541	Cairo	12:05
KNE	231	Riyadh	14:00	KAC	103	London	12:10
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00	UAE	874	Dubai	12:10
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05	JZR	776	Jeddah	12:15
FDB	057	Dubai	14:20	KAC	785	Jeddah	13:00
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:20	JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
				FDB	076	Dubai	13:10
				MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

CROSSWORD 1230



ACROSS

- An unforeseen obstacle.
- A native or inhabitant of Norway.
- Enlarged prostate.
- Leaf or strip from a leaf of the talipot palm used in India for writing paper.
- (of exocrine glands) Producing a secretion in which part of the secreting cell is released with the secretion.
- A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
- Personal state of isolation and anxiety resulting from a lack of social control and regulation.
- A blind god.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- A light touch or stroke.
- (of complexion) Blemished by imperfections of the skin.
- Showing a high degree of refinement and the assurance that comes from wide social experience.
- A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
- Extreme mental retardation.
- An island in the Netherlands Antilles that is the top of an extinct volcano.
- An extreme state of adversity.
- A Hindu prince or king in India.
- A radioactive transuranic element.
- Offering fun and gaiety.
- Top part of an apron.
- (informal) Roused to anger.
- (British) The position of headmaster or headmistress.
- Any of several plants of the genus Manihot having fleshy roots yielding a nutritious starch.
- An island of central Hawaii.
- A member of the Siouan people formerly living in the Missouri river valley in NE Nebraska.
- Relating to or having the characteristics of bees.
- A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.
- A drama set to music.
- A former copper coin of Pakistan.
- A silver-white metallic element of the platinum group that resembles platinum.
- A port city in southwestern Iran.
- A human limb.
- Jordan's port.
- Dressed in a tuxedo.
- Obvious and dull.
- An island of Hawaii northwest of Oahu.
- Any loose flowing garment.
- A graphical record of electric currents associated with muscle contractions.
- Congenital absence of the heart (as in the development of some monsters).
- Type genus of the Anatidae.
- Time for Earth to make a complete rotation on its axis.
- A source of oil.
- A small cake leavened with yeast.

DOWN

- Taking place over public roads.
- The inner and longer of the two bones of the human forearm.
- African tree having an exceedingly thick trunk and fruit that resembles a gourd and has an edible pulp called monkey bread.
- Submerged aquatic plant having narrow leaves and small flowers.
- An organization of countries formed in 1961 to agree on a common policy for the sale of petroleum.
- An artificial language for international use that rejects rejects all existing words and is based instead on an abstract analysis of ideas.
- An internal representation of the world.
- Worn away as by water or ice or wind.
- Used in combination to denote the middle.
- Of or relating to anestrus.
- Italian architect who pioneered in the use of reinforced concrete (1891-1979).
- Any of numerous local fertility and nature deities worshipped by ancient Semitic peoples.
- Make a plat of.
- Swift timid long-eared mammal larger than a rabbit having a divided upper lip and long hind legs.
- A town in southwestern British Columbia on Vancouver Island west of Vancouver.
- The sense organ for hearing and equilibrium.
- (Irish) Chief god of the Tuatha De Danann.
- Horny projecting mouth of a bird.
- Regional and archaic.
- At full speed.
- Of or relating to or characteristic of Java or its inhabitants.
- A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
- A line spoken by an actor to the audience but not intended for others on the stage.
- A gonadotropic hormone that is secreted by the anterior pituitary.
- The cry made by sheep.
- (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
- Proceeding from or ordered by or subject to a pope or the papacy regarded as the successor of the Apostles.
- The complete duration of something.
- Mental lethargy or dullness.
- A river in central Brazil that flows generally northward (with many falls) to join the Tocantins River.
- A public promotion of some product or service.
- A Chadic language spoken south of Lake Chad.
- A small pellet fired from an air rifle or BB gun.
- (informal) Of the highest quality.
- Having many worn or threadbare spots in the nap.
- Formerly included in genus Cedrela.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- A port city of south central Ukraine on an arm of the Black Sea.
- God of love and erotic desire.
- By bad luck.
- (informal) Being satisfactory or in satisfactory condition.
- A city of central China.
- Lacking in liveliness or charm or surprise.
- Someone who engages in arbitrage (who purchases securities in one market for immediate resale in another in the hope of profiting from the price differential).
- A heavy odorless colorless gas formed during respiration and by the decomposition of organic substances.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

Start the day out with some sort of exercise-perhaps a walk or run through the neighborhood. Be wise in balancing your activities-this can be a busy day with family members. It is good that you do not make promises you cannot keep or you would be even busier. Your efforts to listen will not go unrewarded. Trust in your own advice and you will teach young people how to solve problems. Emotionally and romantically, this birth year will be an incredible year. You will inspire yourself and others to new heights of achievement and awareness. The projects you created last year will end successfully this year. Many of your friends and family show you their love through the celebration of your special day!



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You are in a great mood of self-enjoyment and can appreciate your own better qualities. You may see value in or feel love for an older person or someone in authority. Any ill feelings or disagreements from an earlier time have been cast aside. You can demonstrate great understanding and sensitivity to the needs of others. You may be teaching or helping others to take a more independent approach to their lives or careers now. Your confidence is high and you can accomplish anything that is before you now. This time in your life can have a profound effect on your psyche and may mark a time when your faith in a higher power, as well as your faith in other people, will be most meaningful. An attitude of gratefulness is well rewarded.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

You may want to take advantage of a quiet day today and organize and discipline your mind and methods of communication. Perhaps this is a time for paying bills, communicating with relatives, planning future car trips, etc. School and studies are topics of consideration as well. This is a time for perspiration in the idea department. This may be a time during which you consider ways that will move you forward with your goals for the next few years. There is talk of a partnership in a business venture and this would be a good time to review the facts, the statistics and the opinion of others that have been where you want to go. The internet is a good source for information but can also be a great time waster.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

There is a desire to get things done as quickly as possible. It may be fun to compete with yourself when it comes to cleaning, chores and updating whatever needs updating before the workweek begins. There is a bit of shopping to do today and there is new drive available for creative endeavors. Life's goodies seem to just present themselves to you in a very ordinary way. There could certainly be some opportunities for photographs, enjoying the company of a visitor to your garden, getting a free coupon at the grocery store and any number of other fun things. You may find yourself wanting and able to do almost everything that comes to your attention-balance. You will probably actively seek out a good time with friends this evening.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Before the day begins, you may awaken to questions, chatter and quandaries, mostly from young people, intent on jostling your bed. You can really use your mind to make clear choices no matter what time of day it is. You may have to repeat yourself several times, but they will finally get the picture, so to speak. Grab your running gear and join the group in some sort of exercise and then the day just falls into place. Today is one of those days that you join the family and go with the flow. If you do not have a family nearby, your own enjoyment of the unfolding day is good. You don't want to plan your future finances or plot on how to get a better step up the working ladder; you just want to enjoy the day-and you will. Enjoy singing, humming or a little whistle.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You have all the enthusiasm and follow-through to accomplish whatever you set out to do. You are understanding and sensitive to the needs of others whenever your attention is needed. An emotionally charged drama may be experienced in the realm of law, politics, education, travel or religion. Very simply, you consider and are guided by the facts in these areas. You could be most persuasive with others and eloquent in getting your message understood. If you usually take the public transit to work, today will bring you the opportunity to enjoy a drive in the country. You and your mate may enjoy hiking or bicycling. This is a good way to enjoy each other's company. Good conversations with loved ones tonight leave you feeling at peace with the world.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

