

Saudi Crown Prince urges closer security cooperation



GOP frontrunner Trump vows 'America First' foreign policy



The Real Fouz: DIY remedies for better skin



Saul stunner gives Atletico advantage over Bayern



KUWAIT FIRM IN SUPPORT OF COALITION AGAINST IS

CONCERN FOR HUMANITARIAN CONDITIONS IN IRAQ, SYRIA



Min 21°
Max 41°
High Tide 04:20 & 14:40
Low Tide 09:23 & 22:14



KUWAIT TARGETED BY US OVER LAX COPYRIGHT LAWS

WASHINGTON: Kuwait, China, Russia and India are among 11 countries targeted by the Obama administration for leaving American producers of music, movies and other copyrighted material open to rampant piracy. The US is placing the 11 countries on a "priority watch list" that subjects them to extra scrutiny and could lead to sanctions if the US brings cases to the World Trade Organization. Also on the list again are Algeria, Argentina, Chile, Indonesia, Thailand, Ukraine and Venezuela.

Ecuador and Pakistan were removed from the list this year. Ecuador reinstated criminal penalties for large-scale counterfeiting. Pakistan set up intellectual property courts. The United States studied 73 trading partners for the annual Special 301 Report. In addition to the 11 countries on the priority list, another 23 made the "watch list" and need to address problems protecting intellectual property rights, the US Trade Representative's office said. Switzerland, for example, "is generally a strong partner" on intellectual property issues, but has become a haven for websites that sell counterfeit goods. — AP



KUWAIT: US special presidential envoy for the global coalition to counter Islamic State (IS) Brett McGurk (left) speaks as Kuwaiti Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Khaled Al-Jarallah looks on during a meeting yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah confirmed yesterday Kuwait's unequivocal support of the global coalition to counter the so-called Islamic State (IS). In a speech opening the fourth meeting of the officials from the member states of the coalition, Jarallah said "Kuwait backs the international community in its efforts to bring stability to liberated areas from the grip of terrorist organizations," adding that Kuwait also supports the international community in seeking to dry up sources of funding terrorism, repelling electronic hacking attacks and staving off the influx of foreign fighters to conflict areas.

He told the meeting that Kuwait's support involved, among other things, providing logistical support to the efforts of the international community as well as taking part in meetings such as yesterday's. He noted that Kuwait has hosted numerous conferences on fighting terrorism and has demonstrated its abidance of UN resolutions regarding terrorism.

Jarallah said yesterday's meeting was taking place in the shadow of continuing threats by terrorist organizations to the peace and security of the world, so much that these threats had moved from countries rife in conflicts to peaceful countries with no such conflicts. For this reason, he said the international community should double its efforts at fighting this universal threat. "We as nations bear a historical responsibility to ensure a safe and secure world as codified by the UN resolution No. 2253 that urges combating terrorism and drying up its sources of funding in every shape and form," he said.

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MPS BLAME GRAFT FOR FLYING GRAVEL ONLY KUWAITIS EXCLUDED FROM POWER PRICE HIKE

By B Izzak

KUWAIT: MPs yesterday strongly lashed out at ministry of public works officials and road contractors, blaming corruption and lack of supervision for the problem of flying road gravel that damaged windshields of hundreds of vehicles during the rainy season. Lawmakers, who demanded a special debate on the problem, called on Minister of Public Works Ali Al-Omar to take legal action against ministry officials and engineers who supervise road contracts and also against

contractors who did not carry out the projects up to required specifications.

The issue dominated the local press coverage during the winter season when many Kuwaiti streets were found to be defected and resulted in releasing gravel that damaged the windshields of thousands of vehicles. Omar said the ministry has taken legal action against those involved by referring the issue to the public prosecution to investigate suspected corruption that led to the poor quality roads.

Continued on Page 13

UAE MULLS NEW FIRE SAFETY LAWS

DUBAI: Dubai will supervise construction crews more strictly and monitor the material they use after a series of skyscraper fires, including a New Year's Eve blaze that made headlines around the world, a top civil defense official said yesterday. Speaking to AP, the director-general of Dubai Civil Defense said authorities in the United Arab Emirates have been working on new fire safety regulations following the Dec 31 inferno at the 63-storey The Address Downtown Dubai.

