

Health Ministry opens conference on child protection against violence



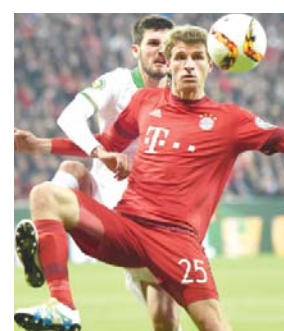
Clinton, Trump eye wins in New York home turf



Jewels still sparkle as Saudis face economic challenge



Mueller double puts Bayern in German Cup final



150 FILS
NO: 16850
40 PAGES

WORK PERMIT, TRANSFER FEES RAISED UP TO KD 50

ALL KUWAITIS, FARMS, INDUSTRIES EXEMPT FROM NEW POWER TARIFFS



Min 19°
Max 35°
High Tide 11:29 & 23:37
Low Tide 05:06 & 17:40

GOVT WON'T TAKE 'ILLEGAL' ACTION AGAINST OIL STRIKE

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih vowed that no illegal action would be taken against a strike by Kuwaiti oil workers that entered its third day yesterday. She told a news conference that an ad hoc committee comprising legal teams from the Cabinet, the Fatwa and Legislation Department and the Public Authority for Manpower would not take any decision unless it is "absolutely legal". The minister added that Kuwait has signed international conventions pertinent to trade unions, but it had voiced reservations over the right to strike.

But a spokesman for thousands of striking Kuwaiti oil and gas workers said yesterday that their strike would continue until planned public sector pay reforms are cancelled. "The strike is ongoing until the implementation of the demands of the workers," Farhan Al-Ajmi, head of the Petrochemicals Industries Company workers union, told a press conference. "A decision to cancel (the strike) is linked to the abolition of decisions issued by the Petroleum Corporation," he added. Earlier in the day, the oil sector's spokesman Sheikh Talal Al-Khaled announced that Kuwaiti oil facilities' average daily production has surged to 1.5 million barrels. Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) is racing against time to resume operation of oil collection centers No. 21 and 24 to fully resume the state's oil and gas production, Sheikh Talal said in a press statement.

Continued on Page 13



KUWAIT: Oil workers sit at the union's headquarters in Ahmadi yesterday as they participate in the third day of a strike to protest alleged pay cuts. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and State Minister for Planning and Development Hind Al-Subaih yesterday signed a new decree sharply raising charges on work permits and transfer of residence. The decision raises the charge for a work permit for the first time from KD 2 to KD 50 and its renewal from KD 2 to KD 10. It also raises fees for transfer of work permit (residence or changing employer) from KD 10 to KD 50. The decision becomes effective from June 1.

According to the law, such charges are paid by the employers, but in practice, the majority of employers force their workers to pay these fees because of the lack of an effective monitoring system and penalties. The Public Authority for Civil Information increased charges for civil IDs from KD 2 to KD 5 from the beginning of April. Several other charges are expected to be raised soon.

Meanwhile, the National Assembly's financial and economic affairs committee yesterday amended a draft bill for raising power charges to exclude all Kuwaitis in both private homes and apartments from the increase. The committee also exempted the agricultural and industrial sectors from the increase, according to rapporteur MP Mohammad Al-Jabri. The new amendments mean that only expatriates, the commercial sector and government offices will be subjected to the raise.



Hind Al-Subaih

Continued on Page 13

US SEEKS GULF SPECIAL FORCES

WASHINGTON SET TO OK FIGHTER JET SALES TO KUWAIT

IRAN-SAUDI HAJJ TALKS HALTE DUE TO VISA HURDLE

TEHRAN: Talks between regional rivals Iran and Saudi Arabia on this year's hajj pilgrimage have stalled because of a disagreement on how visas can be processed when no formal diplomatic relations exist. An Iranian delegation last week travelled to Saudi Arabia, which cut ties in January, for discussions on the pilgrimage to the Muslim holy places in the kingdom. Said Ohadi, head of the Iranian Hajj Organization, said on state television late Monday that four days of negotiations had achieved progress on security issues and travel to the kingdom.

But the lack of a functioning Saudi embassy in Tehran - both it and the kingdom's mission in Iran's second city Mashhad are closed - means there are currently no visas being issued to Iranians. "The problem of visa issuance has not been solved yet," said Ohadi. "Saudi Arabia has not yet offered a clear solution."

Tehran wants visas to be issued inside the Islamic republic. In the absence of its own representatives, Switzerland looks after the interests of the Sunni-dominated kingdom in mainly Shiite Iran. Ohadi said the foreign ministry had offered to provide "all means necessary" to help Saudi Arabia issue visas inside Iran but did not elaborate on how that could be done in the absence of an embassy or consulate.

Continued on Page 13

RIYADH: The United States is seeking greater special forces and naval cooperation with the Gulf states to counter Iran's "destabilizing activities" in the region, a senior American official said. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter, who arrived in the Saudi capital yesterday, will meet his Gulf counterparts today. The following day he is expected to join President Barack Obama at a summit with monarchs of the six Gulf Cooperation Council states.

They will gather in an atmosphere of tension with regional leaders offended by Obama's perceived reluctance to get involved in the region's problems, and in particular his tilt towards Iran. The Gulf monarchies are worried after the lifting this year of international sanctions against their regional rival, Iran, under an international agreement to curb Tehran's nuclear program.

Continued on Page 13



RIYADH: US Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter (left) meets Saudi Deputy Crown Prince and Minister of Defense Mohammed bin Salman to discuss matters of mutual importance yesterday. — SPA



CAIRO: Egyptians shout slogans as they gather at the site where a policeman shot and killed a street vendor yesterday. — AFP

EGYPT COP KILLS VENDOR OVER PRICE OF CUP OF TEA

CAIRO: A riot erupted in a Cairo suburb yesterday after a policeman shot three people after an argument over the price of a cup of tea, killing one of them, the Interior Ministry and witnesses said. Public anger over allegations of police brutality has been bubbling over the past months, with several incidents spilling over into skirmishes and protests, five years after the ministry's officers were a major focus of the 2011 uprising.

One of the onlookers held up a bullet casing and accused the police of killing "poor" Egyptians. A crowd quickly gathered, overturning a police vehicle and

beating up another policeman at the scene, said a witness, who did not see the shooting but said he arrived at the scene in the well-to-do neighborhood of Rehab shortly afterwards. "The interior ministry are thugs," chanted the crowd in a video sent to Reuters by the witness. Around 200 people were in the crowd, according to a Reuters estimate from the footage.

Rights activists say police brutality is widespread in Egypt and that there is a culture of impunity. The interior ministry says abuses are isolated and incidents are investigated.

Continued on Page 13

PALMYRA ARCH RISES AGAIN IN LONDON

LONDON: A replica of one of the most iconic monuments destroyed by Islamic State (IS) jihadists in the ancient Syrian city of Palmyra was unveiled in London's Trafalgar Square yesterday. The six-metre tall scale recreation of the Triumphal Arch is made of Egyptian marble and was carved in the northern Italian region of Tuscany using precision digital technology such as 3D modelling. The project is the brainchild of the Oxford-based Institute of Digital Technology (IDA), a joint venture between a group of international academics.

"If something can be rebuilt in this fashion, then those images of things being blown up and destroyed forever, that's undercut," IDA director Roger Michel told AFP after the replica was revealed in front of a crowd of several hundred people. "Part of what we're doing is to send the message that things that have been destroyed can be replaced and that act of destruction is not final," he added. Palmyra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site northeast of Damascus known as the

"Pearl of the Desert", was taken back by the Russian-backed Syrian army from IS fighters last month. The city was a major tourist destination before the Syrian conflict erupted in 2011, known for its ancient ruins, colonnaded streets and 2,000-year-old temples. IS seized Palmyra last year and beheaded its 82-year-old former antiquities chief three months later.

The jihadists destroyed some of the city's most striking monuments and used the ancient amphitheater as a venue for public executions. The remains of the Triumphal Arch, dating back to the era of Roman Emperor Severus in the third century, are now scattered on the ground, with only the two columns that once sustained the central crown still standing.

Experts are divided on whether the ancient ruins can be restored. Syria's antiquities chief Maamoun Abdulkarim has said the job could be done in five years but Annie Sartre-Fauriat, a member of a UNESCO group of Syrian heritage experts has voiced doubts. Abdulkarim repeated his appeal for interna-

tional assistance for the restoration at yesterday's event in London and suggested that the replica arch could go on display in the modern city of Palmyra. "We need you, we need the international community," he said.

London Mayor Boris Johnson, who spoke at the unveiling ceremony, told the crowd that they were "here in a spirit of defiance of the barbarians who destroyed the original." "We're here today in solidarity with the people of Syria," added Johnson, who is known for his love of classical antiquity. "We all know that Syria's future depends on the conservation and protection of Syria's past."

The replica arch will be on display until Thursday before travelling to New York and Dubai for further public displays. The arch is the highest-profile project yet for the IDA, which is also working on building a Million Image Database of 3D pictures of threatened monuments in conflict zones throughout the Middle East and north Africa. — AFP



LONDON: Mayor of London Boris Johnson gestures after unveiling an imposing scale replica of Palmyra's Triumphal Arch in Trafalgar Square yesterday. — AP

AMIR HEADS TO RIYADH FOR GCC-US MEETING

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, accompanied by an official delegation, will leave for Saudi Arabia today to lead Kuwait's delegation to a meeting of GCC leaders and US President Barack Obama. Meanwhile, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah is set to represent His Highness the Amir today at the ceremony of Kuwait International Award for Quranic Recitation in its seventh edition, to be held at Bayan Palace Theater. —KUNA



His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah



RIYADH: A general view of the meeting. — KUNA

GCC EDUCATION MINISTERS ADOPT KUWAIT WORK PAPER

RIYADH: GCC ministers of higher education and scientific research adopted in a meeting in Riyadh yesterday a Kuwaiti work paper on promoting values of good citizenship among GCC citizens. These values - rejecting sectarianism, extremism, and embracing pluralism and tolerance - will be incorporated in school curricula within the GCC, said Kuwait's Minister of Education and Minister of Higher Education Dr Bader Hamad Al-Essa at the conclusion of the

ministerial meeting. Among topics discussed at the meeting, the minister said it was agreed to support Qatar's bid to get the position of UNESCO's director general and to work toward enabling GCC post-graduate students to be treated equally by higher learning institutions no matter which GCC country these institutions are in. Saudi minister of education had started the meeting with a speech in which he stressed the need of GCC countries for closer cooperation

on all levels, including education, for the higher purpose of attaining the goals of sustainable development.

GCC Secretary General Dr Abdullah Al-Zayani meanwhile applauded the work of the ministers of higher education in furthering the cause of post-graduate education in GCC universities and higher learning institutions, recognizing the importance of equipping the GCC citizens with the educational wherewithal to excel in life. — KUNA



KUWAIT: First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah received yesterday the newly-assigned Cambodian ambassador to the State of Kuwait, Bunva Tan, who handed the minister his credentials. —KUNA

INFO MINISTER TO VISIT PALESTINE, OPEN BOOK FAIR

KUWAIT: Minister of Information and State Minister for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah will visit Palestine on May 7th to open the Palestine International Book Fair, Palestinian Ambassador to Kuwait Rami Tahboub said. Kuwait was selected as the guest of honor this year, which coincides with Kuwait's selection as a capital of Islamic Culture, he said.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas will receive Sheikh Salman, who is also Chairman of the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL), Tahboub said, adding that the visit reflects Kuwait support to the Palestinian people and their



Palestinian Ambassador Rami Tahboub

cause. The NCCAL will hold Kuwaiti cultural days in Palestine on the sidelines of the exhibition, he announced.

ENVOY, OFFICIALS DISCUSS PLANS MARKING KUWAIT ISLAMIC CAPITAL

ROME/PARIS: Kuwait's Ambassador to Italy Sheikh Ali Khaled Al-Jaber Al-Sabah discussed with Islamic leaders in the country coordination within framework of Kuwait's proclamation as Capital of Islamic Culture to promote Islam's contributions to mankind. Kuwait Embassy said in a statement the ambassador received General Secretary of the Islamic Cultural Center in Rome Dr Abdullah Radwan and Director of the Islamic League in Italy Dr Abdulaziz Serhan, as part of the diplomatic mission's efforts to promote the event internationally. Sheikh Ali Khaled discussed with the two leaders cooperation at the religious and cultural levels, within framework of activities marking Kuwait as the Capital of Islamic Culture 2016. Ambassador Sheikh Ali proposed holding Quranic contests at the cultural center and Rome Mosque, organizing activities and contests for the youth and children of the Muslim community in the European nation.

The talks touched on holding celebrations on religious occasions, namely during the upcoming month of Ramadan, Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha at the center, organizing seminars on the Islamic culture and seeking to portray correct image about Islam via the Italian media. Moreover, the discussions dealt with proposals to hold activities in Kuwait, such as Islamic calligraphy exhibitions.

The diplomat underscored importance of the event, which serves Kuwait's purpose to remove cultural barriers, correct misconceptions, "clearing the religious rhetoric" and countering anti-Islam propaganda.

His eminent guests lauded Kuwait's sponsorship of the Islamic culture, noting its leading role to portray Islam's bright image; an approach that has made it eligible to be the cultural capital "at this unprecedented crossroad" of mankind's history.

Cultural cooperation

Meanwhile, Kuwaiti Consul General in Milan and North Italy Abdunnasser Bukhadour discussed boosting cultural and scientific cooperation with Franco Anelli, rector of Universita Cattolica (Catholic University).

Inter-faith dialogue was a key issue discussed during the meeting, especially with Kuwait's current status as "Capital of Islamic Culture for 2016," which paves the way to further deepen cultural and historic ties with Italy, "the cradle of Christianity and Western civilization," Bukhadour said.

The possibility of holding joint scientific seminars and festivities, either in Kuwait or Italy, as well as broadening academic communication between the Catholic University and Kuwait University and other facilities, were also discussed, Bukhadour noted. University of the Sacred Heart, or Catholic University of Milan, is a private research university founded in 1921. It is the largest private university in Europe and the largest Catholic University in the world.

Parliamentary relations

In other news, Kuwait's Ambassador to France Sami Al-Suleiman discussed bilateral relations, especially parliamentary ones, with leading French Senator Leila Aichi. "The meeting comes within Kuwaiti keenness to strengthen relations with components of the French Society," Ambassador Suleiman said in a statement after a business lunch at the Senate with Aichi Monday.

Aichi, who is President of the France-Kuwait Friendship group, is also Vice-President of the influential Foreign Affairs, Defense and Armed Forces Commission. Suleiman pointed to the successful visit of parliament Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem to Paris and meeting counterpart Claude Bartolone. — KUNA

OIC URGES UNSC TO FACE 'ISRAEL'S ARROGANCE'

NEW YORK: The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) reiterated that all arrogant and disrespectful acts by Israel towards the occupied Palestinian territory constitute a flagrant violation of the international law and resolutions of international legitimacy.

Speaking on behalf of the OIC before the Security Council, Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Mansour Ayyad Al-Otaibi affirmed that Israel fuels extremism, violence and racism, and religious conflict, all of which demand the urgent attention and action of the world's top body. "It is incomprehensible that Israel continues perpetrating violations and crimes without response or punishment," he said.

"Therefore, the OIC once again called on the Security Council to assume its responsibility for providing the Palestinian people with international protection. This Council and the High Contracting Parties to the 4th Geneva Convention have clear responsibilities in ensuring the protection and security of the Palestinian people," he added.

Otaibi stressed that the right to security should not be exclusive to Israel; security is a right that should be provided to and enjoyed by all nations, and the victims of this nearly five-decade long illegal, foreign occupation should not be the exception.

At the same time, the OIC emphasized that an exit from the current crisis and revival of peace prospects will not be possible without compelling Israel, the occupying force, to end its illegal construction and expansion of its colonial settlements and the wall in Occupied



NEW YORK: Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Mansour Ayyad Al-Otaibi. — KUNA

Palestine, including East Jerusalem. "This is an urgent priority in line with the Security Council's own resolutions and imperative for saving the two-state solution from demise," he said.

Kuwait's representative reiterated OIC's call for "a resolution that sets a specific timetable and practical steps to end Israel's occupation in all manifestations, including the illegal settlement regime, on the basis of relevant Security

Council resolutions, the Madrid principles and the Arab Peace Initiative."

In his speech, Otaibi noted that since the last Council debate on this matter in January, Israel has continued killing and injuring Palestinian civilians, especially youth. Since the current wave of unrest began in October 2015, Israel's 'shoot to kill' policy has claimed the lives of more than 204 Palestinian civilians, 48 of whom were children. —KUNA

SHEIKH MOHAMMAD LAUDS FORUM

RIYADH: Kuwaiti Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah Al-Sabah extolled the initiative of Saudi Deputy Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz for holding the fourth Twitter blogger forum "tweeps 2016." "The initiative is pivotal to benefiting from the social networking websites in building the capacity of youth," he said in a speech to the main session of the forum on Monday.

Sheikh Mohammad expressed joy for taking part in the forum alongside with a galaxy of ministers from the GCC member states, intelligentsia, public figures and youth - males and females. "Thanks to the patronage of the Deputy Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, the forum deepens the concept of positive dialogue and helps brainstorm ideas about various issues through the social media," he said.

Sheikh Mohammad affirmed that the State of Kuwait attaches great importance to the contents carried by social networking websites and set up specialized departments to follow up the issues of the public opinion and the responses of youth to these issues.

"Though Twitter has a great impact on the public opinion, the views raised via it cannot be considered as a credible criterion for gauging the public opinion, given the fact that many users and bloggers in this virtual world use hoax names," he argued.

He reaffirmed Kuwait's commitment to respecting the freedom of expression, saying: "The ceiling of freedom is usually high but it comes down in case of slandering Allah the Almighty, Prophet Mohammad (Peace Be Upon Him) or his companions and wives, or His Highness the Amir."

Besides Sheikh Mohammad, the forum gathered foreign ministers of the UAE, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, as well as Qatari minister of state for the defense affairs. In their statements to the gathering, the ministers cautioned the youth against the destructive ideologies that could destabilize their countries, foment sectarian tensions or promulgate hatred. On the Operation Decisive Storm, they said it testified the unity of the countries of the region and their ability to defend their collective security with the support of their people as seen in the popular responses via the social media. The event has been organized by Deputy Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman bin Abdulaziz's Misk Foundation, a non-profit agency, on an annual basis since 2013. — KUNA



KIB TAKES PART IN "LIGHT EXPO"

KUWAIT: Kuwait International Bank (KIB) announced its participation in "Light Expo" exhibition that aims at supporting the youth innovative initiatives and small projects of businesswomen and creative minds. The exhibition will be held on April 18th-20th.

The Head of Corporate Communications at KIB, Nawaf Najia commented, "As part of our leading social responsibility program, we make sure to take part in various initiatives and activities that target all society members, especially the ones addressing the youth, since such initiatives help develop and build the country both on the short and long run." He added that this exhibition acts as a momentous platform to showcase the projects of businesswomen and owners of small and medium-sized projects, which will help them to kick off their private businesses that have become the cornerstone and piece of attraction locally and globally.

Najia stressed on the bank's keenness to adopt and support this kind of initiatives and exhibitions that will enhance the inter-

action between participants and visitors on one side, and help build promising cooperation between participants and the bank on the other, by educating them on KIB's products and services that are tailored to them to achieve their ambitions. As a result, the bank strives to support the female participants in the "Light Expo" exhibition who have the talent and creativity that help build a better future for the country, as well as offer career opportunities for young people in the private sector.

Najia concluded by praising the ladies' role in serving the community and their contribution in promoting the small and medium business sector by participating in the specialized trade exhibitions. He also stressed on the bank's continuous attempt to carrying out and supporting many CSR initiatives that cover various sectors and activities such as religious, humanitarian, social, charity, sports, health, medical, national, cultural, educational and many more.



ROME: Kuwait's Ambassador to Italy Sheikh Ali Khaled Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with General Secretary of the Islamic Cultural Center in Rome Dr Abdullah Radwan and Director of the Islamic League in Italy Dr Abdulaziz Serhan. — KUNA

SECOND ISRAELI FILES COMPLAINT AGAINST KUWAIT AIRWAYS

KUWAIT: An Israeli citizen living in Switzerland has filed a complaint against Kuwait Airways (KAC) for discrimination. The Israeli citizen had wanted to fly from Geneva to Frankfurt with Kuwait Airways. This is the second complaint by an Israeli citizen against Kuwait's national carrier over its policy of refusing Israelis access to KAC flights.

The policy is based on Kuwait's law which prohibits all domestic companies from conducting business with Israeli citizens. This includes KAC flights between third countries. In this case, the Israeli citizen, resident in Geneva, claimed that he was denied access to a seat on a Kuwait Airways flight from Geneva to Frankfurt.

In December of last year, KAC canceled flights between London and New York after an Israeli citizen filed a complaint with the US Department of Transportation alleging discrimination based on nationality. The man, Eldad Gatt, was unable to book a flight from

New York City to Heathrow on Kuwait Airways because the airline's booking site would not process the transaction with the nationality option for Israel.

The pro-Israel organization The Lawfare Project which attempts to counter all BDS (boycott, divestment, sanctions) efforts first publicized the issue and was a central player in the earlier suit against KAC.

Flights to or via Kuwait are not affected because Kuwait law does not allow Israeli citizens visas for entry or transit. However it's possible that other KAC flights in Europe not routed through Kuwait may be targeted for similar complaints.

Kuwait Airways' Geneva director John Fernandini denied any knowledge of this particular case but added that the airline has imposed such rules for security reasons. He also added that Kuwaitis are not allowed to fly with Israel's national airline El Al. - Info from swissinfo.ch and agencies were used in this report.

OFFICIALS MEET WITH STUDENTS AT CONTROVERSIAL IDAHO UNI

WASHINGTON: Kuwait's Consul General in Los Angeles Abdullatif Al-Yahya held two separate meetings with Kuwaiti students in Pocatello, Idaho, as well as Idaho State University and local officials to discuss alleged discrimination and offenses against the students.

The meeting with students was also attended by Kuwait's Cultural Advisor in Los Angeles Dr Mansour Al-Jarragh, Head of National Union of Kuwait Students in the United States (NUKS-USA) Fahad Al-Jadaan, and Idaho University officials.

"Our top priority is the safety of students, academic and financial matters come next," Yahya said. "The goal of the meeting was to remove obstacles and help find solutions to students' complaints and end their suffering." Yahya added that he has assured students that

the Kuwaiti Ministry of Higher Education would do all in its power to redress their grievances. "The Ministry is working hard to provide students with a convenient atmosphere for their study and to ensure their safety," he said. He noted that the Higher Education Minister and his undersecretary has expressed readiness to offer "unprecedented exceptions for Kuwaiti students studying in this city," he said referring to Pocatello.

With regard to the meeting with the local officials, Yahya said that he has conveyed to the city mayor and security officials Kuwait's dismay over the maltreatment and discrimination of Kuwaiti students as well as the lack of proper atmosphere for their study in the city.

The city officials have vowed to do their best to provide security for all Arab and Muslim students and to resolve their

complaints, Yahya said. He unveiled that the US officials have admitted the existence of racism in the rural city against foreign students, who hail from 60 countries. The officials also promised to launch an investigation into the issue and to exert more efforts to raise the local community awareness about the importance of foreign students for local economy, he noted. Yahya stated that he has informed Higher Education Ministry Undersecretary Dr Hamed Al-Azmi about the outcome of the two meetings and the local officials' pledges to deal with the issue. During the discussion with Dr Azmi, a proposal was put forward about exceptional freeze of Kuwaiti academic missions to this city for a year, if students desired that, until finding an alternative university in the US or any other country for them. — KUNA

Letters to Badrya

Dear Ms Darwish,

It is always pleasing to read your columns. In your column of April 14, 2016, you state that an increase in the rates of electricity and water charges for businesses and expatriates is akin to apartheid. Apartheid is an Afrikaans word (apart and hood), literally meaning "separateness". The policy of apartheid was practiced in South Africa from 1948 until 1994. I believe that this separateness is apparent in Kuwait for quite some time. Let me give you a few examples.

A few months back, my wife was shopping in the 'new' Jabriya Co-operative Market. When she reached the checkout counter, two young ladies were ahead of her and talking to each other, quite oblivious to their surroundings. My wife politely asked them to take a step forward so that she could put the three items from her basket on the counter. One of the young ladies turned around with a frown and said, "how dare you talk to us like this - you are not even Kuwaiti".

The policy of apartheid is quite visible in the salary structure as well. Expatriates, without exaggeration, work for longer hours and also have better productivity, but their salaries are much lower than those of the citizens.

Please keep writing as your columns are an excellent boost to the morale of the expatriates and keep us working diligently, thinking that at least someone from the citizenry is on our side.

An expatriate

KUWAIT HOSTS LIBRARIES CONFERENCE

KUWAIT: Kuwait is fully cognizant of the role public libraries and information centers play in human development and in furthering culture, knowledge, and scientific research, said yesterday that Minister of Information and Minister of State for Youth Affairs Sheikh Salman Sabah Al-Salem Al-Humoud Al-Sabah.

The minister, who is also chairman of National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, emphasized the benefits of culture in helping library readers absorb multi-faceted ideas and knowledge that may lead them to adopting values of openness, pluralism, moderation, and tolerance.

Deputy Chairman of NCCAL Ali Al-Youha made those statements in a speech he read on the minister's behalf at the opening of the annual conference and exhibition of the Special Libraries Association-Arabian Gulf Branch. The event runs through today under the theme Future Challenges to Librarians.

The minister said that the door is wide open for the private sector to delve into cultural enterprises, information technology, and knowledge economy as well as play a major role in supporting cultural and historical tourism.

Director of the Kuwait National Library (KNL) Kamel Al-Abdul-Jaleel, noting that KNL sponsored and organized the conference and the exhibition accompanying it, said that there will be workshops for the attendees, especially those in the field of library work, to hone in their skills and upgrade them.

Meanwhile, director of Sheikh Zayed Library and chairman of the board of the Special Libraries Association-Arabian Gulf Branch, Rashed Abdul-Rahman, said the conference is committed to thrashing out ideas regarding the challenges facing those who work as librarians and information providers.

Yesterday's meeting included the showing of a documentary film on the Kuwait National Library and its valuable contents from books and transcripts to dictionaries. The film was shown marking the selection of Kuwait as the capital of Islamic Culture for the year 2016.

The exhibition accompanying the conference deals with displaying the latest approaches to publishing books and the benefits of digitization of work in libraries. —KUNA

YEMENI GOVT DELEGATION COMMITTED TO KUWAIT TALKS, REBELS 'RECKLESS'

KUWAIT: The government delegation was committed to attend the Yemeni-Yemeni peace negotiations in Kuwait, but the rebels carried on with their irresponsible behavior - by not showing up, said the Yemeni delegation Monday.

"This reflects the level of recklessness of rebels; their undermining of our people's blood, as well as the will of the international community. It also reflects their lack of seriousness to end the war and give up violence in implementation of UN Security Council resolutions," said the delegation in a statement.

"Our participation came in implementation of UNSC resolution 2216," the statement noted, adding that the delegation appreciates the role played by UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed during the last five months to reach an agreement. It also appreciated the role of the Kuwaiti political leadership and its efforts in hosting and championing the talks.

Earlier Monday, Ould Cheikh Ahmed announced that the Kuwait negotiations would be delayed. "We are working to overcome the latest challenges and ask the delegations to show good faith, participate in the talks in order to reach a peaceful solution to the crisis in Yemen," he said in a press release. —KUNA

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Crime

Report



Man killed in Salmiya accident

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: A motorist died in a car accident reported yesterday in Salmiya. Firefighters and paramedics arrived to the scene shortly after the accident was reported, but the man had already succumbed to his injuries by then. Firemen recovered the victim's body from the vehicle before it was taken to the coroner. A case was filed to investigate the causes of the accident.



Fake domestic help office

Residency Affairs Detectives arrested several Ethiopian women on charges of offering illegal domestic help services and absconding. The arrest came after police raided a fake domestic help office based on information that several persons wanted by authorities were running illegal activities there. According to investigations, the suspects used to sign contracts with citizens to bring in domestic helpers from abroad, then received the money but did not deliver on their promises. A total of six women were arrested, all in violation of residency law, and were sent to concerned authorities.

Fashion designer arrested

Policemen arrested an Iranian fashion designer to serve a one-year jail sentence followed by deportation. The woman was sent to the central prison. She who was tried for inciting vice acts through social media. She was staying with a friend in Salmiya, where police went and arrested her.

LAWYERS CONTEST DNA TESTS LAW

By Meshaal Al-Enezi

KUWAIT: A number of lawyers yesterday filed a contest before the constitutional court against the DNA tests law, which the Cabinet had approved during its weekly meeting last Monday. Separately, the court of cassation set a hearing to be held on April 26 to review a challenge filed by former MP Abdullah Al-Barghash against the government's decision to withdraw his citizenship. The court of appeal had upheld the government's decision.



KUWAIT: The firefighting sector at Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) held a workshop on the use of expanding foaming systems (turbo box), used in basements and closed areas. It took place under the supervision of KFSD Director General Lieutenant General Yousuf Al-Ansari in the workshops' building in Rai. — By Hanan Al-Saadoun



Oil workers participate in the strike for the third straight day.

UNIONS DEFIANT, INSIST NO MEDIATION ATTEMPTS WERE MADE



KUWAIT: MP Abdullah Al-Turajji (left) meets with chairman of the oil sector employees' union Saif Al-Qahtani (center) and head of KNPC employees' union Mohammad Al-Hajri. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat and Fouad Al-Shaikh



Female oil workers attend a function organized by the women's committee at KNPC's union.

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: Oil workers' unions continued their strike yesterday for the third straight day, with no signs indicating that an agreement with the government could be in the horizon. Responding to a question whether there were any mediation attempts with the government to call the oil workers' strike off, chairman of the oil sector employees' union Saif Al-Qahtani stressed that the protesters are keener than anybody to end the strike, but denied that such efforts were made. "The oil union and syndicates' demands are to protect workers' rights and gains without any new ones for the time being," he stressed, pointing out that they are proud that they have gone on strike to protect their rights rather than demand new or more ones. In the meantime, MP Abdullah Al-Turajji visited the workers yesterday to show support for their demands.

Jet fuel

Meanwhile, Kuwait Airways Chairperson and Managing Director Rasha Al-Roumi stressed that available aviation fuel was enough for 30 days and that KAC was constantly coordinating with ALAFCO, the company responsible for providing Kuwait international airport with aviation fuel. "Things are going excellently despite the strike," she underlined, denying that any flights had been affected.

KFSD budget

The parliament's budgets and final statement committee yesterday met to discuss Kuwait Fire Service Directorate's (KFSD) 2016-2017 budget, said committee chairman MP Adnan Abdulsamad, noting that the committee highly commended the role played by firefighters and the hardships they go through to save lives and property.



A Kuwaiti oil worker from shows badges reading in Arabic: "the strike will not compromise" as workers participate in the third day of strikes at the union's headquarters in Al-Ahmadi.

"Remarks about the budget do not undermine those efforts," he stressed, noting that such remarks were only meant to achieve administrative and financial reform. Abdulsamad added that remarks that had been made earlier by the Audit Bureau were not heeded and that KFSD had not carried out any of the recommendations made by the committee either.

Copyrights bill

Chairman of the parliament's educational affairs committee Oudah Al-Ruwai announced that the committee had finished discussing the copyrights bill and accordingly reported to the parliament so that it could be discussed in the coming session. "This law will boost Kuwait's status amongst various countries in terms of copyright," he underlined. Ruwai added that the law would handle reports that have been criticizing Kuwait in this regard and stressed that by passing it, the parliament will have improved Kuwait's image worldwide.

Sports suspension

The parliament's youth and sports committee yesterday convened to resume investigating suspending Kuwait's international sport activities, said committee chairman MP Abdullah Maayouf, noting that the committee has prepared for the meeting due to be held to discuss public, parliamentary and sports movements. He added that the committee also reviewed responses to earlier inquiries made to sports federations that had contributed to this suspension.

Students election

MP Saud Al-Hurajji urged Education Minister Badr Al-Essa to order an immediate investigation over accusations of forging the elections of the Kuwait Students Union in Egypt, where two competing groups fought and destroyed ballot boxes.

Inspectors

The Municipal Council's technical committee recommended allowing municipality inspectors to inspect the canteens of public and private schools to make sure the food sold there is safe.



KUWAIT: The pictures show policemen check drivers' papers at a checkpoint held at the press street in Shuwaikh yesterday. The Interior Ministry has been intensifying crackdowns in recent months, targeting violators such as drivers without licenses and people with expired visas. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



KUWAIT: Supporters of former opposition MP Musallam Al-Barrak gathered outside the diwaniya of his house Monday night to mark the first anniversary of his imprisonment. Barrak is serving a two-year sentence for offending His Highness the Amir. Several political activists and former MPs were in attendance. — Photos by Yasser Al-Zayyat



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GULF BANK CSR PROGRAM WINS GUST'S AL-SHAKOOR AWARD

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank's Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives in the fields of culture and education were recently recognized and lauded by Gulf University of Science and Technology (GUST) through an "Al-Shakoor Lifetime Achievement Award". The award, an initiative of the Mass Communications and Media Department, was presented at a special awards ceremony at GUST and was received on behalf of the Bank by Laila Al-Qatami, Assistant General Manager for Corporate Communications, and Khaled Al-Otaibi, Assistant Manager for Corporate Communications.



Al-Shakoor Awards recognize corporations and organizations that have made significant contributions to Kuwaiti society and have an outstanding corporate social responsibility (CSR) portfolio. Awards were presented for CSR excellence in health, environment, culture and education, as well as social welfare and charity. The independent judging panel included media figures, community leaders, industry experts and academics. Companies and organizations are nominated and are required to submit data to the independent judging panel. Information required included 10 years of information on: the types of events, the benefits for the community, and the impact on the community. The judges then evaluated the submissions based on: the impact and scope of the program's success; the methods, solutions and leadership

of the programs and initiatives; the innovation of the initiative; sustainability; integrity; and expenditures in terms of time, money, and staff engagement.

Gulf Bank's CSR program is committed to initiatives and events that benefit the community. Over the past year, the Bank has sponsored events focusing on youth; education; health and fitness; helping the underprivileged; women's empowerment; as well as promoting Kuwait's heritage and culture.

Gulf Bank has a strong track record of supporting numerous educational and cultural activities. The bank's educational initiatives include ongoing support for INJAZ Kuwait, providing a large number of employee volunteers, and consistently maintaining its position as lead sponsor. Gulf Bank was also a platinum sponsor of this year's National Union of Kuwaiti Students (NUKS) conference in the USA, and a sponsor of the Tamkeen Youth Empowerment Symposium, a Kuwaiti initiative delivered by young people to the youth of Kuwait. In addition, the bank sponsored the 'Jahazeen 2' training and development program, which was held in cooperation with Kuwaiti's Manpower and Government Restructuring Program (MGRP).

Cultural activities the bank has supported include sponsoring Kuwait University's second annual 'Against Violence...With Tolerance' forum on which was organized by Kuwait University's College of Social Sciences, in cooperation with Women's Research and Studies Center and Ministry of Interior. The bank has also sponsored the 27th Memorial Journey for Pearl Diving, Gulf Bank has sponsored this event for as a key part of its long-term commitment to preserving the heritage and continuing the traditions of Kuwait's unique past.

To learn more about Gulf Bank's initiatives, or any of its products and services, visit one of Gulf Bank's 56 branches; call the Customer Contact Center on 1805805, or log on to www.e-gulfbank.com, Gulf Bank's bilingual website.



HEALTH MINISTRY OPENS CONFERENCE ON CHILD PROTECTION AGAINST VIOLENCE

KUWAIT: Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi said the State of Kuwait is keen on protecting children against all forms of violence out of commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

"Kuwait has been the first country to ratify the UNCRC which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on November 20, 1989," he said Monday in his inaugural speech to the 4th Regional Conference on Child Protection against Violence at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel.

"Last year Kuwait adopted a legislation on the right of the child which materialized the fruitful cooperation between the country's legislative and executive authorities, and commitment to the constitution and the international conventions," he pointed out.

"This conference coincides with the Health Ministry's preparation for the launching of the plan for sustainable development through 2030 which was adopted by the historic summit of the UN General Assembly last year. It reflects a great insight into laying down a preventive policy and a clear-cut roadmap vis-a-vis this serious phenomenon while developing the national development plans," Dr Al-Obaidi added.

Ministry of Health for Legal Affairs Dr Mahmoud Al-Abdulhadi urged continuous supervision to curb the growth of the phenomenon of child abuse through effective programs and strategies. "The Ministry set up a higher committee in



KUWAIT: Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi speaks at the 4th Regional Conference on Child Protection against Violence. — KUNA

2013 to oversee the interagency cooperation in detecting and documenting any infringement on the child rights and reporting to the competent regional or international organizations," he pointed out. Dr Al-Abdulhadi noted that it is a collective responsibility of a society to respond to any form of child abuse since this phenomenon impacts negatively on the comprehensive development plans.

Dr Mona Al-Khawari, chairperson of the organizing committee of the conference, said meanwhile that the gathering is an excellent opportunity for professionals engaged in the child protection to network with colleagues from around the world for preventing any child abuse whether physical or psychological.

A survey, conducted recently by the Faculty of Medicine, shows that 22 percent of adults suffered from physical harm when young, eight percent sustained stab wounds, 16 percent were intimidated and 13 percent sexually harassed, she said.

The conference, which lasts until April 20, is co-organized by Kuwait National Child Protection Program (KNCPP), the Arab Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (Arab SPCAN) and the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN). — KUNA



275 FILIPINOS UNABLE TO VOTE

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: A two-page petition was formally submitted to the Commission on Elections (Comelec) in Manila calling the agency to include the names of more than 275 Filipino voters whose names were not included in the official list of certified voters in Kuwait. Comelec has the official list of certified voters



Philippine Consul General to Kuwait Raul Dado

at the Philippine Embassy as prescribed by law, and if names of voters are not included in the list, they will not be allowed to vote. The Philippine presidential elections started for Filipinos abroad on April 9, one month before the May 9 elections in the Philippines. Filipino overseas voters are allowed to vote for president, vice-president, senators and party representatives.

The two-page petition was submitted to the Comelec in Manila bearing the names of

275 people signed by Philippine Consul General to Kuwait Raul Dado. Dado feared voters whose names are not on the certified list could multiply in the coming days, as Filipinos have till May 9 to vote. "The voting is not yet over, and we already have this huge number of voter complaints. We expect this number to multiply soon, so we have submitted the petition now," he added.

The petitioners claimed they were officially registered as voters but their names were not on the official list. Dado wrote a letter with the names of the petitioners to Comelec Chairman Andres Bautista. "We registered at the Philippine Embassy in Kuwait for the overseas voting of 2016, but we could not vote because our names were not included in the certified list of voters, notwithstanding that most of us have registration receipts and Comelec IDs," the petition letter stated.

The first petition to Comelec was sent to Manila last week with names of 140 people. The initial reply of the Comelec was that most of the 140 petitioners either had no records or their names were deactivated. Overseas Absentee Voters who fail to vote twice or in two consecutive Philippine elections are automatically deactivated by Comelec. Only eight petitioners regained their right to vote.

"We are hoping to retrieve more names of voters and Comelec is helping us in this matter. So, while there is still time, I would like to appeal to every Filipino voter in Kuwait to come early, so if there are similar problems, we can still find a solution and retrieve your names," Dado noted.

ZAIN SPONSORS AUM CAREER FAIR 2016



KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, announced its sponsorship and participation in the American University of the Middle East's Career Fair for the year 2016, held in the main campus in Egaila. The event is organized by AUM's Twente Career Development and Recruitment center.

Zain was present at the job fair, which served a large number of students majoring in various business and engineering studies. The company

highlighted to visiting students and graduates the available job vacancies in the company, in addition to providing a detailed explanation of the nature of work at various departments and divisions. Zain's team also took the opportunity to answer any questions and inquiries visitors had.

Zain showcased its keenness participating in career fairs as part of its Human Resources strategy, which closely focuses on supporting the educational sector hand in hand with various univer-

sities, colleges, and educational institutions in Kuwait to provide students and graduates with career opportunities in the private sector.

Zain is committed to playing an active role in the investment in the human capital of Kuwait. The company seeks to provide young and eager Kuwaitis with suitable job opportunities that allow them to apply their practical skills, achieve their potential, and fully develop their capabilities.

Al-Anbaa
WATER TALKS

By Saleh Al-Shayegi

Public interference in private affairs and intrusion in things they are not specialized in begets endless disasters. I see that the populace, the riffraff, those with special agendas and some sick-minded people have been interfering in things they know nothing about nor know their value. Tiran and Sanafeer islands, which Egypt agreed to return to Saudi Arabia, had been under Egyptian administration since 1950 upon an agreement made between both countries.

All of a sudden, all those who had never heard of the two islands and know nothing about them are now protesting with a pretext assuming that Egypt is 'selling' its land! This came as a great opportunity for fault-finders and those waiting to charge at and criticize Egypt - those waiting for a chance to hold it back so that they could spread their tumults, sound their drums and blow their horns.

Things do not really need all this fuss about the matter - all the issue needs is to go back to and consult specialists who know the truth in order to save themselves and others the trouble of going through a state of wailing, adding fuel to fires, dividing their own country and jeopardizing their nation's solidarity.

Despite minor disagreements, most specialists documentarily proved that the two islands belong to Saudi Arabia. So, why does the public interfere in such a case, sticking their noses in something they know nothing about?

Historically speaking, it was proved that Egypt was asked by the owners to run the two islands. So, why all this ignorant revolt and wailing by some tumult-makers and ignorant media figures who have been using each and every major incident to sound their drums and whip their horses in a race of ignorance for the sake of temporary personal gains?! They will eventually lose the race, lose everything and only get disappointment because life goes on and will never be stopped by loud voices. So, let them kill themselves with anger and grudges!

— Translated by Kuwait Times



NBK HONORED FOR BEST SOCIAL PRACTICES IN PUBLIC HEALTH DURING GUST CONFERENCE FOR CSR

KUWAIT: National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) was awarded for its best social practices and initiatives in Public Health for 2015, during the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Conference that was organized recently by Gulf University of Science and Technology (GUST).

NBK remains the largest contributor to society. The NBK Children's Hospital remains an icon of the bank's social contributions. The bank continued with its commitments by establishing the first specialized center for marrow transplantation in Kuwait for the Children.

During 2015, NBK continues its focus on promoting a healthy life style environment for society. NBK implemented a range of programs including women's health issues, awareness initiatives and support for Blood Bank. NBK has a proven track record of supporting Kuwait's health care sector through myriad efforts for adults and children.

NBK strongly supports the country's health care institutions. This award reflects NBK's commitment toward corporate social responsibility.



Last year, NBK was honored for its best social practices and initiatives in the GCC by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Red Crescent Authority. The recognition aimed at honoring the efforts and initiatives of institutions in social development and the bank's social participation in the social development of the Gulf society.

During the past years, NBK has promoted a range of philanthropic mis-

sions and social welfare programs as part of the humanitarian dimension of its corporate social responsibility (CSR). NBK continues to be a leader in CSR, standing as a model in serving all aspects of Kuwait's community. In addition to health, NBK's corporate social responsibility programs cover a range of education, environment, philanthropic, social and sports-related initiatives.

AFTER COMPLAINTS, MUNICIPALITY MOVES TRANSFORMER TO SHUWAIKH PLAYGROUND

KUWAIT: Following citizens' rejection to build a power transformer in the park in block 1 of residential Shuwaikh based on the request of an influential person who did not like it being near his new house in the area, the Ministry of Electricity and Water (MEW) disappointed them again and encroached on another park in block 4 of the same area. The ministry reportedly plans to build a transformer in the middle of a football field for children, without carrying out a full study of the park's

situation, which already has three transformers.

Residents of block 4 said they totally reject any intention by MEW or the municipality to build the fourth transformer in the middle of the park, as it will hinder children's movement and endanger their lives, especially that the park lies near the entrance of the model Al-Mansour kindergarten, and this will also deprive children from practicing their sports hobbies. — Al-Qabas



MANAMA: Kuwait National Guard officers won the top four places during a training course organized recently by the Bahraini National Guard.

LAW COLLEGE CRACKS DOWN ON CHEATERS

APPEAL COURT DISCRIMINATES MICRO-EARPIECES

KUWAIT: At a time when the Law College of Kuwait University has been cracking down on students' cheating attempts during exams and has already expelled a number of them, the court of appeal ruled that finding some 'cheating tools' with students sitting for exams was not to be considered actual cheating, but only 'attempted cheating' upon which students should not be expelled.

The court thus annulled a ruling by the first instance court, rejected the case, annulled KU's decisions on expelling the

students, ordered allowing them to resume their courses and to sit for the same exams once more. Notably, the case was filed by a student who had been caught using a micro-earpiece and a magnetic antenna to pull it out of the ear during an exam session. He was accused of cheating and was banned from registering or studying any courses in this academic year.

The court argued that possessing the 'tools' did not necessarily mean a student had actually used them for cheating,

which was not proved by solid evidence, and thus the university's decision was cancelled by the court. In a similar case, the administrative appeal court also annulled KU's decision on expelling a female student for cheating, as she had been caught with some 'unreadable' words written on her arm during an exam session. The court argued that it was not proven that the student had actually used those writings on her arm for cheating, and accordingly, KU's decision was considered invalid and was annulled. — Al-Jarida

FTZ IN QUEST OF MANAGER AFTER MINISTRY REFUSES RUNNING IT

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Industry (PAI) asked the ministry of commerce's free trade zone department to take over the Free Trade Zone (FTZ), but the new director Mohammed Al-Enezi refused because he believed that FTZ was not qualified for the mission at the time being, well-informed sources said. Notably, PAI had taken over the responsibility of running FTZ as per Cabinet decision number 16/2008 that extended this responsibility as of July 18, 2007 until the laws related to it are settled.

The sources explained that since the court of cassation ordered annulling the appeal court ruling returning the National Real Estate Co that had been running FTZ according to the BOT system, PAI considered its mission as over and thus asked the ministry to take it over because its tenure over was by concluding the case.

In a letter he sent to the Ministry of Commerce Undersecretary Khaled Al-Shamali, Enezi explained that FTZ needed qualified administrative, technical, legal and

security staffs to run it properly and that those staffs were not currently available. He added that there were many obstacles that prevent FTZ administration's from running it efficiently and stressed that before taking over FTZ, the ministry had to address the Cabinet to extend PAI's responsibility for an extra year, recruit the needed engineering, administrative and legal staffs capable of running it and gradually replace FTZ employees with those from the ministry within that year.

Historically, this is the second time a gov-

ernment body has said it is not ready to run FTZ as former PAI director Barrak Al-Subaih had addressed former minister of commerce Anas Al-Saleh suggesting running FTZ by the ministry or any of the investment authority companies.

Notably, the FTZ administration recently met with the Municipality and discussed a legal dispute about the liabilities of issuing licenses at the FTZ, who was responsible for delaying them and accelerating the issue of licenses for FTZ investors. — Al-Rai

Al-Anbaa
THE ROAD TO CORRECTION

By Nermin Al-Houti

Many may make mistakes, but it is rare to have one correct the mistakes of others. This is our issue which we spoke about a month and a half ago, which is exposing many of those who have forged degrees, and that the concerned authorities will send everyone who committed this crime to the prosecution. That was our spotlight in one of our columns in the past, and today our letters go in the direction of correction.

Education Minister Badr Al-Essa said there was a committee to find all persons who are holders of forged degrees and they will be sent them to the prosecution, and apply the law on them, without having 'wasta' (connections) interfere. And true to his word, the statement was not for the media, rather it was practical, and several of those who have such degrees were sent to the prosecution and were questioned. Here we tell the minister you were right, and continue what you are doing, so we can take the road to correction.