You could feel frustrated today if you do not speak up when you see that speaking up is needed. This way, your enjoyment of life and others' enjoyment of life will not be blocked. Circumstances today may require the use of your knowledge and persuasive communication skills-this could offer you your best opportunity to exercise your own personal power. Concentrate on ways in which to bring about a balance between your responsibilities and your recreation. There will be increased opportunities to reach out to others through a social function this afternoon. This is the start of a new cycle. There could be a window in time that opens now, making insights possible. Take a look. A relationship may become more meaningful tonight.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Communication skills are high today. It is almost as though you have a little family within your network of friends. This may be similar to an ongoing soap opera, hearing about the next activity or event in someone's life. Your emotions and the feelings of those around you are very clear. Gossip is prevalent but you will encourage a change in the conversation. Many insights can be gleaned this afternoon from conversations regarding hypothetical situations. Don't be afraid to speak up when you see a situation that could relate to an increase in finances, especially if you are planning to change jobs. True maturity can be reached when you leave those doubts about your abilities and talents behind you. You are the only one that slows your progress.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 18)

You could be slowed down temporarily today by allowing yourself to be pulled into long conversations. While these are fun, time is wasting for that hobby or book or some other activity you have been promising yourself for a long time. Now, come on... You have been saving this sort of day to get into your own agenda. Everyone needs a little rest and relaxation and today is your turn. A loved one may call or turn his or her attention to you later this afternoon. Seeing how much fun you are having today may call for joint learning sessions. Perhaps you and your loved one could take up one new hobby together or attend a class together-perhaps learning about herbs or drying flowers. Whatever the case, it will be something you will both enjoy.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

You may find that people are so busy today that you are not able to finish a conversation. Others may challenge your word or the direction you are taking. Events could make it difficult for you to act, but this could be a good thing. It is a wise person that waits his turn. This afternoon points to you taking the initiative. Your special qualifications and your creativity are more likely to put you ahead of the pack. You will receive the boost you need to be expressive and move forward with what you think is the best move for now. You also may look forward to some form of sports or exercise with friends. In your personal relationship this evening, your ways of creativity can help you reach out and allow you both to develop a more meaningful way of expression.



Aquarius (January 20-February 18)

An irresistible force meets an immovable object. Be wise with your time and your involvement regarding a subject of conversation in which you may not know as much as you think. Proceed with caution! You may be asked questions for which you have no answer. If this is the case, request time to think about the subject and promise to return with your thoughts. There is a lot of interest available for disciplined work-perhaps a hobby or a volunteer situation. Others may follow your lead or the direction you are taking. You add your own special qualities to any project you undertake. Radiate your most positive energies this afternoon. There is a chance to understand those around you and to have a special time with someone you love.

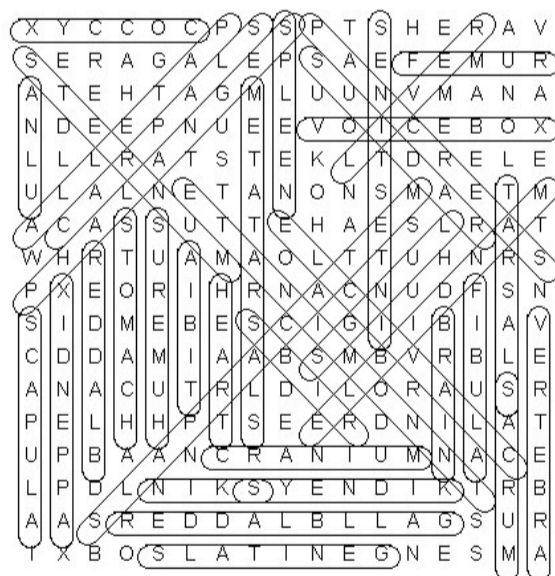


Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may have trouble concentrating this morning. The problem is more likely that you have overlooked your health during this busy time. It would be rejuvenating if you could pop into a spa for a while today. By this afternoon those confusing energies will be gone. There is a massive social change going on now. You may find a new set of friends coming across your path and you may also gain a new interest in a different sort of entertainment than you usually enjoy. Money causes change and some of your new friends may encourage you in those changes. A new friend will lead you in the direction of a new job or new hobby soon. Do not be afraid to ask questions and take notes. Interaction with a mate is most positive this evening.

Wordsearch Puzzle

Human Skeleton & Organs



- | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|-------------|
| Skeleton: | - CARPALS | - PATELLA | Organs: | - LIVER |
| - CLAVICLE | - PHALANGES | - BLADDER | - LUNGS | - PANCREAS |
| - COCCYX | - RADIUS | - BRAIN | - SKIN | - SPLEEN |
| - CRANIUM | - RIBS | - GALLBLADDER | - STOMACH | - VOICE BOX |
| - FEMUR | - SACRUM | - GENITALS | | |
| - FIBULA | - SCAPULA | - HEART | | |
| - HUMERUS | - STERNUM | - INTESTINES | | |
| - INNOMINATE | - TARSALS | - KIDNEYS | | |
| - MANDIBLE | - TIBIA | | | |
| - METACARPALS | - ULNA | | | |
| - METATARSALS | - VERTEBRA | | | |

Hidden sentence: THE AVERAGE HUMAN ADULT SKELETON HAS TWO HUNDRED AND SIX BONES

Yesterday's Solution

Geometry

Find and circle all of the Geometry words that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message.

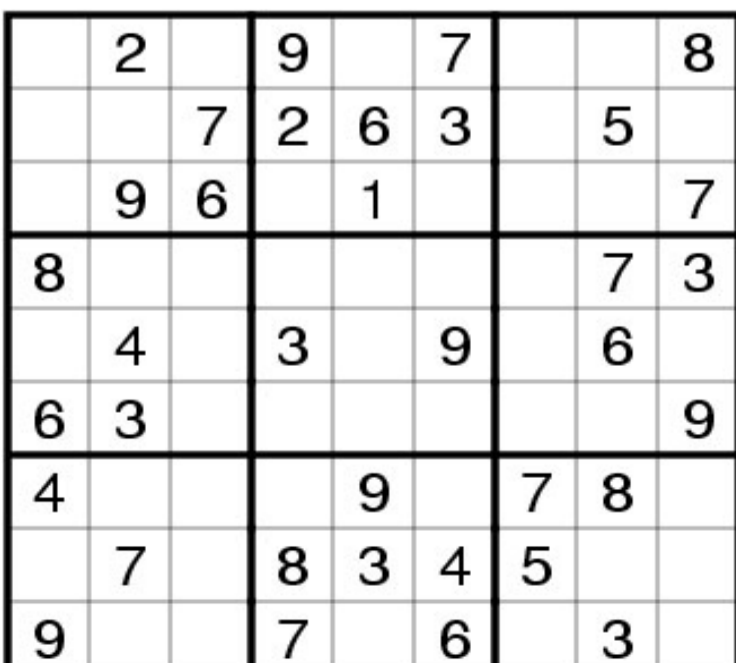


- | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| ACUTE | EQUATION | PERIMETER | SIDE |
| APOTHEM | EQUILATERAL | PERPENDICULAR | SLANT |
| AREA | EQUILATERAL | POLYGON | SLOPE |
| BASE | FACE | POLYHEDRON | SOLIDS |
| BISECT | FORMULA | PYRAMID | SPHERE |
| CHORD | HEIGHT | PYTHAGORAS | SQUARE |
| CIRCLE | HYPOTENUSE | QUADRILATERAL | THEOREM |
| CIRCUMFERENCE | INTERSECT | RADIUS | TRANSVERSAL |
| CONE | ISOSCELES | RHOMBUS | TRAPEZOID |
| CONGRUENT | LEGS | SCALENE | TRIANGLE |
| COORDINATES | MIDPOINT | SECANT | VERTEX |
| CYLINDER | OBTUSE | SEGMENT | VOLUME |
| DIAMETER | PARALLELOGRAM | | |