While trying to downplay the danger, Maj Gen Rashid Thani Al-Matrooshi acknowledged that at least 30,000 buildings across the nation have cladding or paneling similar to the kind that safety and construction experts have blamed for the rapid spread of the fires. "There won't be any radical changes, but instead we'll come up with simple solutions that won't affect the owners or traders," al-Matrooshi said, speaking outside a fire safety technology seminar. "We're finding solutions with the lowest costs on people, so that everyone benefits."

While some types of cladding can be made with fire-resistant material, experts say those that have caught fire in Dubai and elsewhere around the world weren't designed to meet stricter safety standards and often were put onto buildings without any breaks to slow or halt a possible blaze. Since 2012, a spate of fires has struck Dubai and other emirates in the UAE. Though some ignited differently, the infernos all behaved the same way, rushing up and down the sides of the buildings, fueled by the external panels.

Continued on Page 13



KUWAIT: Minister of Public Works Ali Al-Omar speaks during a parliamentary session at the National Assembly yesterday. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat



ABU DHABI: Palestinian writer Rabai Al-Madhoun poses for a picture with a copy of his novel "Destinies: Concerto of the Holocaust and the Nakba" upon receiving the international prize of Arabic fiction for it on Tuesday. — AFP

PALESTINIAN WRITER WINS TOP ARAB FICTION PRIZE

ABU DHABI: A Palestinian author has won the International Prize for Arab Fiction for the first time for a novel about the Palestinian exodus in 1948 and the Holocaust. Rabai Al-Madhoun received the \$50,000 award, known as the "Arabic Booker," for "Destinies: Concerto of the Holocaust and Nakba" late Tuesday in Abu Dhabi, which sponsors the competition. Nakba, or catastrophe, refers to the exodus of Arabs from British-mandate Palestine following the creation of Israel in 1948.

Madhoun's novel is described as being divided into four parts "simulating concerto-moves". It features four narrations that are said to "meet at the end and address issues related to the Nakba, the Holocaust

and the right of return" for Palestinians. Madhoun was born in British-mandate Palestine in 1945 and fled with his family to Gaza. He later became a British citizen.

The novel has "stories from five Palestinian cities", Madhoun said after winning the award, which is supported by the Man Booker Prize, referring to cities now in Israel. "It took me to my hometown, Al-Majdal in Ashkelon. I roamed Haifa. I shouted from Mount Karmel: Oh, how did we lose this country!" he said. Madhoun's previous novel "The Lady from Tel Aviv", about a returning Palestinian exile's chance encounter with an Israeli actress on his flight home, was shortlisted for the same prize in 2010. — AFP



TEHRAN: Iranian women walk past youths playing music on the sidewalk in downtown Tehran on Tuesday. — AP

UNEASE OVER UNDERCOVER TEHRAN MORALITY POLICE

TEHRAN: Tehran resident Sousan Heidari has stopped letting her headscarf slip casually down over her neck and shoulders while driving in the Iranian capital. These days, the 22-year-old with a taste for bold makeup makes sure to pull it tightly over her dark hair, fearful of running afoul of a newly established undercover division of the morality police. "Every single man or woman could be a member of the unit," she cautioned. "I don't know. Maybe some plainclothes agents have already reported me because of heavy makeup."

Tehran police chief Gen Hossein Sajedinia recently announced his department had deployed 7,000 male and female officers for a new plainclothes division - the largest such undercover assignment in memory. Authorities say the division, which started work last week, will patrol major Tehran streets and intersections, policing transgressions including harassment against women and excessive car honking and engine noise.

Critics fear the unit's main focus, however, will be enforcing the government-mandated Islamic dress code, which requires women be modestly covered from head to toe. They see it as the latest flashpoint in the struggle between relative moderates such as President Hassan Rouhani and establishment hard-liners who fear looser social norms will weaken the Islamic Republic's values and principles.

Iranian women these days, particularly younger ones, often forego the traditional long black long veil known as the chador and opt instead for trendy dresses and fashionable headscarves. More and more, they are daring to let their scarves slip down to their shoulders while driving. Influential ayatollah Mohammad Ali Movahedi Kermani alluded to those concerns about moral erosion during a recent Friday sermon in Tehran, saying that a woman driving without a veil, "cannot be called freedom".