The issue of forged certificates is an old and complicated one and accumulated with time by people who were caring for their personal interests only, and they ignored caring for the interest of Kuwait. I may differ with some opinions and means used at the ministry of education, and I focus through my words, and right is right, when I find one who repairs the crooked road, I will laud his work and make my alphabets a praise for the work because our interests are one, which is Kuwait.

A final word: Forgery is not only in certificates but in studying in the orientalist departments of some European countries. To the education minister - investigate those certificates so that we together can complete the road to correction. May you remain strong.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

FARM, HOUSE PER FAMILY AT BORDER AREA

KUWAIT: Public Authority for Agricultural Affairs and Fish Resources' (PAAAFR) Director Faisal Al-Hasawi urged Kuwait Municipality to allocate two sites that had been suggested earlier to set up a new farming community along border areas. Hasawi added that the project aims at distributing farms to citizens so as to revive those areas. Hasawi added that once allocated, PAAAFR would divide these sites into smaller agricultural 5,000 to 10,000 sq m plots to be given to Kuwaiti families and youths, allowing them to build a small house surrounded by a small farm to produce family needs.

Moreover, Hasawi said that the project had been approved by other state bodies including KOC and that he had provided the municipality with the project's blueprints. "The project aims at encouraging Kuwaiti youth and providing them with opportunities to start their own small farming projects as well as encouraging Kuwaitis to inhabit border areas," he added, pointing out that farming those lands would at least help achieve a reasonable percentage of self-sufficiency in terms of locally grown agricultural products.

"Farming those areas will also provide a green line that will improve the climate and act as a wind and sand barrier, hold the soil together and provide residence for Kuwaiti families and youth," he explained. — Al-Rai

19 SAWABER FAMILIES LEFT WITHOUT PUBLIC SERVICES

KUWAIT: The comprehensive court judge adjourned for the second time a ruling in the Sawaber owners' case until next week. Lawyer Talal Al-Obaid presented his defense in the case since the government's announcement that power and water services for 24 Kuwaiti families living in the complex will be cut, as they have ownership deeds and refuse to leave them or accept finance ministry conditions.

As the case is postponed, citizens living in complex will mark 19 days without power, as the elderly and the ill face the danger of having their medical equipment stop working. The ban on public cleaning services will increase rodents and dirt, and will spread diseases.

Despite pressure applied by those concerned in the finance ministry to hand over the flats, residents said they will refuse any conditions, adding they have the right to stay in their homes they paid for with their own money, and the government did "not send any person to negotiate and resorted to force". They asked National Assembly members to act to rescue citizens living in the complex. — Al-Qabas



KUWAIT: The Commercial Bank of Kuwait (CBK) welcomed Mohammad Saied to present him a KD 100,000 grand prize that he recently won in CBK's most recent Najma draw.

Crime

Report

Foul play suspected in child's death

KUWAIT: A four-year-old girl who was playing near a curtain in her home lost her life when she was accidentally hanged with the curtain's rope, according to preliminary investigations, but police did not rule out the possibility of foul play in the case. The child's family rushed her to the hospital, where doctors attempted to revive her, but to no avail. The medical report said the death was a result of suffocation due to hanging, and there were rope marks on her neck, which raised suspicions. The body was sent to the medical examiner.

Juvenile beaten

A care home inmate complained against supervisors and an official at Dar Al-Khansaa in Salmiya, and it was found the reason behind his beating was because the complainant had a pack of cigarettes with him. An informed source said the inmate, 15, was beaten severely by the supervisors after they learned he had cigarettes. The source said the supervisors did not follow the rules of the home, which call for gradual punishment. The source said the child filed a case at the juvenile prosecution, but the administration threatened to return him to the juvenile administration if he does not drop the complaint.

Liquor possession

Airport customs officers caught a Turkish man with a bottle of liquor and a bag of marijuana, and sent him to the Drugs Control General Department.

Abducting maids

Residency affairs detectives arrested a bedoon man who ran an office that harbored abducting domestic helpers, and found 12 men and women in violation of visa regulations. Some of them were reported abducting.

KD 300 theft

A Syrian man accused an Indian domestic helper of stealing KD 300 from his flat during cleaning, and filed a complaint at Maidan Hawally police station. The Syrian said he brought an Indian woman to clean the house because his wife was ill, but when she left, he discovered KD 300 he had kept aside for rent was missing. Detectives are working on the case. — Al-Rai

INTERIOR REASSURES PUBLIC: 'DNA TESTS RESULTS IN SAFE HANDS'

KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry assured citizens and expatriates regarding the DNA law, saying that "information of their DNA test results will be in safe hands, and will be dealt with from the minute they are collected until they are tested and stored with the highest level of secrecy."

The ministry's information and security information department commented on what was said during a program titled "DNA in the eyes of specialists" over secrets, pedigree, crimes and nationality forgery, and said there are deterrent punishments for those who divulge secrets.

The ministry included in its answer a presentation on the idea of establishing a DNA database "that goes back to 2005 and are not the result of certain terrorist events."

"Kuwait has a pioneering experience at the world level in proving identities, which it started in 1985 by using fingerprints," it said, adding that the Interior Ministry has a database of 10 million fingerprints.

It said that DNA samples will be collected by the DNA center and by a specialized committee under the interior minister and receive orders from him to show its importance and secrecy of information. It said that storing samples and analyzing them will be on an individual basis and will be dealt with through a barcode number and the civil ID number or nationality or residency permit. — Al-Rai



Syrian talks appear doomed as air strike kills dozens in market

ROUSSEFF WARNS OF INSTABILITY IN IMPEACHMENT BID

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CHAPPAQUA, NEW YORK: Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton prepares to scan her ballot at the Grafflin Elementary School yesterday. — AP

TRUMP, CLINTON EYE WINS ON HOME TURF

NEW YORK: Competing on their home turf, Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Hillary Clinton aimed to emerge victorious from primaries in New York, contests that offer big delegate hauls and an opportunity for the front-runners to push closer to their parties' nominations.

Even before the New York results were in, Clinton's campaign was declaring the year's Democratic race virtually over and warning rival Bernie Sanders that he risks damaging the eventual nominee if he keeps up harsh criticism of the former secretary of state.

Clinton campaign manager Robby Mook said Sanders faces a "close to impossible path to the nomination" and predicted New York would result in Clinton taking "an important step to the nomination." Sanders needs to win 68 percent of the remaining delegates if he hopes to clinch the Democratic nomination.

The lead-up to upcoming voting created surreal scenes in New York, a state that hadn't seen competitive primaries in decades. Candidates blanketed every corner of the state, from Manhattan and the surrounding boroughs to working class enclaves in Buffalo and Syracuse.

Hope

Trump and Clinton were hoping to win in part on the strength of their local ties. Clinton was twice elected senator from New York, while Trump was born in Queens and lives in a building bearing his name in Manhattan.

"We love this city," Trump said Monday in remarks to reporters in the lobby of Trump Tower. "You look at the other folks that are running, they couldn't care less about New York." For Trump, New York is an opportunity to rebound from a trying stretch for his campaign - and with an exclamation point. The biggest question was whether he would capture more than 50 percent of the vote statewide, which would put him in strong position to win all of the 95 GOP delegates. Trump closed his New York campaigning with an evening rally in Buffalo, where thousands packed the city's hockey arena to catch a glimpse of the billionaire businessman. A big win for Trump is crucial if he hopes to clinch the nomination before the party's convention in July. If the race isn't settled by then, he faces a very real prospect of

losing to Ted Cruz, whose campaign is mastering the complicated process of lining up individual delegates who could shift their support to the Texas senator after the first round of convention balloting.

Cruz, who infamously panned Trump's "New York values" earlier in the primary, was bracing for a tough showing. He was already looking ahead on the primary calendar, holding events in Pennsylvania, which votes next week. Clinton spent her final hours of campaigning in New York trying to drive up turnout among women and minorities, her most ardent supporters.

Voting begins

Yesterday morning, Clinton and her husband, former President Bill Clinton, cast their votes at a local polling place in their adopted home town of Chappaqua. "I love New York and this has been a joy during the last two weeks to be here," Clinton said.

Clinton's campaign has cast New York as a make-or-break moment for the Democratic race. A loss here would be a devastating political blow. But a big win would bolster her delegate lead over Sanders and put her closer to becoming the first woman nominated for president by a major political party.

Sanders has stayed stubbornly close, rattling off a string of wins in recent primaries and caucuses. But unless he can topple Clinton in a state like New York, he faces increasingly limited opportunities. While polling shows Clinton with a comfortable lead in New York, Sanders held out hope for a closer race. "This is a campaign on the move," Sanders shouted to a crowd of thousands gathered along the waterfront in Queens. "This is a movement getting the establishment very, very nervous."

Among Democrats, Clinton has 1,758 delegates to Sanders' 1,076. Those totals include both pledged delegates from primaries and caucuses and super delegates, the party insiders who can back the candidate of their choice regardless of how their state votes. It takes 2,383 to win the Democratic nomination. Trump leads the GOP race with 756 delegates, ahead of Cruz with 559 and Kasich with 144. Securing the GOP nomination requires 1,237. —AP

COUNTRIES LOOK TO DRAW EXPATRIATE CASH WITH 'DIASPORA BONDS'

LONDON: A growing roster of developing states are turning to their compatriots abroad to raise cash by marketing "diaspora bonds", a funding strategy successfully pioneered by India and Israel but sometimes tricky to imitate.

Some 250 million people, around 3 percent of the world population, live outside their native countries, according to World Bank data from 2013. They are an important source of funding for their homelands: last year they sent home around \$440 billion - three times more than global development aid.

Cash raised by governments directly by marketing securities to their overseas citizens represents just a tiny fraction of that, but looks set to grow, judging by a number of recent announcements. Egypt has announced debt certificates denominated in dollars and euros to ease hard currency shortages. Kosovo, which estimates a third of people of Kosovan descent live abroad, proposed issuing bonds for expatriates last month. Sri Lanka discussed such bonds last year, and Nigeria has tried to revive plans for a diaspora issue after naming Goldman Sachs and Stanbic as advisors on a proposal in 2014.

But not all such efforts succeed. Many countries overestimate the generosity of their natives abroad. One high-profile example was Greece, which proved unable to raise a hoped-for \$3 billion from the million-strong Greek community in the United States at the height of its debt crisis in

2011. Ethiopia's 2009 bond to fund a hydro-electric dam failed chiefly because it could not convince investors it would repay the debt. Some also objected to the project on environmental grounds.

In 2009 and 2010, Nepal raised a fraction of its target when it offered yields below 10 percent over five years on rupiah bonds - well below local rates at the time. Moldova also decided not to issue diaspora bonds, concluding that Moldovans abroad who were willing to invest in its currency would probably prefer local bank accounts that pay 25 percent interest.

"Many governments need to really look at themselves in the mirror, as to what has been their historic relationship with their diaspora and use that reality in their calculation when they offer investments," said Liesl Riddle, a George Washington University professor, who has studied diaspora financing.

The lure of a diaspora as an investment pool is clear. Investors with a personal link to a country are often happier than other outsiders to take risks in the local currency, and at lower yields, says Dilip Ratha, manager of the World Bank's Migration and Remittances Unit, who advises governments on diaspora funding.

They can also be more willing stick around in a crisis than the big funds that dominate emerging market debt, he added. — Reuters

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JERUSALEM: Israeli Yosef Haim Ben David, center, convicted in the killing of 16-year-old Palestinian Mohammed Abu Khdeir, arrives to a court yesterday. — AP

SYRIAN TALKS APPEAR DOOMED AS AIR STRIKE KILLS DOZENS IN MARKET

'ESCALATION WILL START'

GENEVA/BEIRUT: Syria's fragile peace talks appeared doomed yesterday after air strikes killed around 40 people in a crowded vegetable market in rebel territory, with the opposition saying a truce was finished and it would keep away from negotiations indefinitely.

France described the bloodshed as "another massacre". A monitoring group said it believed the strike on the market in Maarat al-Numan in Idlib province was the deadliest single attack since a partial ceasefire took effect on Feb. 27.

A rescue worker said warplanes had simultaneously struck crowded markets in two towns in Idlib killing at least 38 people in Maarat al-Numan and 10 others in nearby Kafr Nubl. "We have more than 20 cars that have been moving dead and injured to hospitals in the area," said

to negotiations, although it is reluctant to accept blame for the collapse by walking out altogether. It was not immediately clear whose aircraft were responsible for the strikes. Both Syria's own air force and that of its Russian allies have been operating despite the truce.

Damascus and Moscow say they are only attacking territory held by Islamist fighters who are not covered by the ceasefire, but opposition groups dismiss this, saying the government and its Russian allies use the Islamists to justify wider attacks. The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights which monitors the conflict through a network of sources on the ground, said 37 people were killed in Maarat al-Numan and seven in Kafr Nubl. Many of the injured were in a serious condition and the death toll was

French envoy Franck Gallet said in Geneva. The Syrian military could not immediately be reached for comment, and state news agency SANA made no mention of air strikes in Idlib.

As fighting raged and air strikes on rebel-held areas intensified, the opposition urged foreign states to supply them with the means to defend themselves, a thinly veiled reference to the anti-aircraft weapons long sought by insurgents.

US President Barack Obama told Russia's Vladimir Putin in a phone call on Monday that Syria was starting to fray more rapidly. The two Cold War era super-powers are joint sponsors of the peace process and ceasefire, after intensifying diplomacy following Russia's decision last year to join the war, an intervention that tipped momentum Assad's way.

The Geneva talks aim to end a war that has killed more than 250,000 people, created the world's worst refugee crisis, allowed for the rise of the Islamic State group and drawn in regional and major powers. Damascus blames the rebels for breaking the cessation of hostilities. Chief Syrian government negotiator Bashar Ja'afari said his team was pushing for an expanded government as a solution to the war, an idea rejected by the armed opposition which has fought for five years to oust Assad.

With fighting reported across much of northwest Syria yesterday, both sides were obdurate. "Our mandate in Geneva stops at forming a national unity government," Ja'afari told Reuters. "We have no mandate whatsoever either to address the constitutional issue meaning establishing a new constitution or addressing parliamentary elections or addressing the fate of the presidency. It's not the business of anybody in Geneva. It happens when the Syrian people decide," he said in an interview.

Assad is "dreaming"

Riad Hijab, chief coordinator of the main opposition HNC bloc, said he would leave Geneva although experts would stay to discuss certain issues. There was no chance of returning to the main talks while the government broke the truce, blocked humanitarian access and ignored the issue of detainees.

Clearly angry, Hijab dismissed any suggestion that Assad could stay in power, saying he was "dreaming". Major powers were paralysed and needed to reevaluate the truce and the humanitarian situation, Hijab said.

Another opposition figure made clear the suspension of talks was indefinite. "There is no date, the date ... is the implementation of matters on the ground, and likewise the correction of the path of negotiations. All the while that does not happen, the time period will remain open," the opposition's George Sabra said.

The opposition also had "big complaints" about US policy which he said sought to carry on talks "without us obtaining anything real", he said. He called on international powers to supply Syrians with the means to defend themselves.

Syrian forces backed by Russian warplanes launched a counter-attack against rebels in the northwestern province of Latakia, a rebel group and the Observatory reported.

Targets included towns and villages where the truce agreement had brought about a lull in fighting. Fighters predicted more bloodshed. "Let's be realistic. The escalation will start," said Bashar al-Zoubi, a prominent rebel leader.

Ahmed Al-Seoud, the head of another rebel group, said he hoped for more military support from Assad's foreign enemies. Rockets fired by insurgents killed three children in Kefraya, a Shi'ite town loyal to the government, the Observatory said. State media said the dead were members of one family.

Fighting in Latakia focused on areas where insurgent groups had launched an attack on government forces on Monday, and where battles had often erupted despite the cessation of hostilities. "The regime is trying to storm the area, with the participation of Russian helicopters and Sukhoi (warplanes)," said Fadi Ahmad, spokesman for the First Coastal rebel group in the area. The Observatory said fighting had raged since morning.

Government air strikes were also reported in northern areas of Homs province under rebel control. — Reuters

COURT CONVICTS ISRAELI IN PALESTINIAN TEENAGER'S 2014 MURDER

JERUSALEM: A Jerusalem district court has convicted the main suspect in the July 2014 murder of a Palestinian teenager. The court convicted 30-year-old Yosef Haim Ben David yesterday of murder, rejecting a plea that he was not responsible for his actions. Ben David is to be sentenced next month and could face life in prison.

Two other Israelis have already been sentenced for their roles in the murder of

16-year-old Mohammed Abu Khdeir in revenge for the death of three abducted Israeli teens earlier that summer. The Israelis snatched Khdeir from an east Jerusalem neighborhood, drove him to a Jerusalem forest and burned him to death. The gruesome killing sparked deep outrage in Israel and was part of a series of events that helped spark the Gaza war later that summer. — AP

KERRY, ZARIF MEET OVER SANCTIONS COMPLAINTS

UNITED NATIONS: US Secretary of State John Kerry and Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif met behind closed doors yesterday following Iranian complaints that the United States isn't fulfilling last year's landmark nuclear deal and providing adequate sanctions relief. The two ministers shook hands before the meeting at UN headquarters started with Kerry standing in front of the Iranian flag and Zarif before the American flag - where small signs on the floor signaled they should stand. Kerry greeted the media but neither he nor Zarif made any comments.

Zarif said Saturday that he would ask the United States to ease restrictions on non-American banks doing business with the Islamic Republic, saying it would help reassure Iranians over the nuclear deal. He said the US "is required to implement its commitments in banking cooperation". A day earlier, the head of Iran's central bank, Valiollah Seif, accused the US and the European Union of failing to honor the nuclear agreement by keeping Iran locked out of the international financial system.

The White House, Treasury and the State Department have all said the United States has done what is required of it. Yet, officials say the Obama administration is considering easing or formally clarifying financial

restrictions that prevent US dollars from being used in transactions that enable business with Iran. The officials have ruled out granting Iran access to the US financial system or direct access to the dollar, but they have left the door open to other steps to encourage trade that is now legal under the nuclear deal.

In a speech Monday night, Kerry defended the nuclear agreement, in which Iran curbed its atomic program in exchange for sanctions relief, to the pro-Israel, pro-peace advocacy group J Street that supports the deal. But his comments may have put a price tag on Iran's anger over sanctions relief. "Despite the skeptics' most dire predictions, we are in a place that some people thought was unimaginable and others unacceptable," Kerry said. "Do you remember the debate over how much money Iran was going to get?" he asked.

Kerry said some presidential candidates said it was \$155 billion, which was a mistake, and others thought it would be about \$100 billion. "We calculated it to be about \$55 billion, when you really take a hard look at the economy and what is happening," Kerry said. "Guess what, folks? You know how much they have received to date as I stand here tonight? About \$3 billion. So what we said to people was true." — AP



MAARET AL-NUMAN, SYRIA: A Syrian child receives treatment at a makeshift hospital following an air strike on a vegetable market yesterday. — AFP

Ahmad Sheikho, a member of the civil defense corps, a rescue service operating in opposition-held territory. The air strike, accompanied by intense fighting in other areas, appears to leave the fragile six-week-old ceasefire in tatters. The truce was brokered by the United States and Russia to pave way for the first peace talks attended by the warring factions since fighting began five years ago.

Those talks, taking place under UN auspices in Geneva, also appear to have collapsed this week. The opposition says it has called a "pause"

expected to rise, it said. Asked if it was the deadliest attack recorded since the ceasefire began, the Observatory's head Rami Abdulrahman said: "I believe so."

"Another massacre"

Ahmed al-Seoud, head of the 13th Division, a foreign-backed faction fighting under the umbrella of the Free Syrian Army, also gave a death toll of around 40 in the larger attack and said 80 people were wounded. "We learned today there had been another massacre this morning,"

YEMEN FIGHTING KILLS 13 AFTER TALKS DELAYED

MARIB: Clashes between Yemeni loyalist forces and rebels have killed 13 fighters, military sources said yesterday, after UN-brokered peace talks were delayed with warring parties trading blame for truce violations.

The fighting erupted late Monday in Marib province, east of the rebel-held Yemeni capital Sanaa, despite pledges by all warring parties to commit to a ceasefire that came into effect on April 11. Five soldiers loyal to President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi and eight rebels were killed in the clashes which continued intermittently through yesterday, the pro-government military sources said.

They said the fighting erupted when the Iran-backed Houthi rebels and their allies tried to capture positions held by loyalist troops. AFP could not independently confirm the toll. Sporadic fighting was also reported in other areas, including Nahm northeast of Sanaa and in the southwestern province of Ta'ez.

Pro-Hadi chief-of-staff General Mohammed Ali al-Maqdishi accused the rebels of "not respecting" the April 11 ceasefire which he said his forces were committed to. "The truce is still holding based on orders from our political leadership," said Al-Maqdishi. The rebels meanwhile accused loyalist forces of launching attacks and

dispatching reinforcements to several provinces, in a statement on their sabanews.net website. They also said warplanes belonging to the Saudi-led coalition, which has intervened militarily in support of loyalists since March last year, flew sorties over several areas of Yemen despite the ceasefire.

On Monday, the Yemeni government and rebels were due to start a new round of peace talks in Kuwait but they were delayed after the insurgents failed to show up over alleged Saudi truce violations. In a Facebook statement yesterday, rebel spokesman Mohammed Abdulsalam said "we affirm our continued commitment to dialogue... and this is why our demand from the first day was for talks to be held in an atmosphere of calm, peace, and stability." "But unfortunately, since April 11, the aggression hadn't stopped and the air strikes have continued on several areas," he said. UN envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed and government representatives were still in Kuwait on Tuesday, according to officials close to the government delegation.

Previous attempts at peace talks including a failed round in January have been unable to stop Yemen's conflict, which the United Nations says has killed more than 6,400 people and forced almost 2.8 million from their homes. — AFP



NEW YORK: US Secretary of State John Kerry (right) poses for a photo opportunity prior to a meeting with Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif yesterday at the United Nations. — AFP

YEMENI REBELS HOLD JEW OVER SMUGGLING OUT OLD TORAH SCROLL

SANAA: Yemeni security officials say a member of the country's Jewish minority has been detained over allegations he helped smuggle an 800-year-old scroll to Israel.

The officials say Yahia Youssef Yaish is being interrogated by the intelligence service run by Shiite Houthi rebels, who control the country's capital, Sanaa. The officials also said yesterday that three airport employees have also been detained over

the same allegations. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to speak to the media.

In Israel, Avi Mayer, the spokesman for the Jewish Agency, confirmed the Torah scroll was smuggled out of Yemen with a rabbi and 18 Yemeni Jews who left to Israel last month. Yemeni intellectuals issued a statement demanding Yaish's release and describing allegations against him as "fabricated." — AP

FRENCH LEADER SAYS JORDAN FACES 'REAL THREAT' FROM IS GROUP

AMMAN: French President Francois Hollande says Jordan is facing a "real threat" from Islamic State extremists and that his country's military cooperation with the kingdom is "exceptional".

Hollande spoke yesterday during a meeting with Jordan's King Abdullah II in the capital of Amman. The French leader also says it is "very worrying" that indirect peace talks between Syria's government and opposition

have been suspended. Hollande says this could potentially lead to renewed fighting, more airstrikes and greater civilian suffering.

Syria's civil war, now in its sixth year, has contributed to the rise of Islamic State, which controls large areas of Syria and Iraq. Both countries neighbor Jordan. Abdullah told the visitor that Jordan stands "shoulder to shoulder" with France, which has also been struck by IS extremists' attacks. — AP



AMMAN: French President Francois Hollande, right, shakes the hand of Amman Mayor Aql Biltaji after landing in Jordan yesterday. — AP



BUFFALO: Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks during a campaign stop at the First Niagara Center on Monday. — AP

TRUMP MUST HAVE BEEN THINKING OF SLURPEE

BUFFALO: Donald Trump made an unfortunate slip-of-the-tongue while campaigning in Buffalo, New York, at his final campaign rally before the big-prize primary.

Trump was about to deliver prepared remarks lauding New York values when he mistakenly mentioned the name of a popular convenience store chain in place of 9/11.

He told the crowd: "It's very close to my heart because I was down there, and I watched our police and our firemen down at 7-Eleven, down at the World Trade Center right after it came down, and I saw the greatest people I've ever seen in action." Trump has repeatedly invoked the September 11 attacks as he's campaigned across his home state. — AP

CASTRO KEEPS TOP JOB AS CUBA HOLDS BACK ON LEADERSHIP

HAVANA: Cuban President Raul Castro will serve a second term as head of the Communist Party and others in power for decades also kept their jobs yesterday, in a sign political change will be slow despite economic reform and detente with the United States.

The Communist Party wants avoid any chaotic collapse as it wrestles with an inevitable transition from the generation of leaders who fought in the 1959 revolution and the modernization of the Soviet-style command economy.

Castro, 84, had proposed age limits and term limits for top leaders as the party gathered for the start of a four-day congress over the weekend, raising expectations septuagenarian and octogenarian veterans would begin to step aside. But he also made clear that such changes would not be rushed. At the end of the congress, the first in five years, the Communist Party said Castro had been re-elected as first secretary, with Jose Ramon Machado Ventura, 85, re-elected as second secretary.

Castro is seen as a pragmatist who built Cuba's army and brought efficient management to some of the military's powerful companies during long years in the shadow of his brother, former President Fidel Castro, 89, who ruled the country until 2008.

Castro's orders

Raul Castro has ordered market reforms to the economy and oversaw the thaw with the United States that led Barack Obama to become the first US president to visit Cuba in 88 years. But since that historic visit last month, the Castro brothers have hardened anti-US rhetoric and raised political defenses out of a stated concern Washington plans to topple them.



Fidel is now frail but attended the congress yesterday as a delegate. Photos in state media showed him dressed in a blue tracksuit jacket, apparently joining in a rendition of the left-wing anthem The Internationale.

He was given a standing ovation and delivered a speech about the danger nuclear weapons would wipe out the human race, like "the dinosaurs." He also spoke about climate change and global population growth. Machado Ventura fought alongside Fidel and Ernesto "Che" Guevara in their rebellion against a US-backed government in the 1950s. He is seen as an ideological hard-liner who has sought to slow a move to market economics.

In a sign of the secrecy with which the congress has been conducted, the closing speeches and results of the country's most important political event were not broadcast live on state television, which instead showed a soap-opera. Castro said on Saturday that his proposal of 60 as the maximum age for joining the party's central committee with a limit of two five-year terms would allow the young to be promoted more quickly in the party - key to securing the relevance of an institution that has suffered falling membership in recent years.

He also said the party should represent more women and Afro-Cubans. The top leadership is currently overwhelmingly white and male. While top posts were unchanged, the party brought in five mostly younger faces to the powerful political bureau. The new members included three women. Two were of mixed Afro-Cuban descent.

Castro has called for sweeping changes in the management of Cuba's economy and wants top leaders to retire at 70. But he said the next five years would be for transition and such rules would not be fully applied until then. The congress is not due to reconvene until 2021.

Castro steps down as Cuba's president in 2018 and it is not yet clear whether he will stay on as party leader for the full five-year term. Younger faces in senior roles include Miguel Diaz-Canel, 55, who as first vice president of the country is widely seen as Raul Castro's successor. He was re-elected to a senior position in the party but was not promoted. — Reuters

HOUSTON RECOVERING FROM YET ANOTHER DEADLY FLOOD

AT LEAST FIVE PEOPLE KILLED

HOUSTON: As more than a foot of rain deluged the nation's fourth-largest city, inundating homes, shutting down major highways and leaving at least five people dead, Houston's mayor said there was no immediate solution.

Heavy flooding has become nearly an annual rite of passage in the practically sea-level city, where experts have long warned of the potential for catastrophe. "I regret anyone whose home is flooded again," said Sylvester Turner, the city's mayor, on Monday. "There's nothing I can say that's going to ease your frustration. We certainly can't control the weather." "A lot of rain coming in a very short period of time, there's nothing you can do," he added. Flash flooding and a 50 percent chance of more were possible yesterday, a day after nearly 18 inches fell in 24 hours. The National Weather Service had the area under a flash flood watch through Wednesday morning.

Scores of subdivisions were flooded and most schools remained closed although the city itself was returning to normal. Municipal offices reopened yesterday and by mid-morning, less than 10,000 CenterPoint Energy customers were without power, an improvement from 24 hours earlier when electricity outages topped 100,000. Houston's Metropolitan Transit Authority resumed service and most highways within the city were open.

Outside the city and into the suburbs of northwest Harris County, runoff from Monday's rains forced creeks over their banks



HOUSTON: Darius Simon, second from left, helps his mother Carol, evacuate her flooded apartment complex along with his brother Dominique and son, Isaac Hernandez on Monday. — AP

and forced more people to evacuate their homes overnight. "It's going to have to trickle its way through the city of Houston and to Galveston Bay," Francisco Sanchez, a county spokesman said.

In addition to its location, Houston's "gumbo" soft soil, fast-growing population and building boom that has turned empty pastures into housing developments all over the city's suburbs and exurbs make it vulnerable

to high waters. Harris County has seen a 30 percent jump in population since 2000. Its surrounding counties have almost grown more than 10 percent since 2000, according to the Greater Houston Partnership, a business group. Some of the resulting developments include adequate greenspace for water runoff, but not all of them do, said Philip Bedient, an engineering professor at Rice University. "Could we have engineered our way out of

this?" Bedient said. "Only if we started talking about alterations 35 or 40 years ago." Samuel Brody, director of the Environmental Planning & Sustainability Research Unit at Texas A&M University, last year called Houston "the No. 1 city in America to be injured and die in a flood." Rainstorms last year over Memorial Day weekend caused major flooding that required authorities to rescue 20 people, most of them drivers, from high water. Drivers abandoned at least 2,500 vehicles, and more than 1,000 homes were damaged in the rain.

The year before, flash flooding in Houston and suburban counties left cars trapped on major highways. Those storms still pale in comparison to the devastation wreaked by Hurricane Ike in 2008 and Tropical Storm Allison in 2001. Allison left behind \$5 billion in damages and flooded parts of downtown and the Texas Medical Center, which sits near the Brays Bayou, a key watershed.

The National Weather Service's chief meteorologist for Houston, Jeff Evans, said Monday's soaking and the 2015 Memorial Day deluge were the second- and third-biggest rain events on record after Allison, which dumped more than 30 inches of rain on parts of the sprawling city over two days.

Asked if manmade climate change could be a factor, he said the data is unclear but that the El Nino weather phenomenon, caused by heightened surface temperatures in the eastern Pacific, could "be a player in why we've had so many big rain events this year." — AP

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SERBIA DETERMINED TO JOIN EU DESPITE BLOC'S 'PROBLEMS'

BELGRADE: Serbia is determined to join European Union despite the bloc's "problems" but will do nothing to jeopardize its good relations with Russia, Foreign Minister Ivica Dacic said.

Dacic is also deputy prime minister in Serbia's ruling coalition that is expected to win four more years in power in Sunday's general election. The government opened negotiations on EU membership last December, and hopes to complete them by 2019, but opinion polls show Serbs are increasingly sceptical about the benefits of joining given the painful economic restructuring required.

Years of euro zone crisis and Britain's June referendum on whether to leave the bloc have also clouded the EU's image. "Clearly, the EU has problems. There's no international institution without problems in its functioning," Dacic told Reuters in an interview on Monday evening.

"Serbia is neither Norway nor Switzerland to say it does not need the EU. (Brexit) is a danger to the EU, not to our determination to

enter the EU," he said. Serbia's ties with Russia, with which it shares Slav and Orthodox Christian history, and its link with rising power China, will not be harmed by plans for accession to the EU, Dacic said.

Serbia relies heavily on Russia for gas and sees Russia as an important market for its agricultural exports. It holds military exercises with both NATO countries and Russia and has no plans to join NATO.

In 2014, Serbia refused to join Western sanctions imposed on Moscow over its annexation of Ukraine's Crimea and its backing of pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine, despite EU pressure to align its foreign policy.

"Serbia has no intention of making any moves that would jeopardize its EU path, but neither will it make any moves that could jeopardize ties with our traditional friends, including Russia," Dacic said. The 28-nation EU is Serbia's biggest trading partner and investor and two former Yugoslav republics - Croatia and Slovenia - are already EU members. — Reuters

GREECE EXPECTS EUROSTAT DATA TO HELP CONCLUDE BAILOUT REVIEW

ATHENS: The Greek government said yesterday that European data this week will confirm it performed better than expected last year and help conclude a review of its reforms, adding that it would only implement more measures if it missed its 2018 targets. A successful conclusion to the review of Athens' reforms and fiscal progress under an international bailout agreed last summer would unlock further aid that it needs to repay its debts and unpaid state bills.

The process has dragged on for months due partly to a rift among its international lenders over how the recession-hit economy will fare and whether it needs debt relief, and also due to Athens' resistance to imposing additional unpopular measures. The European Union's statistics agency will say in a report on Thursday that Athens was in the black last year, spokeswoman Olga Gerovasili said.

"The report to be released on Thursday will confirm a larger primary budget surplus compared to what had been initially projected," she told reporters. "The positive developments ... will be the basis for the conclusion of the review." The primary budget in 2015 had been expected to show a deficit equivalent to 0.25 percent of the country's gross domestic product, according to the bailout.

Talks between Greek ministers and

inspectors of official lenders - the EU Commission, European Stability Mechanism, European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund - were set to resume again in Athens yesterday.

Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras hopes that concluding the review will send a positive signal to markets and lure back investors, while a debt relief agreement will convince Greeks that their sacrifices are paying off after six years of belt-tightening. EU institutions believe Greece could achieve a primary surplus in 2018 of 3.5 percent of GDP. The IMF, which will decide whether to co-finance the bailout after the review and in light of how much debt relief the country receives, says Greece will miss that target unless it implements more measures.

Gerovasili said that the adoption of additional measures now would pose an economic but not a political problem for the government, which has a thin parliamentary majority. But, she said, Athens would be willing to go that route at a later stage if the 2018 target were to look unattainable.

"If the 2018 fiscal targets are not met, of course we would be obliged to take some extra measures to reach them," she said. In an effort to speed up the talks, Athens unveiled a bill on pension and income tax reforms yesterday, aiming at savings of 2 percent of gross domestic product. — Reuters



PARIS: Members of the elite RAID police force listen to French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve yesterday. — AP

FRANCE RESHUFFLES POLICE FORCES TO AVOID RIVALRIES IN CRISIS

PARIS: France is reorganizing its police special forces, responding to allegations that rivalries between the three major branches of law enforcement hampered the response to the attacks in November.

French Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve, who

has promised a response time of 20 minutes nationwide, confirmed that elite intervention forces will be deployed in all major cities. The announcement comes ahead of an exercise at Paris' Montparnasse station that will involve forces from the police, gendarmes and a separate SWAT-like unit known as the

BRI. The exercise is intended to mimic a coordinated response to a mass killing like the Nov. 13 attacks that left 130 dead. The forces have traditionally been centered in Paris, and authorities warned that France was ill-prepared outside the capital as the Euro 2016 soccer championships approach. — AP

ROUSSEFF WARNS OF INSTABILITY IN IMPEACHMENT BID 'SHE HEARD MISOGYNIST COMMENTS'

BRASÍLIA: Yesterday President Dilma Rousseff warned that the impeachment process against her will harm Brazil's stability and suggested that sexism played a part in efforts to oust its first female head of state.

The 68-year-old leftist leader pressed her case against what she calls a "coup" attempt, insisting that there was no legal basis to remove her from office. "This will not bring political stability. Why will it not bring political stability? Because it breaks the foundation of democracy," Rousseff said at a news conference with foreign journalists.

Rousseff is close to losing her job as the Senate prepares to schedule a vote on whether to open an impeachment trial, expected in mid-May, after the lower house of Congress overwhelmingly approved the measure on Sunday.

The political crisis is among a slew of challenges besetting Latin America's biggest economy: A deep recession, a massive corruption scandal at state oil giant Petrobras, the fight against the Zika virus and preparations for the Rio Olympics in August.

When asked whether the fact that she's Brazil's first woman president influenced the impeachment process, Rousseff said: "I believe that it is a big component." She said she heard misogynist comments from a businessman suggesting that a woman under pressure can be "hysterical and unbalanced." "They're not satisfied that I'm not nervous, hysterical or unbalanced," she said, recalling that she survived torture as a member of a guerrilla group under the military dictatorship in the 1970s.

"There's a level of great prejudice against women mixed up in all of this. Great prejudice," she said, adding that she faced "a treatment that certainly would not be given to a male president." Looking tired, Rousseff struck an emotional tone when she said it was "lamentable" that lower house deputy Jair Bolsonaro—a rightwing populist who praises the military dictatorship of 1964-1985 — dedicated his pro-impeachment vote on Sunday to Carlos Alberto Brilhante Ustra, a colonel accused of overseeing torture during the regime.



BRASÍLIA: Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff speaks during a news conference with international press at Planalto Palace yesterday. — AFP

Senate eyes vote

While Rousseff struck back at critics, the Senate was to open formalities by reading the 12,000 pages of the impeachment papers alleging that her administration took unauthorized state loans to mask government budget holes during an election year. The president denied committing any crime, saying that her government used accounting practices that are common in other countries and were used by her predecessors.

Senators must now agree on the composition of a special impeachment committee. A vote on launching the trial is expected to take place by May 11. A tally by the daily Folha de S.Paulo showed that 48 senators are in favor of impeachment, more than the simple majority needed in the 81-member chamber to start proceedings.

Rousseff would then be suspended for six months during the trial. She would be replaced by Vice President Michel Temer, a former ally of the centrist PMDB party who turned against her.

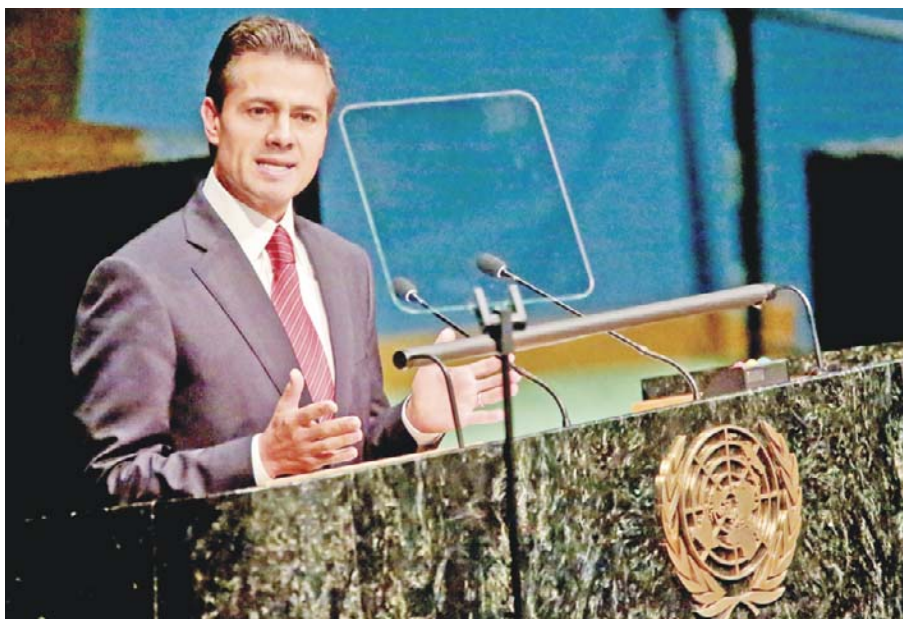
A two-thirds majority will be needed to permanently remove her from office, which would leave Temer at the helm until her term ends in late 2018.

Rousseff slams 'conspiracy'

This "is an attempt at circumventing elections by a group that would not be able to get itself elected," Rousseff said. She singled out Temer as being behind part of the "conspiracy" and noted that the lawmaker who launched the impeachment process, House Speaker Eduardo Cunha, faces corruption charges.

Both men are members of the PMDB, a former coalition partner which defected from Rousseff and threw its weight behind the impeachment process.

Rousseff said that despite the upheaval the Olympics, due to be hosted in Rio de Janeiro in August, will go well. "I am certain these will be the best Olympic Games in the country and beyond-in the whole world," she said. — AFP



UNITED NATIONS: Enrique Pena Nieto, President of the United Mexican States, addresses the UN special session on global drug policy yesterday. — AP

COUNTRIES CLASH OVER DEATH PENALTY AT UN

UNITED NATIONS: The first UN special session to address global drug policy in nearly 20 years bristled with tension yesterday over the use of the death penalty for drug-related offenses, as countries wrestled over whether to emphasize criminalization and punishment or health and human rights.

The outcome document adopted by member states included no criticism of the death penalty, saying only that countries should ensure that punishments are commensurate with the crimes. "Disproportional penalties ... create vicious cycles of marginalization and further crime," Mexican President Enrique Pena Nieto told the gathering. He also called for the decriminalization of marijuana for medical and scientific purposes and said the international community's responses to drug issues is "frankly, insufficient."

He said Mexico in the coming days would announce specific drug policies with an emphasis on health and human rights. Indonesia, which last year executed 14 people, mostly foreigners, convicted of drug-related crimes amid an international outcry, defended its stance yesterday, saying the death penalty is not prohibited under international law.

Prior to this week's three-day meeting, Democratic presidential candidates Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders, rock star Sting and hundreds of others sent an open to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon letter saying the war on drugs has failed.

It said that for decades, governments have focused resources on repressing drug use, resulting in the imprisonment of millions of people, mostly the poor and ethnic minorities, and mostly for non-violent offenses.

The letter's signers, including former presidents of Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Switzerland and others, joined a growing number of government officials and drug policy analysts calling for a shift in global drug policy from emphasizing criminalization to health and human rights. Hundreds of government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations and individuals from civil society are attending the General Assembly special session at UN headquarters.

The last special session on the topic in 1998 ended with the lofty but unattainable goal of ridding the planet of illegal drugs by 2008. On the non-medical use of drugs, the outcome document adopted yesterday says countries should "develop and implement countermeasures and supportive public health, education and socioeconomic strategies to effectively address and counter the non-medical use and misuse of pharmaceuticals that contain narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, while ensuring their availability for legitimate purposes."

Last month, The Global Commission on Drug Policy - whose members include former presidents of Mexico and Brazil, as well as former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Virgin Group founder Richard Branson - said in a statement that discussions drafting the outcome document adopted yesterday relied too heavily on an outdated approach that emphasizes criminal justice and prohibition.

The group argued that the emphasis should instead be on alternative approaches including abolishing capital punishment for drug-related offenses and a focus on treatment. — AP

BODY OF MISSING FLORIDA PRIEST FOUND IN GEORGIA

ST. AUGUSTINE: The weeklong search for a missing Florida priest ended Monday evening in rural east Georgia when authorities found what they believe to be the body of the Rev. Rene Wayne Robert.

St. Johns County Sheriff David Shoar made the announcement Monday night in St. Augustine, where Robert, 71, was a senior priest for the Diocese of St. Augustine. The body was found near Waynesboro, Georgia, after the man arrested while driving Robert's car led police there. The body still needs to be positively identified by authorities in Georgia. But Shoar said during a late-night news conference in St. Augustine all the evidence collected indicates it is Robert.

The motive for the killing remains unclear. Law enforcement authorities in Aiken, South Carolina, tracked down Steven James Murray, 28, following a manhunt. He was driving Robert's Toyota Corolla, which the sheriff said Murray had driven back and forth between Florida and South Carolina.

Murray was arrested on April 13 and returned to St. Augustine two days later on charges of fleeing and attempting to elude law enforcement officers and on being a fugitive. He was being held without bond in the St. Johns County Jail yesterday.

Officials say Murray likely will face additional charges in Georgia, where Robert's body was found. "I'm sure he's going to be charged in the very near future with first-degree murder," Shoar said. Sheriff's officials in Burke County, Georgia, didn't immediately return a telephone message from The Associated Press yesterday. — AP



OGGERSHEIM, GERMANY: Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban arrives for a visit to former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in Kohl's house yesterday. — AP

HUNGARY PM VISITS GERMAN EX-LEADER KOHL AMID MIGRANT CRISIS

BERLIN: Hungary's prime minister, one of the strongest European critics of Chancellor Angela Merkel's approach to the migrant crisis, has made a politically charged visit to her predecessor and one-time mentor, Helmut Kohl.

Viktor Orban traveled to Kohl's home in southwestern Germany yesterday for what Kohl's office termed a private visit between friends. Still, it has been widely interpreted

in Germany as a swipe by Kohl at Merkel over her relatively liberal approach to welcoming refugees.

A joint statement by Kohl's office and the Hungarian embassy said that Europe "cannot be the new home for millions of people in need worldwide."

However, it added that Kohl and Orban don't oppose Merkel's efforts to resolve the crisis. — AP

CHINA, INDIA MOVE CLOSER TO HAVING A MILITARY HOTLINE

BEIJING: China and India are moving towards setting up a military hotline, Chinese state media reported, with a border dispute and tensions over terror sanctions still lingering over relations between the Asian giants.

China "reacted positively" to the idea of setting up a hotline, the official Xinhua news agency cited Defence Minister Chang Wanquan as saying Monday during talks with his Indian counterpart.

The world's two most populous nations are jockeying for regional influence in Asia and their relationship is coloured by territorial disputes at both ends of the Himalayas. In 1962 they fought a border war over the northeastern Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, parts of which Beijing claims as South Tibet. Tensions rose in 2014 when hundreds of Chinese troops allegedly moved into mountainous areas of Ladakh under

Indian control, as China's President Xi Jinping arrived in India on a landmark visit. Xinhua late Monday cited Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar as saying India "hopes to beef up bilateral exchanges and cooperation (with China) in all sectors". Parrikar repeated a call for clear demarcation of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) between the two countries, Indian news agency PTI reported. But it added that China "expressed reservations

over such a move" which was proposed last year when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited China.

India reacted angrily earlier this month after China blocked its request to add Masood Azhar, head of the Pakistani militant group Jaish-e-Mohammad, to a UN sanctions blacklist.

China enjoys close relations with India's arch-rival Pakistan, and is pursuing a multi-billion-dollar slew of infrastruc-

ture projects there. In a bid to gain Chinese investment, Islamabad said in January it was considering upgrading the constitutional status of a northern region which is also claimed by India.

PTI reported that Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj asked Beijing Monday to "review" its position on Azhar, who is accused of masterminding an attack on the Pathankot airbase in the northern state of Punjab. — AFP

US DRONE STRIKE KILLS 5 MILITANTS IN AFGHANISTAN

ISLAMABAD: At least five militants of the so-called Islamic State (IS) have been killed in a US-led drone strike in Afghanistan's eastern Nangarhar province, said officials yesterday. Nangarhar Governor's spokesman Attaullah Khogyani in a statement said that the drone struck a house in the Shadal locality of Achin district in Nangarhar, where the fighters were hiding.

He confirmed that five militants belonging to so-called Islamic State were

killed in the drone strike. Moreover, Afghan security forces launched a clearing operation in the Ghanikhel district of the province against the militants. Around 13 villages had been cleared of insurgents as a result of the operation, Khogyani added.

The drone strike came at a time when Afghan forces are struggling to control the overall security situation of the country after NATO/ISAF forces left the country in December 2013. — KUNA

INDIAN PROTESTERS CLASH WITH POLICE

BENGALURU: Thousands of Indian garment workers angry with the government over changes to their pension funds clashed with police in the information technology hub of Bengaluru yesterday as security forces fired teargas to control the crowds.

Police detained about 100 people after protesters blocked roads and some turned to violence, Bengaluru police commissioner N. S. Megharikh told Reuters. Television footage showed smoke pouring from burnt-out buses and a smashed police vehicle. "Now the situation is under control," Megharikh said. The protests come after the government proposed changes in February to how employees can withdraw savings from the Employee Provident Fund (EPF).

Only about 36 million of the country's 1.3 billion people contribute to the EPF. In March, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley

reversed the proposal to tax pension fund withdrawals. But a plan to restrict when employees can withdraw savings from the EPF remains.