Yesterday's Solution



Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128



PHARMACIES
ON 24 HRS DUTY

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khalidiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaee 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

Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		

STATE OF KUWAIT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
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DAY: Sunday 17/04/2016 Issue Time 07:00

Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

BY DAY: Sunny with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 10 - 32 km/h

BY NIGHT: Fair with light to moderate north westerly to light variable wind, with speed of 06 - 22 km/h and some high clouds will appear

WEATHER WARNING			No Current Warnings	
STATION	MAX. EXP.	MIN. REC.	SFC. CHART 17/04/2016 0000 UTC	
KUWAIT CITY	33 °C	22 °C		
KUWAIT AIRPORT	34 °C	17 °C		
ABDALY	35 °C	20 °C		
BUBYAN	30 °C	19 °C		
JAHRA	35 °C	20 °C		
FAILAKA ISLAND	30 °C	19 °C		
SALMIYAH	28 °C	23 °C		
AHMADI	26 °C	22 °C		
JAL ALIYAH	31 °C	19 °C		
QAROH ISLAND	26 °C	22 °C		
UMM AL-MARADEM	26 °C	22 °C		

4 DAYS FORECAST						
DAY	DATE	WEATHER	Temperatures		Wind Direction	Wind Speed
			MAX.	MIN.		
Monday	04/18	Sunny	35 °C	19 °C	NW	12 - 35 km/h
Tuesday	04/19	Sunny	35 °C	18 °C	NW	15 - 38 km/h
Wednesday	04/20	Sunny + high clouds	35 °C	18 °C	VRB	06 - 22 km/h
Thursday	04/21	Clouds to increase	36 °C	18 °C	VRB-S	06 - 26 km/h

PRAYER TIMES	
Fajr	03:56
Sunrise	05:19
Zuhr	11:48
Asr	15:22
Sunset	18:15
Isha	19:36

RECORDED YESTERDAY AT KUWAIT AIRPORT	
MAX. Temp.	31 °C
MIN. Temp.	18 °C
MAX. RH	67 %
MIN. RH	16 %
MAX. Wind	N 46 km/h
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR.	00 mm

All times are local time unless otherwise stated. U.P.0 2016/04/17 03:00 UTC V1.00 T2.3 2-1/ع.ق.ف



PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
General Practitioners	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaezem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafae	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah 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	
Dr Adrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
General Surgeons	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
Internists, Chest & Heart	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

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 Gujare	23713100
Dr. Zacharias Mathew	24334282
Dermatology	
Dr. Mohammed Salam Bern University	23845955
Dentists	
Dr Anil Thomas	3729596/3729581
Dr. Shamah Al-Matar	22641071/2
Dr. Anesah Al-Rasheed	22562226
Dr. Abdallah Al-Amer	22561444
Dr. Faysal Al-Fozan	22619557
Dr. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

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.Mohammed Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Consultant Cardiologist	
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center	Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123

Psychologists /Psychotherapists	Soor Center Tel: 2290-1677 Fax: 2290 1688	info@soorcenter.com www.soorcenter.com	Kaizen center 25716707	Noor Clinic 23845955	William Schuilenberg, RPC 2290-1677 Zaina Al Zabin, M.Sc. 2290-1677
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Elba dumped wife for career



Idris Elba's second wife claims he dumped her for the sake of his career. The 43-year-old actor - who recently split from Naiyana Garth, the mother of his two-year-old son - was married to Sonya Hamlin for just a few weeks in 2006 before they split up. She told the Mail on Sunday: "People were telling him he was going to

ruin his career. He was being told it was an important part of his image to be a single sex symbol in Hollywood and being married would damage that. "It was very sad. Idris and I were madly in love, but he was getting a lot of flak for being married. Everyone was like, 'Dude, you're the hottest sex symbol! It wasn't the right look; that's what they were telling him. I wanted to save the marriage.' Despite the split, Sonya - who married Idris in Las Vegas - insists that she would be happy for Idris if he decided to marry again as she just wants the best for him. Speaking about Idris, who was also married to make-up artist Hanne Norgaard from 1999 to 2003, she said: "I'd be happy for him if he got married again, and he genuinely loved that person. I'm not a jealous person. I want him to be happy, just like I'm sure he wants me to be happy. I don't think he's ever going to have a problem being lonely."

Christopher Walken admits that ageing is 'a shock'

The 73-year-old actor still feels young and says seeing pictures of himself looking old surprise him as he doesn't picture himself that way. He said: "Every birthday's a big thing. There's a certain shock to it. I'm in here, and then I'll see a picture of myself and, you know, I'm old. And stuff happens. My hands get sore. "The hair helps. And also I think that I have pretty good genes [Christopher's mother died at 104 and his father lived to be almost 100]. 'The Jungle Book' star Christopher and his wife Georgianne married in 1969 but never had children, although they both dote on their nieces and nephews. He told The Guardian: "It never happened. Somebody once said that children are a miracle. I think that's true. Not everybody has them. "I don't mind. My brothers have kids. I've always had kids around. And my wife, frankly - we never talk about it - but I notice she dotes a bit on my nephews and nieces. She's always buying them stuff. She's a little bit of a hen about the kids. Yeah."



Madonna's Kabbalah session with son



Madonna attended a Kabbalah session with her son Rocco following their reconciliation. The 57-year-old singer and Rocco, 15, recently reunited in London for the first time since he fled her 'Rebel Heart' world tour to live with his father Guy Ritchie in the English capital and on Friday the pair were spotted together at a Kabbalah center. A source told The Sun on Sunday: "Madonna has relied heavily on Kabbalah to get her through this tough time. "It's great that Rocco is open to coming to the center with her. There had been rumors her strict Kabbalah lifestyle was a reason they fell out. If so, it's a big deal for him to join her there on his Friday night." The 'Living For Love' hitmaker seems to have taken the advice the mystical Jewish faith are promoting this month, as on their website it states the New Moon of Aries "urges us to reconcile differences this month" as well as "reaching out to mend a torn relationship. A source previously said: "For Madge the New Moon of Aries means a new start. She has really reached out to Rocco and is so happy their differences are behind them. She loves him to bits and is quite literally over the moon that they have been reunited."

Suki Waterhouse lived with a tribe



Suki Waterhouse has been living with a tribe in Brazil. The 24-year-old model and her presenter friend Poppy Jamie have recently returned from the Amazon, and the pair were concerned they might contract the mosquito-borne, symptom-free Zika virus. Poppy said: "Suki and I met this guy in Brazil who invited us to live with a tribe, so we did it. "We were quite worried about contractin the Zika virus though. We risked our lives for a good Instagram!" Despite their medical concerns, the two women had a great time away together. Poppy said: "Quite honestly, Suki is one of the best people who's ever lived. Having just spent the week with her I now feel like I have stomach muscles from laughing. "We're launching our own friendship brand in October." While the pair are also close friends with the likes of Cara Delevigne, Georgia May Jagger and Kendall Jenner, TV presenter Poppy insists their squad isn't particularly exclusive. Asked their squad rules, she told LOOK magazine: "That anyone can join. I can't stand, 'You can't sit with us' vibes. We're dying to sit with people!"