Continued on Page 13



KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem and Zimbabwean Parliament Speaker Jacob Mudenda. — Amiri Diwan and KUNA photos

AMIR MEETS STATE OFFICIALS, ZIMBABWEAN PARLIAMENT SPEAKER

KUWAIT: His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah received His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah at Bayan Palace yesterday. His Highness also received National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem, accompanied by Zimbabwean Parliament Speaker Jacob Mudenda; who is on an official visit to the country. His Highness also received Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled later met separately with the Zimbabwean Speaker, in attendance of Head of Kuwaiti-Zimbabwean Parliamentary Friendship Committee MP Faisal Al-Shaya and Kuwaiti Ambassador to Zimbabwe Bader Al-Houti. Also yesterday, His Highness the Crown Prince received Ghanem, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled, Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Sheikh Khaled Al-Jarrah Al-Sabah, as well as Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Affairs Hind Al-Subaih. — KUNA



His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah meets with Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and Minister of State for Planning and Development Affairs Hind Al-Subaih. — KUNA



RIYADH: The Interior Ministers from the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), (from left) Bahraini Rashid bin Abdullah Al-Khalifa, UAE's Saif bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, Qatari Abdullah bin Nasser Al-Thani, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, Kuwaiti Mohammed Al-Khaled Al-Sabah, Omani Hamud bin Faisal Al-Busaidi and GCC Secretary General Abdelatif Zayani during their 27th ordinary meeting yesterday in Riyadh. — AFP

SAUDI CROWN PRINCE URGES CLOSER GULF SECURITY COOPERATION

RIYADH: Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Naif bin Abdulaziz, Deputy Premier and Minister of Interior, said yesterday that it is imperative for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states to beef up and bolster security cooperation due to regional chaos.

He made the statement during the 17th consultative meeting of the GCC Interior Ministers, including Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Sheikh Mohammad Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. The Saudi Prince, who headed the meeting, appreciated the great role of all GCC security agencies in safeguarding regional security and stability and thwarting enemies' schemes.

Meanwhile, GCC Secretary-General Abdullah Al-Zayani stressed the significance of such gatherings that are mainly meant to promote and reinforce inter-GCC cooperation and coordination. Zayani also spoke highly of the successes and achievements made by GCC security agencies for protecting Gulf societies. The meeting

aims at boosting cooperation among the GCC countries in the security field, and at assessing the latest security regional developments.

Vision 2030

In the meantime, Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah congratulated Saudi Arabia Wednesday on the Kingdom's 'Vision 2030', a package of reforms designed to curb the country's dependence on oil exports. "The people of Saudi Arabia are capable of bringing that vision to fruition for further development and prosperity," Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled said.

Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled also congratulated the Kingdom on the success of the "North Thunder" exercises, which he called "a testament to the rigid alliance between Saudi Arabia and its Islamic and Arab neighbors."

"I affirm our unwavering support of Saudi Arabia as it staves off regional threats as peace in the Kingdom is peace for all of us," he noted. "Our fates have become intertwined, which

enables us to overcome all challenges and obstacles thrust upon us," Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled added.

Moreover, Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled said that the ongoing meeting of GCC interior ministers has yielded new mechanisms of information exchange amongst GCC security apparatuses. Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled also revealed that a planned civil joint exercise dubbed "Security of the Arab Gulf 1" will take place by year's end, a move aimed at bolstering GCC defense capabilities.

Terrorism has become a global threat, and "our fight with terrorism is a long and arduous one," Kuwait's Interior Minister noted. Sheikh Mohammad Al-Khaled also thanked the Saudi leadership for their hospitality and for hosting the meeting. The Saudi Cabinet on Monday announced the country's 'Vision 2030', a series of economic and social programs formed to help lessen the Kingdom's reliance on oil exports. —KUNA

UN ENVOY, YEMENI RIVALS DISCUSS AGENDA

KUWAIT: UN Special Envoy to Yemen Ismael Ould Cheikh Ahmed yesterday met separately with Yemeni parties participating in UN-sponsored talks held in Kuwait since last Thursday in a bid to reach consensus on political, security and economic issues ahead of direct negotiations.