The protests against the restrictions began on Monday in the city after about 200,000 garment workers, most of them women, took to the streets. Jayaram K. Ramaiah, an official at the Garment and Textile Workers Union, said garment workers earning a monthly salary of 6,500 rupees (\$98) depended on access to their pensions.

"Not just garment workers, all workers in the unorganized sector will be affected by this rule," he said. "What about the poor people who use it for important purposes like marriage or education?" Ramaiah blamed "anti-social elements" for attacking police with stones and said 20 of his members were injured when police charged protesters with batons. — Reuters



KABUL: Afghan security personnel keep watch at the site of car bomb attack at the gate of a government office in the Puli Mahmood Khan neighbourhood yesterday. — AFP

30 DEAD, HUNDREDS WOUNDED AS TALEBAN ATTACK RATTLES KABUL TRUCK BOMB TEARS THROUGH CITY CENTER

KABUL: At least 30 people were killed and hundreds wounded when a Taliban truck bomb tore through central Kabul and a fierce firefight broke out yesterday, a week after the insurgents launched their annual spring offensive.

The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack in a densely crowded neighborhood, which sent clouds of acrid smoke billowing into the sky and rattled windows several kilometers away. The brazen assault near the defense ministry marks the first major Taliban attack in the Afghan capital since the insurgents announced the start of this year's fighting season. "One of the suicide attackers blew up an explosives-laden truck in a public parking lot next to a government building," Kabul police chief Abdul Rahman Rahimi told reporters.

"The second attacker engaged security forces in a gunbattle before being gunned down," Interior ministry spokesman Sediq Sediqqi said 30 people, including women and children, were killed in the attack and warned that the toll could rise further.

He added that more than 320 were wounded, with many of them battling for their lives in hospital. The pitched firefight appeared to die down several hours after the powerful explosion, but some security officials expressed concern that other bombers may still be on the loose. "I saw wounded people lying on the road and scream-

ing helplessly," said Sadiqullah, who runs a tea stall near the building which was attacked.

"It was devastating. We are fed up with such attacks. How long must ordinary civilians suffer like this?" The interior ministry said hundreds of kilograms of explosives were used in the bombing, the deadliest so far this year in the Afghan capital. The scene of the attack was littered with upturned cars, many of them mangled and charred. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid claimed their fighters had managed to enter the offices of the National Directorate of Security, the main spy agency. Sediqqi conceded that one of the attackers managed to breach the compound, a government office responsible for providing security to government VIPs, but said he was gunned down after a firefight.

'War crimes'

"This attack shows the devastation caused by the use of explosive devices in urban areas and once more demonstrates complete disregard for the lives of Afghan civilians," the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan said.

"The use of explosives in populated areas, in circumstances almost certain to cause immense suffering to civilians, may amount to war crimes." The Taliban on Tuesday last week announced the start of their spring offensive even as the government tries to bring them back to the

negotiating table to end the drawn-out conflict.

The insurgents warned they would "employ large-scale attacks on enemy positions across the country" during the offensive dubbed Operation Omari in honour of the movement's late founder Mullah Omar, whose death was announced last year. The Taliban began the fighting season last week by targeting the northern city of Kunduz, which they briefly captured last year in a stunning setback for Afghan forces.

But officials said Afghan security forces drove Taliban fighters back from the city on Friday. The annual spring offensive normally marks the start of the "fighting season", though this past winter the lull was shorter and rebels continued to battle government forces, albeit with less intensity.

The Taliban's resurgence has raised serious questions about Afghan forces' capacity to hold their own. NATO estimates that a staggering 5,500 troops were killed last year. Peace talks which began last summer were abruptly halted after it was revealed that Mullah Omar had been dead for two years, a disclosure which sparked infighting in the insurgents' ranks. A four-country group comprising Afghanistan, the United States, China and Pakistan has been holding meetings since January aimed at jump-starting negotiations, though their efforts have so far been in vain. — AFP



BENGALURU: Bengaluru police try to remove garment workers protesting against Centre's decision to amend rules governing withdrawal of EPF contributions yesterday. — AFP

INDIA IS WORKING TO CURB TRAFFICKING OF WOMEN, CHILDREN - MINISTER

NEW DELHI: India is working to find ways to curb the widespread trafficking of women and children in the country, including those from neighboring Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan, said Maneka Gandhi, India's minister for women and children.

South Asia, with India at its centre, is the fastest-growing and second-largest region for human trafficking in the world, after East Asia, according to the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime.

Speaking at a conference on child adoption in India's northeastern state of Meghalaya, Gandhi told delegates that the government was in the process of putting in place a series of policies to prevent human trafficking. "We have discussed this issue in the cabinet. We had called a meeting with these countries last month in which all NGOs working on this and others in Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh came," she said on Monday.

"We will have another meeting next week in India. We are telling each other what we can do. This month, we are going to see that specific solutions come into being." According to the National Crime Records Bureau, there were 5,466 cases of human trafficking registered in 2014, an increase of 90 percent over the past five years.

Under-estimation

Activists say this is a gross under-estimation of the scale of the problem, as much of the illicit organised crime is underground. They claim thousands of

people - largely poor, rural women and children - are lured to India's towns and cities each year by traffickers who promise good jobs but sell them into domestic work or sex work or to industries such as textile workshops.

In many cases, they are not paid or are held in debt bondage. Some go missing, and their families cannot trace them. Gandhi said India's remote northeastern states, which include Assam, Sikkim, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland, were a key source area for trafficking and called for the appointment of a special female police officer in each village to keep a check on crimes against women and children.

"There is an enormous amount of trafficking of children going on from the northeast. We find them in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and many going to Malaysia and Thailand. It is not fair," she said. "The job of special women police is to be vigilant in the village and see that children do not go missing, women are not beaten by husbands, girls are sent to school."

A comprehensive new anti-trafficking law is also being drafted, say government officials. This will not only unify several existing laws, but also raise penalties for offenders and provide victims with rehabilitation and compensation. The law, which is expected to be ready by the end of the year, will also provide for the establishment of a central investigative anti-trafficking agency to coordinate and work between states and special courts to hear such cases. — Reuters

140 PAKISTANI REBELS SURRENDER LEADING CHINA TO INVESTMENT

ISLAMABAD: More than 140 rebels surrendered to Pakistani authorities in insurgency-hit Baluchistan province, the government yesterday, touting the development as a victory in the battle to secure a province targeted for major Chinese investment.

The rebels, from groups including the Baluchistan Liberation Front (BLF), the Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA) and the Lashkar-e-Baluchistan, laid down their arms on Monday, said Anwar ul Haq, a provincial government spokesman.

They included two "commanders" who were relatives of BLF chief Allah Nazar Baluch, Haq said. He did not give a specific figure for the number who surrendered, beyond saying there were "more than 140". "According to them, they were disillusioned from the fight, because they joined thinking that it was for a national cause, but within a year or two, they realized ... that the movement was directionless," Haq said.

A BLF spokesman did not respond to a request for comment on the reported surrenders, but Baluch separatists have dismissed previous such events as government-staged propaganda.

Baluch separatists have been fighting the Pakistani state for nearly a decade in their struggle to attain independence for resource-rich Baluchistan province from Pakistan.

The government is keen to secure the province as work begins on the \$46 billion China Pakistan Economic Corridor, a project that will see a trade route built along the length of Pakistan, culminating in Baluchistan's deep-water port at Gwadar.

China Overseas Ports Holding Company took over Gwadar's operations in 2013. Attacks on security forces by the separatists are common, as are retaliatory operations by the Pakistani military and paramilitary forces, who rights group allege have abducted and killed hundreds of Baluch political activists.

Monday's surrenders took place in Kalat district, about 130 km south of the provincial capital Quetta, which has seen a paramilitary crackdown in recent days. Pakistani paramilitary forces said they killed 34 members of the rebel United Baluch Army during an operation there ten days ago. — Reuters



MARDAN, PAKISTAN: Pakistan police commandos stand outside a government office following a suicide attack that wounded at least 10 people yesterday. — AP

SUICIDE ATTACK KILLS 1, WOUNDS 9 OUTSIDE NW PAKISTAN OFFICE

PESHAWAR: A suicide bomber detonated his explosive device outside a government tax office in the northwest Pakistani city of Mardan yesterday, killing at least one person and wounding nine others, police said.

The attacker also fired gunshots as he approached the tax revenue office, the city police chief, Faisal Shahzad, told The Associated Press. He said at least two of the wounded were in critical condition.

Hours after the attack, Ahsanullah Ahsan, a spokesman for the Jamat-ul-Ahrar militant group, claimed responsibility and warned that they will continue such attacks

in the future. Pakistani militants have long attacked government offices and security forces in a bid to install their own harsh brand of Islamic law.

The Pakistani military has launched multiple offensives against militant hideouts, but the insurgents have proven resilient. An Easter Sunday suicide bombing targeting Christians killed over 70 people in the eastern city of Lahore last month. Mardan is about 50 kilometers northwest of Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province bordering Afghanistan. — AP

TAIWAN PROTESTS AFTER OFFICIALS 'BARRED BY CHINA' AT OECD MEET

TAIPEI: Taiwan said yesterday that it would protest to Beijing and Belgium after its delegation was barred at a global industry conference in Brussels due to complaints from China.

It is the latest bout of diplomatic sparring between Taiwan and China as tensions simmer ahead of the inauguration of Taiwan's president-elect, Tsai Ing-wen, in May. Beijing does not trust Tsai's historically pro-independence party and ties are predicted to deteriorate. Although it is self-ruling, Beijing considers Taiwan a province awaiting reunification since the two sides split after a civil war on the mainland in

1949. Taiwanese officials attending the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) steel symposium in Brussels were barred from a meeting Monday after China complained to Belgium they were not sufficiently high-ranking, Taiwan's economic ministry said. Taiwan is not an OECD member but has attended the organization's steel committee meetings since 2005. "Our delegation protested on the spot, and pointed out that nearly half of the heads of delegations held similar ranks as us," Taiwan's Ministry of Economic Affairs said in a statement.

The Taiwanese group were unable to enter the

meeting because of China's complaint, it added. "That is an unreasonable and discriminatory act," the statement said. Taiwan's representative to the European Union has asked the island's Mainland Affairs Council to lodge a complaint with China, and the delegation will submit a protest letter to the Belgian government Tuesday, it said.

Taiwan's five-member delegation included a section chief from the economics ministry, as well as representatives from the trade bureau and the island's steel sector. Taiwan is barred from a number of international organizations as Beijing's global dominance

has grown and its number of allies is dwindling—the island now only has diplomatic ties with 22 states. The Brussels snub comes after Taiwan last week blasted Beijing for being "rude and violent" over the deportation of 45 of its citizens from Kenya to China where they face investigation for fraud.

Taiwan said it will send 10 officials to the mainland Wednesday in an attempt to bring the suspects back to the island for investigation and trial. The island has also alleged that Beijing sought to deport another group of Taiwanese implicated in telecom fraud in Malaysia. — AFP

PANAMA PRESIDENT SEEKS GLOBAL EFFORTS TO HANDLE TAX HAVEN ROW

TOKYO: Yesterday Panamanian President Juan Carlos Varela called for global efforts to tackle the "Panama Papers" scandal, insisting it is not a problem just for his country but the international financial system as a whole.

Panama is scrambling to avert designation once again as a tax haven that assists money laundering after the disclosure of the offshore dealings of many of the world's wealthy, famous and infamous. They came to light when millions of documents covering nearly 40 years of business were leaked from the archives of the

Tokyo. "It's about a global problem that is tax evasion and also the use of the financial systems and legal system," he added.

The president's views

Varela said his country is willing to cooperate with an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development initiative to share tax information, saying: "We have the door open to do it in a multilateral way." He also reiterated his demand that France drop Panama from a blacklist of tax havens. Following the recent disclosures Paris has put Panama back on its national list of Uncooperative States and Territories. It had removed it in 2012.

Such an international designation would deal a heavy blow to Panama's vital financial services sector. The Panamanian government recently imposed reforms to move it towards global transparency standards. Varela said he plans to announce a bilateral taxation scheme with Japan under OECD standards today following his meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. The world's leading economies took a step last week toward denying tax evaders and money launderers the ability to hide behind anonymous shell companies.

Acting in the wake of the scandal, finance chiefs of the Group of 20 meeting in Washington on Friday supported proposals requiring authorities to share the identities of shell companies' real owners. They also backed creating a blacklist of international tax havens that do not cooperate with information-sharing programs.

On Monday Varela said in an interview with Kyodo News agency that Panama has "decided to join the common reporting standards", referring to the measures on exchanging financial account information with tax authorities set by the OECD. OECD head Angel Gurría said last week that Isabel De Saint Malo, vice president of the Central American country, had called him to express willingness to cooperate with his organization. — AFP



TOKYO: Panamanian President Juan Carlos Varela (L) listens to a speech during the Panama investment seminar yesterday. — AFP

Panamanian law firm Mossack Fonseca. The revelations have had far-reaching political consequences, already bringing down the Icelandic prime minister and Spain's industry minister, while forcing others to explain their financial dealings.

"(The) 'Panama Papers', it is not about Panama," Varela, who arrived in Japan on Sunday, told an investment seminar in



MASHIKI, JAPAN: Evacuees in their vehicle which they have been using for shelter following two major earthquakes. — AFP

JAPAN OPENS PRISON TO CARE FOR QUAKE EVACUEES

MASHIKI: Japan has resorted to opening a prison to those left homeless by two deadly earthquakes, officials said yesterday, highlighting the challenges faced in dealing with tens of thousands who have fled their homes.

Two major earthquakes and about 600 smaller tremors have rocked the southwestern island of Kyushu since late Thursday, leaving a total of 44 people dead and more than 1,000 injured — 208 of them seriously—in Japan's worst humanitarian disaster in five years.

Many who abandoned their damaged or destroyed homes have had to sleep in temporary accommodation, huddle in makeshift shelters or even sleep in their cars, and local media have reported problems in delivering food and other essentials as well as raising health concerns.

Nearly 117,000 people were in evacuation shelters, Takayuki Matsushita, a spokesman for the Kumamoto prefectural government, told AFP, but he added that the figure does not include those staying with friends or family or in places other than official shelters.

Justice Ministry official Koichi Shima told AFP that a prison in the hard-hit city of Kumamoto has accommodated as many as 250 people at a time in the correctional facility's martial arts training hall.

About 110 people were staying there yesterday alongside nearly 500 inmates, he added. The ministry decided to start using prison facilities as evacuation centres after a huge undersea quake in March 2011 killed around 18,500 people when it sent a devastating tsunami barreling into the northeast coast and sparking a nuclear

meltdown disaster. "This is the first time that the policy has been put into practice," Shima said. An initial quake on Thursday, measured at 6.2 magnitude by US geologists, affected older buildings and killed nine people. But Saturday's more powerful 7.0-magnitude tremor and an ensuing landslide brought even newer structures crashing down.

More than 600 quakes and aftershocks have been recorded in the area since Thursday, according to the Japan Meteorological Agency. Officials said that the death toll from the quakes rose to 44 as two more bodies were recovered, while at least eight people were still listed as missing. Many people are avoiding the congested shelters set up in local schools and town hall buildings, choosing instead to stay in their cars. That has fanned worries about deep-vein thrombosis—also known as economy-class syndrome when prolonged immobility can lead to blood clots forming in the legs and travelling to the heart, lungs or brain with potentially fatal consequences.

Jiji Press reported that a 51-year-old woman in Kumamoto had died from the condition, though it could not be immediately confirmed. Other reports said five people had been diagnosed with clots.

Separately, commercial airlines resumed flights to Kumamoto's airport early yesterday but the planes were departing with no passengers as quake damage to the terminal building meant security checks could not be conducted.

Japan is one of the world's most seismically active countries, sitting on the so-called "Ring of Fire" around the Pacific tectonic plate. — AFP



MINAMIASO: Rescuers search for missing persons at the site of a landslide yesterday. — AP

AFTERSHOCKS RATTLE JAPAN AS DEATHS FROM QUAKES RISE TO 45

OUTBOUND FLIGHTS SUSPENDED

MINAMIASO: Japan's southern quake-hit area was rattled by a strong aftershock yesterday and searchers found a woman's body buried under landslide rubble, raising the death toll from the twin earthquakes to 45.

More than 100,000 evacuees, some sleeping in their cars and others in gymnasiums or community centers, were bracing for another chilly night. Many people are afraid to stay in their homes as aftershocks continued to shake the area on the southern island of Kyushu, including a 5.5-magnitude tremor yesterday afternoon.

Authorities were advising people staying in cars and shelters to move about to avoid developing deep-vein thrombosis, or blood clots that develop after being immobile for a long time. Japanese media reported that a 51-year-old woman from Kumamoto had died Monday from the condition. At least 23 people have developed symptoms, Kyodo News service said. Saiseikai Kumamoto Hospital said Tuesday it had

diagnosed 10 cases, including two people in critical condition. The area around Kumamoto was hit by two quakes within 28 hours of each other late Thursday and early Saturday, triggering landslides that have blocked roads. The Fire and Disaster Management Agency said nearly 1,200 houses had been destroyed.

The Death Toll

Nine people died in the first, magnitude 6.4 earthquake, and at least 36 died in the second one, which registered 7.3. About 1,100 have been injured. The hardest-hit towns are Mashiki, where 20 residents died, and Minamiaso, a remote mountain area where 11 died and the death toll is creeping up as soldiers and emergency workers use backhoes and shovels to search for missing people.

Temperatures around Kumamoto city are forecast to fall to 8 degrees Celsius (46 F) overnight. The earthquake damage and loss of

power and water is reverberating beyond Kyushu as Toyota Motor Corp. and other manufacturers have suspended production.

Several soldiers carried a woman's body down on a plastic tray covered with an olive-green tarp Tuesday morning as dozens of workers dug through where a mudslide slammed into buildings in Saturday's quake.

Food shortages and cuts to water service are plaguing the relief effort. American military airlifts are helping to deliver water, bread, ready-to-eat food and other emergency supplies to remote areas. The US has about 50,000 troops stationed in Japan, and the American military played a large role in rescue and relief in 2011 after a massive earthquake and tsunami hit the northeastern coast of the main island of Honshu.

Limited flights resumed to Kumamoto Airport yesterday, but outbound passenger flights remain almost entirely suspended because of severe damage to the terminal building. — AP

UN ENVOY SAYS JAPANESE MEDIA INDEPENDENCE UNDER THREAT

TOKYO: A UN special envoy urged the Japanese government yesterday to protect media independence, which he warned is facing "serious threats." The visit of David Kaye, the United Nations special rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression, came as concerns over media freedoms have grown. The government and ruling Liberal Democratic Party have both drawn criticism for allegedly threatening the press.

Parliament in 2013 passed a law on protecting specially designated secrets, while the cabinet minister responsible for regulating broadcasting told parliament this year the government can revoke licenses if broadcasters fail to correct reporting deemed politically biased.

"There's a significant concern about the direction of independent media in Japan," Kaye told reporters after a week-long visit, saying he had heard from journalists of worries "about their ability to independently report on issues, particularly issues of sensitivity to the government."

In 2014 the conservative LDP wrote to broadcast networks urging "fair" coverage ahead of a general election, in what was seen as an attempt to intimidate media.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe supported the February comments by Internal Affairs Minister Sanae Takaichi on the broadcast law, which stipulates "politically fair" coverage. But Abe has insisted his government "cherishes freedom of speech," he said, adding they should be overseen by an independent entity. He said he was unable to meet Takaichi during his visit despite repeated requests. The envoy also touched on the secrets protection law, saying he remains concerned even though the government assured him harsh penalties would not be applied to journalists.

"The law should be so amended to eliminate any chilling effect" on journalists, he wrote in a report on his preliminary observations. The envoy also called on Japan to abolish its press club system, under which select media outlets have exclusive access to government ministries and police departments at the national and local levels. — AFP



TOKYO: United Nations Special Rapporteur for Freedom of expression David Kaye takes a press conference yesterday. — AFP

'LIMITED' ACTIVITY AT N. KOREA NUCLEAR TEST SITE

SEOUL: Recent satellite images show only "limited" activity at North Korea's nuclear test site, despite reports that Pyongyang is on the verge of conducting a fifth underground test, a US think-tank said Tuesday.

But while the images contain little to suggest a test is imminent, analysts at the US-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University noted that North Korea has become increasingly expert at masking its preparation work.

South Korean President Park Geun-Hye told her cabinet Monday that intelligence sources had detected signs that Pyongyang was preparing a new test, an assessment echoed the same day by her defence ministry.

North Korea is gearing up for a rare and much-hyped ruling party congress early next

month, at which leader Kim Jong-Un is expected to take credit for pushing the country's nuclear weapons program to new heights. Numerous analysts have suggested the regime might carry out a fifth nuclear test as a display of defiance and strength just before the congress opens.

In its analysis yesterday, the US-Korea Institute said the most recent satellite imagery of the Punggye-ri test site showed "very limited activity", although key areas were clear of snow and being maintained. "While there is little evidence that a test is imminent, the possibility cannot be ruled out since the North has demonstrated the ability to conduct detonations on short notice by slow rolling preparations, masking significant indicators from satellite view," it said. — AP



Afghan farmers harvest opium sap from a poppy field in the Chaparhar district of Nangarhar province yesterday. — AFP

IRAN-SAUDI HAJJ TALKS HALT DUE TO VISA...

Continued from Page 1

He said Saudi Arabia had agreed that Iranian aircraft could land for the hajj, an exception since all flights from the Islamic republic were barred after the diplomatic crisis. Security was another contentious issue in the talks, after a massive stampede in last year's hajj killed more than 2,000 foreign pilgrims, including 464 Iranians. "The Saudis offered good solutions on security," introducing electronic tracking bracelets for all hajj participants, Ohadi said.

The Iranian delegation was expected back in Tehran later yesterday. Other officials in Tehran also waded into

the row. "Saudi Arabia is stonewalling on the visa issue," Culture Minister Ali Jannati said on Monday. "We say that if the Swiss government is protecting your interests in Iran, then it should issue visas too. Issuing visas in a third country is absolutely unacceptable for us."

Saudi Arabia severed diplomatic ties with Iran on January 3 after its diplomatic missions in Tehran and Mashhad were stormed and set alight by mobs following Riyadh's execution of a prominent Shiite cleric and activist, Nimr Al-Nimr. This year's pilgrimage to Makkah - a trip that all Muslims who are able to are expected to perform at least once in their lifetime - is due to take place in September. — AFP

GOVT WON'T TAKE 'ILLEGAL' ACTION AGAINST OIL...

Continued from Page 1

He assured that Kuwait Petroleum Corporation's marketing sector has also been able to fulfill its export commitments without any delay or rescheduling of loading times. Sheikh Talal added that operations at the Petrochemical Industries Company and Kuwait Oil Tanker Company are proceeding normally. Sheikh Talal also said the shutdown of gas station BS 150 was a normal precautionary measure, pointing to the operation of stations BS 140 and BS 160 instead. The spokesman added that efforts were being exerted in order to

resume normal levels of production and operation at all oil facilities, noting an increase in production rates following the operation of gas collection centers 11, 12 and 24.

"Production and export operations are going on normally, and traffic of tankers at KNPC ports is going as planned as per the contingency plan," Sheikh Talal said. KPC's international marketing sector is in touch with clients in order to fulfill the needs of world markets, he pointed out. He spoke highly of "friendly" oil companies that provided KPC with a group of efficient technicians and workers with a view to boost oil production in the country. — Agencies

US SEEKS GULF SPECIAL FORCES

Continued from Page 1

Riyadh and its neighbors fear the US-supported deal will only embolden Iran which they accuse of interference throughout the Middle East. Over the past 15 years the US has sold combat aircraft to Gulf states, but the senior American defense official said Iran's activities "won't be countered" in that way. Rather, "special operations forces and maritime interdiction" are needed, he said.

The US is proposing to help train Gulf special forces and to develop their naval capacity to prevent Iran from supplying Shiite groups that it supports in the region, the official said. "In just over a six month period we and our coalition partners were able to interdict four weapon shipments off the coast of Yemen," he said.

The United States provides precision-guided weapons and intelligence support to a Saudi-led military coalition that intervened in Yemen 13 months ago to support the government against Iran-backed rebels. Royal Saudi Air Force jets, many of them US-made F-15s, have carried out intensive air strikes against the rebels and their allies. The coalition maintains a naval blockade of Yemen. Carter will also repeat to his GCC counterparts the importance of increased support for Iraq, where the government is trying to reconquer territory seized by the Islamic State group of Sunni extremists.

"We are urging them to come in... provide funds and support, both political and economic, to the Iraqi government," the American official said. Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Iraq presented his credentials in January, re-establishing relations a quarter-century after they were cut following ex-president Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. "In a perfect world, we would see full diplomatic normalization between all Gulf countries and the Iraqi government," the official said. "There has been some reluctance among the Gulf states". On Monday in Baghdad, Carter announced new US support for the Iraqi government, including the deployment of an additional 217 military personnel.

Meanwhile, the US government is poised to approve two long-delayed sales of Boeing Co fighter jets to Qatar and Kuwait, and could announce the multibillion-dollar deals during Obama's visit, according to two sources familiar with the matter. Both deals have been

stalled amid concerns raised by Israel that equipment sent to Gulf states could fall into the wrong hands and be used against it, and by the Obama administration's broader decision-making on military aid to the Gulf.

However, the Pentagon and the State Department both have signed off on the sale of some 36 F-15 fighter jets to Qatar and 24 F/A-18E/F Super Hornets to Kuwait, both built by Boeing. The White House is expected to follow suit shortly. The sale to Kuwait is worth about \$3 billion and the one to Qatar is probably close to \$4 billion, sources familiar with the matter said. "The last hurdle now is getting approval from the National Security Council and the White House," said one of the sources. The Pentagon had no immediate comment.

A senior Obama administration official said it was the administration's policy not to comment on potential arm sales until it has formally notified Congress of an intent to sell something. But, the official said, the United States is committed to the security and stability of the Gulf region and defense sales "fit into the overall US regional diplomatic strategy".

Senior US officials, including Navy Secretary Ray Mabus have publicly urged approval of the weapons sales, which will help maintain production of the fourth-generation Boeing fighter jets, while the newer and more advanced Lockheed Martin Corp F-35 fighter jet enters service in coming years. One senior US defense official said the Pentagon is keen to see the Boeing F-15 and F/A-18 production lines in St Louis continue and does not want to "foreclose any options on fourth-generation aircraft at this point".

Boeing already is spending "hundreds of millions" of dollars to buy long-lead materials such as titanium to prepare for a possible Kuwaiti order for F/A-18E/F Super Hornets and a separate US Navy order for 12 jets put on the service's "unfunded priorities" list submitted to Congress. The Navy is hoping that Congress will provide the funding to pay for the Boeing jets in fiscal 2017, although the planes were not included in its base budget request. It already has earmarked funding for more F/A-18E/F jets in fiscal 2018. A larger concern now is the Boeing F-15 line, which is set to end in 2019 after Boeing completes work on a large order for Saudi Arabia, unless a follow-on order is approved. — Agencies

EGYPT COP KILLS VENDOR OVER PRICE OF CUP...

Continued from Page 1

Witnesses said on social media the argument yesterday was over the price of a cup of tea, which was confirmed to Reuters by security sources. The video, one of several shared by the witness, showed a man lying still on the ground surrounded by angry onlookers.

The interior ministry said in a statement that a policeman got into an argument with a vendor over "the price of a drink" and shot him dead, injuring two others in the process. A judicial source told Reuters the policeman shot the three men with an assault rifle and fled. The victim died from a bullet to the heart, the judicial source said. "There are clashes between the police and locals. Security forces brought in two riot police vehicles and an armored truck and the victim's family is here and pelting them with rocks," said the witness who sent the video and who declined to be named for fear of reprisal. "Security forces are retreating and promising justice but the crowd is demanding police hand over the killer."

Anger over perceived police excesses helped fuel the 2011 uprising that ended President Hosni Mubarak's 30-year rule and began on a Police Day holiday. Since then, police have regained their power and human rights groups say they have returned to their old ways. Public anger against police has surged again in recent months. In February, a policeman shot dead a driver in the street in an

argument over a fare, prompting hundreds to protest outside the Cairo security directorate. There were also riots in Ismailia and the southern city Luxor over the authorities' handling of at least three deaths in police custody in a single week in November.

Egyptian security forces have also faced scrutiny over the killing of Italian researcher Giulio Regeni in Cairo this year. Human rights groups say his death bears the hallmarks of Egyptian security agencies. Officials deny involvement. "A hundred years of isolated incidents," wrote one commentator on Twitter. In a separate development, an Italian security team arrived in Cairo yesterday to review with Egyptian counterparts the latest in the case of an Italian student who was found dead by a roadside in Cairo in February with signs of severe torture, according to security officials at Cairo's international airport.

Italy has said it was prepared to take "immediate and proportional measures" against Egypt if it fails to provide all the information it has about the torture and death of doctoral student Giulio Regeni, who disappeared in Cairo on Jan 25, the fifth anniversary of Egypt's 2011 uprising when police were out in force to prevent any demonstrations. Italy earlier this month recalled its ambassador from Egypt for consultations after Italian investigators expressed disappointment over Egypt's cooperation in the investigation. Egypt has repeatedly denied involvement by its security services in Regeni's killing. — Agencies

WORK PERMIT, TRANSFER FEES RAISED UP TO KD 50

Continued from Page 1

Last week, the Assembly passed in principle the bill after exempting private homes of Kuwaiti citizens from any increase and kept the price at 2 fils per kilowatt regardless of consumption. The bill however did not exempt tens of thousands of Kuwaiti families living in apartments, so the committee made the amendment.

The increase for expatriates remained unchanged at 5 fils per kilowatt for the first 1,000 kilowatts, 10 fils per kilowatt for between 1,000 and 2,000 kW and 15 fils per kilowatt for any consumption above 2,000 kW. The Assembly will vote on the new amendments next week and is expected to agree on the dates of applying the new charges. Initially, it was proposed to start for expatriates after 15 months from the issuance of the law.

The new charges for expatriates will hardly change during winter months but are expected to increase manifold during the summer months because of air-conditioning.

For example, an average consumer who paid only KD 5 monthly on average could end up paying over KD 50 for each of the summer months.

The government also plans to reduce subsidies for petrol to increase its prices by over 50 percent and is waiting to strike a deal with MPs on how to deal with Kuwaiti motorists. Some MPs have proposed to exempt citizens from any increase in petrol prices while others called for paying them cash assistance as compensation for the raise. Such decisions are expected to eventually cause a rise in the cost of a number of services and goods, thus raising inflation rates considerably.

Commerce and Industry Minister Youssef Al-Ali said last week in the Assembly that the ministry does not expect raising power charges to result in increasing prices of other services and goods. The ministry had already issued a decision banning any artificial increase in prices of consumer goods without a permit from the ministry following the increase in power and petrol charges.

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Kuwait Times

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Focus

TANZANIA SOLAR
PANELS POWER
BUSINESS SURGE

By Kizito Makoye

Samwel Nyakalege's life has recently become more of a grind - and that's a good thing. The 33-year-old miller from Bwisya village, on Lake Victoria's Ukara Island, is one of the first to benefit from a project to bring solar power to residents and business-owners. The entrepreneur, married with four children, has worked grinding millet, maize, rice and beans since 2007, but the high cost of fuel for his diesel generator made it hard to turn a profit.

"I used to buy a litre of diesel for up to 3,000 Tanzanian shillings (about \$1.40) and I needed at least 50 litres every week to run the generator. My business could hardly grow," Nyakalege told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. But with the arrival of the first-ever solar-powered mini-grid at Bwisya, launched by JUMEME, a rural power supply company with government backing, Nyakalege has enough energy to run his power-hungry business - and no longer needs costly and polluting generators.

Cheaper power, in fact, means that he can expand his company. "Solar power is a blessing to us as we can now serve more customers quicker and efficiently," he said. "I don't spend a penny to buy diesel. My motors work very efficiently using solar electricity."

Solar Steps Up

Around the world, as the costs of solar energy plunge, it is increasingly being used to power industry and businesses, a huge step forward from simply supplying lighting and basic electrical power in places like Tanzania, experts say. Nyakalege, for instance, now uses solar power to operate his three milling machines simultaneously. He has employed three people to help him and has seen his customer base rise to 600 a day. His income also has grown as a result, from less than 100,000 shillings a day on average (about \$45) to 400,000 shillings now. He is now contemplating getting a bank loan to expand his business, he said.

Processing grain in Ukara, until recently, was a costly activity because of the island was not connected to the electrical grid. Those who couldn't afford diesel-powered grain-milling services often had to grind their staple foods of cassava and maize by hand, a time-consuming activity. The solar system at Bwisya is part of a project to provide reliable and affordable electricity to the nearly 2,000 households and more than 200 businesses on Ukara, in order to boost opportunities to earn an income.

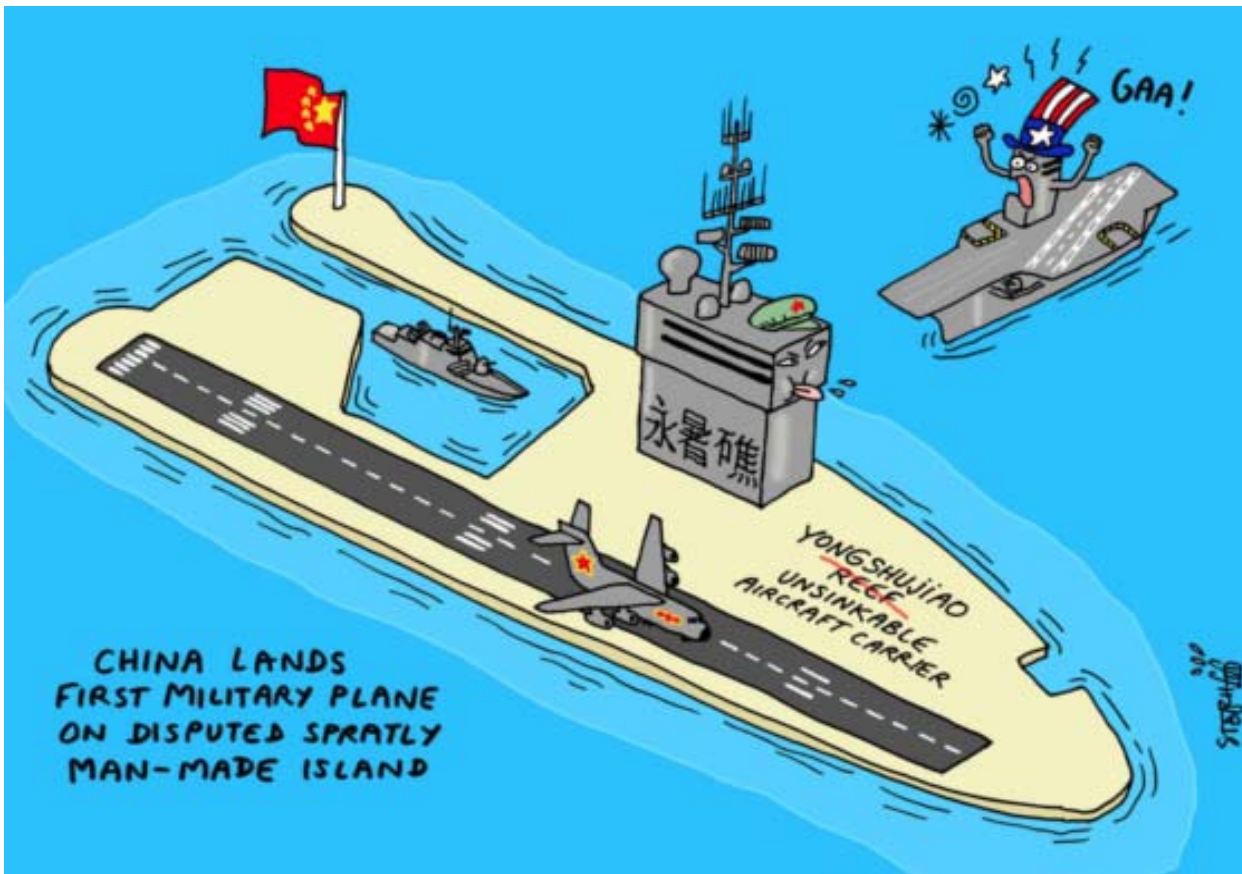
It is the first of 30 such systems JUMEME plans to install over the next two years. They are expected to supply power to around 100,000 people, company officials said. The company has even bigger plans for the longer-term, they said. "Our goal is to set up 300 systems and serve up to 1 million people in rural areas across Tanzania by 2022, making JUMEME the largest mini-grid operator in the country," said Thadeus Mkwama, one of the company's directors. The project, jointly funded by the European Union and private investors with political support from the Tanzanian government, has a total budget of 38.4 billion shillings (\$17.6 million), Mkwama said.

Prepaid Solar Power

In Bwisya, the largest village on Ukara, 250 customers are due to be connected to a hybrid power station consisting of a 60-kilowatt (KW) solar photovoltaic system and a 240 KW-hour battery bank. A diesel generator provides back-up. The system will be extended in the second half of this year to connect the other villages on the island, Mkwama said. The installation charges for individual homes and business are repaid by customers in instalments. Consumers pre-pay for their power, with costs per unit depending on the amount of electrical equipment they use. JUMEME is working with GVEP International, a nongovernmental organization, to train people on Ukara to use electricity for business purposes, such as producing wood and metal crafts. Hamisi Bujjeje, 30, has dreamed of owning a big carpentry workshop since he helped his father build canoes and dhows as a boy. But he said he has so far struggled to turn a profit in the business he started in 2011.

"My business has not been doing very well because of lack of power. I was incurring huge operational costs. I used to travel 29 km (18 miles) to the nearest island of Nansio to access electricity and have some items fixed," Bujjeje said. But along with cheaper solar power, he has access to new carpentry equipment, business coaching from GVEP and a loan scheme offered to entrepreneurs by JUMEME. "I am looking forward to expanding my business and attaining my dream in the furniture industry," Bujjeje said. — Reuters

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CHINA LANDS
FIRST MILITARY PLANE
ON DISPUTED SPRATLY
MAN-MADE ISLAND

RIKERS' CULTURE OF VIOLENCE UNDER FIRE

By Joseph Ax and Nate Raymond

The guards, authorities say, wanted to send a message. "Somebody's leaving in an ambulance tonight," Eliseo Perez, an assistant chief for security at New York's Rikers Island jail complex, told inmates after a rash of attacks on guards, according to prosecutors. Then he allegedly instructed five subordinates to take prisoner Jahmal Lightfoot into a room and kick his teeth in, an attack that left him with facial fractures. The ongoing trial of nine correction officers for the alleged 2012 assault and a subsequent cover-up is the latest in a string of prosecutions targeting dozens of Rikers employees over the past four years.

More than 50 guards at the 10,000-inmate complex, one of the three largest in the United States by population, have faced criminal charges since 2012 for assault, falsifying reports and smuggling contraband, court documents and data from various city agencies show. That is about double the rate of prosecution in the prior four years, as authorities crack down on what they say is a toxic atmosphere of violence and corruption.

"Rikers is a very troubled institution," said Mark Peters, the commissioner of the city's Department of Investigation, which leads most Rikers-related probes. "We are now seeing the result of systemic neglect." Rikers houses male, female and adolescent prisoners in 10 separate facilities, mostly inmates awaiting trial.

Rikers Under Microscope

Mayor Bill de Blasio has made Rikers reform a priority since taking office in 2014. Peters, whom de Blasio appointed two years ago, said he had devoted one investigative squad exclusively to Rikers and increased its staff from 20 to 30 members. Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark, whose office prosecutes most Rikers-related cases, recently proposed a new prosecution bureau based at the complex itself. The list of law enforcement officials whose attention has turned to Rikers also includes Preet Bharara, the US Attorney in Manhattan.

Next month, federal prosecutors will put

two guards on trial for the fatal beating of an inmate. Brian Coll, a correction officer, is accused of stomping Ronald Spear to death and enlisting two other guards to help him conceal the truth. One guard has already pleaded guilty to the cover-up. Bharara's office also threw the weight of the federal government behind a lawsuit brought on behalf of adolescent inmates by the New York Civil Liberties Union. The case led to a settlement mandating reforms overseen by a court-appointed monitor.

A two-year investigation by Bharara's office found the correction department failed to discipline guards adequately for excessive force from 2011 to 2013, said Sara Shudofsky, the chief of the office's civil division, in an interview. In 2014, de Blasio also appointed Joseph Ponte to head the correction department. Since then, it has pursued internal investigations more aggressively, with 200 cases ending in disciplinary charges last year, up from 93 in 2013, according to department statistics.

The focus on guards has met stiff resistance from the correction officers union, which claims the effort hides the true causes of Rikers' problems. "It is clear from the department's own statistics that inmates are attacking correction officers and other inmates at an alarming rate," the union president, Norman Seabrook, said in a statement. Seabrook also said visitors, not guards, are primarily responsible for smuggling contraband, citing the hundreds of visitors arrested in the last year for bringing illegal items into Rikers.

Smuggling Surge

The Department of Investigation has also pursued broader reforms in response to the persistent problems, Peters said. In 2014, an undercover investigator posing as a guard gained access to Rikers six times despite carrying heroin, marijuana and razor blades. Another department probe uncovered red flags among two-thirds of a class of new hires, such as prior felony convictions or known gang ties. In response, the correction department has installed drug-sniffing dogs at Rikers' entrances and increased its "applicant investigation unit" from 19 employees

to 87, to screen potential recruits' backgrounds and psychological fitness.

Both Peters and Ponte say their departments are now working more closely to address misconduct. That cooperation was on display this month, when a guard was caught on video assaulting an inmate who had thrown a cup of liquid in his direction. Correction officials turned over the video to investigators immediately, and the guard was arrested within hours.

But the level of violence still troubles observers. The Lightfoot trial, which began in

March, highlights the difficulties in curbing incidents by both inmates and officers. Perez and his team were part of an elite unit assigned to reduce inmate attacks, but prosecutors say their solution was to turn to assault themselves. Defense attorneys have argued at trial that the guards simply defended themselves when Lightfoot attacked them with a weapon. Prosecutors have said that assertion is false. "They decided they were going to set the tone that night," Assistant District Attorney Pishoy Yacoub said at the start of the trial. — Reuters

TIRING 'TRIDENT' SHOULDER
BLAME FOR BARCA SLUMP

By Richard Martin

Lionel Messi, Luis Suarez and Neymar were being touted as the best strike force in soccer history a month ago as they spearheaded Barcelona's record unbeaten run but the tiring trio are now taking the blame as the club's season unravels. The Madrid clubs are suddenly snapping at Barca's heels in the title race, with Atletico having also knocked them out of the Champions League to end the Catalans' hopes of a second successive treble.

Barca's 'MSN' South American strike force, who have scored 110 of the team's 147 goals this season in all competitions, have suddenly gone off the boil and the most common reason cited by Spanish media for their loss of form is fatigue. La Liga leaders Barca have played 56 games so far this season, seven more than Atletico and 12 more than Real Madrid, due to their participation in the Club World Cup, European Super Cup, Spanish Super Cup and their run to the King's Cup final. Messi and Neymar have each played 43 games and Suarez 47.

Luis Enrique has been reluctant to rest his jaded forwards and, remarkably, made no substitutions in Sunday's 2-1 home defeat by Valencia, suggesting he has little

faith in the members of his squad beyond the regular starting 11. The under-pressure coach has denied that Barca's woes are due to fatigue and, after the latest setback, berated a reporter who asked him about the players' physical decline. But it is clear that Barcelona, and especially the forwards, are not as sharp as two months ago when they destroyed Valencia 7-0 in a King's Cup semi-final game and thrashed Celta Vigo 6-1 as part of a run of 39 games undefeated in all competitions.

Third Defeat

Sunday's loss was Barca's third straight reverse in the league for the first time since 2003, leaving them level on points with Atletico, who they led by nine at the start of April, and a point ahead of Real. Eliminated from the Champions League after last week's 2-0 second-leg loss at Atletico, Barcelona's campaign has unravelled since the players returned from the international break. The 'MSN' trident went to South America for World Cup qualifiers in late March and have not looked the same since.

Messi got his 500th career goal on Sunday but that was his only goal in his last six club games, while Neymar has not found the net in his last five. — Reuters

THREE YEARS OF MADURO ENOUGH FOR OPPOSITION

By Maria Isabel Sanchez

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's six-year term reaches midpoint on Tuesday, a date few have been anticipating more eagerly than the country's opposition, which will now be able to initiate a recall referendum. The measure can take place only after the president has served half his term, and the opposition in control of parliament is chomping at the bit. It is organizing a demonstration on Tuesday to demand the National Electoral Council launch the measure.

Lawmakers also meet this week to approve legislation that would simplify the procedures for holding a referendum and they are set to introduce a constitutional amendment that would reduce the president's term. But any real hope for success is premature, say analysts who point to the country's political impasse. Of the five laws the opposition has passed in the hundred days since its historic victory in parliamentary elections, none has been enacted.

The Supreme Court, which is close to the government, has blocked many of the National Assembly's decisions. Each side is convinced it has the advantage in their trench warfare. "The oligarchy is desperate," Maduro has said. "It's the government that's cornered," countered Julio Borges, chief of the opposition Democratic Unity Roundtable coalition's deputies in parliament.

Economic Chaos

One matter is indisputable, however - the country's economic chaos that is compounding the politi-

cal morass. The fall in global oil prices has plunged the once-wealthy petrostate into serious crisis, depriving it of the foreign currency it needs to pay for imports. Venezuelans are finding daily life increasingly difficult. They must suffer endless queues in supermarkets, where most shelves are empty, and endure the world's worst inflation - more than 180 percent in 2015. They also face regular shortages of water and electricity.

"This hasn't been easy, we've had three complicated years," the 53-year-old Maduro acknowledged last week, accusing the opposition of prompting the shortages as part of an "economic war." "But I promise the next three years will be ones of growth and the building of socialism," he added. They could also be years of legal war. The Supreme Court has rejected landmark legislation from the anti-Maduro camp in recent months, including an amnesty for political prisoners and reform of the Central Bank that would enable the opposition to take control. The court also approved a decree establishing a state of economic

emergency, giving Maduro sweeping powers against the protests of parliament. Few therefore predict a successful outcome for the referendum law the opposition is set to approve, or for its moves to reform the court, which stripped the legislature of key oversight powers last month in a ruling aimed at thwarting moves to change the makeup of the high court.

Tipping Point?

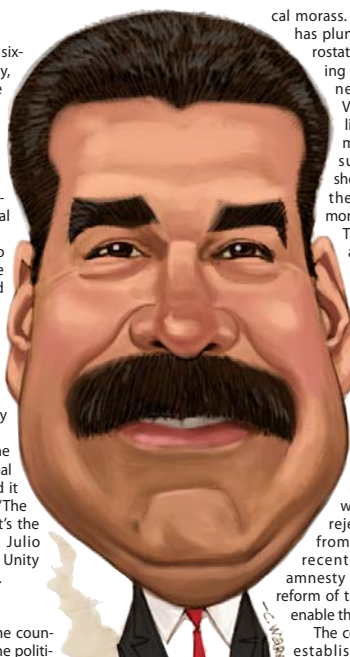
Experts say Venezuela's opposition can succeed only through politics or at the ballot box. "The solution can't be legal or constitutional because the government has seized institutions," says constitutional expert Juan Manuel Raffalli. Jose Ignacio Hernandez, another constitutional law expert, agrees. Parliament is "using up its last ammunition" because all its measures "will be canceled by the constitutional court".

The opposition appears to be sticking with its old tactics nevertheless. "We must continue on the same path," parliamentary speaker Henry Ramos Allup said.

"We can't abandon our duties. The assembly is the last institutional space we have left." That may be increasingly difficult with Maduro on the offensive. He has threatened to shorten lawmakers' terms in office if they continue trying to clip his wings. "The National Assembly should pack its bags because its time is coming," he said.