Jenkins fell for husband immediately



Katherine Jenkins knew immediately that her husband was the one. The 35-year-old singer married Andrew Levitas, 38, within a year of meeting him before welcoming daughter Aaliyah just three days after their first anniversary and Katherine says things moved fast because she was so sure about Andrew. She told Fabulous magazine: "It has been a whirlwind. I'm not a person who rushes into anything. I consider things and I'm actually quite cautious, especially with big decisions. "But when you know, you know and with Andrew, I just knew straight away. He's an amazing husband, an amazing dad and I just feel like I understand the reason for everything now." And Katherine thinks the relationship happened because she was "open to" settling down, when they met. She explained: "I was definitely open to it. I've always wanted a family and we met when I was 33 and so it was in my mind. "Being this little family is just the best thing and I wish that people talked more about the good stuff. "I am tired and I worry but oh my gosh, I just want to tell everyone how amazing it is at the same time. I don't think we shout about the positives enough."

Allen revealed she was harassed for seven years

Lily Allen was harassed by a stalker for seven years. The 30-year-old singer says she is now "practically a hermit" after years of terror at the hands of Alex Gray, who has stalked her online, at concerts and even broke into her house one night when she and her two young daughters were asleep. Alex first contacted Lily on Twitter, using the handle @LilyAllenRIP and claiming to have written her song 'The Fear', before moving on to sending her abusive letters and approaching her assistant and colleagues. However, things got even more serious last October, when Lily accidentally left her back door unlocked. Speaking to The Observer, she said: "I had all sorts of metal shutters and locks on the doors but I'd been cooking and burned a pan and opened the back door. I closed it but forgot to lock it when I went to bed. [Later than night] I sat up in bed and looked and the door handle was twisting round. "This guy came steaming in and I didn't know who he was. I recoiled and he ripped the duvet off, yelling about where his dad is. "For me, it was too much of a coincidence that the only night I had left the shutters up, this man came in. I believe he had been spending a lot of time out there in my garden, watching." Lily believes her stalker had a knife when he broke in and has slammed the police for not taking her claims of stalking seriously. She said: "This was something that started in 2009 with a tweet and ended in 2015 with him in my house and, I believe, with a weapon. "I'm lucky in that I had the money and the motivation to take action myself. I want answers from the police. If they treat me like this, how the hell are they going to treat everyone else? "It was not special attention I looked for. It was reassurance and validation. The police made me feel like a nuisance, rather than a victim." And the mother of two also admitted that the ordeal has changed her completely. She said: "It has affected how I live my life. I'm very wary, I have trust issues. It impacts on your relationships, everything. I'm



practically a hermit now! I'm very aware of trying not to overdramatise what's happened, I'm aware that some fears are irrational; I know he is in prison. If I hear a bang, every little noise makes me start. I see his face in people in the street. I've had to leave the flat I loved, move nearer a main road with lots of CCTV about." Mr Gray was convicted at Harrow Crown Court of burglary and harassment earlier this month and will be sentenced in May.

Kesha's surprise Coachella performance



Kesha surprised the Coachella crowd when she took to the stage on Saturday. The 29-year-old singer - who has seen her music career stall after a court recently ruled she cannot be released from her contract with producer Dr. Luke, despite her claims he sexually assaulted her - joined DJ Zedd during his set for a performance of 'True Colors'. Although Kesha did not address the crowd, fans were thrilled to see her back on stage. The pair had hinted at the surprise performance earlier with Kesha writing on Instagram: "Tonight has a magic to it. Here we come. 4 hours and counting. (sic)" while Zedd added, "COACHELLA. Saturday. 9:30 pm. Don't miss this. I have something big planned. Be there or stream it." Meanwhile, Zedd has been one of Kesha's most vocal supporters as she continues her battle with Dr Luke, and has offered to work on new music with her. After tweeting his support for her, Zedd said: "I just read an article about [the case], literally right before I made the tweet because I didn't know her personally. I thought sending a tweet was kind of the best way to get in touch with her. "The only thing I can really do to help is produce songs and that's what I offered. "Her team actually hit us back confirming that I was serious about it, which is really cool. I'm obviously very serious about it, so maybe something will happen. Maybe there's something I can do. Maybe we can do some music. Nothing I can say right now, but it would be cool." "All I know is that she's in a very rough position and if there's anything I can ever do to help I'll always be happy to do that."

Fassbender swore at Turner

Michael Fassbender swore at Sophie Turner the first time he met her. The 'Game of Thrones' actress was "nervous" about meeting the 39-year-old actor when she joined the cast of 'X-Men: Apocalypse' but knew they'd get on well when he greeted her with a rude gesture. She said: "I was also about meeting Michael Fassbender, but [on my first day on set] I looked over and he gave me the middle finger, jokingly, and I thought, 'We're going to get on.'" Sophie also got on well with "down-to-earth" Jennifer Lawrence and the 'Joy' star even looked after her when she fell ill. She told Britain's Marie Claire magazine: "Despite being one of the most famous actresses in the world, she's so down to earth. One day I got sick and she was looking after me, constantly checking up on me, getting me tablets. She was like a big sister." The 20-year-old star was signed to the next installment of the superhero film late last year and has admitted she burst into tears as soon as she received the call from her management telling her she'd secured the gig. Asked what she did as soon as she found out, she explained: "I rang my mum and she started crying, then I started crying. It was crazy. Then my phone started blowing up."



Vogue Williams wants to have a baby

The 30-year-old model-and-presenter - who has been single since splitting from husband Brian McFadden last year - is keen to start a family in the next five years and admitted she feels envious that her brother has just become a father. She said: "I would definitely like a baby in the next five years, but I'm only 30 so I still have plenty of time." My brother recently had a baby daughter, which makes me feel quite jealous. "But for now, I'm a proud auntie and that's how I'll get my baby fix." Vogue and Brian are still on good terms, and she admits she never expected their marriage to end. She said "We're good friends and are still in touch. We talk every week and we have our dog, Winston. We both love him and we share custody of him. "Like any break-up, it's been painful. This isn't what I expected my life to be like, but once you get used to hanging out with yourself and being OK with it, it's fine." "It's taken me a year but now I feel like I'm in the best place I've been in." And the Irish model hasn't ruled out marrying again in the future. She told Closer magazine: "I still have the same views on marriage. Put it this way, I didn't ever get married to get divorced. "I still think it's a lovely thing and my feelings haven't really changed."



Brown was in hotel room where 4 arrested

Country singer Zac Brown says in a statement that he was "in the wrong place at the wrong time" last week in a Palm Beach hotel room where four people were arrested for drug possession. A report from Palm Beach Police Department showed that Brown, lead singer of the Grammy-winning Zac Brown Band, was present when police arrived at the

Four Seasons Hotel on April 8. He was not charged or arrested. The incident was first reported by TMZ.com. Brown said in a statement on Friday that he did not know the people arrested and cooperated fully with police. He says he is not part of any ongoing police investigation. Brown said he regretted "using poor judgment and putting myself in that position."

Teigen and Legend welcome baby girl



Chrissy Teigen and John Legend have welcomed a baby girl. The 30-year-old model and her singer husband, 37, are overjoyed after Luna Simone Stephens was born on Thursday and took to social media on Sunday to share the happy news. Chrissy wrote: "She's here! Luna Simone Stephens, we are so in love with you! And sleepy. Very sleepy." And John added: "Our new love is here! Luna Simone Stephens, born on Thursday, the 14th. We couldn't be happier!" The tot weighed 6lbs 11oz, according to Chrissy's Instagram post. Chrissy previously revealed she chose a female embryo while undergoing fertility treatment. She said: "I've made this decision. Not only am I having a girl, but I picked the girl from her little embryo. I picked her and was like, 'Let's put in the girl.' "I think I was most excited and allured by the fact that John would be the best father to a little girl. That excited me," she explains. "It excited me to see ... just the thought of seeing him with a little girl. I think he deserves a little girl. I think he deserves that bond." And Chrissy is also planning to give her daughter a younger brother one day too. She added: "A boy will come along. We'll get there too, so it's not like we really have to pick." But he definitely is very lucky to have a little girl. And this girl is going to be so completely lucky to have John as her papa - it's crazy!"