The UN envoy discussed with head of General People's Congress delegation, Aref Al-Zouka, head of Ansarullah group delegation Mohammad Faletah, and Yemeni

Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Abdulmalik Mikhlafi, the agenda of consultations in light of positive results achieved earlier on Tuesday. The peace talks focus on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution No 2216, ongoing efforts to augment the ceasefire agreement that took force on April 10, as well as a peaceful process in Yemen as per the GCC Initiative and the outcome of the Yemeni National Dialogue. —KUNA

UN-HABITAT SIGN MOU WITH DUBAI REAL ESTATE INSTITUTE

KUWAIT: The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) announced yesterday that it has successfully signed an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Dubai Real Estate Institute to offer and advocate real estate solutions to professionals in the MENA region.

The MoU press conference held at the United Nations building aims to strengthen the collaborative role of both organizations in continuously offering educational and leadership programs that are in-line with international standards throughout the coming years.

The collaboration between the two parties will be implemented with a focus on jointly organizing training workshops, urban campaigns, urban research on city prosperity and affordable housing and urban competitions that promote positive change in cities and housing communities for better quality of life.

MoU Objectives

- (a) Awareness raised on Sustainable Development Goals and its application in Gulf Cities
- (b) City Prosperity initiative introduced in at least six gulf cities;
- (c) Housing Profile for Gulf countries produced;
- (d) Housing practitioners capacity developed on new trends in access to adequate housing;
- (e) Urban competition among young Gulf professionals launched;
- (f) World Urban campaign and the city we need materials localized and disseminated

Mahmoud Al-Burai, The Managing Director of Dubai Real Estate Institution stated that UN-Habitat and Dubai Real Estate Institute recently organized the Urban Thinkers Campus that discussed the regions aim for the city they need from a real estate sector perspective.

It is now the right time while we are preparing to go to the United Nations Conference for Housing and Urban development next October in Quito to be ready with a plan to implement the new Urban Agenda once adopted in the Gulf States, continued Burai.

Dr Tarek El-Sheikh, Director at UN-Habitat, said that Dubai Real Estate Institute has been active in collaborating with UN-Habitat in promoting the New Urban agenda elements and advancing the World Urban Campaign that advocate the Sustainable Development Goal 11, and we are going to work together to raise awareness on Sustainable Development Goals and its application in Gulf Cities.

The city prosperity initiative will be discussed and how it can contribute tremendously in at least six gulf cities and organize an urban competition among young gulf professionals on safe, connected, integrated, healthy and resilient cities and develop training courses in different countries on housing and real estate.

City Changer

The MoU signed will support the "I'm a City Changer" campaign which is an advocacy and partnership platform under UN-Habitat to raise awareness about positive urban change in order to achieve green, productive, safe, healthy,



Dr Tarek El-Sheikh

inclusive, and well planned cities.

A campaign geared to create a place for urban innovators to share their inventions into their local areas to serve and foster communities in cities of the Gulf.

Achieve

UN Habitat and Dubai Real Estate Institute will jointly collaborate to raise awareness and build capacities for the development of sustainable cities and communities through:

- (a) Undertaking joint workshops and media Awareness events on Sustainable Development Goals and its application in Gulf Cities with Gulf states City authorities;
- (b) Carrying out City Prosperity initiatives training for the six gulf cities;
- (c) Preparing Housing Profile for Gulf countries in collaboration with the Gulf Cooperation Council;
- (d) Holding Seminars for Housing practitioners on new trends in access to adequate housing;
- (e) Jointly organizing Urban competition among young Gulf university Students and;
- (f) Preparing localized World Urban Campaign and the city we need materials in Arabic.

It is worth mentioning that there is a growing consensus about the need to work together to address the impact of climate change and achieve the sustainable development goals as stated in the GOP meeting in Paris last September.

It is expected to start our first activities with our collaborative partners in the Kuwait Engineering Association and the Arab Towns Organization (ATO) based as well as with Kuwait University Faculty of architecture in launching design competition for the World Urban Campaign for GCC; (I am a city Changer).

This is in line with UN Habitat plan of action in Kuwait to hold a series of regional workshops for the Gulf States in Kuwait supported by Gulf and Kuwait based institutions and organizations to advance sustainable urban development.

UN Habitat believes creating partnerships play a crucial role in the overall development of societies and lays out the final goals for nations to work together in order to achieve all other goals which is part of goal 17 under the SDG.

GLOBAL COALITION GAINING GROUND AGAINST IS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS: MCGURK

KUWAIT: The Global Coalition against so-called Islamic State (IS) is gaining ground against the terrorist group both on the ground in Syria and Iraq, and on social media while rebuilding liberated areas, a US official said Tuesday.