Pope Francis's call for dialogue two weeks ago has had no effect. "This game is completely blocked and we could soon see the consequences," said Raul Arieta, a former diplomat and law professor. "You can't inflate a balloon forever without bursting it." But despite his upper hand in the battle, Maduro's options are narrowing, he added.

"Extending the problem endlessly" would be "political suicide for the government," which is already very unpopular and must seek "a way to get along," Hernandez, the constitutional law expert, agrees. The country is close to a "breaking point," he says, and must choose between dialogue and a "scenario of social conflict." — AFP



BLACKWELL MAY RETIRE AFTER COMA SCARE

LONDON: Nick Blackwell appeared to rule out resuming his professional boxing career yesterday, despite making progress since collapsing shortly after his defeat to Chris Eubank Jr on March 27. The 25-year-old was placed in an induced coma and was found to have suffered a bleed on the skull, although he is recovering well and woke a fortnight ago. When asked on Twitter if he would want to return to the ring, he wrote: "No. that's me done. I can't put my friends and family and self through that again but I'll still be involved (in the sport)." Blackwell lost the British middleweight title bout to Eubank Jr after being stopped in the 10th round. Eubank Jr, the son of former world champion Chris Eubank, wrote to Blackwell that he had been trying to reach him, and hoped that there were no "hard feelings". Blackwell replied: "Hello bro no hard feelings, we were both there doing a job and it was unfortunate for what happened but I hope your OK champ." — AFP

BALE TO MISS VILLARREAL CLASH WITH MUSCLE STRAIN

BARCELONA: Gareth Bale has been ruled out of Real Madrid's La Liga match with Villarreal today with a muscle strain, as coach Zinedine Zidane looks to keep an unexpected late bid for the title on track. Zidane also said he thought the Wales international, whose injury was not serious, had a long future at the club. Bale has only started 18 of 33 league games this season due to injury, missing seven weeks with a calf problem, and he ended Monday's training session early after feeling discomfort. Zidane expects him to return against Rayo Vallecano on Saturday. "We hope it's only a strain and I hope he'll be with us on Saturday," Zidane told a news conference. "The strain is in the back of his leg." Bale was a very important player for the team, the coach added. "He is young and can improve. He has a long future here because he has a long contract here. I have a very good relationship with him, he is a simple guy and his Spanish is improving." Madrid have made up nine points on Barcelona in the last three games, beginning with a 2-1 win over the champions at the Nou Camp, but Zidane said he was in no mood for celebrating. — Reuters

VILLA SUSPEND AGBONLAHOR OVER NIGHT OUT REPORTS

LONDON: Aston Villa announced yesterday that they have suspended striker Gabriel Agbonlahor following reports he went out partying in London on the day of their relegation from the Premier League. British newspapers printed pictures of Agbonlahor, 29, with laughing gas canisters during a night out, allegedly taken hours after Villa's 1-0 defeat at Manchester United on Saturday condemned them to the drop. Agbonlahor had previously been sidelined by Villa caretaker manager Eric Black due to concerns about his fitness. "Aston Villa Football Club have today suspended Gabby Agbonlahor pending an internal investigation," Villa said in a statement. "This is following allegations concerning his conduct at the weekend. There will be no further comment from the club in relation to this matter until the investigation has been completed." Yesterday's announcement from Villa comes two weeks after the club cleared Agbonlahor of wrongdoing following an investigation into a trip to Dubai that he made. Black subsequently announced that Agbonlahor would be removed from the first-team squad and put on a two-week personal fitness regime. —AFP



EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE BY ATHLETES AT DISABLED SPORTS TOURNAMENT

By Abdellatif Sharaa

KUWAIT: The Third Local Disabled Sports Tournament began Monday at the grounds of Kuwait Disabled Sports Club in the shooting, athletics and target ball for the blind and visually impaired, and will continue for three days. Results of the first day of competition resulted in Majed Al-Dhaye winning first place in the discus throw for the physically impaired sitting category, while Mohammed bin Jubail took second and Yousuf Khalaf took third place. In the shot put standing event Rashid Al-Mohsen ended in first place, Abdallah Al-Haraz second and Abdelrahman Al-Qallaf third. Meanwhile, in the shot-put sitting Nasser Saleh ended in first place, fol-

lowed by Abdelrahman Al-Kandari and Abdelrahman Al-Mutairi. Abdallah Al-Seif won first place in the discus throw, standing event, while Hamad Hajji was second and Dhari Butti in third. The 300m for the T33 category Ahmad Al-Mutairi won first place, Nasser Saleh second. In the shooting standing category Atif Al-Dousary first, Mohammad Ajeel second and Fahad Al-Muwaizir third. In the target ball game Al-Nasser team defeated Tahreer by the score of 7-5. In the women javelin event Al-Batool Al-Shatti won first, Hanaa Bilal second, and Sarah Al-Mutairi. Member of the Board of KDSC, Chairman of the Sports Committee Anwar Al-Mutawaa said competitions of the first day were really hard,

adding that this tournament is yet another important stage to prepare athletes for international events. He said the tournament which included all age groups came out with a very good technical level in all three games and noticed that there was an outstanding performance by younger players, and lauded athletes, cooperation with officials, as he thanked the referees for their major role in officiating 12 groups in the javelin event, 4 groups in athletics, 3 groups for running and three for the target ball. Kuwait Athletics Team Captain Hamad Al-Adwani lauded the idea of organizing such events for its role in discovering younger skilled athletes and developing them, while at the same time keeping athletes fit and ready for events, and not relying on training only.



SPORTS FEDERATIONS CONCERNED ABOUT VENUES FOR RIO GAMES

LAUSANNE: International sports federations expressed concern yesterday over problems with venues for the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, including power failures at the gymnastics arena this week. Members of the Association of Olympic International Sports Federations reviewed preparations for the Rio Games, which open in less than four months on Aug. 5. "They miss some very important details in each field of play," ASOIF President Francesco Ricci Bitti said at the group's annual meeting. Ricci Bitti told delegates that IOC President Thomas Bach "is worried like you, like me" about details for Rio. Rio's sports director acknowledged to the 28 Olympic sports that the city's seven-year preparations "were not perfect or up to your expectations" but said the games would be a success. "I can assure you that the athletes will not have any problems in games time, nor any of you in your events," Agberto Guimaraes said. The comments followed complaints raised by the gymnastics federation, known as FIG, which is holding its artistic gymnastics test event at Rio Olympic Arena this week. FIG official Ron Froehlich cited power outages, putting at risk athletes' safety and the scoring system, plus missing equipment at an underfunded temporary training venue. "Most important, they have problems with regard to the Omega (scoring) sys-

tem," Froehlich said. "Furthermore, power outages while the athletes were performing, which is a very serious issue." The absence of flooring at a temporary training center venue was "due to lack of funding," he said. Earlier, ASOIF director general Andrew Ryan disclosed that two top IOC officials will travel to Rio soon to work more closely on preparations. Christophe Dubi, the Olympic Games executive director, and sports director Kit McConnell are "moving permanently" to the host city, Ryan said. Dubi's predecessor, Gilbert Felli, was assigned to work with local organizers two years ago amid growing concerns about Rio's readiness. Guimaraes also addressed longstanding problems of water pollution and "floating garbage" in Rio, and the possibility of officials' accommodation - including a Trump hotel - not being ready, before giving further assurances. "The athletes will be happy with the results they we have achieved," he said. "You and your federations will be happy with the level of service that we will provide to you." Rio organizing committee head Carlos Nuzman said the impeachment process against Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff would not affect the final preparations. "Until today we have no involvement, no problems with any political or economic situation in the country," Nuzman said. — AP



VAN DE VELDE BACKS SPIETH TO BOUNCE BACK

CARNOUSTIE: When Jean van de Velde says he believes that Jordan Spieth will get over his Masters meltdown, the Frenchman knows what he is talking about. Needing a double-bogey six down the last hole of the 1999 British Open at Carnoustie in Scotland, Van de Velde produced a calamitous triple-bogey seven and eventually lost out to Paul Lawrie in a play-off.

It was a moment that came to mind at the Masters when Spieth blew the lead by putting two balls into the water on the 12th hole, allowing Danny Willett to storm past him to victory.

"Trust me, you can't believe how fast everything is happening when that guy is you," said Van de Velde. "That's what I

love about golf. It slaps you on the finger five minutes after the biggest high you could ever think of."

Van de Velde stepped onto the final tee of the 1999 Open leading by three shots and needing only to record a six to become the first Frenchman since 1907 to capture golf's oldest major. He had birdied the 18th hole in two of three prior rounds. Van de Velde chose a driver off the tee, but put his tee shot well right of the fairway. Rather than lay up with his second shot, he decided to go for the green, only to come horribly unstuck as his ball ricocheted off a grandstand, hit the top of a stone wall and cannoned back into knee-high rough.

He put his third shot into the Barry

Burn, which stretches across the 18th fairway, and then removed his shoes and socks to step into the water as he contemplated whether or not to attempt a shot. In the end he elected to take a penalty drop, from where he found a greenside bunker, before bravely hoisting his sixth shot onto the green and sinking a six-foot putt for a triple-bogey seven.

NO COLD SWEATS

It left him in a three-way tie with American Justin Leonard and Scotland's Lawrie, who prevailed after a four-hole play-off. The weekend before last-and on the 20th anniversary of Australian Greg Norman's collapse at the 1996 Masters-

Spieth felt the championship slip from his fingers in similar fashion.

Spieth, the defending champion, looked to be cruising to victory, but a disastrous 12th hole meant that he ended up handing his green jacket over to Englishman Willett.

Van de Velde said he sympathised with the 22-year old Texan. "Jordan is an extraordinary player who has an extraordinary head on his shoulders and he will get over it extremely quickly," Van de Velde said. "And when he does, he will become stronger and stronger."

Van de Velde was speaking by telephone from his residence in Hong Kong to reporters at Carnoustie, where he will make his European Senior Tour debut at

the British Seniors Open, which starts on July 21. The affable Frenchman, who turns 50 on May 29, says that he has no qualms about returning to Carnoustie 17 years on from his infamous meltdown.

"It did take me a few days to find my sleep again after the Sunday at Carnoustie, due to the stress, the adrenaline, the rush, trying to analyse it or whatever," he said.

"But after that, I have never once woken up in a cold sweat and it has never given me difficulty finding sleep. Ever. However, I know it is part of history. There were quite a few viewers that day, 250 to 300 million, so it would take me a while if I met all of them and answered their questions about that day." — AFP



SYDNEY: Australian Olympic athletes (L-R) Holly Lincoln-Smith - Water Polo, Morgan Mitchell - Athletics (400m), Adam Gibson - Mens Basketball, Madison Wilson - Swimming, Sally Pearson - Athletics (Hurdles), Brooke Stratton - Athletics (Long Jump), Kyle Chalmers - Swimming and Stephanie Talbot - Womens Basketball, pose for photos by Sydney Harbour at a media launch to unveil the official uniforms to be worn by the Australian Olympic team during the 2016 Games, yesterday. The Rio Olympics will be held from August 5-21, 2016. — AFP

ROSBERG CAN TAKE LITTLE COMFORT FROM F1 HISTORY

LONDON: History suggests Nico Rosberg is a solid bet for the Formula One world championship after his dominant start to the season, but the German would be wise to ignore the statisticians and be very wary of Mercedes team mate Lewis Hamilton.

Rosberg's triumph in Sunday's Chinese Grand Prix made him the seventh driver since 1950 to start a campaign with three straight victories.

Adding in the three he won at the tail-end of 2015, Rosberg also became the fourth ever to rack up six Formula One world championship race wins in a row. All those who previously achieved such winning streaks went on to win the title that season. The caveat is that 2016 has a record 21 races and Mercedes gives its drivers equal status-and none of the drivers who enjoyed such hot streaks in the past had a team mate like Hamilton.

The Briton is a triple world champion, who has beaten Rosberg in the end of season standings every year since he arrived at Mercedes in 2013. His 43 career grand prix victories, compared to Rosberg's 17, puts him third on the all-time list of winners behind Michael Schumacher and Alain Prost.

Rosberg is the most successful driver never to have won a title, having now overtaken Britain's Stirling Moss who was overall runner-up four times in the 1950s.

LONGEST SEASON

When Italian Alberto Ascari (1953) and Argentine Juan Manuel Fangio (1954, 1957) won the first three races of the season there were eight or nine rounds.

Even seven times world champion Schumacher, Rosberg's compatriot who won three races in a row at the start of the 1994, 2000 and 2004 seasons, only had a maximum of 18 races to contend with and just 16 in 1994. In that sense, Rosberg's season has barely started and he knows it, even if he is 36 points ahead of Hamilton. "Six wins, that doesn't count for me because three were last year. So I just think about the three wins this year," said the German after another dominant afternoon in China. "But it's early days. Three races is just a small handful and we have 18 to go. It's the longest season in F1 history and my team mate is dear Lewis and he's going to push like hell-like always."

"It's been tough to beat him in previous years and it's not going to be any different this year... he's the benchmark."

CALCULATING HAMILTON

Both have only to look to 2014 to see how the situation can change-even if that season had the novelty of double points for the final race.

Rosberg, whose Finnish father Keke won the 1982 title with one win all year, led by 29 points after the Belgian Grand Prix in August 2014 but Hamilton then reeled off five wins in a row on his way to the championship.

The Briton had 10 wins last year and 11 in 2014 compared to Rosberg's six and five respectively. "I need to win all 18 races," Hamilton said after China, but the champion has always been better at driving than doing the mathematics. With 25 points for a win and 18 for second place, there is everything to play for.—Reuters

WARRIORS MARCH ON AS RAPTORS, MAVS FIGHT BACK

OAKLAND: As Stephen Curry emphatically waved his arms to ignite the crowd and coached from the bench when he could do little else, Klay Thompson and the Golden State Warriors' supporting cast picked up the slack for their absent NBA MVP to hold off the Houston Rockets 115-106 on Monday night and take a 2-0 lead in their playoff series. Thompson scored 34 points and dished out five assists for the defending champions, playing without Curry because of an injured right ankle. Curry cut short his pregame warmup routine after appearing to be in discomfort as he was shooting while putting little pressure on the tender ankle. Andre Iguodala, last year's Finals MVP, added 18 points with four 3-pointers and Draymond Green had 12 points, 14 rebounds and eight assists. Now, Curry has until Thursday's Game 3 in Houston to get healthy. James Harden had 28 points and 11 assists to lead the Rockets, losers of six straight and 14 of 15 to Golden State. He made 13 of 15 free throws after not attempting one in the opener.

MAVERICKS 85, THUNDER 84

A putback at the buzzer by Oklahoma City's Steven Adams that would have won the game was disallowed upon review, and Dallas defeated the Thunder 85-84 to even the Western Conference playoff series at one win apiece. Dallas had been embarrassed 108-70 in the opener on Saturday, but the Mavericks held Oklahoma City to 33.7 percent shooting on Monday. Raymond Felton scored 21 points and Dirk Nowitzki added 17 for the Mavericks. Deron Williams, declared doubtful on Sunday with a left abdominal strain, scored 13 points, 11 in the game's first 5 minutes. Kevin Durant scored 21 points for Oklahoma City, but he made just 7 of 33 shots in one of the worst postseason shooting performances of his career. Game 3 is Thursday in Dallas.

RAPTORS 98, PACERS 87

Jonas Valanciunas had 23 points and 15 rebounds and Kyle Lowry had 18 points, nine assists and seven rebounds as Toronto snapped its postseason losing streak at seven games. The Raptors had not won a playoff game since a 115-113 home victory over Brooklyn on April 30, 2014. Corey Joseph scored 16 points, Patrick Patterson added 14 and DeMar DeRozan had 10 as the Raptors evened the first-round series at 1-1. Paul George scored 28 points and Monta Ellis had 15 for the Pacers, who host Game 3 on Thursday night. Lowry and DeRozan both struggled with their shooting in Saturday's Game 1 loss, combining to make eight of 32 attempts. Neither was particularly sharp in this one, with Lowry making four of 13 and DeRozan making five of 18. —AP



OAKLAND: Golden State Warriors' Klay Thompson, left, shoots over Houston Rockets' Dwight Howard during the second half in Game 2 of a first-round NBA basketball playoff series Monday, in Oakland, Calif. The Warriors won 115-106. — AP



TORONTO: Cory Joseph #10 of the Toronto Raptors drives to the basket as Ty Lawson #10 of the Indiana Pacers defends in the second half of Game Two of the Eastern Conference Quarterfinals during the 2016 NBA Playoffs at the Air Canada Centre on Monday in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. — AFP

SOUTH AFRICA PLAYERS AGAINST DAY-NIGHT TEST

MELBOURNE: South Africa are reluctant to play a day-night test during their tour of Australia as they have no experience with the pink ball, the Proteas' players association chief has said.

South Africa will tour Australia in a three-test series in the home summer and Cricket Australia announced last year that they wanted one of the fixtures to be a day-night match. Australia hosted New Zealand in the first day-night test in November and while the match drew huge crowds and big television audiences players on both sides complained that the ball was hard to see at times.

The pink ball has been developed for day-night test cricket, replacing the traditional red ball which becomes too difficult for batsmen to see after dark.

"Our players are not in favour of playing the game under those conditions," South African players' association Chief Executive Tony Irish told The Australian newspaper. "The main reason is we feel disadvantaged. Not one of our players who will compete in that test has played test match cricket, or any cricket, with a pink ball."

"The reluctance to play is a sign of how much importance the South African players place on the series against Australia," Irish added. New Zealand players had similar misgivings about last year's fixture in Adelaide but were given a A\$1 million (\$777,000) sweetener by Cricket Australia to commit. Organisers hailed the test a success, despite Australia wrapping up victory in three days.—Reuters

CAS TO HOLD HEARINGS IN MAY IN RUSSIAN DOPING CASES

LAUSANNE: The Court of Arbitration for Sport will hold hearings next month in the doping cases of 12 Russian track and field athletes hoping to compete at the Olympics. Verdicts are expected a few weeks later, CAS secretary general Matthieu Reeb told The Associated Press on Monday.

The highest court in sports took over the cases because Russia's track and field federation was suspended by the IAAF in November after allegations of

state-sponsored doping made by a World Anti-Doping Agency panel.

The athletes need two legal victories to be eligible for the Rio de Janeiro Games in August: At their doping cases with CAS and by the IAAF reinstating its Russian member federation in time.

The cases include former world heptathlon champion Tatyana Chernova and five race walkers who tested positive for EPO on the same day last June at the national training center at Saransk.

In some cases, athletes have agreed to a fast-track single CAS hearing - which could be held in London, Lausanne or Moscow - without an appeal stage. "That would be the best option to be ready for the decision on time before the (Olympic) selection date," Reeb said on the sidelines of the SportAccord conference. Athletes sanctioned at a first hearing would be unlikely to have a full appeal heard before the Summer Games open on

August 5. But they could seek an interim ruling which could freeze any ban and allow them to compete, Reeb said. The IAAF has said it expects to decide on Russia's status by early June. Russian sports minister Vitaly Mutko and IAAF President Sebastian Coe both attended the conference Monday but did not meet.

"This is the person I would like to meet," Mutko told reporters before leaving to return to Moscow, where he will

host FIFA President Gianni Infantino on Tuesday. Coe declined to speak with reporters when he left a meeting of Summer Games sports federations. Mutko did get a meeting he requested with World Anti-Doping Agency leaders. WADA has stripped official working status from the Russian anti-doping agency and accredited testing laboratory in Moscow. "We are fulfilling the WADA recommendations," Mutko said through a translator, citing a positive meeting. — AP

BANNED UMPIRE OF US OPEN SUSPENDED FOR 10 YEARS

LONDON: A Croatian umpire who officiated at the U.S. Open while serving a 12-month suspension has been banned for 10 years, the International Tennis Federation (ITF) said yesterday.

Denis Pitner was suspended by the ITF last August, but went on to work as a linesman at the US Open in September, due to what The United States Tennis Association (USTA) said was a "flaw" in their system.

The ITF said in a statement that Pitner had now been banned until 2026 after being found guilty of offences, including his failure to notify the USTA that his certification had been suspended prior to the US Open. He was also found guilty of misrepresentation in officiating at the 2016 Qatar

Open and in an application to officiate at Wimbledon. Pitner was originally suspended after sending information about a player to a coach during a tournament and regularly logging on to a betting account from which bets were placed on tennis matches.

The USTA said in February that Pitner had already picked up his accreditation to work at the U.S. Open before they were notified of his ban. They said they would be investigating why his credentials to work at the tournament were not later cancelled. Tennis launched an independent review panel (IRP) last January after widespread allegations of corruption in the sport. It will take at least a year to complete its investigations. — Reuters

CAPITALS TAKE 3-0 LEAD IN SERIES WITH FLYERS

WASHINGTON: The Wells Fargo Center erupted after a moving tribute and spirited play from the home team led to a first-minute goal Monday. However, the Washington Capitals weathered the early storm, dominated the special teams battle yet again, got great goaltending from Braden Holtby and beat the Philadelphia Flyers 6-1, putting a 3-0 stranglehold on the Eastern Conference first-round playoff matchup.

"It's not over yet," said captain Alexander Ovechkin, whose three-point night pushed him ahead of Dale Hunter for the most playoff points (73) in Capitals franchise history. "We have to forget about it and move forward."

It is the first time the Capitals ever held a 3-0 lead in a best-of-seven playoff series, and they can thank their special teams. Washington, the league's best team, got five goals on the man advantage, bumping their series total up to 8-for-17 on the power play. Meanwhile, with the help of Holtby, who made 31 saves, the Caps held the Flyers scoreless on five power plays. Philadelphia is now 0-for-13 with the man advantage. "The power play has lots of confidence," Washington coach Barry Trotz said. "And they (the Flyers) give us lots of practice."

The Capitals led 2-1 after two periods after Ovechkin beat Steve Mason with a wrist shot from the right circle 8:50 into the middle frame. The Caps put the game away in the third. Evgeny Kuznetsov took advantage of a generous bounce off a Justin Williams clearing attempt to put the Capitals up 3-1 at 1:58 of the third period just before a slashing penalty to Brayden Schenn was coming to an end. The puck was being wrapped around the boards and squirted right in front of Mason, allowing Kuznetsov to score in tight.

"It's the first time it's happened to us in a long time," Flyers coach Dave Hakstol said. "It took the wind out of our sails. We just weren't able to recover from that." John Carlson, who had two assists, then beat Mason with a slap shot on the power play with 12:23 to play, pushing the lead to 4-1.

Flyers forward Pierre-Edouard

Bellemare was issued a five-minute major penalty and a game misconduct for hitting Dmitry Orlov from behind with 7:43 left. A melee ensued, and it ended with misconducts to both sides and Flyers fans throwing onto the ice bracelets that were handed out before the game. Ovechkin scored on the ensuing power play, upping the lead to 5-1. Fans threw more bracelets onto the ice after the goal, and the Flyers were given a two-minute delay-of-game penalty. "Whatever, I love Philly fans," said winger Ryan White, who received a 10-minute misconduct in the scrum and earlier knocked Washington defenseman Brooks Orpik from the game with a second-period hit against the boards. "I'd have done it, too." His teammate, Wayne Simmonds, didn't share the same sentiment. "I know they're upset in that situation," he said. "But that can't happen." Jay Beagle got in on the fun, adding the fourth power-play goal of the period. By that point, much of the crowd had left and there weren't many bracelets left to throw. "Obviously we pulled the game away and they weren't interested in playing anymore," Trotz said. "I just thought it wasn't good for the game. Plain and simple. I don't think it displays our game very well."

The Flyers came out attacking from the opening faceoff after an emotional tribute honoring their late chairman, Ed Snider. The Wells Fargo Center crowd was electric, and the Flyers responded by scoring 57 seconds into the game. A point shot by Flyers defenseman Brandon Manning through traffic ended up on the stick of Michael Raffl, who beat Holtby to give the Flyers an early 1-0 lead.

However, Simmonds took the energy out of the building 4:28 into the period by taking a holding minor that put the Flyers' penalty kill to work. Washington's power play stayed hot, scoring 15 seconds into the man-advantage when Marcus Johansson redirected a shot past Mason, who finished with 21 saves, to even the score at 1-1. "We stayed to our gameplan and script," Trotz said. "We took their best punch." — Reuters



CINCINNATI: Jordan Pacheco #15 of the Cincinnati Reds doubles in the sixth inning of the game against the Colorado Rockies at Great American Ball Park on April 18, 2016 in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Rockies defeated the Reds 5-1. — AFP

STORY'S HOMER STARTS ROCKIES' SURGE TO 5-1 WIN OVER REDS

CINCINNATI: Trevor Story's solo homer snapped an eighth-inning tie, Jordan Lyles got his first victory in nearly a year and the Colorado Rockies beat the Cincinnati Reds 5-1 Monday night. Story added to his incredible rookie start, connecting on the first pitch from Ross Ohlendorf (2-2) for his NL-leading eighth homer in only 13 games. Ben Paulsen completed the rally with a three-run homer off Jumbo Diaz. Lyles (1-1) allowed four hits and one unearned run in seven innings for his first win since April 23 last year. He missed most of 2015 with injuries and had been 0-5 in his last eight starts with an 8.35 ERA.

METS 5, PHILLIES 2

David Wright homered twice for his first two RBIs this season as New York went deep four times. Noah Syndergaard (2-0) struck out eight in seven innings and threw 17 of his 94 pitches at least 99.5 mph. He allowed one run and five hits with two walks while bringing his strikeout total to 29 through three starts. He has a 0.90 ERA. Lucas Duda and Neil Walker hit consecutive homers off David Hernandez in the eighth. New York has won four of five following a four-game skid that produced a 2-5 start. Jerad Eickhoff (1-2) gave up two runs and five hits in seven innings with nine strikeouts.

MARLINS 6, NATIONALS 1

Jose Fernandez overcame early wildness and regained his winning touch at home. Fernandez (1-1) threw 54 pitches in the first two innings but didn't allow a hit until the fifth. He lasted six innings and improved to 18-1 at Marlins Park, with the lone loss in his previous home start.

Washington's Bryce Harper went 0 for 2 with a sacrifice fly. He had homered in his previous four games. Giancarlo Stanton benefited from the new, cozier dimensions at Marlins Park when he homered near the 407-foot sign in center in the fifth. Last year the ball would have been off the wall. Tanner Roark (1-2) gave up five runs - four earned - and seven hits in six innings. The Nationals have lost two in a row after starting 9-1.

BLUE JAYS 4, RED SOX 3

Russell Martin hit a two-run single against Craig Kimbrel, who walked Troy Tulowitzki with the bases loaded to force in the tying run. The rally began when when Ezequiel Carrera reached second base against Koji Uehara (0-1) after Josh Rutledge's throwing error on his infield hit to third. J.A. Happ (2-0) gave up one run and four hits in seven-plus innings in the Patriots' Day morning game. Drew Storen got three outs for his first save despite giving up Travis Shaw's RBI double and Hanley Ramirez's two-out, RBI single. Storen then struck out pinch-hitter David Ortiz, who

took a 93 mph sinker with a 2-2 count for a called third strike.

CUBS 5, CARDINALS 0

John Lackey struck out 11 in seven innings against his former team and had an RBI single, leading Chicago over St. Louis. Jayson Heyward, playing at Busch Stadium for the first time since leaving to sign with Chicago, was 0 for 4 at the plate, made two nice catches in right field and was booed throughout. Dexter Fowler homered for the second time in three days for the Cubs, a major league-best 10-3 and off to their best start since 1970. Chicago has won 15 of its last 16 regular-season road games, going 6-1 this year. Lackey (3-0) allowed four hits. Mike Leake (0-2) yielded four runs - three earned - in seven innings in his home debut for the Cardinals.

ANGELS 7, WHITE SOX 0

Hector Santiago matched a career high with 10 strikeouts over seven crisp innings, and Los Angeles roughed up Chicago lefty Carlos Rodon. Kole Calhoun, Andrelton Simmons and Geovany Soto hit consecutive RBI singles during a five-run first, matching the Angels' season high for runs in an entire game. Rodon (1-2) got only one out before he was pulled. The No. 3 pick in the 2014 amateur draft allowed six hits and walked two in the shortest of his 29 major league appearances. Simmons and C.J. Cron each had three hits as the Angels rebounded from a weekend sweep by the Twins.

Santiago (1-0), traded from the White Sox to the Angels in 2013, yielded two hits and walked three. Greg Mahle and Mike Morin finished the three-hitter for Los Angeles' first shutout of the season.

TWINS 7, BREWERS 4, 6 INNINGS

Miguel Sano and Byung Ho Park homered, and Minnesota had a season-best 14 hits against Milwaukee in a game that was shortened to six innings because of rain. After losing their first nine games this season, the Twins have won four straight. Every Minnesota starter had a hit to support Phil Hughes (1-2), who allowed three earned runs and six hits with six strikeouts in an abbreviated complete game. Joe Mauer's RBI double in the sixth pushed him past Harmon Killebrew for fifth in Twins history with 1,712 hits. Chase Anderson (1-1) gave up five runs, four earned, and 11 hits in five innings for the Brewers, who have lost four of five. The game was called after a delay of 2 hours, 6 minutes.

DIAMONDBACKS 9, GIANTS 7, 11 INNINGS

Jake Lamb hit a tying homer with two outs in the ninth inning and doubled home an insurance run in the 11th, rallying Arizona past San Francisco.

Phil Gosselin scored on Jean Segura's go-ahead infield single with two outs in the 11th. Lamb, who homered off closer Santiago Casilla two innings earlier, made it a two-run cushion with his RBI double. Segura and Lamb had three hits apiece. Welington Castillo homered and drove in two runs for Arizona in a game that ended 9 minutes shy of midnight on the West Coast.

Rubby De La Rosa (1-3), scratched from his scheduled start in this series opener after coming out of the bullpen over the weekend, struck out three for the win. Brad Ziegler earned his third save this season and 31st consecutive overall - an ongoing franchise record. Gosselin reached on a leadoff single against Chris Heston (1-1). — AP



PHILADELPHIA: Jay Beagle #83 of the Washington Capitals scores as Shayne Gostisbehere #53 of the Philadelphia Flyers defends in Game Three of the Eastern Conference Quarterfinals during the 2016 NHL Stanley Cup Playoffs at Wells Fargo Center on Monday in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Washington Capitals defeated the Philadelphia Flyers 6-1. — AFP

MLB results/standings

Toronto 4, Boston 3; NY Mets 5, Philadelphia 2; Colorado 5, Cincinnati 1; Miami 6, Washington 1; Chicago Cubs 5, St. Louis 0; LA Angels 7, Chicago White Sox 0; Minnesota 7, Milwaukee 4 (6 innings); Arizona 9, San Francisco 7 (11 innings).

American League

Eastern Division

	W	L	PCT	GB
Baltimore	8	3	.727	-
Toronto	7	7	.500	2.5
Boston	6	6	.500	2.5
NY Yankees	5	6	.455	3
Tampa Bay	5	7	.417	3.5

Central Division

Kansas City	8	4	.667	-
Detroit	7	4	.636	0.5
Chicago White Sox	8	5	.615	0.5
Cleveland	5	5	.500	2
Minnesota	4	9	.308	4.5

Western Division

Texas	7	6	.538	-
LA Angels	6	7	.462	1
Oakland	6	7	.462	1
Seattle	5	7	.417	1.5
Houston	5	8	.385	2

National League

Eastern Division

Washington	9	3	.750	-
NY Mets	6	6	.500	3
Philadelphia	6	8	.429	4
Miami	4	7	.364	4.5
Atlanta	3	9	.250	6

Central Division

Chicago Cubs	10	3	.769	-
Pittsburgh	7	6	.538	3
St. Louis	7	6	.538	3
Cincinnati	6	7	.462	4
Milwaukee	5	8	.385	5

Western Division

Colorado	8	5	.615	-
LA Dodgers	8	5	.615	-
San Francisco	7	7	.500	1.5
Arizona	6	8	.429	2.5
San Diego	4	9	.308	4

US RELEASES THREE FIFA GUILTY PLEA TRANSCRIPTS

NEW YORK: A US judge released Monday transcripts of guilty pleas from three prominent defendants in the sweeping FIFA corruption investigation who confessed to crimes and agreed to pay \$37.5 million in compensation.

Former FIFA vice president Jeffrey Webb, Argentinian-Italian marketing executive Alejandro Burzaco and Brazilian intermediary Jose Margulies pled guilty last year to racketeering, wire fraud and money laundering conspiracies. US prosecutors have in total accused 40 officials and marketing executives of soliciting and receiving tens of millions of dollars in bribes and kickbacks in a case that has sparked an unprecedented crisis at FIFA.

The transcripts released Monday

show three of them expressing regret and suggesting that bribes were standard practice. All three, who are confined to US house arrest, will be sentenced for corruption in New York in June. "I abused my position to obtain bribes and kickbacks for my personal benefit," Webb, who suffers from a heart condition, told the judge in pleading guilty to seven counts and confessing to enriching himself from 2012-2014.

He said he was told in 2012 that sports marketing companies would offer "side payments" or bribes in exchange for commercial rights to soccer matches. "I believed that such offers were common in this business," he told the judge.

He confessed to receiving bribes for the sale of commercial rights for 2018

and 2022 World Cup qualifying matches, and in 2012, 2013 and 2014, including for the Copa America Centenario tournament, which will be held in June.

"I deeply regret my participation in this illegal conduct," said the dual Cayman Islands-British citizen who was educated in the United States. He confessed to conspiring to defraud his employers and conspiracy to commit money laundering offenses by transmitting money from the United States to front accounts in Panama, the Cayman Islands and elsewhere.

ELECTRONIC TAGGING

After his confession, the court last November lifted his security detail and allowed him to leave home in Georgia

seven days a week from 8 am to 5 pm, ostensibly to care for his then 18-month-old son. His wife is a doctor in Atlanta, making Webb "solely responsible" for their child, the court heard. "He is a busy man," Judge Raymond Dearie said.

His freedom of movement was limited to a 20-mile (32-kilometer) radius and Webb was still subject to electronic tagging. The documents, released following a request from US media, were still heavily redacted in parts.

Burzaco, 51, the former chairman of the board of Torneos y Competencias S.A., an Argentine sports marketing company, also voiced regret. "I was wrong," he said, confessing to paying bribes and kickbacks totaling tens of millions of dollars to multiple soccer offi-

cial to obtain marketing rights to various tournaments.

"Torneos and I profited from these payments directly and indirectly by securing these rights," he said.

Court papers complained last month that Webb kept up a millionaire lifestyle quaffing champagne, gambling and partying while under arrest at the US home he may have purchased "with bribes and kickbacks." In a letter to the US attorney's office, FIFA's lawyers requested an "immediate" audit of Webb's funds and assets, expressing concern that he may not have fully disclosed them to the court. Fifteen individuals have pleaded guilty and agreed to cooperate with US prosecutors in exchange for a possible reduction in sentence. —AFP

FORMER GERMAN FA BOSS CLEARED OVER QATAR 'CANCER' COMMENT

BERLIN: Former German Football Association (DFB) President Theo Zwanziger is free to repeat his claim that 'Qatar is a cancer on world football', a German court ruled yesterday. Zwanziger, who headed the DFB until 2012 and has been embroiled in a 2006 World Cup scandal, first made the comment last year to public broadcaster Hessischer Rundfunk, adding the decision for Qatar to host the 2022 World Cup should be reviewed as corruption allegations hit world governing body FIFA.

The Qatar Football Association (QFA) filed a lawsuit over the comment claiming it showed collective disrespect and Zwanziger should be banned from repeating it. But Dusseldorf's regional court ruled that while the comment was indeed offensive, Zwanziger was not obliged under German law to change his wording or be blocked from repeating it.

"Those criticising public abuses do not have to use the mildest possible medium to highlight their points of view," the court said in a statement. "It has nothing to do with public defamation of the Qatar Football Association, as it was about the legality and checks regarding the awarding of the 2022 World Cup to Qatar that were at

the forefront. "With respect to the sporting, financial and political importance of a football World Cup host, the purpose for the comment, which was about drawing attention to the critical working process and decision of FIFA, is set higher than the honour of the Qatar Football Association."

Zwanziger has said he was not referring to the Qatari people with his comment. FIFA, where Zwanziger was an Executive Committee member, faced the biggest crisis in its history last year with several investigations leading to dozens of individuals being arrested on corruption charges.

Switzerland's prosecutor is investigating both FIFA's decision to award the 2018 World Cup to Russia and the 2022 tournament to Qatar, a small, wealthy desert country with no real soccer tradition.

Several human rights groups have also accused Qatar of systematically abusing migrant workers rights.

Russia and Qatar have denied all wrong doing. A Frankfurt prosecutor is also formally investigating Zwanziger and other former football officials for suspected tax fraud in relation to a payment to FIFA ahead of to the 2006 World Cup in Germany. — Reuters



TURIN: Juventus celebrate after winning the Italian Serie A football match Juventus vs Palermo on Sunday at the Juventus stadium in Turin. —AFP

EVERGRANDE KEEP ASIAN HOPES ALIVE

POHANG: Guangzhou Evergrande kept their stumbling AFC Champions League title defence alive with a deserved 2-0 win over Pohang Steelers yesterday—their first victory of the competition. Chinese international striker Gao Lin set up the first goal and scored the second as Luiz Felipe Scolari's side finally got a win at the fifth attempt in Group H.

But the well-heeled Chinese domestic champions are still relying on Sydney FC beating Japan's Urawa Red Diamonds on Wednesday if they are to avoid exiting at the group stage.

The win for Evergrande, the leading lights of cashed-up China's football revolution, was their first in the Asian tournament since they won their second title in three years last November.

Evergrande were on top but wasteful in the early exchanges as ex-Spurs midfielder Paulinho passed up a string of chances, including a scuffed shot from just outside the six-yard box.

The champions' opener came in the 33rd minute, when Gao fired a raking ball to Ricardo Goulart and the Brazilian snapped up the chance from a tight angle at the back post.

Lacklustre Pohang managed little in reply and Gao doubled Evergrande's advantage two minutes after half-time when he arrowed a diagonal shot past home goalkeeper Kim Jin-Young. Evergrande should have had a third nine minutes later when substitute Li Yuanyi met a cross sweetly on the half-volley, but saw his shot creep just wide. Elsewhere a double from Brazilian striker Santos kept Suwon Samsung Bluewings's last-16 hopes alive as they beat Gamba Osaka 2-1 away in Group G. Santos scored twice in eight minutes shortly after half-time before a consolation strike from Yasuyuki Konno in the 89th minute. With the win, Suwon drew level on points with Melbourne Victory after their 3-1 loss to Sven-Goran Eriksson's Shanghai SIPG, who rubber-stamped their progression as Group G winners.

Goals from Yu Hai and former Guangzhou Evergrande players Elkeson and Dario Conca made it a straightforward night for SIPG, who have enjoyed four wins in five games.

It set up a nail-biting final round of matches as Suwon and Melbourne compete for the second spot in the group and a place in the knock-out stage. —AFP



POHANG: Kim Young-Gwon (C) of China's Guangzhou Evergrande fights for the ball with Veselinovic Lazar (top) of South Korea's Pohang Steelers during their AFC Champions League group stage football match in Pohang yesterday. —AFP

LAZIO LOOK TO HALT JUVE TITLE PARTY PREPARATIONS

MILAN: On-form Nigeria midfielder Ogenyi Onazi will join forces with German veteran Miroslav Klose today when a rejuvenated Lazio aim to put the brakes on Juventus planning for an early title party.

With Juventus nine points ahead of second-placed Napoli with five games remaining, the black and white half of Turin is preparing to break out the champagne and celebrate a record-equalling fifth consecutive Serie A title.

The only other time Juve achieved the formidable feat was in 1935, so this year's title celebrations should be something special.

Lazio coach Simone Inzaghi admits he's not getting too excited ahead of his bid for a third consecutive win since taking over, but Onazi and Klose would disagree.

The 23-year-old Nigerian was Lazio's best player on Sunday when he fired Klose's assist into the Empoli net to score his first goal of the season and secure a 2-0 win. Lazio are now only four points behind AC Milan in the first possible Europa qualifying place and Onazi said: "We're doing our best to get the Europa League spot."

It was Inzaghi's first win at the Stadio Olimpico, having begun his top flight career after the sacking of Stefano Pioli two weeks ago with a 3-0 win at Palermo.

Lost confidence has returned to the team, but

Inzaghi, the brother of former AC Milan striker and coach Filippo, admits they could come up short against a Juve side looking to stretch their unbeaten run to 24 games.

"We have to recover physically for Turin because at the end of the game some of my players had nothing left in the tank," he said.

"We're playing some good football, but it won't be easy. We'll go out to try and do our best, but Juventus have been unbeatable." An unlikely Juventus defeat would give Napoli, who host Bologna a day earlier at the San Paolo, belief that all is not lost.

But the statistics suggest Massimiliano Allegri's men are in no mood to give points away: a 4-0 rout of crisis-hit Palermo on Sunday was Juve's 22nd win in their unbeaten run of 23 games. The mood in Turin, in spite of the cruciate knee ligament injury suffered by Juve midfielder Claudio Marchisio—ruling him out for the rest of this campaign—is so positive they are already looking to next season.

DECISION

With Italy coach Antonio Conte taking up the reins at Chelsea following Euro 2016, the former Juventus handler is reportedly hoping to lure midfielder Paul Pogba and defender Leonardo Bonucci to Stamford Bridge.

Juventus CEO Beppe Marotta, however, was unequivocal, at least about French international Pogba. "We made a conscious decision last year that he (Pogba) is an important player we want to see remain at the club for the coming years," said Marotta.

Although, he added: "Obviously, sometimes you have to consider the desires of the player, but I really think he is at home with us now."

Having seen their chance of a first scudetto in 26 years slip away, Napoli will still be gunning for a win yesterday. Second spot offers automatic qualification to the Champions League and Roma are only five points away.

Roma host on-form Torino in the hope a highly-publicised spat between coach Luciano Spalletti and club legend Francesco Totti following a 3-3 draw at Atalanta does not negatively affect the dressing room.

Totti came off the bench on Sunday to hit Roma's leveller in Bergamo, but relations with Spalletti have soured in what could be the 39-year-old playmaker's 23rd and final season at the club. Meanwhile, a slip-up by Roma would boost Inter Milan's hopes they can still fight for a top-three finish to enter the Champions League at the qualifying stages. Inter, in fourth at four points behind Roma, travel to Genoa four days after a convincing 2-0 defeat of Napoli. —AFP

KLOPP CALLS FOR COOL HEADS BEFORE EVERTON CLASH

LIVERPOOL: Liverpool manager Juergen Klopp has challenged his players to keep their cool when they host Everton in the febrile environment of the Merseyside derby yesterday.

The fixture has produced more red cards - 20 - than any other since the Premier League began in 1992, but Klopp said he wanted his team to handle the emotions and pressure in a professional manner.

The German is no stranger to city rivalries. He managed Borussia Dortmund during the fiercely contested Ruhr derby games against Schalke 04 in the Bundesliga.

"Before I went to Dortmund there were lots of red cards in derbies. I don't want to see this. Not to show 'I am the man,'" Klopp told reporters yesterday.

"Maybe one or two fans want to see stuff like this, but it will never help. I understand aggressiveness only in one way, and that is being prepared to hurt yourself, not somebody else."

Liverpool face Villarreal in the semi-finals of the Europa League next week, but Klopp said his players had banished European ambitions from their minds and were concentrating on defeating their local rivals.

"Nobody in our dressing room is thinking about the Europa League," he said. Liverpool are currently eighth in the domestic standings, three places above Everton, and Klopp, who made 10 changes for their last game against Bournemouth, said he was not planning to save his best players for the semi-final first leg on April 28.

"We have a situation where we can change," he added. "We felt good before the Bournemouth game and it will be the same against Everton. No one will be rested."

"We have eight games, hopefully nine games to play. It makes no sense to push the same 11 players through all these games. "It doesn't mean we have to rest players for two weeks. If somebody thought when they saw our line-up for Bournemouth that we didn't want to win the game, then it is the biggest misunderstanding in history."

"Liverpool is a very big club. It's a big difference between seventh or sixth or fifth (in the Premier League). We need to try everything to get the best position we can get. We could be fifth." —Reuters



DOHA: Tractorsazi Tabriz' Farzad Hatami (R) vies for the ball with Al-Hilal's Saud Kariri during their AFC Champions League group stage football match in Doha yesterday. —AFP

AUBAMEYANG FIT AS DORTMUND HUNT ANFIELD CURE IN BERLIN

BERLIN: Borussia Dortmund's Thomas Tuchel says Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang will be fit for today's German Cup semi-final at Hertha Berlin as they look to heal the hurt of their Europa League exit at Liverpool.

Aubameyang has scored 37 goals in all competitions for Dortmund this season, but limped out of Monday's training with a toe injury, sparking concerns about his fitness. "Aubameyang took a hit to his toe in training, which was very painful, but it shouldn't be an issue for today," assured Tuchel, Dortmund's head coach.

Aubameyang is on an incredible goal-scoring run in the German Cup, having

scored in each of Dortmund's last seven cup games-including their 3-1 defeat to Wolfsburg in the 2015 final-dating back to the start of last season.

With Bayern Munich meeting Werder Bremen in Tuesday's other semi-final, Dortmund are determined to reach the German Cup final to exorcise the heartache of their dramatic European quarterfinal exit at Anfield.

"The set up is similar to how it was in Liverpool: it's a knock-out game, an away match, we'll be meeting a euphoric opponent, who are full of confidence from the great support of their home fans," said Tuchel.

Tuchel admits Dortmund are still pro-

cessing last Thursday's 4-3 defeat at Liverpool having thrown away a 3-1 lead. "It would be hypocritical to say that we will have been working on the Liverpool result until tomorrow-there is no medicine for that," said Tuchel.

EYES ON TITLE

"We are finding things out about ourselves and that's okay. We're on the right path to dealing with it. "Of course, after such a defeat as that, you feel bitter, but it's not the end of the world.

"It hasn't been an issue in our concrete preparations for tomorrow." Besides from Anfield, there has also been the off-field distraction of media reports that,

with a year left on his Dortmund contract, Germany midfielder Ilkay Gundogan has agreed a five-year deal to join Manchester City for next season.

Having lost last year's cup final, Dortmund are eager to beat Berlin to stay in the hunt for a title as they trail Pep Guardiola's Bayern in the German league and are currently seven points adrift with four games left.

Dortmund make the 500km (310 miles) trek to Germany's capital hoping to again head west for the final in a month's time.

Hertha are bidding to reach the final for the first time since 1993 and with a capacity crowd of 76,233 expected, their

coach Pal Dardai says 'the whole city and all the players' are up for this match.

"I expect a team from Hertha with a lot of confidence, who will defend high up the pitch," said Tuchel. "They are brave in their build-up play and from week to week they are improving their possession.

"Our goal is to be in the final and win it. "Whether this is a lesson, to learn from the Liverpool game, to play more physically, I would like to differentiate.

"It's not as though things started to unravel after the first goal in Liverpool.

"The lesson of the past few weeks after the international break is very simple: We have to play better. — AFP

POCHETTINO PROUD AS 'PERFECT' SPURS MAINTAIN TITLE CHARGE

STOKE-ON-TRENT: Tottenham Hotspur manager Mauricio Pochettino believes his side delivered the "perfect" message to Premier League leaders Leicester City after an emphatic 4-0 win at Stoke City saw them close the gap at the top of the table to five points. Leicester's 2-2 draw at home to West Ham on Sunday gave Spurs the opportunity to reduce the deficit with four games remaining and they seized it in commanding style with a fourth win in five matches thanks to two goals each from the England duo of Harry Kane and Dele Alli.

"This is our dream. We need to believe," said Pochettino, who is attempting to lead the Londoners to their first English championship since 1961. "It is good for the competition that we are in behind to try and put pressure on Leicester. I feel very proud.

"Our supporters were fantastic and they feel proud of us. I think it is an exciting moment for the club," the Argentinian added. "In football all can happen and we need to be there. If Leicester fail we need to be there. That's what we are trying to do, put the pressure on Leicester.