Ware is expecting her first child



The 'Champagne Kisses' singer, who got married to her childhood sweetheart Sam Burrows on the Greek island of Skopelos in 2014, has shared her baby joy with the world by posting a picture of her blossoming bump on social media. Taking to her Instagram yesterday alongside the photo, she wrote: "Dropping this year, and it's not the album X (sic)" The 31-year-old beauty has since thanked her fans for their well-wishes and also promised that just because she's pregnant that doesn't mean she hasn't stopped working on her follow-up to 2014's 'Tough Love' LP. She wrote: "Thanks for all your sweet messages. This doesn't mean I've stopped working on the record. You will have new music asap X (sic)" Jessie has long wanted to start a family but put her plans on hold to complete her record and finish her tour in 2014. Of her desire to become mother Jessie said at the time: "We're just working out the best time to pop one [a baby] out!" As for her forthcoming album, Jessie previously admitted it would be "dull" if she penned songs about her relationship with Sam, who she first met as a kid at a co-educational independent school in Dulwich. Of her album, 'Tough Love', she said: "A lot of the songs are fantasy and embellished thoughts where I'm telling a story. 'I absolutely think that if I wrote a full album about our relationship it would be so dull because we don't fight and are easy going!"

Khloe slams negative body critics

Khloe Kardashian has hit out at body critics after sharing a revealing bum selfie. The 'Keeping Up With the Kardashians' beauty posted a picture of her torso and the top half of her bottom whilst laying in bed in a Calvin Klein bra and jogging bottoms. Alongside the photo posted on her Instagram account, she wrote: "Good morning" The 31-year-old beauty's 46.6 million fans had a lot to say about the sexy image and Khloe was clearly unimpressed and slammed those who wrote "negative" comments under the image and for wasting their time in doing so. In a series of tweets, posted on Saturday evening, she wrote: "It is 8: 30 AM on Saturday morning and people still have something negative to say. I guess negativity never sleeps huh?! ... You know if you don't like something you don't have to look at it right? Let alone waste your energy to comment. thirsty thirsty thirsty ... Anyways... Shout out to all the real ones who uplift!! I love and respect you all! Stay shining (sic)" The 'Kocktails with Khloe' host later showed her haters she isn't phased by their comments by showing off her super-toned body with yet another gym mirror selfie with her "gym buddy" Malika. Alongside the photo, she wrote: "I'm so proud of Malika for being my workout buddy today and killing it!!! Thanks "@domanatrixtraining for making her throw up lol happy Saturday!! (sic)"



Swift excited to support Harris at Coachella

Taylor Swift is "super excited" to support her boyfriend Calvin Harris at Coachella this weekend. The 'Bad Blood' hitmaker is reportedly looking forward to the DJ-and-producer being the centre of attention for a change while she parties with her pals and watches the hunky Scottish star do his set. A source told HollywoodLife.com: "Taylor is super excited that she can support Calvin this weekend and give him her undivided attention at Coachella. "She's so proud of him and is looking forward to watching him perform, and to dancing to his music. She's also happy that the tables are turned for this event and that all eyes will be on Calvin rather than solely on her." The 26-year-old pop beauty - who has been dating the 'Outside' hitmaker for over a year now - recently said she is in a "magical relationship" and is trying to keep their romance out of the spotlight as much as possible. She said: "I'm just taking things as they come. "I'm in a magical relationship right now. And of course, I want it to be ours, and low key...This is the one thing that's been mine about my personal life." And she also admitted that being famous has put her off dating in the past. She said: "You know, I went out on a normal amount of dates in my early 20s, and I got absolutely slaughtered for it. "And it took a lot of hard work and altering my decision-making. I didn't date for two and a half years. Should I have had to do that? No."



Jessica Biel: Justin and Silas are like the same person



Jessica Biel says her son Silas is a "mini version" of her husband Justin Timberlake. The 34-year-old actress and 'Suit & Tie' hitmaker celebrated their little boy's first birthday last week and the brunette beauty says it's like looking at the "same person" when she watches them enjoying golf on the television. She said: "They're like the same person. "It's like a mini version of him ... They like to sit and watch golf together. The only TV that Silas is allowed to watch is the Golf Channel, which is really funny. "They just sit there on the couch staring at it. And they don't communicate anymore. When golf is on, all the communication ends." The 'Total Recall' star had a low-key party to celebrate little Silas reaching the 12-month milestone with just family and she even made his cake herself. She told PEOPLE magazine: "It was just a small family hang at the house." Of what the sweet treat was made of, she added: "It was a lemon pound cake, almost. But it had zucchini in there." Silas and Justin's similarities might have something to do with the fact Jessica used to play the 35-year-old R&B singer's music to her bump when she was expecting. She previously revealed: "I listen to [Justin's] music probably more than I should. It's maybe slightly creepy. I love his music. Silas loves his music. I want him to hear it a lot. We listen to it in the car a lot. "I went to probably 40-50 [of his] concerts when I was pregnant. I stood there and the music was just slamming. I actually thought, 'I'm going to damage this child!"

Trai Byers and Grace Gealey are married



Empire' stars Trai Byers and Grace Gealey have tied the knot. The real-life couple - who play Anika Calhoun and Andre Lyon in the FOX music industry drama - got married on the Cayman Islands at an intimate ceremony on Thursday in front of close friends and family. According to website TMZ, the newlyweds' co-stars were not present at their nuptials. News of their engagement broke out in July last year when the 32-year-old star popped the question on Grace's 31st birthday. At the time, a source revealed: "He popped the question, and she was totally surprised and elated. She can't stop looking at the ring! They celebrated all night!" However, the couple didn't confirm the news until October, when Grace appeared on live TV showing off her sparkling engagement ring. Speaking to Tyra Banks on her daytime chat show 'FABLife', Grace said: "I think that if you do get involved-I keep wanting to say on set-I think that if you do get involved at your workplace you have to know that this is something that you want to be invested in, and this is just not just something that is frivolous and fleeting. "[You have] to have the maturity to say that if this doesn't work out, you're not going to, you know, throw staplers." The couple - who first met on the show in 2014 - are yet to publicly confirm their marriage. -Bang Showbiz



Tourists watch the canopy light show at the Fremont Street Experience in Las Vegas. — AP photos



Runners stream southward on Las Vegas Boulevard during the Rock 'n Roll Las Vegas Marathon, always a big visitor draw in Las Vegas.

New report says tourists spending more money in Las Vegas

Tourists are spending more money on their trips to Sin City, according to a new report by the Las Vegas tourism board. The Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority issued its visitor profile study this month, which showed average spending in most expense categories increased in 2015, including lodging, food and drinks, local transportation, shows and sightseeing. The length of the stays inched

up, to an average of 4.4 days for the record 42.3 million visitors last year. In 2014, Las Vegas trips lasted 4.2 days.

The data is based on information volunteered by a total of 3,600 random tourists polled at various casino-hotel properties throughout the year. The agency that commissioned the yearly survey is funded by county room taxes generated by the hotels it considers

partners. Kevin Bagger, executive director of the tourism board's research center, said he interprets the latest numbers as a sign that visitors are choosing to spend more for a quality experience, as opposed to the costs of such expenses going up overall. Nearly all survey participants reported being either "very" or "somewhat" satisfied with their trip.

"Our visitors are comfortable spending more," Bagger said. The largest jump in spending was for shows. On an average trip, tourists spent \$61.95 to see some type of performance, including lounge acts, headliners or comedians. It amounted to a 30 percent increase from the \$47.56 they spent in 2014, although the overall percentage of visitors who attended such a show went down to 61 percent. In 2014, 65 percent of visitors took in a show.

The average cost of lodging also saw a significant increase, with visitors reporting spending \$102.64 per night, up nearly 19 percent from the year before.

The figure did not include rooms that were bought through a vacation package or was a complimentary offering from the hotels. The price of vacation packages did go up, too, by about 5 percent to \$857.43. Among the reported categories, only the amount of shopping dollars for an average trip went down. The average tourist spent \$122.66 per trip shopping, an 18 percent decline from the year before. This marks a five-year low for the shopping category, while hotels, food and drinks, transportation,



Casinos are pictured on the Las Vegas Strip.

shows and sightseeing all hit a five-year high in 2015. Citing the recent strength of the US dollar, Bagger said he attributes the shopping dip to a

3 percent decline in international tourists, who tend to shop more on their trips to Las Vegas than domestic visitors. —AP



Tourists walking along The Strip in Las Vegas.

Grim new details of IS destruction in Syria's Palmyra museum

The first foreign experts who visited the museum in Palmyra after it was taken over from Islamic State militants said they spent a week collecting fragments of priceless broken sculptures from the museum grounds and preparing them for transportation to Damascus in a rescue mission they hope will help salvage most of its contents. Back in the Syrian capital Saturday, they offered grim new details about the extent of the destruction caused by the extremists during their 10-month stay in the ancient town.

The museum was trashed and some of its best-known artifacts and statues were smashed by the militants, who cut off the heads and hands of statues and demolished others before being driven out last month. Bartosz Markowski, from the Polish Archaeological Center at the University of Warsaw, told The Associated Press that most



This file photo shows a destroyed statue outside the damaged Palmyra Museum, in Palmyra city, central Syria. — AP photos



This file photo shows destroyed statues at the damaged Palmyra Museum.

of the 200 objects which were exhibited on the ground floor of the Palmyra museum were destroyed, many of them apparently with hard tools like hammers. Many artifacts have been stolen, he added, though it was not possible to know how many.

He and his colleagues were the first specialists to visit Palmyra after it was taken over by the Syrian army, and spent a week working and assessing the damage. "We collected everything we could. The fragments were spread around the whole museum among broken glass and furniture ... It is a catastrophe," he said, speaking to the AP in the garden of the National Museum in Damascus.

During their rule of Palmyra, the extremists demolished some of the most famous Roman-



This file photo shows destroyed statues at the damaged Palmyra Museum.

era monuments that stand just outside the town, including two large temples dating back more than 1,800 years and a Roman triumphal archway, filming the destruction themselves for the world to see. The sprawling outdoor site, a UNESCO world heritage site, as well as the museum were among Syria's main tourist attractions before the civil war. Among the best-known statues destroyed was the famous Lion of Allat, a 2,000-year-old statue which previously greeted visitors and tourists outside the Palmyra museum. The statue, which used to adorn the temple of Allat, a pre-Islamic goddess in Palmyra, was defaced by IS militants and knocked over by bulldozers.

On a visit to Palmyra on Thursday, The Associated Press saw the statue lying outside the museum building with its face cut and some of its broken pieces lying next to it. "Fortunately we collected most of the fragments and I hope it can be reconstructed very soon," said Markowski, who in 2005 took part in a Polish archaeological mission that did renovation work on the statue. —AP



This combination of undated photos provided by Christie's shows "Him," a controversial sculpture of Adolf Hitler by Maurizio Cattelan. — AP

Kneeling Hitler sculpture could fetch over \$10m at auction

A controversial sculpture of a kneeling Hitler by the edge Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan is among the highlights of a special sale at Christie's auction house in New York. When viewed from the rear, "Him" appears as a child-like figure in a gray suit kneeling in prayer. But as viewers come around to the front, they come face-to-face with an unmistakable likeness of Hitler. It will be offered May 8 as part of Christie's "Bound to Fail," a curated sale where it is estimated to bring \$10 million to \$15 million. The 2001 work, made with human hair, wax and polyester resin, is the artist's proof from an edition of three. It was included in the artist's retrospective at the Guggenheim in 2011.

Another major work in the sale is Jeff Koons' "One Ball Total Equilibrium Tank." The 1985 sculpture depicts a basketball suspended inside a vitrine of distilled water. It could sell for over \$12 million. Both works are coming to auction for the first time. The "Bound to Fail" auction is curated by Loic Gouzer, Christie's deputy chairman of post-war and contemporary art. The concept originated with a work by Bruce Nauman titled "Henry Moore Bound to Fail," a cast of Nauman's own hands bound behind his back. The sculpture is estimated to bring \$6 million to \$8 million. The themed auction "shines a spotlight on works that have purposefully pushed the envelope of what the art market would be willing to call 'successful' in the pursuit of creating something new and ground-breaking," said Gouzer.

In the case of Cattelan, the artist "defied the taboos of representation by disguising evil incarnate under a cloak of innocence," he added. Among the other 39 works in the sale is a silk screen by Glenn Ligon of Malcolm X with rouged cheeks and pink lips and Marcel Duchamp's lithograph of a masculinized Mona Lisa with a moustache and goatee. Gouzer has curated two other successful auctions at Christie's, including "Looking Forward to the Past" last May where Pablo Picasso's 1955 "Women of Algiers (Version O)" sold for \$179 million, setting a world record for artwork at auction. "Bound to Fail" is being held on a Sunday in advance of Christie's weeklong spring auctions of 20th century art that runs through May 13. — AP

Obama meets with musicians on My Brother's Keeper

Musicians Alicia Keys, Nicki Minaj, Busta Rhymes, Common, Janelle Monae and others met Friday with President Barack Obama to discuss ways to continue the administration's "My Brother's Keeper" initiative and spur criminal justice reform in the United States. The musicians who met with Obama have been working

plex Friday afternoon was not announced by the administration, but was confirmed to The Associated Press. Obama was joined at the meeting by Broderick Johnson, chair of the My Brother's Keeper Task Force, and senior adviser Valerie Jarrett. Under the My Brother's Keeper initiative, businesses, foundations and community groups coordinate investments to come up with or support programs that help keep young people out of the criminal justice system and improve their access to higher education. The president initiated the program in February 2014 to try to help reverse some of the challenges facing black, Hispanic and Native American boys and young men.

So far, private investors including foundations and businesses have committed more than \$500 million in grants and in-kind resources and \$1 billion in financing through community banks, including investments in schools, mentoring programs, juvenile justice reforms and school redesign. — AP



Musician Nicki Minaj is seen in Philadelphia. — AP

on efforts to help younger generations of blacks and other minorities stay on the right path. The roster also included Ludacris, Chance the Rapper, J Cole, Wale and DJ Khaled.

Keys in February pushed for House Speaker Paul Ryan to have the House move on criminal justice overhaul through a flirty Valentine video. Monae has pushed for voter registration; Common has publicly supported the private-sector efforts of My Brother's Keeper; and Ludacris has started a foundation to foster economic development and teach leadership and education skills to young people.

The meeting at the White House com-



In this March 23, 2016 file photo, singer Alicia Keys performs in Seattle.



Indian Bollywood actor Shahid Kapoor (left) poses with actresses Alia Bhatt (center) and Kareena Kapoor Khan (second right) and producer Ekta Kapoor (right) during the trailer launch of the forthcoming Hindi film 'Uda Punjab' written and directed by Abhishek Chaubey in Mumbai yesterday. — AFP

Axl Rose, back with Guns N' Roses, to front AC/DC

Axl Rose fired up a reunited Guns N' Roses at the Coachella festival on Saturday as he was announced as the new frontman of an even more veteran hard rock group-AC/DC. In one of rock's most long discussed reunions, Rose performed on the festival stage in the California desert with guitarist Slash, who until this month had not joined his former bandmate and on-off nemesis for more than two decades. Guns N' Roses added a fresh surprise as Angus Young, the lead guitarist of AC/DC, suddenly appeared on stage late in the set, hours after the Australian rockers named Rose as their at least temporary new singer.