"The most important thing is the performance we showed was perfect. It is a big signal we are there waiting and fighting," the former Southampton manager explained. Tottenham have scored 13 goals and conceded just one in racking up 13 points out of the last possible 15.

PACK MENTALITY

Kane, who took his season's tally to 27 goals, posted a social media image of a pack of lions closing in on their prey after

Leicester had dropped two points against West Ham. "It is a good thing because it shows how this group is, how our squad is," said Pochettino.

"We can win or not, but the desire and passion we show and how we enjoy the game is fantastic."

Kane opened the scoring at the Britannia Stadium with his 23rd league goal of the season, overtaking Leicester striker Jamie Vardy's tally in the race for the league's golden boot, and believes the Foxes can still be caught. The in-form striker, 22, said: "We are not going anywhere. We scored four but could have had six or seven. It is one of our best performances all season but that's what we can do.

"We are ready to put the pressure on Leicester. We think we can do it. Leicester are five points ahead but we have closed the gap, that's all we could do."

Stoke have now won only one of their last six games as their season runs out of momentum with their hopes of qualifying for next season's Europa League almost gone. Mark Hughes, the Stoke manager, paid tribute to Tottenham and believes they can win the title.

"We are disappointed with what we produced but Spurs were very impressive," said Hughes. "They were stronger, faster and had more power in the team." "With their mentality, you wouldn't bet against them catching Leicester," added Hughes.

"On the night we were very much second-best. We need to pick ourselves up or it will be another difficult game against Manchester City on Saturday." —AFP



BARCELONA: Barcelona's Argentinian forward Lionel Messi gestures during the Spanish league football match FC Barcelona vs Valencia CF at the Camp Nou stadium in Barcelona on Sunday. — AFP

BARCA ON BRINK OF IMPLOSION ON LA LIGA SUPER WEDNESDAY

MADRID: Barcelona must reverse an amazing loss of form to win all five of their remaining La Liga games to be assured of retaining their title, starting with a trip to Deportivo la Coruna today.

The Catalan giants have taken just one point from their last four La Liga games and lost four of their last five in all competitions having previously enjoyed a 39-game unbeaten run stretching back six months.

Only Barca's superior head-to-head record separates them from their Champions League conquerers Atletico Madrid at the top of the table with Real Madrid lurking just a point further back after a run of seven straight league wins. All three face tough tests today evening of action that will go a long way to settling the title with the fixture list for all three favourable in the final four games. Barca are up first as they travel to Galicia in a desperate search to snap their worst run of league defeats in 13 years.

Coach Luis Enrique and key defender Gerard Pique insisted Barca can and will win the league if they play like they did against Valencia on Sunday despite slipping to a 2-1 defeat thanks to a mixture of bad luck, poor finishing and a brilliant goalkeeping display by Diego Alves.

"If there is a team capable of doing it and much more given what they have done, it is this Barca," said Enrique. "We don't have any margin for error, but I prefer to lose like this than win playing badly," added Pique.

DAUNTING TRIP

"Football is like this, sometimes it is marvelous, sometimes it is so cruel." However, Pique's absence at the heart of Barca's defence through suspension will be a huge loss for Enrique with Marc Bartra expected to cover in the absence of Jeremy Mathieu and Thomas Vermaelen.

Atletico face a daunting trip to Athletic Bilbao with the Basques still eyeing Champions League football next season having moved to within six points of fourth-placed Villarreal at the weekend.

A 2-1 victory at San Mames propelled Atletico towards the title two years ago and Diego Simeone's men could be further boosted by the absence of Bilbao's two top scorers this season in Ariz Aduriz and Inaki Williams through injury.

"We have the possibility to play an important game in Bilbao and continue competing in the four games left afterwards," said Simeone when quizzed on Atletico's title chances.

"It will be difficult, but we have to do what the schedule demands of us and that is win, win and win again." Atletico will be forced into at least one change as captain Gabi is suspended, but Fernando Torres will start alongside 29-goal Antoine Griezmann up front after scoring in four consecutive games for the first time since he was at Liverpool in 2010. Real will have the advantage of knowing what Barca and Atletico have done when they kick-off in the late game at home to Villarreal. Zinedine Zidane could afford the luxury of resting the likes of Sergio Ramos, Casemiro and Luka Modric for Saturday's 5-1 rout of Getafe on Saturday with all three expected to return. The much-criticised Danilo is also expected to start at right-back with Dani Carvajal a major injury doubt. There are also huge clashes at the bottom of the table with four teams separated by two points in the battle to avoid relegation. Two of them face each other as Granada host Levante on Thursday looking to open up a gap on the bottom three. Getafe go in search of their first win in 14 games at Real Sociedad, whilst Sporting Gijon look to take advantage of Sevilla's poor recent run when they host the Europa League semi-finalists at El Molinon. — AFP



STOKE-ON-TRENT: Tottenham Hotspur's English midfielder Dele Alli (2nd L) scores his team's fourth goal during the English Premier League football match between Stoke City and Tottenham Hotspur at the Britannia Stadium in Stoke-on-Trent, central England on Monday. — AFP

TROUBLED MARSEILLE DISMISS COACH MICHEL

MARSEILLE: Marseille yesterday dismissed coach Michel as they battle relegation from the French top flight and other turmoil within the club. Following constant speculation surrounding the future of the Spaniard, Marseille said they had decided to dismiss Michel and cited his conduct, "in particular over the last three weeks." "Olympique de Marseille have suspended him with immediate effect," added a club statement.

The former European champions, who are up for sale, added that Michel would be replaced until the end of the season by his assistant Franck Passi. He will be helped by club legend Basile Boli, who has been working as an ambassador for the club and has now been named "sporting coordinator".

Boli scored the winning goal for OM against AC Milan in the 1993 Champions League final, which remains the only triumph for a French club in Europe's elite competition. Passi and Boli's first job will be to lead a demoralised side into Wednesday's French Cup semi-final away to second-tier Sochaux.

"The situation is perilous, we need to be united," Passi, who previously stood in as caretaker in August following former coach Marcelo Bielsa's resignation, said at a press conference.

"We are going on a commando mission to win tomorrow (Wednesday), get to the final and save the club from relegation." Passi added that Michel's departure "had been coming for a while. I am not going to say I was surprised."

Michel, who starred as a player for Real Madrid and Spain, was appointed in August with OM in crisis following Bielsa's resignation in the wake of a 1-0 defeat to Caen on the opening night of the season.

ABJECT

However, the 53-year-old has been unable to transform the club's fortunes, and Sunday's abject 2-1 defeat at Monaco left them still just six points above the relegation zone in Ligue 1 with four games left.

They have gone 10 league games without

a win and are on a club record run of 14 matches without a victory at their Stade Velodrome home since September.

A 0-0 draw at home to Bordeaux on April 10 was pointed out to fan protests at the team's struggles that featured banners depicting goats and the Benny Hill theme tune being played from the stands.

Supporters also continued their theme of fury at the perceived apathy of owner Margarita Louis-Dreyfus, with one banner at the Velodrome reading:

"Margarita rich incompetent heiress get lost!" Louis-Dreyfus, who inherited the club after the death of her husband Robert in 2009, announced last week that she would be listening to offers to buy out her controlling stake in the 1993 Champions League winners.

There is also doubt about the future of president Vincent Labrune, with sports daily L'Equipe and other French media claiming on Tuesday that he could be replaced by local businessman Xavier Giocanti.

Giocanti is the partner of Christine Lagarde, the chief of the International Monetary Fund. However, Louis-Dreyfus denied the reports in a statement on the club's website. "I categorically refute the reports in L'Equipe about the replacement of the current president," she said, adding that they were "without foundation". —AFP



MARSEILLE: Olympique de Marseille's French new head coach Franck Passi leaves a press conference at the Robert Louis-Dreyfus training centre yesterday in Marseille. —AFP

Live Matches on TV		(Local Timings)
ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE		
West Ham United v Watford	21:45	beIN SPORTS 7 HD
Liverpool v Everton FC	22:00	beIN SPORTS 2 HD
Man United v Crystal Palace	22:00	beIN SPORTS 1 HD
SPANISH LEAGUE		
Deportivo La Coruna v Barcelona	21:00	beIN SPORTS 3 HD
Athletic de Bilbao v Atletico	21:45	beIN SPORTS 9 HD
Malaga CF v Rayo Vallecano	21:45	beIN SPORTS
Valencia C.F. v SD Eibar	21:45	beIN SPORTS
Sporting Gijon v Sevilla FC	21:45	beIN SPORTS
Real Madrid v Villarreal	23:00	beIN SPORTS 3 HD
ITALIAN CALCIO LEAGUE		
Sassuolo Calcio v Sampdoria	19:30	beIN SPORTS 6 HD
Juventus FC v SS Lazio	21:45	beIN SPORTS 4 HD
AS Roma v Torino FC	21:45	beIN SPORTS 10 HD
Udinese Calcio v Fiorentina	21:45	beIN SPORTS
Chievo Verona v Frosinone	21:45	beIN SPORTS
Genoa v Internazionale	21:45	beIN SPORTS 12 HD
Empoli v Hellas Verona	21:45	beIN SPORTS
Citta di Palermo v Atalanta	21:45	

HAGI STEPS DOWN AS COACH OF HIS OWN CLUB AFTER POOR RUN

BUCHAREST: Romania great Gheorghe 'Gica' Hagi has stepped aside as coach of his own club Viitorul Constanta at least until the end of the season after a poor run of results.

"I want to analyse the situation," 51-year-old Hagi told reporters yesterday, adding that he will be replaced by his assistant Catalin Anghel, who was coach from 2009 to 2013.

"I still don't know if I'll be here in the summer," he said regarding whether he would resume his coaching duties. Hagi, nicknamed "The Maradona of the Carpathians" and considered Romania's all-time greatest player, founded Viitorul in 2009 and still owns the club, known for nurturing young talent in the Black Sea state.

In August, Viitorul went top of the Romanian league for the first time in the club's six-year history but they have fallen away, collecting two points in their last eight games.

Viitorul's loss of form has left them in fifth spot in the table, 17 points behind leaders FC Astra.

Hagi, who won 125 caps and went to three World Cups, played for several top European clubs including Real Madrid and Barcelona. He won the UEFA Cup with Galatasaray in 2000.

Speculation over Hagi's future dominated Romanian media following the announcement he was stepping down. It was fuelled by Viitorul general manager Cristian Bivolaru, who told local media that Russian club Rubin

Kazan wanted to invest in the Romanian outfit's youth academy and were again trying to tempt Hagi to take charge of their own team.

"It's a long-term project, they're willing to invest in the academy. They're a big Russian club who want to win the championship, and they want to invest a lot in this project..." Bivolaru was quoted as saying by ProSport yesterday. Rubin were not immediately available to comment.

Reports in Russian and Romanian media in December said Hagi had turned down a lucrative offer to become Rubin coach for 4 million euros (\$4.55 million) a year. Rubin put assistant coach Valery Chaliy in temporary charge of the first team after Rinat Bilyaletdinov's contract was terminated by mutual consent in September.

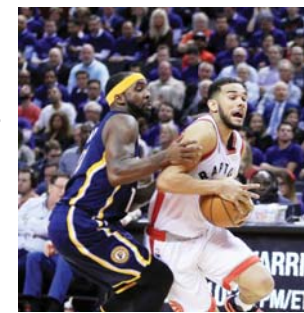
Bivolaru added that a major Turkish club also wanted Hagi as coach, with the local Dolce Sport TV station reporting that Galatasaray were keen to have him back for a third time.

Galatasaray were not immediately available to comment.

On March 1 the Turkish champions appointed their youth coach Orhan Atik to manage the first team until the end of the season when Mustafa Denizli quit three months after taking the job. Former Romania captain Hagi was in charge of the 21-times Turkish champions in 2004-2005 and 2010-2011. — Reuters

Sports

Warriors march
on as Raptors,
Mavs fight back



Troubled Marseille
dismiss coach
Michel



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2016

STORY'S HOMER STARTS ROCKIES' SURGE TO 5-1 WIN OVER REDS Page 17



MUNICH: Bremen's Florian Grillitsch, left, and Bayern's Juan Bernat challenge for the ball during the German soccer cup (DFB Pokal) semi final match between FC Bayern Munich and SV Werder Bremen at the Allianz Arena stadium in Munich, Germany, yesterday. — AP

MUELLER GOALS SEND BAYERN IN GERMAN CUP FINAL

MUNICH: Bayern Munich took a step towards winning the treble as Thomas Mueller netted twice in yesterday's 2-0 semi-final win over Werder Bremen to reach the German Cup final. Mueller now has 31 goals in all competitions, four in the Cup, as the 26-year-old headed home in the first half, then converted a penalty after a cynical dive from Arturo Vidal.

Bayern secured their passage to their 21st final-on May 21 at Berlin's Olympic Stadium as they starved Bremen of the ball with 70 percent possession. Nevertheless, the match-winner was far from pleased with Bayern's performance. "The most important thing was going through, but we made too many mistakes and it wasn't a pleasant game for us," said Mueller. "We have played better, but it's a nice

feeling to be in the final." The Bavarian giants will face either Borussia Dortmund or Hertha Berlin, who meet in Wednesday's other semi, having already lifted the trophy a record 17 times. It keeps Bayern on course for a repeat of their 2013 treble in what is Pep Guardiola's third and final year of his Munich contract before coaching Manchester City next season.

Bayern face a busy few weeks. They play Atletico Madrid away in a week's time in the Champions League semi-final with the return leg in Munich on May 3. They are at Hertha in Berlin on Saturday, with a seven point lead in the Bundesliga and four games left, as they bid to become the first club to win four consecutive Bundesliga titles. This was the clash of Germany's two best cup teams with Bayern

and Bremen having won the trophy 23 times between them. In the last 13 years, Bayern have won the Cup seven times. Guardiola named a near full-strength team in front of a crowd of 75,000 although Vidal, Douglas Costa and Thiago Alcantara were on the bench. The hosts needed just half an hour to take the lead at Munich's Allianz Arena when Mueller was left unmarked in the middle of the area to head home Xabi Alonso's corner.

But Bremen wasted one of two first-half chances with 40 minutes gone. Bayern's Manuel Neuer mistimed his clearance straight to Sambou Yatabare, but the Mali midfielder failed with his attempt to lob the Germany goalkeeper. Neuer had to pick the ball out of the Bayern net early in the second half when Bayern defender David Alaba

lobbed his own goalkeeper, but the referee whistled for a foul by Fin Bartel.

Vidal replaced France winger Kingsley Coman on 67 minutes and the Chile international helped win Bayern a penalty just three minutes later. Bremen defender Janek Sternberg tackled the box-to-box midfielder and Vidal went down in the area, but replays showed he dived without there being any contact.

Nevertheless, referee Tobias Stieler pointed to the spot and Mueller drilled home the penalty. Bremen can now concentrate on surviving the relegation battle as they remain in the Bundesliga's bottom three, two points from safety, ahead of Friday's north German derby at Hamburg. — AFP

ANITA PEGS MAN CITY BACK TO GIVE NEWCASTLE HOPE



NEWCASTLE: Sergio Aguero's 100th Premier League goal was not enough for Manchester City to force victory as they were held to a 1-1 draw at relegation-threatened Newcastle United yesterday.

Aguero, City's top scorer, claimed his landmark goal after 14 minutes, but Manuel Pellegrini's side were pegged back before half-time as Dutch international Vurnon Anita found the net for the first time in more than two years to earn a deserved point for Rafael Benitez's side. City remain third, a point ahead of Arsenal and five points above Manchester United, trailing leaders Leicester City by 12 points. A draw left Newcastle two points adrift of safety, but they will retain hope of pulling off an unlikely escape in their remaining four games if they can reproduce this level of performance.

They were indebted to a fine display from Karl Darlow, their third-choice goalkeeper, who kept out efforts from Jesus Navas, Aguero and Kevin De Bruyne in a nervy sec-

ond half. The hosts might even have won it at the death when substitute Georginio Wijnaldum had a close-range shot blocked by City goalkeeper Joe Hart.

City, who recalled captain Vincent Kompany after a month out with a calf injury, went ahead in the 14th minute, though the hosts had justifiable claims that the effort should not have stood.

After he was fouled by Andros Townsend, Aleksandar Kolarov swung a free-kick into the Newcastle area from City's left. The officials missed Aguero returning from an offside position as the set-piece was taken and the Argentinian rose to send a glancing near-post header beyond Darlow from six yards out.

STUNNING LEVELLER

It has taken Aguero just 147 goals to score 100 Premier League goals, with only Alan Shearer—who was at St James' Park as part of the BBC's radio match commentary team—reaching the landmark more quickly, in 124 appearances.

De Bruyne came close to doubling the advantage when the Belgian was gifted possession by Jamaal Lascelles, but the prolific midfielder shot narrowly wide.

Moussa Sissoko should have drawn the hosts level just before the half-hour, but the Frenchman lacked conviction after intercepting



ST JAMES PARK: Newcastle's Jack Colback, background, and Manchester City's Raheem Sterling battle for the ball during their English Premier League soccer match at St James' Park, Newcastle, England, yesterday. — AP

a Kolarov pass and sprinting 50 yards, sending a tame shot straight at Hart from just inside the area.

But Sissoko did not have to wait long to make amends as he played a significant role in the 31st-minute equaliser, sweeping a ball out to Anita, who had advanced to the edge of the City area from his auxiliary right-back role.

The Dutchman cut inside Kolarov onto his left foot and curled in a low shot that beat Hart and found the net via the foot of the left-hand post for a stunning leveller.

City started the second period

on the front foot, with Aguero having a penalty claimed waved away by well-placed referee Kevin Friend after the forward went down in a penalty area tussle with Chancel Mbemba. Darlow then had to dive full-stretch to his right to claw away an angled drive from Navas at a swiftly taken free-kick, as the visitors piled on the pressure in their attempts to retake the lead.

They failed to do so, in the process seeing their 12-game winning run against the Tyneside club brought to an end to leave their top-four hopes very much in the balance. — AFP

NAPOLI THUMP BOLOGNA TO MAKE JUVE WAIT

ROME: Dries Mertens scored a hat-trick and Manolo Gabbiadini notched a brace as Napoli kept their faint Serie A title hopes alive as Bologna were thrashed 6-0 yesterday.

David Lopez rounded off the scoring a minute from time with a fortuitous goal as his prod rebounded off Bologna goalkeeper Antonio Mirante, hit him in the chest and the bounced in. Juventus could have won a fifth straight title with victory over Lazio today had Napoli lost.

That would have given the Old Lady of Turin a 12 point lead with just four matches left, and as they have the edge on the southerners in head-to-head record, they would have been champions.

Instead, Napoli live to fight another day as Gabbiadini struck twice in the first half, cutting Juve's lead, for 24 hours at least, to six points.

Gabbiadini fired home from the centre of the box from Mertens's pass after just 10 minutes.

He doubled Napoli's advantage from the penalty spot 10 minutes before the break after Kevin Constant had brought down Jose Callejon. Any chance of a Bologna comeback was snuffed out just before the hour mark when Marek Hamsik teed up Mertens to fire home from the left side of the box.

Napoli added three more goals in the final 10 minutes. Omar El Kaddouri teed up Mertens for his second and the Dutchman scored his hat-trick two minutes from the end with a rasping drive into the top corner from outside the box.

Lopez had set up Mertens for his third and the Dutchman returned the favour in the final minute. What was most impressive about Napoli's performance was the fact top scorer Gonzalo Higuain was still absent, sitting out the last of his three-game ban.

Gabbiadini proved an able understudy for the Argentine with Mertens's second half showing particularly eye-catching. The win moved Napoli eight points clear of third-placed Roma, who host Torino on Wednesday before entertaining Napoli next Monday.

That match could have a crucial bearing on which of the two joins Juventus in direct qualification for the Champions League group stages and which team must negotiate a potentially tricky play-off, providing Inter Milan or Fiorentina don't make a late run for a top three berth. — AFP

Kuwait Times BUSINESS

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RIYADH: A Saudi couple looks at jewelry during the Riyadh international Jewelry exhibition in the Saudi capital Riyadh. — AFP

JEWELS STILL SPARKLE; SAUDI FACES ECONOMIC CHALLENGE

'WHEN SOMEONE LOSES MONEY, SOMEONE ELSE MAKES MONEY'

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia may be facing its biggest economic challenge in years but there's little talk of falling oil revenues or austerity at Riyadh's glittering annual Jewelry Salon. Women in traditional black abaya robes stroll through the showrooms at a luxury Riyadh hotel, as muscle-bound security men patrol. Hanging unobtrusively in a small glass display case is a chunky 30-carat emerald cut set of diamond earrings offered by London's Moussaieff, one of more than 20 vendors at this year's show, which began on Monday.

The price: \$3.5 million. "The rich are always rich," says Leslie Kegg, a Moussaieff salesman. "If you have so much money you're never affected. When someone else loses money, someone else makes money." The biggest economy in the Arab world, Saudi Arabia has for decades enjoyed a windfall from its massive oil industry. But the global collapse in crude prices over the last two years—from more than \$100 a barrel in early 2014 to around \$40 this month—has put pressure on Riyadh to cut spending and to intensify its efforts to find economic alternatives.

Riyadh posted a record budget deficit in 2015. With another \$87 billion shortfall projected for this year, the government took the unprecedented

step of raising retail fuel prices by up to 80 percent in December and cutting subsidies for electricity, water and other services. It has also delayed some major projects and mooted privatizations and the imposition of taxes. On Monday the kingdom is to announce its "vision" for future social and economic development, including a "National Transformation Program" aimed at diversifying the economy away from oil, which still accounts for more than 70 percent of state revenues.

None of that was of much concern to Nouf Albaiz as she and two other young women browsed the layered necklaces, chunky rings and diamond-encrusted watches on display. Albaiz professed a relatively modest jewelry budget of 5,000 riyals (\$1,300) for any purchase she might make, and said the total amount that she and her companions spend annually on jewelry "depends on the weddings" they have to attend.

'The dancing diamond'

Marwan Meneimneh, Saudi marketing manager of Qatari group Ali bin Ali, said the impact of the economic situation has been minimal. "We're still doing fine," he said, among stands displaying

international brands distributed by the group. "For us it's not about sales. It's about being present and recruiting more clients," said Meneimneh, whose firm is in its fourth year at the show. "There's ups and downs," and for this year he and his colleagues are "crossing our fingers". Kegg, of Moussaieff, said he is "hopeful" for this year, as Saudis holding weddings in London provide a regular clientele. "We already have a very big customer base," he said.

The event, which runs until Thursday, was preceded by a Jewellery Salon in Jeddah which Kegg said also went well. "We can't complain," he said. Neither could Nouf Algebewi, helping her aunt at their small and friendly corner kiosk in the back of the hall. "We have the dancing diamond," said the cheerful Algebewi, holding up a shimmering little earring. "It's not that expensive. This is only 1,600" riyals (\$415), she said. Algebewi said her aunt's designer products are normally sold online, for the rich as well as the not-so-rich. She expressed confidence that the two-year-old business will "of course" prosper as spending on luxuries continues despite the kingdom's broader economic challenges. — AFP



RIYADH: Saudi women stand next to a model during the Riyadh international Jewelry exhibition in the Saudi capital Riyadh. — AFP

CHINA SEEKS TO ESTABLISH OWN GOLD BENCHMARK

SHANGHAI: China announced its first-ever "fix" for the gold price yesterday, as the world's biggest producer and consumer of the yellow metal seeks to establish its own benchmark. The Shanghai Gold Exchange set the price for 99.99 percent gold at 256.92 yuan (\$39.71) per gram, it said on its website. It was marginally higher than the international price at the time, according to figures from goldprice.org. "China needs a gold benchmark that reflects local market flows and reduces gold's price dependency on the US dollar," Roland Wang, managing director of industry group the World Gold Council in China, said in a statement.

"An Asian-focused, yuan-denominated benchmark will significantly increase the liquidity and efficiency of the gold price," he said. The industry group has put mainland China's demand for gold at 984.5 tons last year, with jewelry at 783.5 tons, and bars and coins at 201 tons. Analysts said denominating the gold fix in China's own yuan currency is aimed at increasing international use of the unit. "Having more sway in the gold market befits the long-term strategy of expanding the yuan's role as a global currency," Jiang Shu, chief analyst at Shandong Gold Financial Holdings Capital Management, told Bloomberg News.

China keeps a tight grip on inflows and outflows of the yuan, but says it is seeking to eventually make the currency fully convertible.



BEIJING: People wait to cross an intersection in Beijing. China's economy expanded at its slowest rate in seven years during the first quarter, the government said, but forecast-beating readings for March raised hopes a growth slowdown in the Asian giant may be bottoming out. — AFP

Head of the Shanghai Gold Exchange, Jiao Jinpu, said in December that launch of a yuan-dominated benchmark for gold would promote "internationalization" of its business. The

exchange will also study yuan-dominated benchmark prices for other precious metals including silver, platinum and palladium, according to domestic media reports. — AFP

OIL PRODUCTION FREEZE WOULD PROLONG SANCTIONS, IRAN SAYS

TEHRAN: Iran will not accept an oil output freeze because it would effectively mean a prolonging of sanctions, its oil minister said yesterday, insisting rival producers caused a supply-led price slide. Iran has been pumping more crude since sanctions were lifted on January 16 under its nuclear deal with major powers, aiming to regain market share lost in recent years but adding to a global glut.

Oil prices rebounded last week on hopes that major producers—including the largest two, Russia and Saudi Arabia—would agree at a weekend meeting in Doha to freeze output at January levels. Prices plunged early Monday soon after news that the long-awaited meeting in Doha had collapsed with no decision taken, but they recovered in volatile trading yesterday. OPEC cartel member Iran did not send a representative to the Doha meeting and Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh's comments underlined why Tehran sees no justification for changing its stance.

"Accepting a production freeze in practice amounts to a voluntary acceptance of sanctions by our country after years of

effort to have them lifted," state television quoted Zanganeh as saying. "A freeze by Iran at January 2016 production levels would mean that sanctions are not lifted and Iran's exports would be stabilized at the sanctions level." Sanctions were lifted in return for curbs on the Islamic republic's nuclear program, which saw the OPEC cartel-member return to world oil markets and increase exports to around two million barrels per day, up from just over one million bpd previously.

Zanganeh, without naming any states, blamed other producers for the oversupply. "Some countries imagine that after the lifting of sanctions they can create an atmosphere among oil producers to distract public opinion from the fact they have caused the market instability." Iran has had no role in destabilizing the oil market and those who were responsible for this instability and the saturation of the market are now trying to escape from it," he said. Zanganeh, however, endorsed the talks in Qatar as "a start for cooperation among non-member and OPEC countries for returning stability to the oil market." — AFP



PORSCHE CENTRE KUWAIT CELEBRATES ARRIVAL OF THE NEW PORSCHE 911

MOST ADVANCED 911 LAUNCHES WITH NEW ENGINE TECHNOLOGY



Ambassador of Malta Patrick Cole, Ali Morad Behbehani, Ambassador of Germany Eugen Wollfarth, and Ambassador of Greece Dr Theodoros J Theodorou

KUWAIT CITY: Bursting with more power, refined design and increased efficiency, the new Porsche 911 range has arrived at Porsche Centre Kuwait, Behbehani Motors Company showcasing cutting-edge technological advancements in what is the most highly evolved 911 to date.

Now available in a range of model variants including coupe and cabriolet, the new 911 features entirely new turbocharged power units evolved from the racetrack to the road, as part of Porsche's commitment to technology transfer. This gives the world's best-selling sports car a boost in performance alongside significantly improved fuel economy. On the exterior, the new 911 impresses with an evolutionary yet further sharpened design, while inside it features the new Porsche Communication Management (PCM) system delivering improved connectivity and controls.

Advanced over more than 50 years, the brand icon is the heritage model from which every Porsche stems. Having been developed and proven on the most challenging circuits of the world, the 911 is the sports car which has won more races than any other but seamlessly balances exceptional everyday usability.

Speaking on the arrival of the new 911 range, Roger Kyriacou at Porsche Centre Kuwait, commented: "With its unique success story, the Porsche 911 is a car that has achieved iconic status over the decades and we are immensely pleased to be sharing its latest evolution with our enthusiasts and customers here in Kuwait. This model represents standard-setting sports car performance along with the convenience of everyday usability, all packaged in a legendary design. Thanks to the extensive range available right from the start, there is a 911 for every driver with each type boasting one overriding trait: pure Porsche performance. The innovations, which allow each version to deliver even more power but

with increased efficiency, are nothing short of ground breaking and further extend the 911's position as a segment leader."

The Carrera and Targa models feature a completely new engine generation with bi-turbo charging, which set the benchmark in terms of performance, driving pleasure and efficiency. Across the range, a gain of 20 hp has been achieved, despite a fuel reduction of up to 1.0 litre per 100 km.

911 Carrera models

The new 911 Carrera produces 370 hp, whilst the 911 Carrera S delivers 420 hp, thanks to a combination of turbochargers with modified compressors, enhanced exhaust system and tuned engine management.

This allows the 911 Carrera to sprint from zero to 100 km/h in 4.2 seconds – making it two tenths of a second faster than its predecessor. The 911 Carrera S with PDK and Sport Chrono Package performs its showcase discipline in just 3.9 seconds.

Torque gains in the new models are also significantly improved by 60 Nm, with 450 Nm in the 911 Carrera and 500 Nm in the 911 Carrera S. Drivers will also now benefit from the full torque being available to be converted into sprinting power from as low as 1,700 rpm. The maximum torque is available over the entire range at up to 5,000 rpm.

911 Carrera and Targa four-wheel-drive models

The four-wheel-drive versions of the new 911 boast improved drive dynamics and driving safety. In addition, the adaptive Porsche Active Suspension Management (PASM) chassis with its ten-millimetre lower ride height, included as standard, enables an even greater spread between sporty circuit and relaxed long-distance driving.



PORSCHE

Power distribution to all four wheels is now handled by Porsche Traction Management (PTM) from the 911 Turbo with electrohydraulic control. This enables the 911 Carrera 4 to achieve better acceleration values than its rear-wheel-drive counterparts for the first time, sprinting from zero to 100 km/h in 4.1, with the S model registering 3.8 seconds. The 911 Targa 4 and Targa 4S, with comparable equipment, need just 0.2 seconds longer.

Rear-axle steering, which for the first time is available as an option for the Carrera 4S and Targa 4S models, considerably increases the overall dynamics of the vehicle. Taken from the 911 Turbo and 911 GT3, stability is noticeably increased when the front and rear wheels are turned in the same direction starting at a speed of 80 km/h. At speeds of up to 50 km/h, the wheels are turned counter to one another for improved agility. This technology also enables better manoeuvrability in city traffic thanks to the vehicle's turning circle being reduced by 0.4 metres.

911 Turbo models

Regarded as the top athletes in the range and thanks to a 3.8-litre six-cylinder bi-turbo engine, the 911 Turbo now delivers 540 hp, with the coupe model sprinting from zero to 100 km/h in 3.0 seconds. The gain of 20 hp has been achieved by modified inlet ports in the cylinder head, new injection nozzles and higher fuel pressure. Top speed in the new 911 Turbo is 320 km/h, 5 km/h faster than the previous model.

Meanwhile, the 911 Turbo S develops 580 hp thanks to new turbochargers with larger compressors. It is also the first production 911 to accelerate to 100 km/h in less than three seconds, reaching the milestone speed in 2.9 seconds. The model's top speed is 330 km/h, 12 km/h higher than its predecessor. Porsche is still the only manufacturer to employ two tur-

bochargers with variable turbine geometry in a petrol engine. This enables breath-taking acceleration figures for the new high-performance sports cars.

Sure to excite Porsche enthusiasts are the refined exterior features of the new 911 mod-

els, which further enhance its iconic character. They include new headlights with four-point daytime running lights and a redesigned rear lid with vertical louvres, as well as distinctive four-point brake lights.

In conjunction with the optional Sport Chrono Package and for the first time, all 911 models now have a mode switch on the steering wheel. Derived from the 918 Spyder, mode switch consists of a rotary ring with four positions for the driving modes "Normal", "Sport", "Sport Plus" and "Individual". Depending on the equipment, the latter setting enables drivers to

configure their own individual vehicle set-up. In combination with the PDK transmission, the mode switch has an additional push button, the "Sport Response Button". When this button is pressed, the drivetrain is pre-conditioned for maximum acceleration for 20 sec-

onds, a feature that can be deployed for overtaking manoeuvres.

Meanwhile, the interior of the new models has been updated with the enhanced Porsche Communication Management (PCM) system, featuring a multi-touch seven-inch display, which offers a considerably expanded range of functions and intuitive controls similar to operating a smartphone.

The new Porsche 911 is now available for order at Porsche Centre Kuwait. The retail price for the standard 911 Carrera base model starts at KWD 29,000.



Ali Morad Behbehani, President of Morad Yousuf Behbehani Group and the Ambassador of Germany Eugen Wollfarth revealing the new Porsche 911



Ali Morad Behbehani with officials during the launch of the new Porsche 911



Dance performance.—Photos by Joaph Shagra



BRAZILIAN BUSINESS LEADERS BACK IMPEACHMENT TO REVIVE GROWTH

BRASILIA: Brazilian business leaders and the opposition are banking on President Dilma Rousseff's looming impeachment to dig the country out of a deep recession. But her potential successor would have to take tough measures that could prove unpopular amid a tense political environment in Latin America's economic powerhouse. The prospect of the unpopular leftist leader losing her job increased on Sunday when the lower house of Congress voted to send her impeachment case to the Senate.

Vice President Michel Temer, who broke ties with Rousseff, could take over by mid-May if senators agree to open a trial and suspend her for six months until a final vote on her ouster. Temer, of the centrist PMDB party, would face abysmal economic figures that have

worsened during the political standoff. The economy shrank 3.8 percent in 2015, the worst single annual fall in GDP since 1990, and the International Monetary Fund is forecasting the same drop this year and zero growth in 2017.

Last year, unemployment rose to 6.8 percent, inflation reached 10.67 percent (its worst level in three years) and industrial output contracted by 8.3 percent. Temer has warned that the country will have to make "sacrifices" to kickstart the economy and fix public finances. The opposition is seeking Rousseff's impeachment on charges that she illegally manipulated public accounts in order to conceal a budget deficit during an election year. She counters that other presidents have done the same. Public debt soared to 66.2 percent of

gross domestic product last year, a 10 percentage point jump from the previous year. The fiscal deficit more than tripled to 1.88 percent of GDP in 2015. Three international ratings agencies have downgraded Brazil's debt to junk status.

Pro-business Temer

Trade associations like the CNA agriculture confederation and the Sao Paulo industrial federation publicly voiced support for Rousseff's impeachment, blaming her for the country's economic ills. "We call on the Senate to continue the actions undertaken until now to move toward the changes demanded by society," the CNA said in a statement. Analysts expect Temer to pursue market-friendly policies if he becomes interim president.

"Temer is likely to embark upon an ambitious economic reform agenda that puts pension and fiscal overhaul on the table," international consultancy Eurasia wrote in a note on Monday.

"We are skeptical over Temer's ability to approve measures that have a short-term impact on spending, but his team is clearly of the view that putting structural economic reforms on the table is the only way to generate a positive shock of expectations," it wrote. While Temer would have a friendlier Congress on his side to seek reforms, the left would likely do everything to make his life more difficult. Rousseff's administration tried in 2015 to pass cuts in social programs and new taxes through Congress, but lawmakers did not approve them and the crisis deepened.—AFP



YANGON: People ride ferries to cross a river to go to the Kyauk Mhaw Wynn pagoda following the Myanmar New Year on the outskirts of Yangon yesterday. — AFP

AS ECONOMY BOOMS, CHILDREN TOIL IN MYANMAR

ONE IN FIVE CHILDREN GOES TO WORK INSTEAD OF SCHOOL

YANGON: When a boat stacked with gravel moors at a jetty in Yangon, 14-year-old Aung Htet Myat fills a basket he then carries on his back to trucks that whisk the load to construction sites springing up across Myanmar's booming biggest city. For each basket a labor broker rewards the boy with a stick he puts in a plastic bottle tied to his belt. At the end of the shift, which at the busiest times can last up to 24 hours, he exchanges the sticks for cash - 100 baskets earns him about \$2.50. "I carry baskets with stones the whole day," said Aung Htet Myat, who has worked at the jetty for the last two years. "If there is no gravel boat to unload, I help bus drivers as an assistant."

One in five children in Myanmar aged 10-17 go to work instead of school, according to figures from a census report on employment published last month, and the opening up of the economy since 2011 has triggered a spike on demand for labor. As the former Burma emerges from nearly 50 years of neglect under military rule, Yangon has been transformed into a vast construction site. Than Than Win and her two teenage sons began working at the same jetty as Aung Htet Myat after her husband died. The family now rely on a labor broker who lends her money in return for on-demand, non-stop work when a boat arrives.

"He gives us a place to stay and we can also take money from him when we have no job," said Than Than Win, as nearby her sons carried another load of gravel on their backs. "We have no way to pay it back, so whenever he asks us to work we can't refuse." Her story is common in Yangon's slums, filled with people who have flocked from the countryside as the economy has boomed, says Michael Slingsby, an urban poverty expert based in the city. "People borrow money from lenders and in order to repay their debts children are being sent out to work," he said.

Laws rarely enforced

May Win Myint, a senior member of Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) which took power this month, said tackling child labor was one of the party's goals. "If we cannot solve this problem, there will not be any development in our country because they will be the people serving the country in the future," she said. "They need to be educated to do that." To do that the first freely elected government since the early 1960s will need to address labor laws that experts say are fragmented and rarely enforced.

Myanmar law bars children under 13 from working in shops or factories, and says teenagers aged 13-15 should not

work more than four hours a day, or at night. "Nobody under 18 should be carrying heavy cargoes," said Vicky Bowman, a former British ambassador who now runs the Yangon-based Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business.

Outside of construction, child labor is most visible in hospitality, with even small children serving food in Myanmar's ubiquitous tea shops. Many children also work in fish farming and processing. At Yangon's San Pya fish market, the country's largest, over two days in February Reuters found girls and boys as young as nine cleaning and processing fish and unloading boats and trucks during 12-hour overnight shifts. "I don't want my son to do this kind of hard labor," said Hla Myint, 56, whose 15-year-old son works in San Pya. Speaking from their home in a dilapidated bamboo hut close to the river bank, Hla Myint did not share many of his fellow citizens' high hopes for Suu Kyi's government. "Whatever they say they would do, or give us, it will never reach here," he said. "I don't believe in any change."— Reuters

News

in brief

German investor sentiment rises in April: ZEW institute

FRANKFURT: Investor confidence in Germany rose for the second month in a row in April as favorable economic news from China helps stabilize sentiment in Europe's biggest economy, a leading survey showed yesterday. The investor confidence index calculated by the ZEW economic institute increased by 6.9 points to 11.2 points in April, the think tank said in a statement. Analysts had projected a slightly smaller rise in the index to around 8.0 points this month. "Surprisingly positive economic news from China seem to have improved the sentiment amongst financial market experts," said ZEW's head of international finance and financial management, Sascha Steffen. "On balance, however, the continued poor growth in China and other important emerging markets continues to be a burden for the German export industry. Furthermore, concern about Britain's possible exit from the EU seems to be having a negative impact," Steffen added.

Russia won't rush with structural reforms: PM

MOSCOW: The Russian government should not rush to implement rapid structural reforms because this may extend the crisis for another few years and weigh heavily on the recession-battered economy and population, Russia's prime minister said yesterday. "We will not conduct reforms at the expense of people," Dmitry Medvedev said to a rapturous applause in the lower chamber of Russia's parliament as he reported on the performance of his cabinet. "Both people and the economy can bear only a certain speed and depth of reforms." Russia is suffering hard from low world prices for its vital oil exports, and from Western economic sanctions imposed on Moscow over its role in the Ukraine crisis. But Medvedev said the government had no plans to resort to printing money to help bridge a budget gap. Russia should return to three-year budget planning, Medvedev said.

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.777
Indian Rupees	4.572
Pakistani Rupees	2.886
Sri Lankan 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	Selling Rate
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

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.421385	0.430385
Czech Korune	0.004240	0.016240
Danish Krone	0.040358	0.045358
Euro	0.325498	0.333499
Norwegian Krone	0.031506	0.036706
Romanian Leu	0.086458	0.086458
Slovakia	0.008960	0.018960
Swedish Krona	0.031489	0.036489
Swiss Franc	0.296272	0.306472
Turkish Lira	0.098248	0.108548

Australasia

Australian Dollar	0.214759	0.226259
New Zealand Dollar	0.198356	0.207856
Canada Dollar	0.220260	0.228760
US Dollars	0.297300	0.301800
US Dollars Mint	0.297800	0.301800

Asia

Bangladesh Taka	0.003424	0.004024
Chinese Yuan	0.044762	0.048262
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036787	0.039537
Indian Rupee	0.004256	0.004646
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002570	0.002750
Kenyan Shilling	0.003015	0.003015
Korean Won	0.000241	0.000256
Malaysian Ringgit	0.070064	0.076064
Nepalese Rupee	0.002857	0.003027
Pakistan Rupee	0.002702	0.002982
Philippine Peso	0.006333	0.006613
Sierra Leone	0.000067	0.000073
Singapore Dollar	0.215882	0.221882
South African Rand	0.013694	0.022194
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001703	0.002283
Taiwan	0.009082	0.009262
Thai Baht	0.008193	0.008743

Arab

Bahraini Dinar	0.792796	0.800796
Egyptian Pound	0.033288	0.037624
Iranian Riyal	0.000083	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000194	0.000254
Jordanian Dinar	0.421092	0.428592
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000151	0.000251
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020508	0.044508
Nigerian Naira	0.001240	0.001875
Omani Riyal	0.776438	0.782118
Qatar Riyal	0.082076	0.083289
Saudi Riyal	0.079487	0.080437
Syrian Pound	0.001277	0.001497
Tunisian Dinar	0.145162	0.153162
Turkish Lira	0.098248	0.108548
UAE Dirhams	0.081079	0.082228
Yemeni Riyal	0.001362	0.001442



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STOCKS RISE AS OIL PRICES SHRUG OFF DOHA FAILURE
EUROPEAN SHARES HIT 3-MONTH HIGH AFTER ASIAN GAINS

LONDON: European shares hit three-month highs yesterday following gains on Asian bourses as a rise in oil prices, partly due to a workers' strike in Kuwait, boosting investors' appetite to take on risk.

million barrels a day on Sunday from 2.8 million bpd in March due to the strike, although analysts expect the impact to be brief.

"It is quite amazing how oil prices have recovered from Monday's lows. That is shoring up risk appetite and pushing up commodity-linked currencies," said Niels Christensen, FX strategist at Nordea.

economy and the US Federal Reserve's cautious approach to raising interest rates, have helped lift stocks on Wall Street and elsewhere in recent weeks. The pan-European FTSEurofirst 300 share index rose 1.3 percent, led higher by gains in basic resources stocks, oil and gas and travel and leisure.

The FTSEurofirst is up 14 percent from February lows. Britain's FTSE 100 added 0.5 percent. MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan was up 1 percent, after touching its highest intraday levels since November. Tokyo's Nikkei gained

3.7 percent, Australian shares hit their highest since early 2016 while New Zealand shares hit a new record high. In China, both the CSI 300 and the Shanghai Composite indexes closed 0.3 percent higher. Emerging market stocks measured by MSCI rose 0.7 percent and EM currencies broadly gained. Oil exporter Russia's rouble gained 1 percent to 65.50 per dollar.

The Australian dollar rose 0.5 percent to \$0.7782, having earlier hit its strongest since June at \$0.7803. The Canadian dollar hit its highest since July. The US dollar edged 0.1 percent lower against a basket of currencies. The euro was up 0.1 percent to \$1.1328 but the safe-haven yen, which last week hit 17-month highs around 107.61 per dollar, fell 0.3 percent to 109.14. Assurances from Fed Chair Janet Yellen that the central bank would be cautious in raising rates have held the dollar in check lately. The Fed meets next week and

while no move is expected, investors will be on the look-out for signs of a hike in June.

European Central Bank policymakers meet tomorrow. Government bond yields rose with stocks. In the euro zone, Italian yields rose before a hefty auction and Spanish 10-year yields rose 3 basis points to 1.53 percent after political parties' latest failure to form a government since an inconclusive election in December. "It looks like the (Italy) announcement came as a surprise ... and now the market is preparing for that supply," Mizuho strategist Peter Chatwell said. "We've also got all of these political factors building up ... and the sentiment is going to be towards spreads widening from here." Copper prices, which have benefited from signs of economic recovery in China in recent weeks, dipped 0.4 percent to \$4,809 a ton. Gold rose as the dollar weakened. It last traded at around \$1,242 an ounce. — Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report
Tuesday 19 April 2016
Table with columns: Index, Change, Closing, Last Closing, High, Low, Volume, Value (KWD), Number of Trades. Includes sections for Stocks, Bonds, and other market data.



TOKYO: People walk by an electronic stock board showing Japan's Nikkei stock index at a securities firm in Tokyo yesterday. Asian stock markets are mostly higher, led by a rally in Japan, as investors were encouraged by Wall Street's rally to its highest levels in recent months. — AP

GOLD GAINS ON DOLLAR WEAKNESS, SILVER HITS 10-MONTH HIGH

LONDON: Gold rose 1 percent yesterday, lifted by a weaker dollar and a 10-month high for silver, which benefited from robust Chinese buying. Gold touched a session high of \$1,246.40 an ounce and was up 0.9 percent at \$1,242.35 by 0958 GMT. Silver climbed 3.5 percent to \$16.78, its highest since June 2015, before stabilizing with a 2.7 percent gain at \$16.65, having risen by 5.7 percent last week, its biggest weekly jump in 11 months.

year," Mitsubishi Corp analyst Jonathan Butler said.

"That generally means that the yield environment for non-interest-bearing assets remains fairly favorable." The Fed raised rates modestly from near zero in December - its first policy tightening in nearly a decade. While futures markets imply no further increases until December, Fed projections suggest there could be two more hikes by year-end. New York Fed President William Dudley said that US economic conditions are "mostly favorable" but the Fed remains cautious on interest rates because threats loom.

The dollar fell 0.1 percent against a basket of major currencies. European equities climbed to three-month highs but that did not damp demand for gold, often seen as a hedge against risk. Gold traders were also watching for comments from Federal Reserve officials to gauge the outlook for US monetary policy. "Gold should probably hang on to its gains in the second quarter because the dollar is likely to stay relatively subdued with the expectations of US interest rate hikes being pushed out to the second half of this

Boston Fed President Eric Rosengren, however, said the Fed is set to increase rates more rapidly than investors currently expect. Top gold consumer China launched a yuan-denominated gold benchmark yesterday as the country took an ambitious step to exert more control over the pricing of the metal and boost its influence in the global bullion market. Among other precious metals, platinum rose 1.9 percent to \$995 and palladium gained 1.6 percent to \$572. The most traded silver contract on the Shanghai Gold Exchange jumped as much as 4.3 percent to 3,595 yuan per kilogram (\$17.28 per ounce). — Reuters

OIL EXTENDS REBOUND

LONDON: Oil prices recovered further yesterday as a strike by Kuwaiti petroleum workers entered its third day, outweighing disappointment over the failure of weekend talks to freeze output. Prices had plunged early Monday soon after news that Sunday's long-awaited meeting of major producers in Doha had collapsed, fanning worries about a persistent global oversupply. However, the losses were pared through the day on news that thousands of workers in the Kuwaiti oil sector had started industrial action over planned wage cuts. Just before 1100 GMT yesterday, US benchmark West Texas Intermediate for delivery in May rose 62 cents to \$40.40 per barrel.

interruption would not be large," CMC Markets analyst Michael McCartney told AFP from Sydney. Oil prices had rebounded last week on hopes that major producers-including the biggest two, Russia and Saudi Arabia-would agree to freeze output at January levels.