In a preview of the new AC/DC, Rose brought out his classic intense scream for the Australians' "Whole Lotta Rosie" as Young pranced on stage in his trademark school uniform and let loose with rapid-fire guitar in coordination with Slash. Yet Rose on his day of triumph projected an awkward image: a recent injury confined him to a chair, with his left leg in a cast. The singer famous for his emotional intensity and rages across stage fidgeted in a sort of sedentary, agitated dancing.

AC/DC broke off a North American tour last month after saying that singer Brian Johnson, 68, risked permanent loss of hearing if he kept performing with the notoriously loud band. The band said Rose would front AC/DC on a 12-show European leg starting on May 7 in Lisbon. Rose will then return to North America for the arena tour of the reformed Guns N' Roses, with the 10 postponed AC/DC dates in the United States to be rescheduled later. Rose, like Johnson, can bring out a punishing grittiness on high notes, but the Guns N' Roses frontman enjoys a much more versatile vocal range.

Sudden change for AC/DC

AC/DC kept open whether Rose would stay permanently. The band had planned shows only until June at the end of a marathon global tour for its 2014 album "Rock or Bust." But the band made clear that Johnson was out, issuing a statement thanking him "for his contributions and dedication to the band throughout the years." "We wish him all the best with his hearing issues and future ventures. As much as we want this tour to end as it started, we understand, respect and support Brian's decision to stop touring and

change for AC/DC. Malcolm Young, the rhythm guitarist and brother of Angus, retired before "Rock or Bust" as he suffers dementia. Drummer Phil Rudd was pushed out after he was arrested on charges of ordering a murder in New Zealand, where he lives.

Long-awaited reunion

Guns N' Roses became global sensations with 1987's "Appetite For Destruction," which remains the best-selling debut album ever. But the rough living described in the songs was not far from reality and the band suffered frequent friction,

with the classic lineup calling it quits after a 1993 show in Buenos Aires. A reunion had long been thought impossible, with Rose a few years ago calling Slash "a cancer" and refusing to join him at the band's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction.

But Slash and Rose—who are expected to earn millions of dollars for the reunion—briefly locked arms as they bid farewell to fans after their encore, which culminated in flames on stage



This file photo shows Axl Rose of US hard rock band Guns N' Roses performs during a concert in Bangalore. — AFP

Hosting Clinton fundraisers, Clooney decries political cash

George Clooney would like to get big money out of politics - so he doesn't have to raise it. Clooney hosted two weekend fundraisers in California on behalf of Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton.



In this file photo, actor George Clooney attends a news conference for the film 'Hail Caesar' at the 2016 Berlinale Film Festival in Berlin. — AP

Donations for attendees at an event in San Francisco topped out at \$353,000 per couple, which Clooney acknowledges is an "obscene amount of money."

The event even drew pro-Bernie Sanders demonstrators, Clooney

recounted in an interview airing on NBC's "Meet the Press." When he went to talk with them, he said, they called him a corporate shill. "That's one of the funnier things you could say about me," the Oscar-winner said, though he conceded that some of the protesters had a valid point regarding a different matter. "Their T-shirts said, you know, 'You sucked as Batman,'" said Clooney, the star of 1997's "Batman & Robin," one of the least memorable films in the superhero franchise. "And I was like, 'Well, you kind of got me on that one.'"

Clooney said he likes many of Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders' ideas and would gladly raise money for him if he became the Democratic nominee. But the actor said he is supporting Clinton because of his admiration of her work as secretary of state, and he praised her for her efforts to avert a humanitarian crisis ahead of South Sudan's independence. Clooney faulted Clinton for not better explaining where the money she is raising goes. Most of it, he said, would end up being spent on down-ballot races including those for the Senate, which will confirm the next president's picks for the Supreme Court. If the right justice is confirmed for the spot now open on the court, Clooney said, political campaigns could "get this obscene, ridiculous amount of money out so I never have to do a fundraiser again." — AP

Hollywood mogul blasts Obama, Google over piracy

Movie mogul Avi Lerner branded US President Barack Obama "a coward" on Saturday, berating him for not taking on Google over piracy. The 68-year-old American-Israeli producer told AFP that the White House's failure to force the search engine giant to improve its anti-piracy measures was costing Hollywood millions of dollars a year. "It's a major problem and it's something that I don't know if anyone can stop, because the government, the president, Congress are all scared of Google," said Lerner, who was behind a string of blockbusters including the

"Expendables" movies and "London Has Fallen." The veteran financier told AFP at a gala Beverly Hills dinner in his honor that piracy had cost his production companies Nu Image and Millennium Films \$250 million on action sequel "The Expendables 3." "The government, the president, is such a coward. He's scared of Google so we are losing millions," he told AFP. "They should tell Google to stop piracy. They should make a law that anyone helping piracy-and not helping to stop piracy-should go to jail or get penalized or whatever."

A near perfect copy of "The Expendables 3" leaked onto file-sharing sites in July 2014, three weeks before its theatrical release date. It was downloaded around 100,000 times within hours and Nu Image said more than 10 million copies were made before its release. Lerner believes that since a portion of Google's advertising revenue is coming from piracy-related sources, the company has no incentive stop it without being forced.

Google, which was not immediately available for comment, modified its algorithms in 2014 to damage the search engine ranking of piracy websites, but many studio executives believe the tech giant has not gone far enough. Hollywood lobbied intensively in 2012 for the creation of two pieces of legislation—the Protect Intellectual Property Act and the Stop Online Piracy Act—which would hold non-US websites to the same standards as those in the United States. — AP



Producer Avi Lerner (left) and actor Gerard Butler (right) attend a Gala To Honor Avi Lerner And Millennium Films in Beverly Hills, California. — AFP



This file photo taken on April 12, 2014 shows a giant moving inflated astronaut art piece, Escape Velocity, surrounded by music fans at the Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival at the Empire Polo Club in Indio, California. — AFP

Surprises galore including Bernie Sanders at Coachella festival

The Coachella music festival is famous for its surprises, and the latest edition included one of the more uncommon—an appearance, although remotely, of a presidential candidate. Senator Bernie Sanders showed up late Saturday on the screen of the main stage in the California desert of the leading US music festival, bringing cheers to the mostly young crowd—the left-wing candidate's main support base. Sanders was offering a brief introduction to the set by Run the Jewels, a project of Atlanta rapper Killer Mike who is a prominent supporter of the candidate.

The senator, who has defied predictions by waging a tough challenge to Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, said that Killer Mike's "depth of passion-his knowledge and commitment to community-is an inspiration to me and I value his friendship immensely." Sanders backers are

hoping to use Coachella, which brings 180,000 people over two consecutive weekends, to register voters and otherwise rally support. Sanders supporters waved signs and pictures, including one of the senator cuddling a kitten, as Run the Jewels put on a set that included "Early," a powerful critique of police brutality.

Fellow rapper Ice Cube later performed separately to a packed Coachella crowd, inviting the revelers to all raise their middle fingers in the air as he performed the rock song "F**k the Police." Ice Cube's former group N.W.A. sent shockwaves through much of white America when it released the song in 1988 and the rapper suggested that an officer at Coachella asked him not to play it, leading to his defiance. Ice Cube during his set brought out fellow Los Angeles-area rapper Snoop Dogg as well as fellow N.W.A. members DJ Yella and MC Ren.