European benchmark Brent crude for June delivery won 75 cents to \$43.66. Kuwait-the fourth largest producer in the OPEC exporters' cartel-revealed yesterday that it had managed to restore some affected production at its state oil firm. Kuwait Petroleum Corp's spokesman Sheikh Talal Khaled Al-Sabah said output was now running at 1.5 million barrels per day — 50 percent of normal output against 1.1 million bpd when the strike first erupted on Sunday. Sheikh Khaled said a crude gathering centre in the north of the emirate had been put back into production and that the company had plans to reopen three more.

But Saudi Arabia's decision not to take part unless bitter rival Iran also joined in torpedoed any hopes of a deal. Iran had said it would not agree to any caps having just returned to the export market after years of Western nuclear-linked sanctions. Analysts said the focus will now shift to a key OPEC meeting in June. Meanwhile, Iran will not accept an oil output freeze because it would effectively mean a prolonging of sanctions, its Oil Minister declared yesterday, insisting rival producers caused a supply-led price slide. Tehran has been pumping more crude since sanctions were lifted on January 16 under its nuclear deal with major powers, aiming to regain market share lost in recent years but adding to a global glut.

He did not specify how they were being staffed but on Sunday the cabinet gave orders for KPC to recruit contractors from abroad to operate some of its facilities in defiance of the indefinite strike called by the Kuwait oil workers union over planned wage cuts. Analysts said the strike might only have a temporary effect on the market. "The strike is a potential positive. But at this stage, it appears that this (Kuwait strike) may be resolved pretty quickly and so the overall

OPEC cartel member Iran did not send a representative to Doha and Oil Minister Bijan Zanganeh's comments underlined why Tehran sees no justification for changing its stance. "Accepting a production freeze in practice amounts to a voluntary acceptance of sanctions by our country after years of effort to have them lifted," state television quoted Zanganeh as saying. "A freeze by Iran at January 2016 production levels would mean that sanctions are not lifted and Iran's exports would be stabilized at the sanctions level." Sanctions were lifted in return for curbs on the Islamic republic's nuclear program, which saw the OPEC cartel-member return to world oil markets and increase exports to around two million barrels per day, up from just over one million bpd previously. — AFP



AL SAYER GROUP PARTICIPATES IN THE SIXTH MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA RENEWABLE ENERGY CONFERENCE

RENEWABLE INNOVATIONS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE ENERGY



CSR EFFORTS TO PROMOTE RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT FRIENDLY PRODUCTS



KUWAIT: Al Sayer Group Holding has participated as one of the sponsors in the 6th Middle East & North Africa Renewable Energy Conference which was held under the patronage of His Highness The Emir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah. MENAREC 6 was based on the theme 'Renewable Innovations Towards Sustainable Energy' and one of the key objectives is to promote renewable energy as an essential and strategic part of the energy-mix for all countries. Ambitious plans of the State of Kuwait for building a renewable energy generation to cover 15% of Kuwait's consumption by 2030 were also discussed.

According to Mr. Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer Managing Director CSR Committee "As a leading Kuwaiti company with a long history of modeling a commitment to quality and eco-friendly aspects, Al Sayer has a special responsibility to set an example of sustainable business practice in Kuwait and in the Gulf region. We are taking extreme care towards our sustainable business concept, to cover every dimension of our operations - financial performance, social responsibility, worker and customer well-being, and care for the environment - all working hand in hand."

Sustainability vision of Al Sayer Group is to become a reliable pace-setter and recognized regional leader by adopting the best sustainability practices in business. Some of the important efforts initiated by Al Sayer Group

to support Renewable Energy include: -
 • 42 kWp solar power generation at Toyota Ardiya facility
 • 12.5 kWp solar power generation at Al Sayer Farm
 • 50 kWp generated at Toyota Ahmadi center
 • 1 mWp produced from Al Sayer Toyota City
 • Approximately a total 4 mWp which will be produced by Al Sayer Group from various projects per day reflecting strong progress

Nehad Haj Ali Manager Corporate Sustainability and Responsibility said "Our partnership demonstrates our commitment towards the sustainability business aligning with the message of renewable energy and environmental friendly approach, tightly interwoven to tackle current challenges, mainly pollution and global warming."

Al Sayer Group showcased products powered by innovative technology at the venue, emphasizing the significance of renewable energy. The highlight of them was the Prius hybrid car display and the test drive event which attracted attendees in masses.

Toyota Prius Hybrid Revolution - The Future is Now

The Prius underlines Toyota's continued commitment to progressive thinking and being environmentally conscious. Anticipating the 21st century's need for vehicles with exceptional fuel efficiency, successive generations of Prius have showcased Toyota's commitment to environmentally conscientious for-

ward thinking, and led the company's drive towards the creation of the ultimate eco-car. Over 3.5 million satisfied customers have put their faith in the car to make it the world's most popular hybrid.

"I am speechless after test driving this car. It was a fantastic experience behind the wheels, overall an enjoyable driving experience. What I liked most is the smoothness and quietness. Toyota Prius Hybrid has brought a technology revolution, the engineering of hybrid is quite fascinating" said one of the attendees of the event who test drove the car.

Renewable energy run Al Sayer Toyota City

Al Sayer Toyota City, large private investment in the GCC to build 1st industrial green building to adopt GSAS in Kuwait as a best model for Sustainable and energy efficient building. At full run it is expected to produce 1 mWp to cater 8% of total power required for the building. Toyota showrooms, insurance units, service stations, body paints and accessories under one roof to take the bold front by ASG to be part of Kuwait's renewable energy vision.

Eco friendly RM Paints & Eco battery

The R-M ONYX HD is an environmentally friendly waterborne basecoat line automotive paint. It complies with the demands of Europe's stringent VOC emissions regulations. 80% less solvent emissions - Up to 90% less



waste - Faster drying times - The perfect finish. MNSS body & paint shop is promoting this premium eco-friendly product to its customers.

Eco battery - 25% less led and 25 % weight less than conventional one to help less pollution and CO2 emission.

The Middle East and North Africa Renewable Energy Conference (MENAREC) was born in 2004 and has since become the major platform for renewable energy through

the region. MENAREC 6 is organized by the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research (KISR) and the Energy and Building Research Centre (EBRC) in partnership with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWi) of Germany. This event brings together national, international institutions and private companies working in the field of renewable energy application and investment agendas.



SPAIN TARGETS SLOWER DEFICIT CUT TO PRESERVE GROWTH

MADRID: Spain's caretaker government yesterday said it aimed to cut the public deficit this year and next at a slower pace than originally agreed with Brussels, after a wide miss on 2015 targets left it scrambling to plug a budget gap. Madrid wants to whittle down the deficit to 3.6 percent of economic output in 2016 from a previous target of 2.8 percent, which would have met the 3 percent threshold recommended by the European Commission.

It projects that goal will now only be reached in 2017, with a deficit at 2.9 percent of gross domestic product instead of the 1.4 percent previously forecast. The

acting centre-right government - in place since an inconclusive national election in December left parties short of a majority and unable to agree on a coalition - said sticking to the original targets could hurt an economic recovery. "It would have required a very significant budget adjustment," acting Economy Minister Luis de Guindos told parliament.

He confirmed Spain was lowering its annual growth forecasts for 2016 to 2.7 percent from 3 percent previously, and citing a slowdown in the world economy. "The new budget plan is in line with the situation we had at the end of 2015 and

will allow us to reduce the deficit without putting the pace of growth at risk," he said. In spite of spending cuts by the previous People's Party (PP) administration and a rebound over the past two years after a prolonged recession, Spain has struggled to bring its public deficit in line with Brussels' demands. Tax cuts brought in months before the December election partly contributed to a wide deficit miss last year.

Spanish regions, which manage their own budgets in areas such as education and healthcare, also overspent, driving the deficit to 5 percent of gross domestic

product rather than the 4.2 percent target agreed with the European Commission. In a joint statement with the European Central Bank, the Commission warned yesterday that Spain's efforts to cut the deficit, one of the highest in the euro zone, had dwindled. "The needed progress on fiscal consolidation has come to a halt, with part of the structural adjustment implemented in earlier years being reversed," they said.

Further reforms were needed to rebalance the economy, they added, in a country still suffering from one of the highest unemployment rates in Europe,

at 20 percent of the workforce. The political stalemate has stifled momentum for further structural changes this year, however, and the prospect of fresh elections at the end of June if parties cannot agree on a government this month would postpone more delays.

Brussels has yet to formally sign off on the new deficit goals envisaged by Madrid. Spain's acting government has also tweaked forecasts for its public debt to GDP ratios, elevating the 2016 target to 99.1 percent of output from 98.5 percent previously, and the 2017 goal to 99.0 percent from 96.5 percent. — Reuters



SEOUL: People pass by the headquarters of Bank of Korea in Seoul, South Korea yesterday. — AP

S KOREA CENTRAL BANK CUTS GROWTH FORECAST

SEOUL: South Korea's Central Bank lowered its growth forecast for Asia's fourth-largest economy yesterday, citing the country's weak first-quarter economic performance and a downgrade in the global economic outlook. But it kept its policy rate steady for this month. The Bank of Korea said that South Korea's economy will likely expand 2.8 percent this year over a year earlier, down from the 3.0 percent expansion predicted in January, but an improvement from 2015 when South Korea's economy eked out 2.6 percent growth.

The forecast reinforces worries the economy is on the cusp of a low-growth period. The bank revised its inflation outlook to 1.2 percent from 1.4 percent. Last week, the International Monetary Fund revised its forecasts for global growth in 2016 to 3.2 percent from the 3.4 percent predicted in January. It also downgraded its outlook for major economies including the United States, Japan and Europe. South Korea's exports have suffered due to softening demand from China, its top trading partner. Steelmakers and shipbuilders posted losses last year while the fall in crude oil prices reduced the value of exports by South Korea's oil refining companies.

The central bank governor, Lee Ju-yeol

said South Korea should see a modest recovery during the rest of the year, thanks to signs of improvement in the Chinese economy and a modest recovery in crude oil prices. But, "While those uncertainties have lessened, it is difficult to say that they are fundamentally resolved," Lee told reporters. The central bank expects exports to improve thanks to the recovery in advanced economies. But the improvement would not be strong enough to support a full recovery, so South Korea's economy must rely mostly on domestic demand. Sectors that suffer from overcapacity and weak global demand, such as shipping, are due for an overhaul.

Though the bank kept its monthly policy rate at a record low 1.5 percent, expectations are growing of another rate cut, following two cuts last year. Some analysts said the revised forecast was a tad optimistic. "The BOK's downgraded outlook still remains optimistic as exports will likely decline further, the housing market continues to taper off and elevated corporate credit risks should reduce business investment. All of these downside risks should more than offset resilient private consumption," said Kwon Young Sun, an analyst at Nomura International. — AP

CHINA GROWTH HOPES REDUCE URGENCY OF MORE STIMULUS

PBOC FEARS EXCESSIVE EASING MAY RE-IGNITE PRESSURE

BEIJING: China's leaders sound more confident that the world's second-largest economy has arrested a slide in growth to quarter-century lows, but their policy advisers caution it is too early to call an end to a cycle of easing that began in 2014. Signs the economy is picking up give the central bank room to keep its policy powder dry for now so it has the ammunition later to cope with any possible shocks from domestic economic restructuring and expected US rate rises, the policy insiders said.

"We still need to loosen policy and there is room for cutting interest rates, but the urgency for doing so has been reduced," said one policy adviser. The advisers requested anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter. Data on Friday showed that the annual pace of economic growth slowed to 6.7 percent in the first quarter, its weakest pace since early 2009. Growth for all of 2015 was the slowest in 25 years.

But stronger-than-anticipated activity indicators for March suggested the economy was gaining momentum as it headed into the second quarter, fuelled partly by a surge of new debt. Industrial output, exports and retail sales were all surprisingly strong. Rather than celebrating, China's main stock indexes ended slightly lower on Friday on worries that the data would prompt Beijing to ease up on providing extra policy support for the economy. Since late 2014, the central bank has cut interest rates six times in its most aggressive easing campaign since the global financial crisis. It has also cut bank reserves - the bank reserve requirement (RRR) - five times. Reducing reserves frees up cash that

the banks can then use for lending.

But three government economists said they still expected the People's Bank of China (PBOC) to cut bank reserves three or four times this year and reduce official interest rates at least once. Policy decisions have been made more difficult by the financial markets turmoil in 2015 and early this year. Leaders have been wary of cutting interest rates excessively in case it revives downward pressure on the yuan and fresh capital outflows. "A rise in inflation has narrowed room for further interest rate cuts and RRR cuts may not happen soon as capital outflows ease," said an economist at a top government think-tank.

To be sure, the central bank can use other policy tools, including special lending facilities, to help cushion the economic pain from restructuring the economy, even as the government leans more on fiscal spending and tax cuts to support growth. "The window is open as the central bank wants to boost liquidity and lower borrowing costs, but the central bank has many means - it has developed many new policy tools," said Zhang Jun, dean of Fudan University's School of Economics. The central bank did not respond to emailed requests for comment.

Bottoming out?

China's economic slowdown in recent years has caused jitters in world markets at a time when the government wants to reduce a reliance on industry in favour of services and consumers. Leaders have sounded more positive about the economy in recent weeks. On April 8, Premier Li Keqiang said China's economic indicators had

shown signs of improvement in the first quarter, although such improvement was not solid yet due to a sluggish world economy and market volatility. "The overall situation is better than expected," Li was quoted by state media as saying.

Some market economists agree. After March inflation data, ANZ Bank scaled back its expectations for monetary policy easing this year to one more RRR cut this year, instead of three. On Friday, UBS upgraded its 2016 economic growth forecast to 6.6 percent from 6.2 percent, and said it no longer expected an interest rate cut this year. But the investment bank said there were concerns about the sustainability of growth and about debt. Indeed, there was a surge of new debt at the start of 2016 which could have helped the economy gain strength in March. Yuan loans rose 25 percent over a year earlier.

Rising debt levels in China is a concern though. In a report last week, the International Monetary Fund flagged the risks of commercial bank loans to the corporate sector, saying 15.5 percent of them, or \$1.3 trillion, were now held by borrowers without sufficient income to cover interest payments.

Continued strong lending to a weakening corporate sector would sap potential economic growth because the loans would only refinance existing debt rather than new projects, the IMF said. "China is climbing a ridge in its restructuring, the restructuring pain continues, the real economy has more difficulties and the downward pressure cannot be ignored," Sheng Laiyun, spokesman of the National Bureau of Statistics, said on Friday. — Reuters

MASTERCARD NAMES KHALID AS DIVISION PRESIDENT FOR MENA

DUBAI: MasterCard yesterday announced the appointment of Khalid Elgibaly as Division President for Middle East and North Africa (MENA) - effective 8 May, 2016. With a network of offices and local centers across the region, MENA is an extremely important market for the business and Khalid will play instrumental role in driving commercial growth, executing the growing and emerging technology payment opportunities in the region, and also deepening business alliances with MasterCard's key partners and stakeholders. He will be based in Dubai.



Khalid Elgibaly

Khalid brings a wealth of experience to this role. Most recently, he worked for HSBC Middle East (HBME), where he was the Regional Head of Retail Banking & Wealth Management for MENA. Khalid also worked with Standard Chartered Bank

(SCB), Barclays and Citigroup, where he held several senior roles including Head of Consumer Banking, Chief Executive Officer for SCB Pakistan, Chief Executive Officer for Barclays Egypt and Head for Global Consumer Bank for Citigroup Egypt.

Commenting on the appointment, Raghu Malhotra, President, Middle East and Africa for MasterCard said: "We see enormous potential for the Middle East and North Africa region and with Khalid joining the team, we will continue to build on our existing strong business base across the region. Khalid has a very strong and successful track record in the industry and we look forward to him leading our growth in MENA." Khalid holds a BA degree in Economics from the American University in Cairo and an MBA from Strathclyde Graduate Business School in Glasgow.



A&A COMMERCIAL VEHICLES DIVISION ORGANIZES 'MERCEDES-BENZ FIELD FORCE' CAMPAIGN 2016

KUWAIT: To support commercial vehicles fleet customers, the Commercial Vehicles Division of Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Alkazemi Co (A&A) in cooperation with Daimler Commercial Vehicles MENA (DCV MENA), organized a "Mercedes-Benz Field Force" campaign to visit clients' fleet workshops around Kuwait from 2 April to 7 April 2016. During the campaign this year, there was a Workshop open day for the technicians & drivers of Mercedes-Benz commercial vehicles, held at Ahmadi CV workshop in order to train them on the basics of perfect handling to Mercedes-Benz trucks.

"One of our core objectives of this initiative is to strengthen the relationship with our customers, screening the technical conditions of his fleet to safeguard their Mercedes-Benz commercial vehicles operation, assess their drivers capabilities and improving their product knowledge for a professional, efficient and safe operation of their vehicles" commented Ralph Geyer (General Manager of Commercial vehicles & Daimler Buses at Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Alkazemi Co.)

He added "This initiative presents a full supporting team to our customers, comprising service, parts and sales experts from A&A at the customer's premises, with the additional valuable collaboration of Mercedes-Benz experts from Daimler Commercial Vehicles MENA (DCV MENA), to support our clients' operations on-site. It is our aim to work closely with our customers helping them to ensure a smooth and efficient operation of their fleets and caring about your assets."

For the 2nd year, a Workshop open day for the technicians & drivers of Mercedes-Benz commercial vehicles customers, held at Ahmadi CV workshop in order to train them on the basics of perfect handling of their Mercedes-Benz trucks, including a presentations and lessons by DCV MENA experts on site with theoretical and practical training on the right handling and the basic daily checkup for their trucks which will ensure an efficient performance of the vehicle.

A&A and DCV MENA's proactive team performed a mobile workshop services, offering to customer's valuable facts: Free vehicle technical inspection check-ups and diagnosis; Driver assessment and on-site training on Mercedes-Benz Actros trucks; Maintenance and repair technical

advice and tips; Offering special Service repair packages; Special promotion of Service & Maintenance Contracts; Competitive prices on spare parts packages.

Ralph Geyer confirmed "This initiative provides an ideal opportunity to further support our customers at their premises in Kuwait, providing them with specialist support and technical advice to ensure a safe and efficient operation of their fleet, especially to these often difficult to reach and remote areas as there are increasing projects in sectors related to transportation, oilfield services, contracting and ready-mix concrete operations"

Field Force team will cover many technical

points during the inspection of the trucks at the customer's premises. The Driver Training Program will educate drivers core competencies, defensive and economic driving, in order to ensure trucks are operated at their optimum efficiency with utmost safety. Heavy trucks can pose a great threat to light vehicles if they are not in perfect technical conditions. Drivers need to be intensively trained on road safety for the wellbeing and protection of other road users. The organizing of the Mercedes-Benz Field Force further verifies A&A's commitment of providing superior services with the passion to exceed all expectations and under our slogan "Customer Satisfaction is our driving force."

OOREDOO ADDS NEW BENEFITS, DISCOUNTS TO SHAMEL PLANS

KUWAIT: Ooredoo Kuwait, a member of the international Ooredoo Group, has recently announced adding new benefits and discounts to ShameL plans, where it enables customers to subscribe to ShameL without committing to paying monthly installments for a smart phone within the package. The new offer enables customers who possess the latest handsets, or are content with the ones they already have to subscribe to ShameL plans without commitment on devices, to either commit to a 24-month contact to receive a 30% discount on their monthly bills, or opt for a 12-month contact and receive a 20% discount.

Commenting on the new offer, Mijbil Alayoub, Director of Corporate Communications at Ooredoo Kuwait said: "The new ShameL plans have witnessed great success, both customers' feedback and sales figures demonstrated this. Our main goal as a company is to meet our valued customers' needs; therefore, we have further revamped those plans, adding new benefits and special discounts which will apply for the different requirements of our

customers" Ooredoo subscribers can now enjoy the privilege of freezing their contract for up to 3 months a year when they travel, without worrying about paying bills for months that they don't use.

Additionally, Ooredoo now allows customers to transfer contracts to other customers even during the contract period, with no penalties or extra fees.

Keeping up with the lifestyle of its customers, Ooredoo also allows customers to get an additional device on top of their current plan, in installments, without paying extra fees.

Additionally, all ShameL subscribers can enjoy unlimited calls on the Ooredoo network, in addition to other perks such as minute and data rollover, to ensure that they are making full use of their package. For more information about the ShameL Packages and the new benefits, visit one of Ooredoo's branches or dealers across Kuwait. You can also visit <http://shamelr2.itp17.com/en/packages> or contact the customer care center on 1805 555 or 121 for Ooredoo subscribers.

QATAR AIRWAYS TO SHOWCASE UNIQUE EXPERIENCE AT ATM

'WORLD'S BEST AIRLINE' OPENS LUXURIOUS LOUNGE IN DUBAI

DOHA: Qatar Airways is preparing to bring its unique offering to the Arabian Travel Market (ATM), the Middle East's leading travel trade fair taking place in Dubai from 25-28 April 2016. This year, Qatar Airways will showcase the award-winning service and hospitality that the airline is renowned for, making memorable experiences for passengers world-wide. At its state-of-the-art exhibition stand, Qatar Airways will give visitors a premier experience in its A380 First Class cabin, which takes luxury travel to new heights. The cabin, featuring ultra-wide seats, privacy dividers and the flexibility to convert the space into a fully flat bed or extend a table to invite a guest to dine with them, provides travelers a haven of tranquility and relaxation while cruising at Mach 0.85 for business or leisure.

Visitors can also get a feel for the luxuriously appointed Dubai Premium Lounge located in Dubai International Airport's Concourse D Available to Qatar Airways First and Business Class passengers and Privilege Club Platinum, Gold and Silver members, the Dubai Premium Lounge is a modern and sophisticated space where travelers can relax and rejuvenate before

their journey. The recently opened lounge is decorated with artistic Arabic calligraphy, Mediterranean-style tiles and calming water fountains, featuring private family areas, shower facilities, spacious seating areas and an international cuisine buffet.

Speaking on the airline's involvement in Arabian Travel Market for this year, Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, His Excellency Akbar Al Baker said: "Arabian Travel Market has consistently been one of the most exciting platforms for us to participate in, providing us with the opportunity to network with our passengers and partners alike. We are looking forward to recreating the unique Qatar Airways experience at our stand this year, enabling visitors to get a true taste of what it means to be a Qatar Airways passenger travelling to any one of our more than 150 global destinations." Several senior representatives from Qatar Airways will be present during the event. On day one, HE Al Baker will hold a press conference to discuss the airline's expansion plans, upcoming developments, and the newest additions to its growing portfolio of offerings.

GATES: US NEEDS LIMITS ON COVERT EMAIL SEARCHES

WASHINGTON: Bill Gates said on Monday that no one was an "absolutist" on either side of the digital privacy debate, but the co-founder of Microsoft Corp said he supports his company's lawsuit against the US government seeking the freedom to tell customers when federal agencies have sought their data. "There probably are some cases where (the government) should be able to go in covertly and get information about a company's email," Gates said at a Reuters Newsmaker event in Washington.

"But the position Microsoft is taking in this suit is that it should be extraordinary and it shouldn't be a matter of course that there is a gag order automatically put in," he said in an interview with Reuters Editor-in-Chief Stephen Adler. The lawsuit, filed last

week in federal court in Microsoft's home town of Seattle, argues that the government is violating the US Constitution by preventing Microsoft from notifying thousands of customers about government requests for their emails and other documents, sometimes indefinitely.

The move comes as rival Apple Inc is locked in a showdown with the U.S. government over access to an iPhone belonging to one of the killers in the December shooting in San Bernardino, California. Gates said more collaboration between law enforcement and privacy advocates would help determine which "legislative framework ... strikes the perfect balance" on government access to private data. "I don't think there are any absolutists

who think the government should be able to get everything or the government should be able to get nothing," Gates, 60, said.

The man who co-founded Microsoft in 1975 and is still held in reverence by the technology world made waves in February when he appeared to distance himself from Apple in its legal fight with the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, but later clarified his comments and said that headlines suggesting he supported the FBI's position were inaccurate. Gates, the world's richest person, also talked about the work of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the philanthropic organization he formed in 2000, which has an endowment of more than \$40 billion.

The foundation, where Gates works day to day,

has focused attention in recent months on the Zika outbreak, which has been linked to thousands of suspected cases of microcephaly, a rare birth defect, in Brazil and is affecting large parts of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The World Health Organization declared the outbreak an international health emergency on Feb 1. Gates said the foundation would be contributing funds to aid in the Zika fight, but did not say how much. Private sector and governments need to work together to quickly roll out products to combat Zika and other mosquito-borne diseases, Gates said. "Zika is a tough one," he said. "There are potential solutions. They won't come soon enough to avoid some problems in the entire hemisphere." — Reuters



DORTMUND, Germany: (Above) A man controls a First Person View (FPV) multi-copter model with video glasses during a photo preview for the 'Intermodellbau' trade fair yesterday. (Below) An exhibitor makes a model of a bulldozer. More than 550 exhibitors from 19 countries exhibit over 20,000 individual items from April 20 to 24 April, 2016. — AFP



UNLOCK YOUR CREATIVE POTENTIAL WITH THE NEW CANON EOS 80D

KUWAIT: Canon introduces the EOS 80D - a powerful, fully equipped DSLR providing you with everything you need at your fingertips to advance your photography and video skills. Ideal for enthusiasts who love experimenting with different genres and styles, the camera is highly customizable and shoots with exceptional speed and ease. Combining leading imaging technologies - including a new 24.2 megapixel CMOS sensor and DIGIC 6 processor, alongside a new 45 all cross-type point AF system and fast responsive 7 fps shooting rate - the EOS 80D is a versatile camera for capturing striking stills and Full HD movies.

Canon is also unveiling an all-purpose lens - the EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM - with new Nano USM technology, and an optional Power Zoom Adapter PZ-E1, for smooth zoom control when shooting movies and remote operation via Wi-Fi.

Excel in all areas of photography and video

Whatever subject you're looking to explore - from sports, to wildlife, or action - the EOS 80D is extremely responsive, excelling in capturing everything in incredible, intricate detail. The new sensor provides stunning clarity and the freedom to crop in, while the new 45 all

ed to provide photographers with everything they need.

The instinctiveness of the camera's design means you can easily customise your shooting experience, with conveniently-placed controls giving you access to the most commonly used modes and settings.

The Intelligent Viewfinder displays 100% of the frame, as well as the current settings - you can also quickly switch to the 7.7cm (3.0") Vari-angle Clear View LCD II Touch screen, ideal for movie shooting, Live View mode, or accessing functions quickly.

Become the videographer you aspire to be

Whether you're creating a travel vlog, or cinematic-style movie, the EOS 80D offers total flexibility with Full HD movie shooting. Achieving accurate auto focus and smooth focus tracking is effortless thanks to Canon's unique Dual Pixel CMOS AF technology. Both AF speed and AF tracking sensitivity can also be easily adjusted, giving you complete control over the pace and responsiveness of the AF to suit the style of your movie.

Serious videographers can be confident footage will achieve a professional looking result, with the ability to shoot at 60p in MP4 format - perfect for slowing down the action while still controlling focus. The EOS 80D includes both headphone and microphone inputs, allowing you to capture and have full control over audio during a shoot.

Easily connect, shoot remotely and share your work

Enjoy the freedom of remote shooting via your smartphone or tablet using the EOS 80D with Canon's Camera Connect app. Built-in Wi-Fi and Dynamic NFC connectivity makes it simple to connect with and share full resolution JPEGs to your smart device. You can also connect to and control your camera via a PC, without the need for a home Wi-Fi router, and quickly and easily save, view and share your photos and movies all from one single accessible location using Canon's Connect Station CS100.

Shoot stunning stills and movies with the EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM and Power Zoom Adapter PZ-E1

To match the versatility of EOS 80D, Canon's new EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM provides high performance auto-focus for movies and stills with the focal range to shoot wide, or up close, within a single lens.

The EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM is the first of Canon's lenses to feature Nano USM focus technology - delivering smooth, quiet AF for movies and blistering speed for stills. The new Power Zoom Adapter PZ-E1 is a compact and lightweight accessory designed for the EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM to enable smooth, fingertip zoom control when shooting movies, ideal for capturing professional-looking documentary footage, with the option to control via Wi-Fi.



cross-type point AF system and 7 fps shooting can freeze action with ultimate precision. For pin-point focusing or wide-area tracking, the AF points are individually selectable or grouped into areas, giving you greater control over composition regardless of where your subject is in the frame. When using lens combinations with narrow apertures, 27 f/8 compatible AF points offer focus, in even the most extreme situations. Designed to shoot in varying light conditions, the camera has a native ISO 100-16,000 range, expandable to ISO 25,600, and the AF system will continue to work even under moonlight (-3EV). The 7560-pixel RGB+IR metering sensor measures both visible light and invisible infra-red light, giving accurate exposures, while Flicker Detection ensures consistent exposure when shooting under flickering artificial lights. A new White Priority setting also helps you to reduce the appearance of warmer tones.

A camera that adapts to you

The EOS 80D has been meticulously craft-

NETFLIX IS OUT-HBOING HBO IN EXCLUSIVE SHOWS

SAN FRANCISCO: Look out, HBO. Netflix produced more original programming than cable's premium-network leader last year, according to number provided by the two rivals. The Internet video service isn't slowing down, either, even if it risks losing subscribers to price increases that will help pay for more exclusive shows. Since its push into original shows kicked off in earnest with the 2013 debut of "House of Cards", Netflix has hit the fast-forward button. Last year, it put out 450 hours of original programming, compared to 401 from Time Warner's HBO. This year, both companies say they expect to release roughly 600 hours of original material. HBO, of course, is the network Netflix CEO Reed Hastings set out to emulate when his service began charting a course away from streaming TV reruns and previously released movies. Ted Sarandos, the company's head of programming, famously told GQ back in 2013 that Netflix's goal was "to become HBO faster than HBO can become us". Netflix is aiming to put itself into "an entirely different and supreme league" from its rivals, says Tom Numan, a former TV network and studio executive who now lectures at UCLA's graduate school of theater, film and television. The company's goal, he says, is to become the first global network for original shows and movies.

With Netflix now available in 190 countries, Hastings expects Netflix to surpass 100 million subscribers next year. During a review of Netflix's results on Monday, Hastings declared the company "really excited" about the boost it expects from its growing library of exclusive programs. Amazon.com, Hulu and other services are scrambling to catch up with their own moves into original programming. Although its own original slate is only a quarter the size of Netflix's, Amazon.com can boast that its shows won more Emmy awards last year than its rival.

Netflix is counting on a vast library of original programming to help keep subscribers on board as it faces tougher competition. Amazon, for instance, just started offering its streaming-video service for \$9 a month; previously, you had to sign up for the company's \$100-a-year Prime service, which includes free shipping from its e-commerce site and other goodies.

Amazon is undercutting Netflix's \$10 monthly price for its most popular video-streaming plan, as is Hulu, which charges \$8. HBO charges \$15 per month for a video-streaming service it launched last year to compete against Netflix. Netflix will test the loyalty of its long-time subscribers next month when it starts to hike their prices 25 percent, following a two-year freeze that kept rates at \$8 per month. The increase will hit 17 million to 22 million US subscribers, based on analyst estimates.

Original programming doesn't come cheap. The Los Gatos, California, company ended March with \$12.3 billion committed to Internet streaming rights, nearly double the \$5.6 billion it spend at the end of 2012. Netflix hasn't disclosed how much of that spending has gone toward original series and exclusive movies, but the percentage has been steadily increasing. The cost of licensing



In this file image provided by Netflix, Kevin Spacey appears in a scene from the Netflix original series "House of Cards". — AP

and overseas expansion has whittled Netflix's profit margins. In its first-quarter results released late Monday, the company said it earned \$28 million, or 6 cents per share, on revenue of nearly \$2 billion. Investors, though, are far more focused on the company's subscriber growth.

Getting original
Netflix has vastly expanded its offering of original shows, and now rivals HBO in sheer volume.



*Planned. **2015-2016 include some programs not available in the U.S.

***Some original programs ran on other overseas networks

SOURCES: Netflix, HBO, Amazon, Hulu AP

So far, the company has delivered. Netflix picked up an additional 6.74 million customers in the first quarter to boost its worldwide audience to 81.5 million subscribers - up from 33 million before the first season of "House of Cards." Such gains helped propel Netflix's share price, which has more than quadrupled since then, creating about \$36 billion in shareholder wealth.

But Netflix's stock price dropped nearly 8 percent in extended trading late Monday after the company predicted it would only add 2.5 million subscribers in the second quarter, including a gain of 500,000 customers in the US. The conservative forecast reflected the anticipated loss of some longtime subscribers due to the price increase. There's a worrisome history here. In 2011, subscribers fled when Netflix split off its DVD-by-mail operation from its burgeoning streaming business, a shift that hiked prices as much as 60 percent for some subscribers.

Netflix lost 3 percent of its US subscribers at the time. A similar reaction to next month's price increase might cost it 510,000 to 660,000 subscribers in the second quarter. Analysts think a repeat is unlikely. "I don't think you are going to see a lot of people bailing out and running for the exits," said Rosenblatt Securities analyst Martin Pyykkonen - largely because Netflix now has so many shows you can't find anywhere else.

That original programming appears to be a major draw for many subscribers. In a recent online survey of 2,500 US adults conducted by Morgan Stanley, 45 percent cited it as a reason to subscribe to Netflix. HBO, however, still has a huge advantage over Netflix in terms of prestige. Last year, HBO won 43 Emmys, more than any other TV network, while Netflix's original programs garnered just four - one less than Amazon.com. — AP

KASPERSKY PRESENTS CYBERSECURITY SOLUTION FOR INDUSTRIAL SYSTEMS

DUBAI: Kaspersky Lab has released a specialized solution to secure critical infrastructure and industrial facilities, Kaspersky Industrial CyberSecurity. The solution addresses the urgent need to manage industrial cyber-risks and protect the continuity and integrity of technological processes in industrial environments from cyber-attacks. This is vital as these environments virtual threats have the potential to cross the boundaries of cyber-space and target field-level equipment, threatening both nature and human lives. Kaspersky Industrial CyberSecurity delivers a unified, holistic approach to IT security for industrial facilities, combining the company's leading technologies, services and intelligence in one unique package.

Information technologies and process automation systems are vital to the operation of all modern industrial facilities - from power plants, refineries and assembly lines to railways, airports and smart buildings. Unlike traditional corporate IT networks, where confidentiality is the top priority, industrial control systems (ICS) demand faultless continuity and consistency of the technological process. Strict regulation and compliance can lead to unprotected operating of critical facilities if the cyber security measures do not meet safety requirements. Kaspersky Industrial CyberSecurity takes all these unique requirements into account and delivers protection to the ICS network at the layers most vulnerable to cyber-attacks - ICS/SCADA servers, HMI panels, engineering workstations, PLCs and more - securing them from cyber-threats without affecting operational continuity and consistency of the technological process.

Empowering Holistic Industrial Cybersecurity

Kaspersky Industrial CyberSecurity offers a combination of conventional security technologies, adapted for an ICS environment, such as anti-malware protection, whitelisting and vulnerability assessment functionality. This strong foundation is enhanced further with unique technologies

designed specifically for industrial environments, including Integrity check for PLC programs, Semantic monitoring of process control commands and Telemetry data to detect cyber-attacks targeting physical part of an infrastructure. A special Observability Mode is focused on the detection of cyber-attacks, operation personnel faults and anomalies inside industrial network. All prevention and detection technologies are managed via a single centralized management console.

The new solution also helps infrastructure operators build an efficient security strategy that goes beyond threat detection and prevention technologies by adding specialized security services to develop incident response and prediction capabilities. The services include industrial cybersecurity training for IT security professionals and awareness programs for general employees.

Expert services also include Cyber Security assessment and Penetration Testing which allow customers to strengthen their own intelligence, manifest the most critical vulnerabilities, including zero-day, and predict cyber-threats relevant to the company's specific industrial assets and technological processes. Incident Response services help to localize the intrusion, mitigate consequences, stop attackers from penetrating further into the infrastructure, prevent subsequent attacks on a company and develop incident response plan for the future.

Meeting the strict industry requirements

The highly customizable settings of Kaspersky Industrial CyberSecurity mean it can be configured in strict accordance with the requirements of different industries, facilities and production lines, allowing the solution to be effectively integrated into an organization's existing ICS network and technological processes without any significant modifications both to the network and to the process. All Kaspersky Lab's technologies are tested by and certified with leading ICS vendors.



PHILADELPHIA: This June 10, 2015 photo shows a chip credit card. — AP

NEW VISA CARD CHIPS TO SPEED CHECKOUT TIMES

NEW YORK: Visa says its improving its smart chip-embedded cards, which have been the source of grumbling from businesses and customers forced to wait for transactions to go through. The company said yesterday that Quick Chip for EMV will let customers dip and remove cards, usually in two seconds or less, without waiting for purchases to be finalized. Though the wait can be just seconds, in today's economy of swipes and scans, the cards have been a nuisance for high traffic retailers, for example, a coffee shop during the morning rush.

The cards are more secure than those with magnetic strips because the chip assigns a unique code to each transaction. That means that if a crook acquired that code, it couldn't be used to make another purchase. Chip cards are much harder, if not impossible, to duplicate. That makes them more secure than magnetic cards, which are easily copied. — AP

SPOTTING A LIE ISN'T EASY, BUT THERE ARE CLUES

WASHINGTON: Spotting a lie isn't as quick and easy as it looks on television. With time and training, it is possible to get a good sense of when someone is deceiving you, experts say. "It's really about how to observe very carefully," said Pamela Meyer, author of the book "Liespotting" and chief executive officer of the private firm Calibrate, which trains people and companies about how to spot deception. "It's really not a parlor trick." It's a skill that can be developed with practice, said David Matsumoto, a San Francisco State University professor of psychology. He's also a consultant to law enforcement and intelligence agencies and chief executive officer of Humintell, a company that trains police agencies, lawyers and businesses in how to read emotions. Some clues to detecting deception:

Baseline is key

There is no magic tell or giveaway, Meyer and Matsumoto said. There are hints - or "leakage," as Meyer calls it - but they aren't the same for everyone. What experts look for is change from truth-telling to deception, but not one specific change. So they need a baseline, a sense of what people look and talk like when their guard is down and they are telling the truth. While it is possible to get a baseline with 20 seconds to 30 seconds of observation, it works better with more time. Different people have different baselines. Some people can act nervous - especially when being questioned by police - even if they are telling the truth. Once a normal is established, the idea is to ask open-ended questions and look for cues, changes in verbal and nonverbal behavior, Meyer said.

VERBAL CHANGES

Look for changes in language and grammar, Matsumoto said. Meyer points to distancing lan-



BOGOTA: Students learn to administer polygraph exams at the Latin American Polygraph Institute in Bogota, Colombia.

guage, such as Bill Clinton's "I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky." Liars may split hairs, decline to answer, change the subject or tone, protest a question, even put up their hands while protesting, Meyer said. Also, look for extraneous information. That's often a clue of deception, but not always, Matsumoto said. Police will ask for a disjointed or backward timeline of someone they are interrogating, he said. Constructed fake memories are done in chronological order so they are harder to call up backward.

Nonverbal changes

There's a myth that fidgeting is a sign of lying, Meyer said. Some people naturally fidget or naturally freeze. The key is change, not a specific action,

she said. That said, look at the face, Matsumoto recommended: "If something happens in the face it can happen anywhere" on the face. "Research has shown that the bulk of messages in any action is communicated nonverbally," Matsumoto said. Meyer tells people to look at the smile. A real smile is seen in the eyes, a fake smile is only in the mouth. Also watch for a smile of contempt with one lip corner curled, as if the liar thinks he or she is getting away with something, Meyer said.

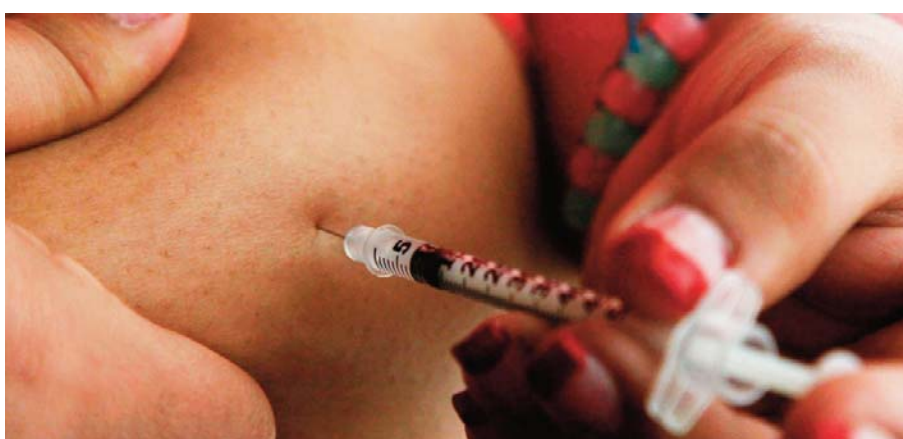
Polygraph

The National Academy of Sciences gave a decidedly mixed review to the usefulness of polygraphs, especially as a means of screening out potential security threats in advance. A 2003

report said that if the person being examined isn't trained in countermeasures that can fool a lie detector machine, "specific-incident polygraph tests can discriminate lying from truth telling at rates well above chance, though well below perfection." But the same report said "almost a century of research in scientific psychology and physiology provides little basis for the expectation that a polygraph test could have extremely high accuracy." Matsumoto said much research points to the quality of the polygraph examiner, not the machine itself, as the most important factor. Well-trained people can divine truth without the machine, Matsumoto said - just ask his children. "My family gave up a long time ago trying to lie to me," he said. — AP



BOGOTA: A polygraph examiner applies electrodes on the fingers of a subject in Bogota, Colombia. — AP photos



LOS ANGELES: A woman diagnosed with diabetes gives herself an injection of insulin at her home in the Los Angeles suburb of Commerce, Calif. — AP

STUDY BACKS PANCREAS CELL TRANSPLANTS FOR DIABETES

WASHINGTON: Transplants of insulin-producing pancreas cells are a long hoped-for treatment for diabetes - and a new study shows they can protect the most seriously ill patients from a life-threatening complication of the disease, an important step toward US approval. These transplants are used in some countries but in the US they're available only through research studies. Armed with Monday's findings, researchers hope to license them for use in a small number of people with Type 1 diabetes who are most at risk for drops in blood sugar so severe they can lead to seizures, even death.

"Cell-based diabetes therapy is real and works and offers tremendous potential for the right patient," said study lead author Dr. Bernhard Hering of the University of Minnesota, whose team plans to seek a Food and Drug Administration license for the therapy. In Type 1 diabetes, the immune system destroys the pancreatic cells responsible for making insulin, a hormone crucial to converting blood sugar into energy. About 1 million Americans have Type 1 diabetes and depend on regular insulin shots to survive but still can experience complications due to swings in their blood sugar.

Diabetics who get kidney transplants sometimes also receive pancreas transplants at the same time, essentially curing their diabetes. But it's an uncommon and grueling operation, so scientists for years have worked on a minimally invasive alternative: Infusing patients with just islet cells, the insulin factories inside the pancreas. The questions: How best to obtain those islet cells from deceased donors, and who benefits most from transplants?

When glucose levels drop too low, most people with Type 1 diabetes experience early warning signs - slurred speech, tremors, sweating, heart palpitations - so they know to eat or drink something for a quick sugar boost. But even with optimal care, about 30 percent eventually quit experiencing those symptoms, a condition called hypoglycemia unawareness. They can be in grave danger if their blood sugar plummets when no one else is around to help. Continuous glucose monitors can counteract that problem, but even those don't help everyone. The National Institutes of Health targeted that fraction of highest-risk patients, funding a study that gave 48 people at eight medical centers at least one islet cell transplant.

A year later, 88 percent were free of severe hypoglycemia events, had their awareness of blood sugar dips restored, and harbored glucose levels in near-normal ranges. Two years later, 71 percent of participants still were faring that well, concluded the study published by the journal Diabetes Care. The goal wasn't insulin independence, which requires more functioning islet cells than merely restoring blood sugar awareness. But some patients - 52 percent after one year - no longer needed insulin shots and others used lower doses.

"It's just an amazing gift," said Lisa Bishop of Eagle River, Wisconsin, who received new islet cells in 2010 and no longer needs insulin shots. Bishop recalls the terror of learning she'd become hypoglycemic unaware, and the difficulty of even holding a job. She hasn't had hypoglycemia since the transplant and says if her blood sugar occasionally dips a bit after exercise, "now my body senses it." — AP

DINOSAURS STRUGGLED TO SURVIVE FOR MILLIONS OF YEARS BEFORE ASTEROID HITS

MIAMI: Dinosaurs struggled to survive for tens of millions of years before they finally went extinct, an event widely blamed on the environmental fallout from an asteroid strike, researchers said Monday. The argument offers the latest salvo in a long-running debate among scientists over the state of dinosaur health in their final years on Earth - some say they were flourishing, while others say they were strongly in decline.

"While a sudden apocalypse may have been the final nail in the coffin, something else had already been preventing dinosaurs from evolving new species as fast as old species were dying out," said lead author Manabu Sakamoto, a paleontologist at the University of Reading, in Britain. For the study in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, researchers combed through fossil records from around the world and performed a statistical analysis showing that various species of dinosaurs were going extinct at a faster pace than new ones were emerging for a period of at least 40 million years prior to the cosmic debris that smashed into what is modern-day Mexico.

"We were not expecting this result," said Sakamoto. "While the asteroid impact is still the prime candidate for the dinosaurs' final disappearance, it is clear that they were already past their prime in an evolutionary sense." For instance, long-necked vegetarian sauropod dinosaurs - the largest land animals known to exist - were in the fastest decline, the study found. But theropods, the group that includes the iconic, meat-eating Tyrannosaurus rex, were disappearing at a more gradual pace.

Factors in their struggle likely included the break-up of continental land masses and sustained volcanic activity, the study said. Then, a giant asteroid collided in Mexico with the Earth-known as the Chicxulub impact - 66 million years ago, causing a massive dust storm that blocked the Sun and led to a period of global cooling and widespread plant death. Without trees and vegetation, an important food and shelter source disappeared, and so did the dinosaurs. "This suggests that for tens of millions of years before their ultimate demise, dinosaurs were beginning to lose their edge as the dominant species on Earth," said Sakamoto. — AP

GLOBAL WARMING MAY BOOST SPREAD OF ZIKA, OTHER VIRUSES

CLIMATE CHANGE MAY ACCELERATE SPREAD OF MOSQUITO-BORNE DISEASE

PARIS: As Europe and the United States brace for the likely arrival of the Zika virus from Latin America this summer, experts warn global warming may accelerate the spread of mosquito-borne disease. Rising temperatures are a threat in more ways than one, they cautioned ahead of a major gathering of Zika researchers in Paris next week. "Climate change has contributed to the expansion of the range of mosquitoes," said Moritz Kraemer, an infectious diseases specialist at Oxford University.

Kraemer was the lead author of a study mapping the 2015 habitats of two warm-weather species - both of which have gained ground in recent decades - known to infect humans with several viruses. Since 2014, *Aedes aegypti*, known as the "yellow fever" mosquito, has been the main carrier of Zika across Brazil, Colombia and other parts of Latin America, where it has infected several million people, according to the World Health Organization. Most carriers of the virus show no symptoms. But Zika has also caused a sharp increase in cases of microcephaly, a devastating condition that shrivels foetal brains. It is also linked to a rare neurological disorder in adults.

The second species, *Aedes albopictus*, is similarly found along the world's tropical belt, but unlike *aegypti* has also colonized some 20 countries in southern Europe since the early 1990s. In the northern hemisphere, mosquitoes are most active during summer months, disappearing every winter. In the warm, moist tropics, they thrive year-round. Over the last decade, the newly arrived *albopictus* has caused small outbreaks in southern Europe of dengue and chikungunya-viral diseases that provoke high fever, headaches, muscular pain and, in rare cases, death.