Notably absent was N.W.A. member Dr. Dre, who has gone on to become a multimillionaire Apple executive. He appeared with his bandmates for an induction this month into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, but Dr Dre has hesitated to join reunion performances. Guns N' Roses, the headliner Saturday at Coachella amid a reunion between singer Axl Rose and guitarist Slash, invited onto stage AC/DC guitarist Angus Young for his Australian band's hit "Whole Lotta Rosie."

The appearance came hours after AC/DC announced that Rose would become the band's singer, at least temporarily, after frontman Brian Johnson developed hearing problems. The British electronic duo Disclosure brought out two prominent guests, Sam Smith and Lorde, who won Grammys for their respective breakthrough songs "Stay With Me" and "Royals." — AP

Lifestyle

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Axl Rose, back
with Guns
N' Roses, to
front AC/DC

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This undated image released by The Publicity Office shows a scene from the Cirque du Soleil production, "TORUK - The First Flight." The Canadian-based circus company Cirque du Soleil is canceling upcoming stops in North Carolina by two of its touring shows to protest a state law that limits anti-discrimination protections for the LGBT community. The company said Friday that it will scrap plans for "Ovo" to play Greensboro from April 17-20 and Charlotte from July 6-10, and "Toruk - The First Flight," which was scheduled to play Raleigh from June 22-26. — AP

Nail polish and mascara:

Beauty brands eye up Iran

When Dubai businesswoman Negin Fattahi-Dasmal opened the first branch of her luxurious nail salon chain in Iran this year, it was met with both excitement and skepticism among image-conscious young Iranians. Despite—or perhaps partly because of—strict Islamic dress codes, cosmetics sales in Iran are among the highest in the Middle East. Women are required to wear modest clothes and headscarves, but their faces and hands are not covered, and many express their individuality with lipstick, mascara and nail polish in styles that would seem elaborate by Western standards.

With most international economic sanctions now lifted after a nuclear agreement with world powers that took effect this year, Fattahi-Dasmal thinks it is time to bring in a high-end international brand. Her chain of nail salons, N Bar, already has a customer base among the

thousands of well-off young Iranians who holiday in nearby Dubai, where they can sunbathe, shop and dress with relative freedom. "For Iranian women it's a sought-after brand," Fattahi-Dasmal, an Iranian-born Emirati, said in an interview. "There have been a lot of counterfeit products in Iran. They are extremely hungry for anything that is real, genuine and imported from the West." Nonetheless, she said some customers were sceptical that the new Tehran branch could replicate the quality and consistency customers are used to in Dubai, where branches offer dozens of standardised treatments and stringent hygiene procedures.

High fashion

Iran's fashion-forward twenty-somethings have kept up with global trends on social media and travels abroad, skirting diplomatic isolation and domestic repression. Fattahi-



An Iranian woman checks make up at a cosmetics shop in northern Tehran in this file photo. — AFP

Dasmal says they are discerning consumers. Even under sanctions, independent shops in the affluent northern districts of Tehran managed to obtain the latest seasonal collections of top global brands such as Dolce & Gabbana, Louis Vuitton, Gucci, and Roberto Cavalli. Some of those luxury fashion brands are now entering Iran directly, and there could be similar opportunities for beauty and cosmetics—a market estimated by Iran's parliament's research center to be worth more than \$4 billion a year.

But they could face resistance from conservative factions in the establishment, which enforce Islamic dress codes and are wary of allowing any perceived Western cultural influence into the country. "The way women dress and look is still one of the red lines in the Islamic Republic," said Afshin Sadeghizadeh, a

brand management consultant in Tehran and former editor of Iran's Style magazine. "The brands going to Iran should be ready to face resistance from conservatives or even get shut down and expelled from Iran," he said. Some conservatives even see foreign luxury brands as part of a war against the Islamic Republic. The Tasnim news agency, close to the Islamic Revolutionary Guards, last week reported that the CIA could spy on Iranians through fake eyelashes or skin care lotions.

Franchise it

Complex business and banking regulations are another potential obstacle that lead many, including Fattahi-Dasmal, to opt for a franchise arrangement, licensing to a local partner rather than owning her Tehran shop herself. An

expensive and badly-regulated rental market adds to the difficulties.

"Because of the legalities and complications, Iran is not an easy place to do business but it is also very lucrative. That was the reason we franchised," Fattahi-Dasmal said. Some brands have been held up by the difficulty of finding a partner who is a good fit for their business and not linked to any entity designated under US sanctions that remain in place. "Iran has potential but we are still at the stage



of finding the right partner," said Jean Cassegrain, chief executive of handbag maker Longchamp, adding that the process could take considerable time. But Fattahi-Dasmal is not deterred, and is even considering exporting another of her brands to Iran. JetSet, an aviation-themed hair salon chain, could soon land in Tehran. "Why not?" she said. — Reuters



Halal makeup: Muslim beauty without the beast

A bearded imam may have seemed out of place at this week's In-Cosmetics expo in Paris, an annual showcase for the world's leading beauty and personal care products. But Shaikh Ali Achcar's presence points to a growing demand for makeup that adheres not just to the face—but also to Muslim rules. "When an animal-based product isn't halal ("allowed" in Arabic), or contains alcohol, it's not only forbidden to consume it, but it's also considered to be impure: You cannot use it on your face, or your skin," said Achcar, manning the stand of the Swiss-based Halal Certification Services (HCS).

"That's why it's increasing the need for halal products in cosmetics," said the Brazilian, who heads HCS's office in Madrid. Since Islam prohibits the consumption of pork and alcohol,

lard-based lipsticks and many perfumes are among beauty products that are off limits to strictly observant Muslims. Thanks largely to a 2013 EU ban on animal testing, as well as a skyrocketing demand for vegan cosmetics, many new makeup products contain no animal by-products at all.

But labeling is not uniform and can be confusing. "The majority of the consumers do not know if the product comes from animal-based ingredients or not. So when they see the halal product, they buy it," says Achcar, a copy of the Koran lying on the table beside him. The nearly 800 exhibitors at the In-Cosmetics expo were showing not only beauty products but also laboratory equipment and other necessities for testing and regulatory compliance. "In the case of a company that has animal-based

products and synthetic ones in the same (factory), we have to understand how they separate the production in order to avoid cross-contamination," he said.

Achcar has begun to build a client base in the cosmetics industry, with HCS charging between 1,500 and 2,000 euros (\$2,250) for its scientific team to analyze products. HCS also inspects factories to certify them as halal. "Some of our competitors are a lot more expensive," said Achcar, adding that the certificates must be renewed every year.

\$20 billion industry

A few years ago halal cosmetics were a niche market for a few small businesses, mainly in Muslim countries in Southeast Asia such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. But an

industry worth around \$20 billion (18 billion euros) in 2014 is expected to double by 2019, when it will represent six percent of the global cosmetics market, according to the British market research firm TechNavio. This is because "some countries are developing regulations making it mandatory for cosmetic products to be certified halal," according to Monica Ducruet, who is in charge of regulatory questions for the Swiss perfume group Givaudan's French subsidiary.

Major beauty products companies are beginning to adapt to the trend. L'Oréal has had hundreds of its ingredients certified halal, and experts have checked its production lines turning out goods for the huge market in Indonesia, which counts 200 million Muslims. "Some of the countries realized how much money they could



Islam prohibits the consumption of pork and alcohol, which means many perfumes and lard-based lipsticks are among beauty products that are off limits to strictly observant Muslims. — AFP photo

make with the halal certificates. For a lot of people it's more business than religion," said a source familiar with the industry. —AFP