Humans infecting mosquitoes

Laboratory tests have shown that *albopictus* is also in the jargon of mosquito experts - "competent" to carry Zika, and could drive its spread in Europe. "The threat we are facing is that we will see the Zika virus in Europe next summer," said Anna-Bella Failloux, a virologist at the Institut Pasteur, which will co-host the April 25-26 meeting. Any outbreaks would likely remain localized, she said, but the fear of microcephaly looms large. In the southern United States, where *aegypti* is common, the threat is even more immediate.

A virus can be introduced to a new region when a local mosquito picks it up from an infected human - perhaps someone coming back, in the case of Zika, from a holiday in South America. If it lives long enough, an infected female mosquito can then spread the virus while consuming the blood she needs to nourish her eggs. Here again, climate change could make things worse, experts say. It can accelerate the virus' progression from the gut of the mosquito to its saliva - a bit of which enters the human bloodstream as the insect draws a meal with its needle-like proboscis.

"At warmer temperatures, this time period is shortened, leading to a greater likelihood that transmission will occur before the mosquito dies," said Lyle Petersen, an expert on vector-borne diseases at the National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases in Fort Collins, Colorado. Higher temperatures also shorten the time it takes for a mosquito egg to mature into a blood-sucking female. At 28 degrees Celsius (82.4 degrees Fahrenheit), this process happens within nine or 10 days, compared to about two weeks at 25 C (77 F). Viruses also tend to reproduce more quickly the warmer it gets.

Globalization of mosquitoes

When it comes to the spread of mosquitoes and the viruses they carry, global warming is not the only - or even the biggest - driver, scientists point out. "It is important, but increased international travel and trade - globalization, in short - are even more important," said Herve Zeller, head of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control's emerging and vector-borne disease program. Ever larger numbers of travelers are at risk every day of being bitten by an diseased mosquito and taking the virus home with them while they are still infectious.

Population density and access to clean water and living conditions are also key factors, and a major reason - besides a more temperate climate - that outbreaks in developing countries will continue to be more severe. Mosquitoes flourish in bodies of stagnant water in densely-populated settlements typical to poor, urban communities. In the absence of a vaccine or cure for Zika, the best way to prevent infection is to avoid getting bitten, experts say. Prevention efforts must focus on eliminating the insects and their breeding sites. — AFP



RECIFE: *Aedes aegypti* mosquito larvae sit in a petri dish at the FioCruz institute in Recife, Pernambuco state, Brazil. Even before the Zika virus reached crisis levels early this year, Brazil had trouble maintaining routine eradication efforts. — AP

COLORADO POT REPORT: MORE ADULTS USING DRUG, 'NOT KIDS'

DENVER: Colorado kids are not smoking more pot since the drug became legal - but their older siblings and parents certainly are, according to a long-awaited report giving the most comprehensive data yet on the effects of the state's 2012 recreational marijuana law. The state released a report Monday detailing changes in everything from pot arrests to tax collections to calls to Poison Control. Surveys given to middle-schoolers and high-schoolers indicate that youth marijuana use didn't rise significantly in the years after the 2012 vote.

Anonymous surveys given to about 40,000 Colorado students before and after legalization showed "no significant change" in marijuana use by children under 18 in the preceding 30 days. Among high school students, use went from about 23 percent in 2005 to about 20 percent in 2014. Similarly, there was no significant change in use by kids younger than 13 in recent years. But Colorado youth were much more likely than kids in other states to use marijuana, both before and after legalization, according to a national survey.

About 13 percent of Colorado minors 12-17 in 2014 had used marijuana in the last 30 days, the annual National Survey on Drug Use and Health said. That compared with about 7 percent of minors the same ages nationwide. Youth marijuana arrests in Colorado rose 5 percent between 2012 and 2014, from 3,235 to 3,400. Even worse, the report cited a huge uptick in pot arrests in schools, which rose by 34 percent between 2012 and 2014.

While use of the drug did not increase significantly among children, it did jump among adults. Relying on data from the national drug use survey, Colorado reported that nearly a

third of Coloradans 18 to 25 in 2014 had used pot in the last 30 days, a rise of about 5 percent from the year before recreational pot was legalized. The survey showed a similar spike in adults over 26. Past 30-day marijuana use went from 7.6 percent in 2012 to 12.4 percent in 2014.

The report comes three years after lawmakers ordered the state Department of Public Safety to start tracking law enforcement activity related to pot. A major argument of pro-legalization activists was that legal pot would result in fewer arrests, allowing police to focus on what some consider more serious crimes. The numbers showed a marked drop in arrests, but that legalization has not solved the racial disparities in enforcement that drug-policy reformers had hoped to end. Colorado police departments have struggled to standardize their marijuana data-collection systems, making more granular conclusions problematic.

Other highlights

Traffic safety data related to legalization was limited, mostly because Colorado didn't collect data on marijuana-impaired driving before 2012. The number of Colorado State Patrol summons issued for driving under the influence of marijuana dropped slightly from 674 in 2014 to 655 in 2015. Traffic fatalities in which a driver tested positive for marijuana's psychoactive chemical, THC, increased 44 percent in the first two years of legalization. The report said there was "no discernible trend" in illegal pot cultivation on public land, which includes most of Colorado's ski resorts. More Coloradans are calling Poison Control reporting marijuana-related exposure. Pot calls went from 44 in 2006 to 227 in 2015. — AP

EXTREME RAIN TRIGGERS HEALTH CRISIS ON THE SOUTH PACIFIC ISLAND

MIAMI: Extreme weather events are expected to strike more often due to climate change, and a study published Monday detailed how a 2014 storm triggered a health crisis on the Solomon Islands. The report in the American Journal of Tropical Medicine examined the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Ita, which drenched the capital, Honiara, with more than 24 inches (60 centimeters) of rain from April 2-4. "This study based in the Pacific island region has implications for coastal communities worldwide," said Stephen Higgs, president of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene. The unusually intense storm caused rivers to overflow, flooding roads and sweeping away bridges and homes in the city of 64,000 people.

The storm killed 31 people and was deemed per capita to be the world's most deadly single event disaster of 2014, according to the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters. "This is the first study to catalog significant health impacts from our changing climate in the Pacific region," said lead author Eileen Natuzzi, a general surgeon and public health researcher at San Diego State University. "The findings support the notion that this region is vulnerable not only to the well-documented rising sea levels associated with climate change, but also to more severe storms like this flood, which we witnessed as well as cyclones like Pam and Winston that have followed it."

The floods were particularly dangerous to children. Twenty-one died in the floods-most were children under 14 who were swept away-and 10 more children died of diarrhea and related complications in the days to follow. The storm broke water and sewer lines, and three of Honiara's nine health clinics were flooded. One month after the storm, reports of infectious disease transmission reached a peak with 2,134 cases of flu-like illness and 3,876 cases of diarrhea, mostly among children under age five. Researchers still do not know what caused the disease outbreaks, because there was no detailed analysis of pathogens found in the drinking water in the weeks after the flood.

The study also found that 75 percent of Honiara's healthcare infrastructure was located in areas considered "vulnerable to destruction by a future flood event." Furthermore, one in three people in Honiara live within 500 meters of a river or coastline. "Our findings could help governments and those providing aid improve readiness and response in order to save lives," said Natuzzi. Some strategies could include moving housing and hospitals away from flood-prone areas. "We can't change the weather, but we can change the capacity of communities to cope with the aftermath of extreme weather events," Natuzzi said. — AFP



OSAWATOMIE: An older building stands near the entrance of Osawatomie State Hospital in Osawatomie, Kan. Reminders of the past mark the campus in older buildings, some largely abandoned as states moved in past decades away from using large hospitals to treat the mentally ill. Fifty years ago, Osawatomie had more than 750 patients. — AP

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCATES CONCERNED

NYC MONITORING OF SOME MENTALLY ILL SPARKS RIGHTS CONCERNS

NEW YORK: When a homeless man was taken for a psychiatric evaluation because he argued with shelter police, doctors found no reason to commit him. Then City Hall stepped in. At the urging of a mayoral aide who cited a new city program to monitor mentally ill people considered potentially violent, the man was involuntarily hospitalized for a week. A judge finally ordered his release, ruling that the man's commitment violated his civil rights and that bureaucrats had meddled in his medical treatment.

The case crystallizes the unease that has surrounded the NYC Safe program since Mayor Bill de Blasio launched it last summer after some high-profile attacks raised alarm about the mentally ill. The program - apparently unique among American cities - keeps tabs on a roster of people with psychiatric problems and a history of violence, hoping to help them before they reach a breaking point.

So far, NYC Safe is monitoring more than 100 people, more than half of whom are in jail, prison or a locked hospital ward. City officials say administration policy is not to divulge who is on the list, though they say those on it are told. Civil liberties and mental health advocates are concerned about the potential for infringements on liberty and privacy abuses as officials share sensitive information about people among various city agencies.

Aggressive and alarming

According to a city memo obtained by The Associated Press, homeless shelters refer people to the list based on standards as broad as escalating "aggressive and alarming" conduct. In other cases, mayoral aides simply pick cases from crime stories in newspapers. And there's not yet a mechanism for people to get off the list once they're on it. "Politics is interjected into this difficult decision of who's a danger to themselves and others," said Norman Siegel, former director of the New York Civil Liberties Union.

City officials say they never should have interfered in clinical decisions. While they will continue tracking certain people, they now plan to expand their effort via data analysis, to spot patterns of when troubled people get to the edge of violence - perhaps within a certain amount of time after getting out of jail or a hospital. "We're addressing an issue that's a very difficult problem at the center of civil

liberties and public safety," said Elizabeth Glazer, director of the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice. The goal, she said, is a program that's "respectful of privacy and provides a way for people to get help." The 26-year-old man who sued over his commitment isn't identified in court records. His lawyers declined to comment.



OSAWATOMIE: Osawatomie State Hospital superintendent John Worley demonstrates ligature proof door handles during a tour of the state hospital grounds in Osawatomie, Kan. Officials and consultants are improving staffing and overhaul hospital operations so that it can regain federal certification. — AP

NYC Safe list

He had a history of violence but showed no signs of serious mental illness when brought in September to Bellevue Hospital, which released him, according to the judge's decision. But then a mayor's office liaison recommended the hospital keep him because he was on the NYC Safe list. To justify doing that, a doctor said the man was dangerous, citing episodes of troubling behavior at the hospital. But, the judge noted, hospital records showed the man began threatening violence only after learning he was being held indefinitely under the new program. Glazer said her office's call for committing the man "shouldn't have happened." The \$22-million-a-year NYC Safe is similar to programs universities started after campus shootings to monitor students who may turn violent. New York's began last year after a spate of attacks allegedly committed by mentally unstable people, including a mother accused of smothering her 20-month-old son in a burger joint bathroom, and a former homeless shelter resident charged with kidnapping and killing the shelter's director. The mayor speeded up the unveiling of NYC Safe after a homeless man abruptly punched a tourist, according to emails obtained by the AP.

The program is designed to enlist law enforcement, health services, homeless shelters and other agencies in looking for signals before someone spirals into violence. NYC Safe staffers monitor subjects' criminal cases, asking prosecutors to keep them informed about court dates. They check that people on the list show up for treatment, and they sometimes send mental health workers to visit. They also work to connect people with housing, jobs or other services after they get out of jail or the hospital.

"The city is trying to do the right thing," said Mark Murphy of the advocacy group Disability Rights New York, "but it's not clear the people involved get a say in this." While advocates worry that NYC Safe runs the risk of equating mental illness with violence, city officials have also faced questions of whether the program goes far enough. It wasn't monitoring a man suspected of killing his homeless shelter roommate in January. The now-dead suspect had a record of psychiatric problems but not violence, officials said. Glazer said she hopes that NYC Safe can "get better at noticing flags." — AP

US PROBES TARGET HEALTH CARE STARTUP THERANOS

SAN FRANCISCO: Theranos, a startup that touted a revolutionary new way to test blood, has revealed it is under scrutiny by US civil and criminal authorities. Investigations by the US Attorney's Office and the Securities and Exchange Commission are ongoing, with documents being requested from the California-based company. Theranos told partners in a memo, a copy of which was obtained by AFP on Monday.

"In the past, we have generally not commented on the specifics of these inquiries out of deference to our regulators and in light of specific requests for confidentiality," the memo read. "However, in light of consistent press attention in this area we want you to hear about them from us." The Wall Street Journal on Monday cited unnamed sources as saying that federal prosecutors are investigating whether Theranos misled investors and regulators about its technology and its operations. "The company continues to work closely with regulators and is cooperating fully with all investigations," a Theranos spokesperson said.

Investigations into Theranos by departments of health in the states of Pennsylvania and Arizona, as well as by the US Food and Drug Administration, have been successfully closed, the startup said in the memo. "The investigations by the SEC and the US Attorney's Office, which began following the publication of certain news articles, are focused on requesting documents and ongoing," Theranos said. Elizabeth Holmes took the crown of youngest "self-made" woman billionaire thanks to revolutionary blood tests touted by the Silicon Valley startup. She has been on the defensive for months after news reports questioning whether Theranos has indeed delivered a revolutionary new way to test blood. Media outlets knocking her from her pedestal had previously praised the 31-year-old as a visionary along the lines of Apple's famed co-founder Steve Jobs. — AFP

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Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
فهد علي المخيزيم

استشاري أطفال
M.B. Bch. FRCPC. FAAP. PEM

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



Talise Spa at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel and Spa is offering the deeply relaxing Luminescent Indulgence treatment. Designed to leave the skin radiant and refreshed, the treatment features organic body scrub followed by a massage to promote circulation and energize the muscles.



Palestinian Cultural Exhibition

Under the auspices of HE
Eng. Ali Al Youha

Secretary General of National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters

The Palestinian Culture Center in cooperation with the Embassy of the State of Palestine in Kuwait, invite you to its 44th exhibition, at the Kuwaiti women's Cultural and Social society in Khaldiya, starting from Monday at 10:00am, April 25th to Thursday, April 28th, 2016.

Classic designs intertwined with modern usage, motifs and color will be exhibited. Items on sale include: handmade cushions, scarves, shawls, traditional dresses, ceramics and other items. Books, music and movies will also be available.

A bake sale of traditional foods will take place on Thursday. Food products imported from Palestine are available every day. A dabkah folkdance will be performed on Thursday at 6:30 pm.

Venue
The Kuwaiti Women Cultural Society,
Khaldiya, Block 2, Al-Orouba Street

Dates
Monday April 25th to Thursday April 28th, 2016

Hours
Mornings 10:00am to 1:30pm
Evenings 4:30pm to 8:30pm

Tel.
2484 3397 - 2484 3667 - 9937 6608



Fatma Failakawi - Hala Sami - Wafaa Salman - Abir Noueihed - Najwa Salman - Jeremy Van Dyken - Satish Kumar - Santhosh Kumar/Winners of all four Contests

TOASTMASTERS AREA 14 ANNUAL SPEECH CONTEST: SUCCESSFUL EVENT

Area 14 Toastmasters successfully held the Annual speech contest and esteemed panel of judges voted for the winners that will represent the Area 14 and compete in another battle among other Areas under Division I contest on May 6 at ACK.

Kuwait - March 25, 2016 - Toastmasters Area 14 Director Najwa Salman successfully held the Area 14 Annual Speech Contest at the Auditorium of American University in Kuwait from 2:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

Every year we hold Toastmasters Annual Contests which will be of four segments, Table Topics, Humorous speech, Evaluation, and International speech. Contests begin at club level; then at the Area level; then compete for Division titles; finally, Division champions do battle in the District Championships. Contests come under the umbrella Toastmasters International, that is a voluntary, non-profit organization, and its primary objective is focused in particular on the development of an individual's ability to communicate effectively and raise the level of his skill in leadership and management in accordance with professional style.

Toastmasters International's founded by Dr Ralph Smedley in 1924 in the United States, throughout its history, Toastmasters has served over four million people, and today, the organization serves over a quarter of a million members in 122 countries boasting over 14,350 clubs. Toastmasters is one of the largest non-profit organizations, educational and specialized in the art of communication and leadership skills, at a time when the pursuit of individuals to develop their skills profile comes at the forefront of priorities and concerns to a large segment of people interested.

Contest program

Sergeant at arms Yasser Mohamed called the contest to order and informed the audience about the protocols to maintain during the contest and read the Toastmasters Club Mission. Area 14 Director Najwa Salman started the



Najwa Salman - Abir Noueihed - Jeremy Van Dyken - Satish Kumar - Alifiya Lakdawana, three Winners in one of the contest with the Area Director and the chief judge.

contest by an opening speech stating that "It is my pleasure to welcome you all here today to Area 14 Annual speech contest. I would first like to give my thanks for the hard work of the Toastmasters' members of our area 14, our Division I, and every Toastmaster's member who helped in a way or another in the preparation for this event. I want to wish a good luck to our contestants, and I am sure we will listen to inspirational speeches, deep thought and they will ensure to take with us valuable messages home. For me all contestants are winners. Let us enjoy, get inspired and have fun."

Master of Ceremony Lulwa Alameeri introduced the ground rules of the contest. She mentioned the Clubs falls under Area 14 by recognizing the club name when it is charted led by a big round of applause. She continued Area 14 clubs are Kuwait Toastmasters Club the first club chartered in Kuwait in Feb. 1999, Pear of the Gulf

Toastmasters Club chartered in May 2007, Aim High Toastmasters Club chartered in May 2012, Life Principles Toastmasters Club chartered in Nov. 2013, and KWT Rovers Toastmasters Club chartered Dec. 2015.

The contest was led by four Contest Toastmasters each was chairing her contest. Table Topics Contest chaired by Farah Alelwani, Evaluation contest chaired by Muna Alboulouchi chaired, Humorous Speech Contest chaired by Marwa Essam, and International Speech Contest chaired by Ola Rahseed.

Area 14 Director Najwa Salman ended the event by awarding the role players and called the Chief Judge Alifiya Lakdawana who had the winners selected by esteemed panel of judges. Najwa congratulated the winners and wished them luck in their next contest.

MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL INVITES THE WORLD TO DISCOVER THE REGION WITH #MARRIOTTTRAVELS

With summer fast approaching, Marriott International is inviting travelers the world over to discover the Middle East and Africa with the launch of #MarriottTravels.

Launching 15 April, and available at any one of over 50 regional properties for stays between 15 May to 17 September, 2016, #MarriottTravels gives travelers from over twenty countries 3 nights for the price of 2, and up to 50 per cent off on hotel dining. In addition to free nights and dining discounts, those taking advantage of the offer will also enjoy complimentary breakfast, free dining for children and 30 per cent off their next booking.

Members of Marriott International's award-winning loyalty program, Marriott Rewards(r), can also avail of further discounts through Marriott Rewards(r) Member Rates as well as stay up-to-date, and in touch with friends and family as complementary Wi-Fi is also included for members.

Commenting on the Marriott Summer promotion, Neal Jones, Chief Sales and Marketing Officer, Marriott International said, "The Middle East and Africa region is home to some of the world's most unique, historic and exotic destinations. Through the #MarriottTravels campaign, we will be welcoming travelers from both within the region, and as far afield as the United States, and China to explore both our range of brands and properties, as well as the inspired destinations that they are located in."

Brands included in the offer range from elegant to cheerful and include JW Marriott Hotels, Renaissance Hotels, Autograph Collection Hotels, Marriott Hotels, Marriott Executive Apartments, Courtyard by Marriott, Residence Inn by Marriott and no less than twelve Protea Hotels. The offer is available at the majority of these brands across the GCC and in Jordan, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Ethiopia and South Africa.

"As one of the world's leading travel companies, we endeavor to help our guests have enriching travel experiences, while at the same time, offer them great value. #MarriottTravels is indicative of this ethos given its size, scale and also value-added proposition with the addition of further benefits through our award-winning Marriott Rewards(r) program," added Jones.

#MarriottTravels is available to book from 15 April and those wishing to avail of the offer need to simply select their destination online at deals.marriott.com/marriotttravels and use the code: B4F. To avail of Marriott Rewards(r) Member Rates, those booking can sign up for Marriott Rewards(r), while those who are already members simply need to log in.

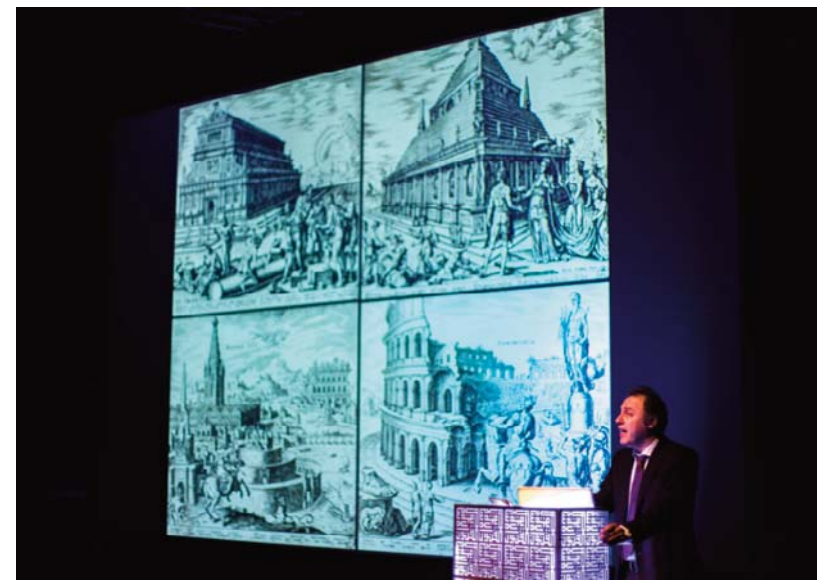
#MarriottTravels is open to travelers booking across the Middle East and Africa region as well as those in the United States, India, Germany, Ukraine, United Kingdom, China, Korea, and Japan. For a full list of participating hotels and booking, visit <http://deals.marriott.com/marriotttravels> or call 800 Marriott.



Jordan Valley Marriott Resort and Spa



Jordan Valley Marriott Resort and Spa



PROFESSOR FOLIN TALKS 'ANCIENT WORLD' WONDERS AT DAR AL-ATHAR AL-ISLAMIYYAH

Italian Professor Dr Marco Folin presented a lecture titled 'The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World: Memory, architecture, imagination' at Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah recently. The presentation focused on the 'Seven Wonders of the Ancient World,' those mythic constructions located around the Eastern Mediterranean rim and listed by Hellenistic authors as emblems of an extraordinary architectural perfection. Dr Folin explained why this canon was established, in Ptolemaic Egypt (IV century BCE), and how it continued to be transmitted in Europe during the Middle Ages. "Between the fifteenth and sixteenth century the first attempts to reconstruct the actual aspect of the original monuments started (which, except the pyramids, had all been destroyed): at first only on the basis of ancient descriptions. This would be supplemented later, thanks to ambitious archaeological campaigns which fuelled the imagination of several generations of European artists, writers and architects," he said.

Dr Folin is a Professor of History of Architecture at the University of Genoa. He has published several studies on Italian urban culture and the relationship between art and politics in the Renaissance. Among his main publications: *Courts and courtly arts in Renaissance Italy. Art, culture and politics, 1395-1530* (ed.), ACC and Officina Libraria, Woodbridge 2010; *A Renaissance Architecture of Power. Princely Palaces in Italian Quattrocento* (ed, with S Beltramo and F Cantatore), Leiden, Brill (forthcoming, 2015).



ALBANIA SHOWCASES FOLK SONGS, DANCES

KUWAIT: A concert of folk songs and dances was held yesterday at the Abdulaziz Hussein Theater in Salmiya. The Albanian Embassy in Kuwait hosted and invited its most famous group from Albania 'The Albanian National Ensembles' where they showcased cultural performances to thrilled audience led by dignitaries including some local officials from several ministries in Kuwait. The event, held under the auspices of National Council for Culture Arts and Letters and the Kuwait Capital for Islamic Culture was introduced to attendees by Kujtim Morina, Albanian Ambassador to Kuwait. The performance was really amazing and received warmest applause from attendees. The group performed dances/songs; which are heartily appreciated by everyone in the audience; Feast Day in Tirana Dance, Do they have water in springs, pliphonic interval, Kaba for violin and orchestra, gora dance, dharda, skraper dance, to my arberesh, Open black eyes, Cham collage, Orchestral Clarinet and sister cries over brother. The event lasted for over an hour. The National Ensemble of Folk Songs/Dances was established as professional ensemble in 1957. The ensembles include the solo singers, solo and group singers.



AMC

00:50 The Heavenly Kid
02:20 How To Beat The High Cost Of Living
04:10 Mighty Fine
05:30 Saved!
07:00 Charge Of The Light Brigade
09:05 Big Screen
09:20 Cannon For Cordoba
11:05 The Beast Of Hollow Mountain
12:25 One Summer Love
14:05 Lords Of Dogtown
15:45 One More Kiss
17:25 Empire Of The Ants
18:55 The Magnificent Seven
21:00 Barbershop
22:45 Barbershop 2: Back In Business

ANIMAL PLANET HD

00:45 Beast Lands
01:40 Gator Boys
02:35 Tanked
03:25 Man, Cheetah, Wild
04:15 Gator Boys
05:02 Treehouse Masters
05:49 Gator Boys
06:36 Swamp Brothers
07:00 Swamp Brothers
07:25 My Cat From Hell
08:15 Gator Boys
09:10 Treehouse Masters
10:05 Tanked
11:00 My Cat From Hell
11:55 Bondi Vet
12:25 Bondi Vet
12:50 Gator Boys
13:45 Gator Boys
14:40 Treehouse Masters
15:35 Tanked
16:30 Man, Cheetah, Wild
17:25 River Monsters
18:20 Australia Doesn't Just Want To Kill You
19:15 Tanked
20:10 Mutant Planet
21:05 Treehouse Masters
22:00 Australia Doesn't Just Want To Kill You
22:55 Gator Boys
23:50 River Monsters

BBC FIRST

00:15 Doctors
00:50 Ripper Street
01:45 Ripper Street
02:40 Silent Witness
03:35 Waking The Dead
04:35 Doctors
05:10 Doctor Who
06:00 Doctors
06:30 Doctors
07:00 Stella
07:50 The Paradise
08:45 Doctor Who
09:35 Doctors
10:10 Doctors
10:40 Death In Paradise
11:35 Stella
12:25 The Paradise
13:20 Doctor Who
14:15 Doctors
14:45 Doctors
15:15 Death In Paradise
16:15 The Paradise
17:10 Doctor Who
18:00 Doctors
18:30 Eastenders
19:05 Death In Paradise
20:00 New Tricks
21:00 New Tricks
21:55 Silent Witness

Bloomberg TELEVISION

00:00 Charlie Rose
01:00 Bloomberg West
02:00 First Up With Angie Lau
03:00 First Up With Angie Lau
04:00 Trending Business
05:00 Trending Business
06:00 Asia Edge
07:00 Bloomberg West

00:00 News Update
00:30 Dialogue
01:00 News Update
01:15 China 24
02:00 The Heat
02:30 News Update
03:00 Global Business
04:00 News Update
05:00 News Update
06:30 Dialogue
07:00 News Hour
08:00 Global Business
09:00 News Update
10:30 Sports Scene
11:00 Global Business
12:00 News Update
12:30 Culture Express
13:00 Africa Live

CNBC

00:00 Access: Middle East
00:30 Inside China
01:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
02:00 Asia Squawk Box
05:00 Asia Street Signs
07:00 Capital Connection
08:00 Squawk Box Europe
11:00 Europe Street Signs
12:00 Worldwide Exchange
13:00 U.S. Squawk Box
16:00 Squawk On The Street
18:00 U.S. Squawk Alley
19:00 Fast Money: Half Time Report
20:00 U.S. Power Lunch
22:00 U.S. Closing Bell

crime & investigation network

00:00 Killers
01:00 Jack The Ripper
02:00 The First 48
03:00 Martina Cole's Lady Killers
04:00 My Crazy Ex
05:00 Killers
06:00 I Killed My BFF
07:00 Gangs Of Britain...
08:00 Crime Stories
09:00 Frenemies
09:30 Private Crimes
10:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
11:00 After The First 48
12:00 The FBI Files
13:00 I Killed My BFF
14:00 Crime Stories
15:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
16:00 Gangs Of Britain...
17:00 After The First 48
18:00 The FBI Files
19:00 I Killed My BFF
20:00 Crime Stories
21:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
22:00 The Haunting Of...
23:00 Cursed: The Bell Witch

Discovery CHANNEL HD

00:20 Fast N' Loud
01:10 The Island With Bear Grylls
02:00 Bear Grylls: Mission Survive
02:50 So You Think You'd Survive?
03:40 Thrift Hunters
04:05 Storage Wars Canada
04:30 Auction Hunters
05:00 How Do They Do It?
05:30 Thrift Hunters
06:00 Outback Truckers
06:50 Wheeler Dealers
07:40 Fast N' Loud
08:30 Thrift Hunters
08:55 Storage Wars Canada
09:20 Auction Hunters
09:45 How Do They Do It?
10:10 Fift Gear
10:35 The Island With Bear Grylls
11:25 Bear Grylls: Mission Survive
12:15 So You Think You'd Survive?
13:05 Thrift Hunters

00:20 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
01:08 Food Factory
01:31 Food Factory
01:55 Moon Machines
02:42 How The Earth Works
03:29 Mythbusters
04:16 Food Factory
04:39 Food Factory
05:03 Moon Machines
05:50 Future Firepower
06:37 How Do They Do It?
07:00 How Do They Do It?
07:23 Mythbusters
08:08 How The Earth Works
08:53 Future Firepower
09:38 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
10:23 Food Factory

Disney Channel

00:00 Violetta
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:15 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Hank Zipzer
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:30 Violetta
03:15 The Hive
03:20 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
03:45 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
04:10 Hank Zipzer
04:35 Binny And The Ghost
05:00 Violetta
05:45 The Hive
05:50 Mouk
06:00 Lolirock
06:25 Sofia The First
06:50 Graviity Falls
07:15 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
07:40 Jessie
08:05 Shake It Up
08:30 Shake It Up
08:55 Hannah Montana
09:20 Hannah Montana
09:45 Girl Meets World
10:10 Girl Meets World
10:35 A.N.T. Farm
11:00 A.N.T. Farm
11:25 Jessie
11:50 Jessie
12:15 Whisker Haven Tales With The Palace Pets
12:20 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
12:45 Fish Hooks
13:10 Austin & Ally
13:35 Austin & Ally
14:00 Liv And Maddie
14:25 Cars Toons
14:30 Liv And Maddie
14:55 Dog With A Blog
15:20 Dog With A Blog
15:45 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
16:10 Violetta
17:00 The Next Step
17:25 Alex And Co
17:50 Dog With A Blog
18:15 Best Friends Whenever
18:40 Liv And Maddie
19:05 Evermoor Chronicles
19:30 Violetta
20:20 The Next Step
20:45 Good Luck Charlie
21:10 Good Luck Charlie
21:35 H2O
22:00 Binny And The Ghost
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
22:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:10 Hank Zipzer
23:35 Binny And The Ghost

Disney Junior

00:05 Art Attack
00:30 Henry Hugglemonster
00:45 Calimero
01:00 Zou
01:15 Loopedidoo
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Henry Hugglemonster
02:05 Calimero
02:20 Zou

00:05 Art Attack
00:30 Henry Hugglemonster
00:45 Calimero
01:00 Zou
01:15 Loopedidoo
01:30 Art Attack
01:55 Henry Hugglemonster
02:05 Calimero
02:20 Zou

GOOD LUCK CHUCK ON OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

02:30 Loopedidoo	20:55 K.C. Undercover	00:10 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
02:45 Art Attack	21:20 Pickle And Peanut Lab Rats	01:05 Emmerdale
03:10 Henry Hugglemonster	21:45 Lab Rats	01:30 Eggheads
03:20 Calimero	22:10 Mighty Med	02:00 Coronation Street
03:35 Zou	22:40 Disney Mickey Mouse	02:30 The Jonathan Ross Show
03:45 Loopedidoo		03:25 Home Fires
04:00 Art Attack		04:20 Hiding
04:25 Henry Hugglemonster		05:15 Prince George At One
04:35 Calimero		06:10 Who's Doing The Dishes?
04:50 Zou		07:00 Eggheads
05:00 Loopedidoo		07:30 Home Fires
05:15 Art Attack		08:25 Hiding
05:35 Henry Hugglemonster		09:20 The Jonathan Ross Show
05:50 Calimero		10:15 The Chase: Celebrity Specials
06:00 Zou		11:05 Eggheads
06:20 Loopedidoo		11:35 Prince George At One
06:35 Art Attack		12:30 Who's Doing The Dishes?
07:00 The Hive		13:25 Emmerdale
07:10 Zou		13:50 Eggheads
07:25 Loopedidoo		14:20 Coronation Street
07:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse		14:45 The Jonathan Ross Show
08:05 Sofia The First		15:35 Kate Middleton: Heir We Go Again!
08:30 Goldie & Bear		16:30 Murdoch Mysteries
08:45 Jake And The Never Land Pirates		17:25 Murdoch Mysteries
		18:20 Emmerdale
		18:45 Coach Trip
		19:10 Coronation Street
		19:35 Kate Middleton: Heir We Go Again!
		20:30 Murdoch Mysteries
		21:25 Murdoch Mysteries
		22:50 Coronation Street
		22:50 Emmerdale
		23:15 Who's Doing The Dishes?

BATTLESHIP ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

VIACOM and OSN bring big laughs to the small screen in MENA with exclusive launch of Comedy Central HD

Dubai, UAE: Further strengthening its roster of world-class and exclusive comedy content, OSN, the region's leading pay-TV network, has signed an agreement with Viacom International Media Networks to add the number one global comedy brand, Comedy Central, to its offering of entertainment channels.

Comedy Central HD is the third brand for ViMN in the region, complementing the existing presence of MTV and Nickelodeon/Nick Jr.

From May 7, Comedy Central HD (OSN Channel No. 207) will be available exclusively on OSN in the Middle East and North Africa region, adding to the distinctive 'nowhere else' value proposition that the network provides to its subscribers. To effectively satisfy local appetites for comedic entertainment, 100 percent of the content premiering in the region on Comedy Central HD, including animated programmes, will be subtitled in Arabic.

Comedy Central is the undisputed leader in funny around the globe with a presence in more than 120 countries, a deep library of international content and an increasing commitment to local productions. Among the popular programs the brand will be airing in the region are The Daily Show with Trevor Noah, Comedy Central Presents..., Inside Amy Schumer, Lip Sync Battle and the animated hit, South Park.

Emad Morcos, SVP Media Partners & Digital at OSN, said: "Everybody loves a good laugh and OSN is offering great value with the addition of Comedy Central HD, a perfect fit to the entertainment preferences of people in the region. We are confident that the wide range of comic series, sitcoms and reality-competitions will appeal to all. Comedy Central contributes to the diversity of exclusive entertainment choices we have added to OSN this year. Complemented with a host of edgy programmes from Spike,

Comedy Central is also creating the opportunity for local talent to showcase their skills through our planned local programming."

Raffaele Anneschino, EVP and MD of ViMN South Europe, Middle East and Africa, said: "We are thrilled to work with OSN to further expand our distribution footprint in MENA and bring Comedy Central and Spike to the region. At Viacom, we are committed to creating content that resonates locally and internationally, and we are certain that viewers will love the unique editorial mix on OSN. Delivering this balance of premium international and local comedy content is our expertise and we look forward to working with OSN to bring laughter and satisfaction to MENA audiences, who we know are passionate about comedy. Furthermore, we are committed, as in all of our regions, to growing the local comedy scene and investing in local productions and we will be focusing our energies on this from the first year."

Fans of talk show TV will be delighted to learn that The Daily Show with Trevor Noah, currently on OSN Play, will also be featured on the new channel. The Emmy-Award winning show hosts a star-studded line-up of celebrities including actors, authors, singers and presidential hopefuls as guests under the sharp comic wit and smart observations of South African host Trevor Noah.

Comedy Central favorites Tosh.0 and Inside Amy Schumer will also be featured on OSN. Fans won't miss a thing as both of the long-running series will be aired from their first seasons starting in April. The weekly Tosh.0 delves into all aspects of the social media landscape, featuring razor-sharp humour and biting commentary from comedian Daniel Tosh. The show, now in its 8th season, is an international hit and will air its 200th episode this summer. Emmy-Award winning Inside Amy Schumer features the famous, edgy comedian performing a variety of hilarious sketches, stand up,

interviews and musical performances.

Further bolstering the quality of its premium programming, the new channel will feature a dedicated block of Spike content. Spike is a general entertainment brand offering original productions created to inform, engage, inspire and above all push the boundaries of the unexpected. Shows from Spike will include the global smash-hit and YouTube viral sensation Lip Sync Battle, as well as the popular Catch a Contractor, an original non-scripted series that sees host Adam Carolla on a mission to track down shady, evasive contractors and drag them back to the scene of their crimes to face the music and fix the disasters they left behind.

Stand-up lovers will find The Half Hour, featuring some of the exciting names in stand-up comedy, irresistible, while Nathan For

You, a factual show that sees host Nathan Fielder going as far as it takes to make his business ideas come true. Internationally produced shows include I Live with Models, a hilarious sitcom where newly 'discovered' hand model Tommy must 'live his dream' with three experienced fashion models.

Competition reality series Frankenfood follows New York executive chef and restaurateur Josh Capon as he discovers new flavours; while Framework explores the compelling world of furniture design and construction. Swire Inc. is another reality-competition series featuring 12 aspiring fitness entrepreneurs competing to prove that they have developed the next ground-breaking exercise programme.

Finally, the all-new Comedy Central HD exclusively on OSN will include domestically produced programmes that will lend a crucial and authentic local feel to the channel. Comedy lovers will enjoy a mix of popular international comedy series and docu-reality programmes, as well as join Comedy Central in celebrating the thriving local stand-up comedy circuit on Comedy Central Presents...

All the shows premiering on Comedy Central HD will be available on OSN's award-winning catch-up service, OSN Play and via OSN on Demand.

OSN continues to strengthen its portfolio of premium exclusive channels. New and exclusive channels launched this year include: OSN Yahala Cinema HD, OSN Movies Family HD, OSN First HD Home of HBO, H2 HD, BBC First HD, Discovery Family HD and IDX HD. In addition, six new Filipino channels were launched recently - CineMo, Lifestyle Network, GMA Pinoy TV, GMA Life TV, GMA News TV and PBO (live streamed on OSN Play). More exclusive channel launches are planned this year.

NAT GEO people HD

00:35 David Rocco's Dolce Vita
01:00 Chasing Time
01:25 Miguel's Feasts
01:50 The Food Files
02:15 Dream Cruises
03:05 East Bites West
03:55 Lucky Chow
04:20 Fearless Chef
05:10 Street Food Around The World
05:35 Street Food Around The World
06:00 Cesar To The Rescue
06:50 Chasing Time
07:15 Miguel's Feasts
07:40 The Food Files
08:05 Dream Cruises
08:55 Wineroads
09:20 East Bites West
09:45 Lucky Chow
10:10 Fearless Chef
11:00 Street Food Around The World
11:25 Street Food Around The World
11:50 Cesar To The Rescue
12:40 Chasing Time
13:05 Miguel's Feasts
13:35 The Food Files
14:00 Dream Cruises
14:55 Wineroads
15:25 East Bites West
15:50 Grandma's Boy
16:20 Fearless Chef
17:10 Street Food Around The World
17:35 Street Food Around The World
18:00 Cesar To The Rescue
19:00 Wineroads
19:30 East Bites West
20:00 Grandma's Boy
20:25 Fearless Chef
21:15 Street Food Around The World
21:40 Street Food Around The World
22:05 Cesar To The Rescue

OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

00:00 Pusher
02:00 The X Files
04:00 Jack The Giant Killer
06:00 Crimson Tide
08:00 Battle Of The Damned
09:45 Battleship
12:00 Oblivion
14:15 Crimson Tide
16:15 The Marine 4: The Moving Target
18:00 Battleship
20:15 12 Rounds
22:15 300: Rise Of An Empire

NAT GEO WILD HD

00:20 World's Deadliest Snakes In The City
02:00 Deadly Instincts
02:50 Wild 24
03:45 Monster Fish
04:40 Wild Florida
05:35 Deadly Instincts
06:30 Wild 24
07:25 Monster Fish
08:20 Wild Florida
09:15 Ultimate Animal Countdown
10:10 Dead Or Alive
11:05 Snakes In The City
12:50 Shark Men
12:55 Deadly Instincts
13:50 Wild 24
14:45 Monster Fish
15:40 Animals Gone Wild
16:35 Ultimate Animal Countdown
17:30 World's Deadliest
18:25 Snakes In The City
19:20 Monster Fish
20:10 Animals Gone Wild
21:00 Ultimate Animal Countdown
21:50 World's Deadliest
22:40 Snakes In The City
23:30 Shark Men

OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

00:45 Get On Up
03:00 The Savages
05:00 Beaches
07:00 Great Expectations
09:30 Upside Down
11:30 Beaches
13:30 The Mirror Has Two Faces
15:30 Diana
17:30 Upside Down
19:30 At Any Price
21:15 Bugsy
23:30 Summer Of Sam

OSN FIRST HD COMEDY

00:30 My Big Fat Greek Life
01:00 Breaking In
01:30 It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia
02:00 The Big C
02:30 Web Therapy
03:00 Weird Loners
03:30 Living With Fran
04:00 Two And A Half Men
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
05:30 Suburgatory
06:00 The Bernie Mac Show
06:30 Your Family Or Mine
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:00 Two And A Half Men
08:30 Suburgatory
09:00 Weird Loners
09:30 Modern Family
10:00 Playing House
10:30 Your Family Or Mine
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
12:00 The Bernie Mac Show
12:30 \$#*! My Dad Says
13:00 Suburgatory
13:30 Your Family Or Mine
14:00 Living With Fran
14:30 Modern Family
15:00 Playing House
15:30 My Big Fat Greek Life
16:00 Breaking In
16:30 The Bernie Mac Show
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
18:00 The Carmichael Show
18:30 Living With Fran
19:00 The Last Man On Earth
19:30 Playing House
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
21:00 My Big Fat Greek Life
21:30 Breaking In
22:00 It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia
23:00 The Big C
23:30 Web Therapy
Late Night With Seth Meyers

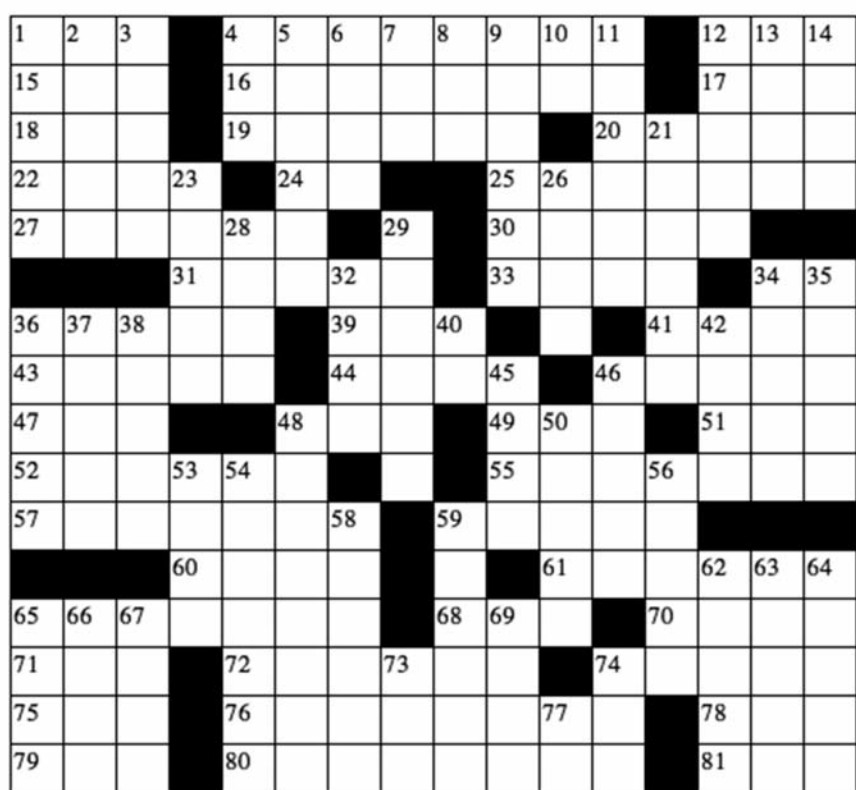
OSN SPORTS 1 HD

01:00 PGA Tour Highlights
02:00 PGA European Tour Highlights
03:00 The PGA Tour Champions Highlights
04:00 NRL Full Time
04:30 Live NHL
07:00 Gillette World Sport
08:00 The PGA Tour Champions Highlights
09:00 PGA Tour Highlights
10:00 PGA European Tour Highlights
11:00 AFL Premiership Highlights
12:00 Live Snooker World Championship
16:00 Top 14 Highlights
16:30 Live Snooker World Championship
20:00 Inside The PGA Tour
20:30 European Tour Weekly
21:00 Live Snooker World Championship

OSN SPORTS 2 HD

00:00 The PGA Tour Champions Highlights
01:00 Top 14 Highlights
01:30 NRL Full Time
02:00 Live NHL
05:00 Indy Car Highlights
06:00 AFL Premiership Highlights
07:00 Gillette World Sport
07:30 Snooker World Championship
11:30 Super Rugby Highlights
13:30 Golfing World

CROSSWORD 1232



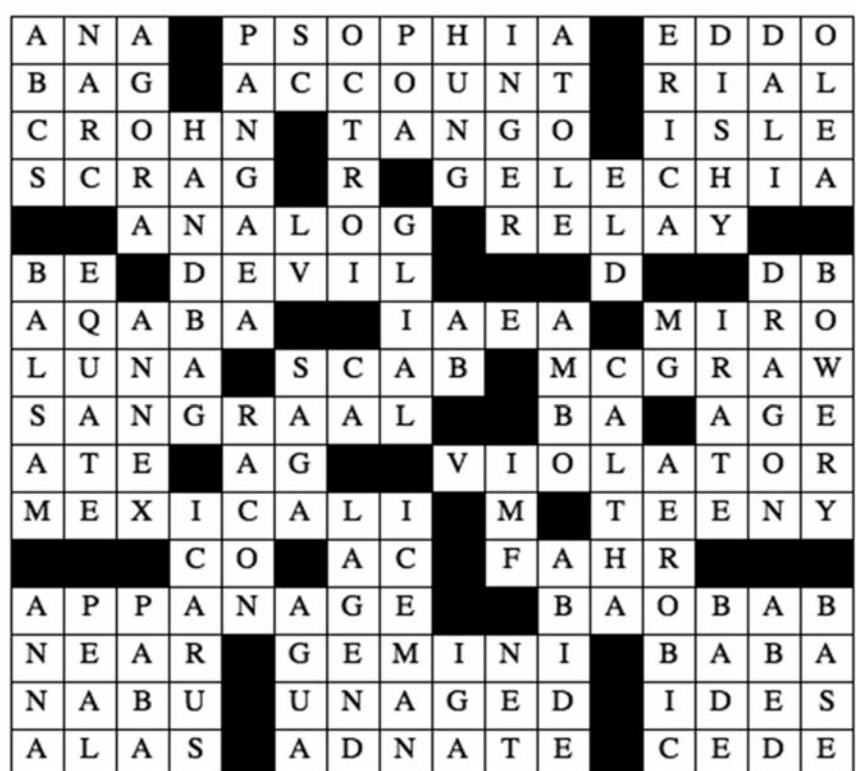
ACROSS

- 1. The United Nations agency concerned with the international collection of meteorological data.
4. The wife or widow of a czar.
12. The chance to speak.
15. A former agency (from 1946 to 1974) that was responsible for research into atomic energy and its peacetime uses in the United States.
16. Having or showing valor.
17. In favor of (an action or proposal etc.).
18. A federal agency that supervises carriers that transport goods and people between states.
19. Bright with a steady but subdued shining.
20. The function or position properly or customarily occupied or served by another.
22. Someone who works (or provides workers) during a strike.
24. An artificial language for international use that rejects rejects all existing words and is based instead on an abstract analysis of ideas.
25. The second month of the Hindu calendar.
27. (Mexican) Corn and cornmeal dough stuffed with a meat mixture then wrapped in corn husks and steamed.
30. American author of inspirational adventure stories for boys.
31. A coffee cake flavored with orange rind and raisins and almonds.
33. Having the slant of a bevel.
36. Having lost your job.
39. (computer science) A coding system that incorporates extra parity bits in order to detect errors.
41. Flesh of fish found in colder waters of northern Atlantic coast of the United States.
43. (of a liquid) Agitated vigorously.
44. An easy victory.
47. (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
49. A constellation in the southern hemisphere near Telescopium and Norma.
51. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
52. A name under which Ninkhursag was worshipped.
55. A genus of Malayan tree.
57. Inflammation of the nose and throat with increased production of mucus.
60. Black honeycreepers with yellow feathers around the tail.
61. A state in northwestern North America.
65. Something contrived to meet an urgent need or emergency.
68. The longer of the two telegraphic signals used in Morse code.
70. A branch of the Tai languages.
71. Any of various dark heavy viscid substances obtained as a residue.
72. Wool of the alpaca.
75. A Turkish unit of weight equal to about 2.75 pounds.
76. Obstruction of the sweat ducts during high heat and humidity.
78. A light touch or stroke.
79. Having undesirable or negative qualities.
80. Lacking professional skill or expertise.
81. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

DOWN

- 1. The narrowing of the body between the ribs and hips.
2. Joint capital (with Riyadh) of Saudi Arabia.
3. English scholastic philosopher and assumed author of Occam's Razor (1285-1349).
4. A sudden loss of consciousness resulting when the rupture or occlusion of a blood vessel leads to oxygen lack in the brain.
5. The capital of Croatia.
6. (prefix) Indicating difference or variation.
7. Fish eggs or egg-filled ovary.
8. A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
9. An alloy of copper and zinc (and sometimes arsenic) used to imitate gold in cheap jewelry and for gilding.
10. (Sumerian) Evil storm god represented as a black bird.
11. Give an assignment to (a person) to a post, or assign a task to (a person).
12. A long pointed rod used as a weapon.
13. Any of various strong liquors distilled from the fermented sap of toddy palms or from fermented molasses.
14. The 10th letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
21. Blood-sucking African fly.
23. A confusion of voices and other sounds.
26. (botany) Of or relating to the axil.
28. A polite name for any woman.
29. German mathematician (1804-1851).
32. A Chadic language spoken in Chad.
34. A Russian prison camp for political prisoners.
35. A drama set to music.
37. Region of western Asia Minor colonized by Ancient Greeks.
38. Showing or feeling mirth or pleasure or happiness.
40. A metric unit of length equal to one hundredth of a meter.
42. Group of people related by blood or marriage.
45. Large burrowing rodent of South and Central America.
46. Obvious and dull.
48. A 10% solution of formaldehyde in water.
50. A Hindu prince or king in India.
53. A tool for tamping (e.g., for tamping tobacco into a pipe bowl or a charge into a drill hole etc.).
54. The Japanese art of folding paper into shapes representing objects (e.g., flowers or birds).
56. Lower in esteem.
58. strap the foreleg and hind leg together on each side (of a horse) in order to keep the like-sided legs moving in unison.
59. (British) A member of the military police.
62. The main city of ancient Phoenicia.
63. Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
64. Jordan's port.
66. The basic unit of money in Bangladesh.
67. Toward the mouth or oral region.
69. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
73. Wood duck and mandarin duck.
74. Feline mammal usually having thick soft fur and being unable to roar.
77. A heavy brittle metallic element of the platinum group.

Yesterday's Solution



STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

You may swing a good deal on an important purchase today. This is a favorable time for adventurous travel, sports, outdoors and contact with foreigners. It is also favorable for cultural, religious and legal matters. Generosity, financial gain, hospitality and favors may be bestowed upon you now. You handle bigger responsibilities than usual in the workplace now. With a new resolve, you become generally optimistic about your career. You may deal with governmental agencies today. Public relations and educational matters may require your attention soon. Political matters are important to you as well. There are issues that you would like to pursue regarding your community. Networking today is a good idea.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

A co-worker or family member has a fat problem. They may ask for your advice today. Although you may not have a fat problem, you have an instinctive urge to join this co-worker friend by taking better care of yourself-perhaps a new regimen is in order. A group of you may decide to join a noon exercise group and then enjoy a light lunch together. Great results can happen if each person commits for a short time-perhaps for six weeks at a time. After the six weeks, you can always agree to six more weeks. You will want to feel good about yourself and have a focus to do the things you want to do. This afternoon you will be spending time in research. An idea of yours, or someone else's, needs research and you may be elected.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Your pride is strong and you are always ready to master any problem. You are self-reliant and self-confident enough to accomplish whatever you set out to do. Of course, you can work side by side with others, but today you may prefer your own company. One of your greatest teachers is your own power of observation. Your power to absorb impressions of the world around you gives you great intuitive abilities. When you listen, your intuitive abilities will guide you toward successful opportunities. Travel today is favorable, whether it is for business or pleasure. Your enthusiasm is good when dealing with matters pertaining to the family or home. A project on the home front will end successfully. A science fiction movie is a great escape this evening.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You may feel that you have grown by leaps and bounds lately. The progress in your life is easy to see. The habits and negative feelings of the past are truly behind you. Intellectual, well-educated people play a more important role in your life now. This is a concern for something bigger than any one person; the good of the many outweighs the needs of the few. You are coming into a time of experimenting with new concepts and putting aside the old ideas you once had. A new community project is in order. You are at your most practical when it comes to dealing and working with others and this includes the service people with whom you communicate as well as your boss or a co-worker. You know just what to do.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Do not shorten the morning by getting up late-this is a busy day. Your business sense is fine-tuned today. You are able to spot a mistake quickly and work in a team effort is successful. Pay attention to all the opportunities that you can find to give an honest compliment or to create friendliness among all people. Your magnetic personality is showing and you could charm anyone you wanted. You may be dressed in your best spring relax for a social occasion with your friends this afternoon. Enjoy the fun and let yourself relax-you may discover parts of you that were hidden for a long time. This evening may bring dreams and visions of the future-and then, that may mean you have found a good book!



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

You are able to get to the heart of a disturbing matter with simple solutions today. Revealing the cause of an underlying problem can bring about some new and better future changes. You could be stubborn about a matter today and it may be wise to think about your own motives. You have an abundance of motor skills and during the noon break, you can put them to work to exercise some worries away. Walk, go to a gym or just enjoy a different landscape for a while. You will come back more relaxed and ready to work on one thing at a time. While relaxing, take out a pen and paper and see what creative things could happen. Perhaps you will write a poem or create a picture. Enjoy your family this evening.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

It's a good time to begin new projects or a new job. You feel secure, efficient and comfortable with your colleagues and friends. Your charming personal manner and happy outlook enhances your attractiveness. You are expressive and animated and people love having you on their team or in their presence. A professional workshop may be offered soon and if so, accept the offer; it will look very good on your resume or to your present employers. Make your health appointments soon, in order to get them out of the way for the rest of the year. You might also think about where you would like to go for your vacation. If you have family to care for, the vacation may need to wait until summer. Enjoy spending a little time alone this afternoon.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

The time is favorable for research. Your mind is full of ideas and you can create positive results from some difficult assignment. Another person's opinion can be very important to you just now, but remember, it is just that, another person's opinion; don't hang your hat on it. You may feel that conditions are excellent for making good impressions; networking and attending social affairs will be profitable. You get a lot accomplished today and others are in awe of your speed and thoroughness. You receive a lot of attention and many compliments this afternoon while out with co-worker friends. Avoid scattering your energy-stay centered. Enjoy family time this evening. Put a notebook on your bedside table to take notes of your dreams.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Real-estate sales can be prosperous today. Work in import-export can be productive as well. You find yourself in a very practical mood and working with instead of against yourself. Get to know a co-worker on a more personal level. Plan a social event to break the ice. Perhaps something as simple as visiting a new art store would be a good place to begin. A speculative venture should be avoided, however. Old friends call this afternoon with new opportunities for you. Your hard-earned reputation pays off now, just when you need it. You can, if you want, excel as a counselor-you have the ability to listen. Dive into something fun and intellectually stimulating with your loved ones this evening. This will bring your energies into balance.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

A new person in the work area this day is interested in your guidance. This is an excellent time to sway others to your ideas as you lend this new person your attention. Be careful, of taking the action of others to the extreme. You do not have to find a reason for every event. You have moods that are best enjoyed through the company of friends this afternoon. There may be an opportunity for a party or other type of social gathering later today. Go for it! Marriage and other close relationships give rise to great opportunity as a new cycle gets underway. This is a time to enjoy and appreciate your ties to others and to seek and promote harmony in the interaction between people. Everything is working in your favor.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

Your feelings at work may take on a positive, get-it-done attitude. Others may find that even the interruptions will not slow your progress. Circumstances could cause you to be firm with co-workers. However, suggesting a time to talk later will assuage those interrupters. Taking care of business is a major theme where your emotional orientation is concerned. You crave organization and you want to get things accomplished. Honeysuckle or orange blossom scents can be enjoyed in your home this afternoon. These scents can be purchased even if you do not have the plants. You work well with these scents and this can help you relax. Your friends may want you to join them in some group gathering this evening. This is a happy time.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

You may have a sense of emotional coolness in the business world. Combined with an emphasis on the results of a project, this is just where your mind rests. Because of your business sense and your ability to concentrate on the important matters, you may be asked to supervise or lead others. Respect, status and achievement are central goals for you. These are the things you must keep in mind if others become a bit too sensitive. Creating a structure to empower and maintain your ideals and principles becomes a high priority. By taking on greater responsibilities, you become an inspiration to others. Your peace of mind may hinge on just how much focus you give the negative in your life. Focus on the light-truth.

WORD SEARCH

Shakespeare: Macbeth

Find and circle all of the words relating to Macbeth that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell a secret message - a quotation from Macbeth.

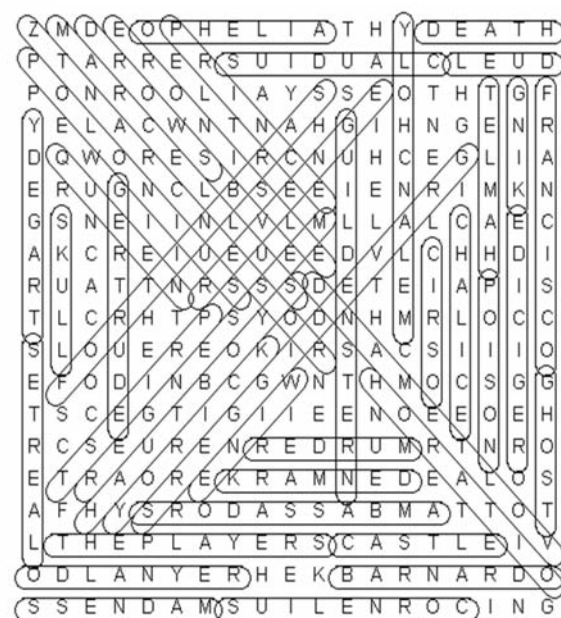
Note: MACBETH and LADY MACBETH are hidden separately and do not overlap.



- ANGUS APPARITIONS BANQUO BIRNAM WOOD BLOOD CATHNESS CAPTAIN CASTLE CAULDRON CAWDOR COLMEKILL CONSCIENCE CUMBERLAND
DAGGER DOCTOR DONALBAIN DUNCAN DUNSINANE ENGLAND FLEANCE GENTLEWOMAN GLAMIS MURDERERS GUILT HEATH HECATE INVERNESS
IRELAND LADY MACBETH LADY MACDUFF LENNOX MACBETH MADNESS MALCOLM MENTETH MURDERERS NORWAY PORTER PROPHECY QUEEN
REGICIDE ROSS SCONE SCOTLAND SEYTON STWARD SLEEPWALKING SOLILOQUY THANE WEIRD SISTERS

Yesterday Solution

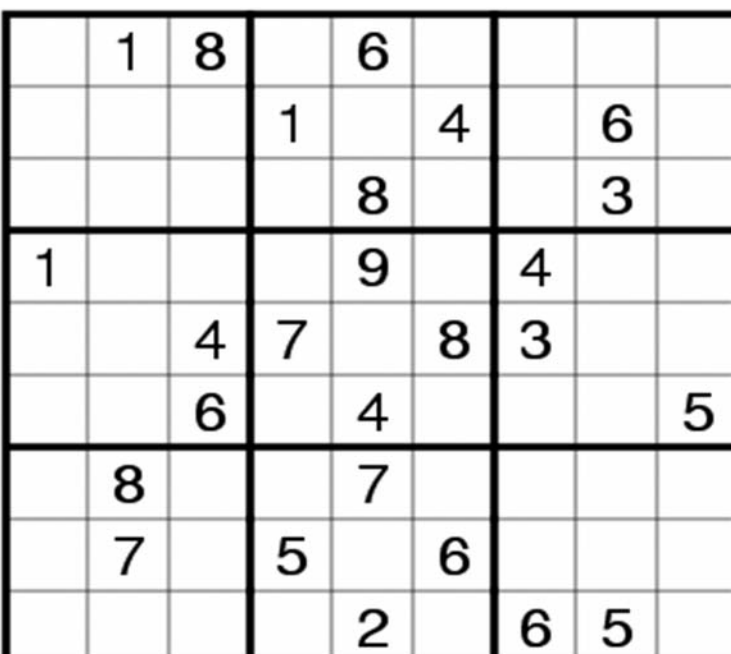
Shakespeare: Hamlet



- AMBASSADORS BARNARDO CASTLE CHALICE CLAUDIUS CORNELIUS DEATH DENMARK DUEL ELSINORE FORTINBRAS
FRANCISCO GERTRUDE GHOST GRAVEDIGGERS GUILDENSTERN HAMLET HAUTOBOYS HORATIO KING LAERTES MADNESS
MARCELLUS MELANCHOLY MESSENGER MURDER OPHELIA OSRIC POISON POLONIUS PRINCE QUEEN
REGICIDE REVENGE ROSENCRANTZ SKULL SWORD THE PLAYERS TRAGEDY VOLTEMAND WINE YORICK

Hidden sentence: THE PLAY'S THE THING WHEREIN I'LL CATCH THE CONSCIENCE OF THE KING

Daily SuDoku



Yesterday's Solution



For labor-related inquiries and complaints:
Call MSAL hotline 128

Hospitals

Sabah Hospital	24812000
Amiri Hospital	22450005
Maternity Hospital	24843100
Mubarak Al-Kabir Hospital	25312700
Chest Hospital	24849400
Farwaniya Hospital	24892010
Adan Hospital	23940620
Ibn Sina Hospital	24840300
Al-Razi Hospital	24846000
Physiotherapy Hospital	24874330/9

Clinics

Kaizen center	25716707
Rawda	22517733
Adaliya	22517144
Khaldiya	24848075
Kaifan	24849807
Shamiya	24848913
Shuwaikh	24814507
Abdullah Salem	22549134
Nuzha	22526804
Industrial Shuwaikh	24814764
Qadsiya	22515088
Dasmah	22532265
Bneid Al-Gar	22531908
Shaab	22518752
Qibla	22459381
Ayoun Al-Qibla	22451082
Mirqab	22456536
Sharq	22465401
Salmiya	25746401
Jabriya	25316254
Maidan Hawally	25623444
Bayan	25388462
Mishref	25381200
W Hawally	22630786
Sabah	24810221
Jahra	24770319
New Jahra	24575755
West Jahra	24772608
South Jahra	24775066
North Jahra	24775992
North Jleeb	24311795
Ardhiya	24884079
Firdous	24892674
Omariya	24719048
N Khaitan	24710044
Fintas	23900322



PHARMACIES ON 24 HRS DUTY

GOVERNORATE	PHARMACY	ADDRESS	PHONE
Ahmadi	Sama Safwan Abu Halaifa Danat Al-Sultan	Fahaeel Makka St Abu Halaifa-Coastal Rd Mahboula Block 1, Coastal Rd	23915883 23715414 23726558
Jahra	Modern Jahra Madina Munawara	Jahra-Block 3 Lot 1 Jahra-Block 92	24575518 24566622
Capital	Ahlam Khaldiya Coop	Fahad Al-Salem St Khaldiya Coop	22436184 24833967
Farwaniya	New Shifa Ferdous Coop Modern Safwan	Farwaniya Block 40 Ferdous Coop Old Kheitan Block 11	24734000 24881201 24726638
Hawally	Tariq Hana Ikhlas Hawally & Rawdha Ghadeer Kindy Ibn Al-Nafis Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Salmiya-Amman St Hawally-Beirut St Hawally & Rawdha Coop Jabriya-Block 1A Jabriya-Block 3B Salmiya-Hamad Mubarak St Mishrif Coop Salwa Coop	25726265 25647075 22625999 22564549 25340559 25326554 25721264 25380581 25628241

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw

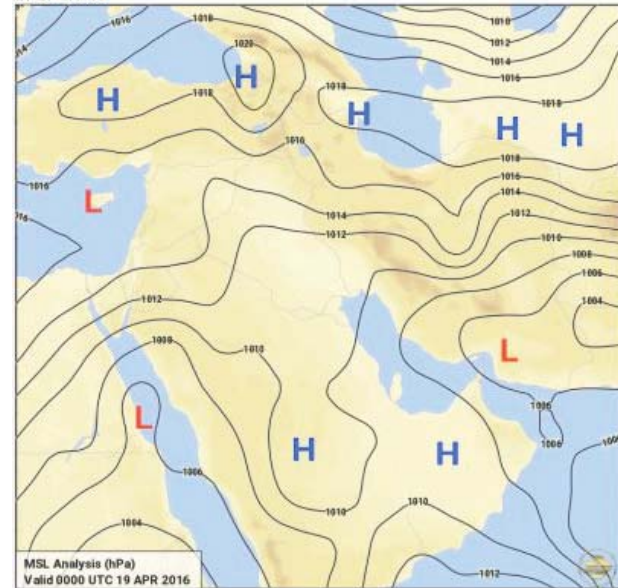
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 19/04/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 34 °C

By Day : Sunny with light to moderate north westerly wind, with speed of 10 - 32 km/h
By Night : Fair with variable wind changing to light to moderate north westerly later on wind, with speed of 06 - 26 km/h

SFC. CHART



Four-Day Forecast

	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Expected Weather	partly cloudy	sunny + high clouds	R.hot+clouds to increase later on	partly cloudy
Min Temp °C	19	20	20	21
Max Temp °C	34	35	36	36
Wind Direction	variable wind changing to south easterly later on	light variable to south easterly	variable wind changing to south easterly	variable changing to south easterly
Wind Speed km/h	08 - 28	08 - 28	08 - 35	08 - 32

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C	Max °C
KUWAIT CITY	24	34
KUWAIT AIRPORT	17	34
ABDALY	17	35
BUBYAN	18	31
JAHERA	21	36
FAILAKA ISLAND	19	32
SALMIYAH	24	27
AHMADI	22	29
JAL ALIYAH	19	35
QAROH ISLAND	23	28
UMM AL-MARADEM	23	27
NUWAISIB	18	37
WAFRA	17	37
MANAGISH	18	34
SALMY	17	33
MUTRIBA	17	39

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	34
Min Temp (°C)	19
Max Rel Hum (%)	50
Min Rel Hum (%)	14
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	39 SE
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm
Sunrise	05:17
Sunset	18:17

Prayer Times

Fajr	03:54
Sunrise	05:17
Zuhr	11:48
Asr	15:22
Sunset	18:17
Isha	19:37

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		



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	Plastic Surgeons Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf 22547272 Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari 22617700 Dr. Abdel Quttainah 25625030/60 Family Doctor Dr Divya Damodar 23729596/23729581 Psychiatrists Dr. Esam Al-Ansari 22635047 Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan 22613623/0 Gynaecologists & Obstetricians DrAdrian arbe 23729596/23729581 Dr. Verginia s.Marin 2572-6666 ext 8321 Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan 22655539 Dr. Majeda Khalefa 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-Duwaisan 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 Gupare 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. Abdalateef 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.Mohammes Akkad 24555050 Ext 210 Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital 25339667 Consultant Cardiologist Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC 2611555-2622555 Inaya German Medical Center Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123
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Students performing in a hallway before the start of a class in the Moscow State Academy of Choreography, better known as the Bolshoi Ballet Academy, in Moscow. — AFP photos



Students performing in a hallway before the start of a class.



Students attending a class in the Moscow State Academy of Choreography.

Bolshoi dreams: Tradition reigns at Russian ballet school

In a vast, light-filled room, a dozen girls in identical lavender leotards, hair in tight chignons, all strike an arabesque pose and share the same dream: One day joining Russia's legendary Bolshoi Ballet. Others chatter, legs impossibly played in full splits, in the building's endless corridors. Welcome to the Bolshoi Ballet Academy, churning out talent for one of the world's leading dance companies. "Our school is the keeper of great traditions," said instructor Valery Anisimov, watching a class of eight particularly gifted students. Located in south Moscow far from the gilded splendor of the historic Bolshoi theatre, the academy has produced some of the world's most celebrated ballerinas including Maya Plisetskaya and Maris Liepa. "We train our dancers for the world of classical theatre," said Anisimov. "We teach them the little secrets of Russian ballet, the most rigorous technique there is."

'Never slack off'

Founded in the 1770s like the Bolshoi theatre, the academy, also called the Moscow State School of Choreography, today has 721 students from 10 to 19 years old. They attend rigorous classes from 9am to 6 pm, then end the day with solo practice. While the younger students follow both dance and regular school curriculums, the focus narrows almost exclusively to ballet after the age of 15. "We don't have the right to make mistakes, we can never slack off," said 15-year-old Liza, who has been dancing for 10 years. "Sometimes in the evening I just want to plop down on the couch and snack in front of the telly, but instead I have to do homework for the next day," she said.

"It's not easy," chimed in 17-year-old Mikhail. "Since it's our profession, it's all right, but there is a lot of work." At the final exam, the academy invites recruiters from the world's top ballet companies to watch the graduating talent. And scouts from Russia's legendary Bolshoi theatre are in the front row. "Everyone would love to go on to the Bolshoi, to become a star," gasped 15-year-old Harper Ortlieb, an American attending the school. She left her small Oregon hometown to study in Moscow after the Bolshoi academy discovered her via Youtube videos.

"This is the best school in the world. The teachers and their level of involvement in the courses is incredible," she said. Ortlieb, whose mother moved with her to Moscow, is one of 84 foreign students from all corners of the world, here to pursue the Russian classical technique characterized by a bold, dramatic, almost athletic approach. "I am the only foreigner in my class, but other students are helping me a lot," she said.

'Like a family'

The Bolshoi suffered a blow to its image when the ballet troupe's artistic director Sergei Filin was maimed by a horrific acid attack in 2013, orchestrated by one of its own soloists. The ensuing criminal case and courtroom drama exposed the ferocious competition, and allegations of corruption and favoritism behind the scenes still weigh on the company. As of last month, Filin was replaced by Makhar Vaziev, a veteran of both the rival Saint Petersburg school where the ballet greats Vaslav Nijinski and Rudolf Nureyev studied — today called the Vaganova Academy, and the rival Mariinsky theatre.

Vaziev, who quit the post of ballet chief at La Scala to come to the Bolshoi at a difficult time,

however promised to uphold the theatre's tradition to recruit dancers "mostly from the Moscow school". "There should be a close link between the Bolshoi theatre and the Moscow school," he said in his first interview on the job, aired on state television this month. For the young dancers, transitioning from the academy into the professional world is a change of pace.

The school was "like a family," said one former student. "We all lived together in the dorm, three people to a room. We all shared the same fears and the same dreams," said the dancer, now 22. But such a closed environment has its downfalls, she added, asking not to be named because she feared her comments could lead to reprisals. She once hoped for a dancing career abroad but said that was difficult after a "purely Russian" dance education. "We didn't even learn English," she said. "When you are a student, the whole world stops at the doors of the academy, of Russia, of dance," the young dancer said. "It's only now I am discovering that there may be other things to live for." — AFP



Students attending a class in the Moscow State Academy of Choreography.



A student stretching in a hallway before the start of her class.



Students attending a class.



A student attending a class.



Students walking in a hallway before the start of a concert.

Hanks, movie-land ambassador to America, takes another trip

Tom Hanks, great American, has been to some far-flung places in the service of Hollywood and country. There's no working actor who more embodies America, or at least its most idealized, virtuous image of itself. It's one reason why Hanks has five times topped the annual Harris Poll, including this year, as the nation's most popular actor. More than that, Hanks ranked as America's most trusted person in a 2013 Reader's Digest poll.

Hanks has long played iconic Americans, both fictional (Forrest Gump) and real (Walt Disney in "Saving Mrs Banks," Sully Sullenberger in the upcoming "Sully"). But many of his most indelible characters have been Americans abroad, including in his latest film, "A Hologram for the King." The film, which premieres this week at the Tribeca Film Festival and opens in theaters Friday, is Tom Tykwer's adaptation of Dave Eggers' novel in which Hanks plays a struggling middle-aged American businessman who travels to the Saudi Arabian desert to pitch the king on an IT system for a new complex being built.

For Hanks, it's another stamp in a movie passport that includes Cold War-era Russia ("Bridge of Spies"), the dangerous waters off the coast of Somalia ("Captain Phillips") and a tiny South Pacific island ("Cast Away"). It's fitting that Hanks' all-American should be such an international one; his stardom

coincides with decades of American imperialism in warfare and commercial expansion. With basic decency and good-humored candor, he has refracted American triumph ("Apollo 13") and tragedy (perishing in the Twin Towers in "Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close").

He's our funnier, less sure John Wayne for a more complicated time, a cowboy only as Sheriff Woody in "Toy Story." Who better to send on the country's behalf? Everybody loves Tom Hanks, movie-land ambassador to 20th Century America. Here's a look at his many sojourns abroad:

Bridge of spies: In Steven Spielberg's 2015 thriller, Hanks played the lawyer James B. Donovan for Soviet spy Rudolf Abel (Mark Rylance). His idea of patriotism - including that all men, even national enemies, deserve their day in court - is at odds with the time and perhaps with today as well. When Donovan travels to Moscow, one feels Hanks could have, by himself, warmed away the Cold War.

Captain Phillips: Paul Greengrass' docudrama of a Maersk cargo ship taken by Somali pirates may have taken some liberty with the details of the 2009 kidnapping and Navy Seal rescue. But few films have better captured America - this time a hardy New Englander - face-to-face with terrorism.

Charlie Wilson's war: Hard-drinking Texas

Congressman Charlie Wilson was a more unlikely participant in a far-away battle in Mike Nichols' 2007 comic drama. The brash, can-do Wilson leads a program to support the Afghan mujahideen in the Soviet-Afghan War, only to watch the US fatefully withdraw once the Russians exited.

The Da Vinci Code: This and Ron Howard's sequel, "Angels and Demons," took Hanks to Paris' Louvre and the Vatican, seeking divine secrets in Old Europe and a modicum of sense in Dan Brown's best-sellers.

The terminal: Hanks didn't play an American in Spielberg's less-loved 2004 film but an Eastern European tourist forced to take up residency at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport. It's a rare look at a country-less Hanks. But with all his traveling, it was inevitable he would at some point be waylaid.

Cast away: The consummate Hanks abroad movie about just trying to make it home. What more does a humble FedEx employee need on a desert island than a friendly volley ball and an unbreakable spirit?

Saving Private Ryan: Hanks' first collaboration with Spielberg and his most heroic. On the timeline of Hanks' decorated Americans, none matches Captain John Miller - a small-town Pennsylvania schoolteacher who taught English composition before WWII - for courage. "Earn this," he tells Matt Damon's rescued soldier.



Apollo 13: It's only fitting that the well-traveled Hanks would also make it to the final frontier and utter Jim Lovell's famous words: "Houston, we have a problem." — AP

This image released by the Roadside Attractions shows Alexander Black, left, and Tom Hanks in a scene from 'A Hologram for the King,' a film being featured at the Tribeca Film Festival. — AP



This file photo shows English singer Brian Johnson, of the Australian hard rock band AC/DC, performs on the stage of the Stade de France during their 'Rock or Bust World Tour'.



This file photo shows Axl Rose of US hard rock band Guns N' Roses performs during a concert in Bangalore. — AFP photos

AC/DC singer says not retiring after replaced by Axl Rose

Veteran AC/DC singer Brian Johnson vowed yesterday that his music career was not over after his increasingly serious hearing problems led the band to replace him with Axl Rose. In his first public remarks since his removal last month, the 68-year-old singer confirmed that he had been told by doctors that he risked total deafness if he maintained his tour with the famously high-decibel Australian rockers.

"I am personally crushed by this development more than anyone could ever imagine. The emotional experience I feel now is worse than anything I have ever in my life felt before," Johnson, whose distinctively punishing vocal style has helped define AC/DC since 1980, said in a statement. But Johnson said that he was undergoing

medical treatment and hoped eventually to return to performing live. "I wish to assure our fans that I am not retiring. My doctors have told me that I can continue to record in studios and I intend to do that," he said.

Johnson said that he had become acutely aware of his hearing problems as he was struggling to hear guitars on stage, interfering with his singing. US radio host Jim Breuer earlier said he spoke to Johnson and that the singer felt "kicked to the curb" by the band for so swiftly parting ways with him. AC/DC on Saturday announced that Rose-the Guns N' Roses frontman known, like Johnson, for his intense voice but with a wider range-would be its new singer for remaining tour dates in Europe and the United States.

Soon after the announcement, AC/DC guitarist Angus Young joined a reunited Guns N' Roses as a surprise at the Coachella music festival where they performed together one of AC/DC's best-known songs, the fast-paced "Whole Lotta Rosie." Johnson was not an original member of AC/DC, joining after previous singer Bon Scott died in 1980 after a night of heavy drinking. AC/DC's first release with Johnson, "Back in Black," remains one of the top-selling albums of all time. "Our fans deserve my performance to be at the highest level, and if for any reason I can't deliver that level of performance, I will not disappoint our fans or embarrass the other members of AC/DC," Johnson said. — AFP

Pearl Jam latest to shun N Carolina over anti-trans law

Pearl Jam on Monday became the latest band to boycott North Carolina over a law against transgender people, calling the measure "despicable." The alternative rockers led by Eddie Vedder called off a concert scheduled in the state capital Raleigh for today, saying they hoped to be able to return at a later date. The band said North Carolina's law "is a despicable piece of legislation that encourages discrimination against an entire group of American citizens."

"The practical implications are expansive and its negative impact upon basic human rights is profound," the band said in a statement. "We want America to be a place where no one can be turned away from a business because of who they love or fired from their job for who they are," it said. Rock legend Bruce Springsteen earlier canceled a concert and businesses including online payment leader PayPal and Deutsche Bank reversed or froze investments in the southern state.

Cyndi Lauper, meanwhile, said she would go ahead with a concert but devote all proceeds to campaigners fighting the law. Pearl Jam also said it would make a donation to the cause. The law, signed last month by the

state's Republican governor, Pat McCrory, bans local governments from acting to stop discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people in public facilities or restrooms. The state legislature voted on the move to prevent an anti-discrimination ordinance passed by North Carolina's largest city, Charlotte.

Faced with the outrage, McCrory has clarified that state government employees would remain protected from job discrimination but has not budged on the most controversial part which requires transgender people to use bathrooms corresponding to the gender listed on their birth certificate. Pearl Jam, one of the biggest acts in the 1990s alternative rock boom, has long been active on political causes. Vedder is a prominent supporter of US President Barack Obama and has rallied support for environmental protection and the right to legal abortion. Pearl Jam in its heyday waged a high-profile-although ultimately unsuccessful-battle against leading ticket seller Ticketmaster to control surcharges passed on to fans. — AFP



This file photo shows Eddie Vedder of Pearl Jam performing during the fourth annual Global Citizen Festival in Central Park Manhattan in New York. — AFP

Out-of-the-ordinary project blends jazz, art for a new work

Pianist Vijay Iyer has an unlikely backstory for a musician who's been voted jazz artist of the year in Downbeat magazine's critics' poll, received a MacArthur Foundation genius grant, and is a professor in Harvard's music department. Largely self-taught on piano, he majored in physics and mathematics at Yale. At age 23, while pursuing his doctorate in physics at the University of California at Berkeley, he took the risky decision to become a professional musician to his parents' bewilderment. He later received an interdisciplinary Ph.D. from Berkeley focusing on music and embodied cognition, or how the human body perceives music.

"I was a bit of a later bloomer and had a lot of catching up to do," said the 44-year-old. Iyer's untraditional path has led him to another out-of-the-ordinary project: A collaborative suite, "A Cosmic Rhythm With Each Stroke," with trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith, inspired by the art of late Indian visual artist Nasreen Mohamedi, recently released by ECM Records. "It was a beautiful thing that we could make a duo project in relation to the work of this incredible artist from India who's lesser known than she should be in the West," said Iyer, interviewed in a gallery displaying Mohamedi's geometric line-based drawings. "Her work is very spare, elegant and mysterious. It has a lot of order and geometry and patterns, and it also has a lot of space."

Neurological disease

After Iyer became the 2015-16 artist-in-residence at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, curators introduced him to the work of Mohamedi ahead of an exhibition opening The Met Breuer, a center for the museum's modern art program in the former home of the Whitney Museum of American Art. The museum commissioned Iyer to compose the suite with Smith, and the duo recorded the album in October. The titles of the suite and its seven movements are taken from phrases in Mohamedi's diaries. Iyer was particularly struck by the precise, delicate drawings Mohamedi made in her later years as she struggled with a debilitating neurological disease that made it difficult to hold her pen.

"There's this field of energy behind each stroke - the cosmic rhythms," he said. Limor Tomer, the Met's general manager of concerts and lectures, said she chose Iyer as the resident artist not only for his talents as a composer and pianist, but also for his "curiosity" about collaborating with other artists. Iyer was inspired and encouraged by musicians like Anthony Braxton and Smith, who were involved in the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, formed in the mid-'60s in Chicago by musicians who mixed avant-garde jazz, contemporary and world music.



In this file photo released by ECM Records, composer-musician Vijay Iyer, left, and trumpeter Wadada Leo Smith in New York. — AP

Creative artist

Iyer's collaboration with Smith underscored Iyer's belief that "music can help you transcend differences." Their backgrounds are worlds apart: he is the son of Indian immigrants who grew up in upstate New York, and the 74-year-old trumpeter has roots in the Mississippi Delta. "Vijay is a sincere, creative artist, a very generous human being who is well-attuned to human feelings and emotions," said Smith, a 2013 Pulitzer Prize finalist for his civil rights opus "Ten Freedom Summers."

Iyer played in Smith's Golden Quartet from 2005-2010 - an experience he says "stretched me in a way that I hadn't really been before." They first performed as a duo in January 2015. For his recent three-week performance residency at the Met Breuer, Iyer premiered "Cosmic Rhythm" with Smith, but also played with or presented 40 ensembles and soloists. Some of those performances included his trio with bassist Stephan Crump and drummer Marcus Gilmore, who have been together since 2004. Iyer says the project brought together "artists who cut across disciplines, ethnic, racial and class backgrounds, and generations." "When you consider us all as connecting to each other in some kind of larger fabric, then what you think of as musical genres don't really make any sense. ... Music doesn't really want to be separated." — AP



In this file photo, Kanye West accepts the video vanguard award at the MTV Video Music Awards in Los Angeles. — AP

The Lumineers topple West's reign on US Billboard chart

Folk rockers The Lumineers knocked Kanye West off the top spot on the weekly US Billboard 200 album chart on Monday. "Cleopatra," the second album from the Colorado-based Lumineers, best known for their 2012 hit "Ho Hey," sold 125,000 units from album and song sales and 17 million streams. Rapper West's "The Life of Pablo," which topped the chart last week based on the strength of streaming activity, dropped to No. 4 this week with 47,000 units, comprising 1,400 physical album sales and 69 million streams.

The only other new entry on the top 10 of the Billboard 200 chart this week was "Gore" by metal rockers Deftones at No. 2, selling 71,000 units. On the Digital Songs chart, which measures online single sales, Canadian R&B artist Drake ousted his own "Pop Style" with his "One Dance" song featuring Wizkid and Kyla, which sold 119,000 digital copies. "Pop Style" dropped to No. 5. — Reuters

New York competition honors composer of 'Threepenny Opera'

Two young American singers have won a musical theater competition honoring Kurt Weill (vyl), who composed "The Threepenny Opera." The German Jewish musician fled Nazi oppression in the 1930s and settled in New York. He was married to a woman whose voice kept his art alive decades after he was gone. The Lotte Lenya (LOH'-teh LEN-yah) Competition on Monday announced two top winners of the weekend contest in Rochester: Jim Schubin, of Plainsboro, New Jersey, and Brian Vu, of Los

Angeles. Seven more prizes were awarded for a total purse of \$79,000. Judges included soprano Teresa Stratas, whom Lenya anointed as the keeper of the Weill flame and taught the subtleties of his songs. The competition is sponsored by the Manhattan-based Kurt Weill Foundation for Music. This story has been corrected to show Lotte Lenya is pronounced LOH'-teh LEN-yah, not LAH'-teh LEHN'-yuh. — AP



In this Aug 17, 1942 file photo, theatrical composer Kurt Weill and his wife, performer Lotte Lenya, are seen at the piano at their home in New City, in the Rockland County suburb of NY. — AP

South Africa's tourism value proposition



Sun city , North West



Big Hole, Northern Cape



God's Window, Mpumalanga



Gold Reef City Theme Park, Gauteng



Wild Coast cycling, Eastern Cape

South Africa's natural and scenic beauty, good climate, abundant wildlife, diverse flora and fauna, stunning landscapes and fascinating history, and culture are major tourist attractions that have grown globally to make South Africa an iconic, 'must do' tourism destination and experience. South Africa is infused with a multicultural vibrancy. This mix of cultures makes our country open and welcoming to nations across the world. South Africa is a Muslim friendly country and encourages Muslims to travel to beautiful South Africa and learn about the country's history and heritage including over 200 years of Islam on these shores.

South Africa is a comparatively easy on the pocket and affordable tourist hot spot. This undeniably stunning country at the southern tip of the mystifying African continent provides visitors with a once-in-a-lifetime experience. The country offers world class accommodation from top of the range luxury accommodation to standard quality accommodation for families and singles.

For the sportsman and the adventurer South Africa, with its great climate, offers an enormous variety of activities such as hiking, mountaineering, scuba diving, white-water rafting, sailing, canoeing, parachuting, ballooning, windsurfing, 4x4 safari adventure trips and many more. From hair-raising abseiling adventures off Table Mountain and nerve shattering Great White shark diving experiences to sipping cocktails with wild lions roaring, you name it, we have got it.

Beauty of nature

For those who love the beauty of nature, South Africa offers wide variety of options from its picturesque natural landscape and game reserves, diverse cultural heritage, to its beautiful and unspoilt beaches. Some of the most popular destinations include several national parks, such as the beautiful coastlines and beaches of the KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Western Cape provinces, beautiful parks and inland rivers and the e famous and expansive Kruger National Park (for the must do Big Five safaris for anyone fascinated by wildlife i.e. buffalo, elephant, lion, leopard and rhino) in the north of the country.

South Africa is ranked sixth out of the world's seventeen mega diverse countries and is home to a large variety of animal life. Among the large mammals found in the northern bushveld include lions, leopards, cheetahs, white rhinoceroses, blue wildebeest, kudus, impalas, hyenas, hippopotamuses and giraffes. A significant extent of the bushveld exists in the north-east, including the Kruger National Park, one of the largest game reserves in Africa, and the Sabi Sand Game Reserve. The Kruger National Park, established in 1926, is one of the most visited national parks in the country.

Architecture and archaeology

For the world of retail therapy and great entertainment, the South Africa's theme parks and shopping centers provide world-class shopping, plenty of entertainment, the latest movies and delicious food in conveniently situated and safe

surroundings. Whether you are looking for something specific, have time on your hands to browse around or just love to shop, the boutiques, chain stores and specialist shops in the country's malls have it all. When you leave the country after your holiday or business trip, you will lament the baggage restrictions of the international airlines and wish that you could take more of South Africa home with you! Thanks to a very favorable exchange rate, Euros or US Dollars go a very long way in South African shopping centers, and make even the more exclusive purchases very affordable.



Kruger National Park, Limpopo

For cultural connoisseurs, you will be spoiled for choice with a range of cultural offerings from theatre, poetry, dance, and world class art galleries, a variety of music venues and concerts, and diverse architecture and archaeology, village and townships tourism, etc. Some of the significant cultural attractions include the fossil-bearing caves forming part of the Cradle of Humankind in Gauteng, the ruins of the Kingdom of Mapungubwe in northern Limpopo, the wine routes of the Western Cape, and various historical sites in the cities of Cape Town and Johannesburg (such as Robben Island, the Castle of Good Hope and Soweto township). Eight South African sites are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, including the iSimangaliso Wetland Park and uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park in KwaZulu-Natal.



Saint Lucia, KwaZulu-Natal



Table Mountain and V & A Water Front , Western Cape



Monu, 76 year old Kayan tribeswoman sits in her home wearing a stack of bronze neck coils—the statuesque sign of beauty of her Kayan tribe, at Panpet village located in Demoso township in Kayah state, central Myanmar. — AFP photos



Mu Htwe, a Kayan tribeswoman wearing a stack of bronze neck coils—the statuesque sign of beauty of her Kayan tribe—sells handmade products at Panpet village.



Kayan tribeswomen wearing a stack of bronze neck coils.



Mu Par, a Kayan tribeswoman wearing a stack of bronze neck coils.



A Kayan tribeswoman wearing a stack of bronze neck coils.



A Kayan tribes girl wearing a stack of bronze neck coils.



Two Kayan tribeswoman wearing a stack of bronze neck coils.

Myanmar's 'long-necked' women hope to turn tourism into homecoming

Wearing a stack of bronze neck coils—a sign of beauty for her Kayan tribe—Mu Par dreams of a time when all “long-necked” women can return to Myanmar from Thailand where they are a tourist attraction. For years Kayan women and girls have been driven across the border by poverty and conflict to earn money posing in holidaymakers’ pictures in purpose-built Thai villages derided by rights campaigners as “human zoos”. Now several have returned to their remote native Panpet area in Kayah state, Myanmar, with an entrepreneurial plan to reverse the flow of departures as their once junta-ruled homeland emerges from decades of solitude.

Mu Par came home just a few months ago having saved enough money after 14 years working in Thailand. She now runs one of a dozen neat little shacks selling locally-made wooden dolls, scarves and individual bronze neck rings—giving tourists a more ethical window into their unique culture. Lining up a neat row of handmade “long-neck dolls” at a new craft market, Mu Par hopes to entice tourists to her eastern Myanmar homeland, and provide for her four children, aged between four and 15. “In Myanmar my children can attend school and also I am happy to be among my relatives,” the 33-year-old told AFP, as a handful of tourists milled through the area.

Once the preserve of intrepid travellers as it languished under junta rule, Myanmar is now a hot new tourist draw. Arrivals have doubled in the past five years and numbers are expected to surge under a new government led by Aung San Suu Kyi’s pro-democracy party. Much of tiny Kayah state was off limits to foreigners until recently. Authorities now hope the region’s emerald hills and languid waterways will become the country’s next top travel destination. Mu Par and her neighbors from Panpet’s cluster of five hamlets grouped together to build the market. They share the profits from the 5,000 kyat (\$4) visitor entrance fee. “If we can get many tourists here, we want all the Kayan girls in Thailand to come back,” she told AFP.

Controversy and culture

From as young as five years old, Kayan girls are given up to ten neck rings to wear, they then add a new one approximately every year until adulthood. The practice, which gives them a giraffe-like appearance, painfully compresses their shoulders and collarbones, rather than actually stretching their necks. A grown woman can wear as many as 25 rings, weighing a total of five kilos (11 pounds). One local legend suggests women began wearing the rings to protect themselves against tigers, who once roamed the region in large numbers and bite the necks of their prey.

Men in the village also used to wear face-shaped masks on the backs of their heads in a bid to ward off tiger ambushes, according to local people, although the practice has since died out. Fewer women now wear the coils, which force them to keep looking straight ahead. Families often cannot afford the costly, handcrafted rings, while many young girls feel they are an impediment to getting a job outside of their region.

The women can remove their rings with the help of a specialist and their shoulders and collarbones can eventually return to normal, depending on the age when they



Monu (left), 76 year old Kayan tribeswoman, sits in her home wearing a stack of bronze neck coils.

are taken off. Several dozen women and girls still wear the traditional bands, including those at the new handicraft market in Panpet. Until recently they spent much of the year in Thailand, earning around 3,000 baht (\$90) a month in the tourist attraction villages, where most of the money goes to Thai tour agents. “Asking them to pose for photographs for money is acting like they are in a human zoo,” said Phyo Wai Yar Zar a Myanmar tourism official. “Instead (in their home villages) people can buy their products like food, handmade crafts and souvenirs to support them.” — AFP



A Kayan tribesgirl wearing a stack of bronze neck coils.



A Kayan tribesgirl wearing a stack of bronze neck coils.



In this picture taken from a balloon, hot air balloons fly over the west bank of the Nile River in Luxor, Egypt. — AP photos



A hot air balloon lands as the ground crew secures the balloon after a tour over the west bank of the Nile River, in Luxor.



In this picture taken from a balloon, a hot air balloon flies over the mortuary temple of Ramsis III at Medinet Habu on the west bank of the Nile River in Luxor, Egypt.



Ground crew members collect a hot air balloon after a tour over the west bank of the Nile River.



The details of life in rural Egypt come into view as the balloon begins its descent, on the west bank of the Nile River in Luxor, Egypt.

Ballooning over Luxor, Egypt: Antiquities from the sky

They take off at first light, reinforced wicker baskets filled with people, heading into the skies over Luxor, Egypt. Only from a balloon high in the sky, in the clear air of the early morning, can a visitor begin to grasp the beauty of antiquities on the ground in this one-time Egyptian capital known in ancient times as Thebes.

The city in southern Egypt is one of the world's largest outdoor museums, boasting majestic pharaonic temples on the east bank of the Nile River and heavily adorned tombs of some of the best-known ancient kings - including Tutankhamun, the boy king - on the west bank. The path of the brightly colored balloons is determined by prevailing winds. On the ride, the silence is broken only by the whoosh of the gas burners and the occasional exclamations from tourists awed by the sights.

Yet there may be mixed feelings at takeoff: a healthy dose of adventurism and anticipation about what the short flight will reveal, but also concerns about safety. Three years ago, 19 people died here in a balloon accident. Since then, authorities have imposed rigid regulations on balloon operators, including cancelling flights on bad-weather days and training requirements for pilots.

The ride lasts about 20 minutes, before the pilot begins looking for a safe landing zone. Tourists brace themselves for landing, a usually bumpy affair more akin to a soft crash landing. The details of life in rural Egypt come into view as the balloon begins its descent, with farmers toiling in the fields and children heading to school in the dusty roads of the west bank. A dedicated ground crew riding a rugged truck tracks each balloon. The trucks maneuver in anticipation of the landing spot. Once the balloon touches down, they hurry to grab ropes to prevent it from taking off again or moving sideways.

If you go...

Luxor balloon rides: Price for balloon rides, including hotel transfers and a souvenir DVD, currently runs at around \$30, a bargain without any of the usual haggling for which Luxor is notorious. — AP



A hot air balloon prepares to take off on the west bank of the Nile River.



Tourists watch hot air balloons prepare to take off at dawn.



The Nile River is partially shrouded in early morning clouds in Luxor, Egypt.



In this picture taken from a balloon, farmers harvest their wheat as the balloon descends, on the west bank of the Nile River in Luxor, Egypt.



A hot air balloon flies over the mortuary temple of Ramsis III at Medinet Habu.