The areas controlled by IS in the north of Iraq and Syria in the summer of 2014 are now "rapidly shrinking," and the coalition's airstrikes backed by forces on the ground are contributing to the liberation of more lands from IS grip, Brett McGurk, US Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter IS, said.

He said the area east of the Euphrates in Syria was totally liberated from IS, while road networks between Raqqa in Syria and Mosul in Iraq - which used to be free passage for IS militants in 2014 - have been cut off some four months ago. The coalition, once helping in the liberation of IS-occupied areas, helped in restoring electricity and water as well as security in streets to enable people return to their homes.

This is very critical for people because they can go back to their homes, McGurk said in an interview with Kuwait News Agency (KUNA). He cited the Iraqi city of Tikrit, where the coalition used its Stabilization Funding Facility, a \$100 million instrument, to get water and electricity

back to help people return to their homes in the city. McGurk said the coalition wanted to build on the experience of Tikrit and implement it in recently-liberated city of Ramadi. He noted that the Stabilization Fund was very critical as the coalition wanted to maintain the \$100 million sum inside the fund in order to restore electricity and water as well as enforce security in streets.

The coalition, he explained, was also using another funding facility, with another \$100 million, for enhanced stabilization. This facility, he added, was used to extending power lines from Haditha to Ramadi.

Multiple levels

McGurk said IS was recruiting on multiple levels: one in joining what they depict as a historic movement yet it was only a "phony caliphate ... that is something we need to aggressively counter." "They do recruit on religious base messaging," he said, and "our partners in the Gulf" like Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were exerting great efforts to countering these religious messages by highlighting moderation and tolerance. "We think this has been very effective."

The coalition is also stepping up the war

against IS on social media, he said, and for every pro-IS twitter feed there were about six anti-IS countering messages constantly. "We have to shrink territory they (IS) control, in Iraq and Syria, but also the global networks and the affiliate they are trying to establish around the world," he said.

Significant meetings

McGurk said the meetings in Kuwait were "significant." He added that Kuwait hosted some of the earliest meetings of the coalition when the situation "was very dark ... and we came a long way." The coalition, in which Kuwait is a member, has been fighting IS with the ultimate objective of eliminating it through military campaign, intelligence assets, having military advisors on the grounds as well as having a combat medical care. But McGurk said "it is not about defeating Daesh (IS) but what comes after it. We have identified about 22 priority projects in areas liberated from Daesh, like the Euphrates valley of Anbar province, where Iraqi forces and locals in Anbar are working to liberate the areas." "We have some momentum but to sustain it the coalition need to coordinate and see where we are making progress," said the official. — KUNA



KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Al-Jarallah met yesterday with visiting US Special Presidential Envoy for the Global Coalition to Counter Daesh (IS) Brett McGurk. The meeting came within the framework of the fourth meeting of officials from the member states of the Coalition. — KUNA

SHEIKHA AL-ZAIN AL-SABAH, SARA AKBAR LOCAL KEYNOTE SPEAKERS AT 'WOMEN IN THE CORPORATE WORLD' CONFERENCE

KUWAIT: Alghanim Industries and Gulf Bank are proud to announce Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah and Sara Akbar as keynote speakers at the 'Women in the Corporate World: Beyond the Glass Ceiling' conference, taking place on Wednesday, May 4, 2016 at Jumeirah Messilah Beach Hotel. As two influential local leaders, these keynote speakers will discuss the importance of gender diversity in the workplace.

The 'Women in the Corporate World: Beyond the Glass Ceiling' is a non-profit conference which will bring together key influential international, regional, and local leaders to discuss the important issue of gender diversity in the workplace. The conference will include keynote speakers and panel discussions, providing a networking platform to exchange various ideas on achieving success in the corporate environment.



Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah

Sheikha Al-Zain Al-Sabah is presently the Undersecretary of the Ministry of State for Youth Affairs. Prior to this, she co-founded Eagle Vision Media Group KSCC, serving as Chairperson and Managing Director. Sheikha Al-Sabah worked at ABC News in New York City, and received the Arab Woman Award



Sara Akbar

for being the "Inspirational Woman of the Year" in 2015. Al-Sabah has earned a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts and a Bachelor of Science degree in journalism from Boston University. The second keynote speaker, Sara Akbar, is the Chief Executive

Officer and Co-founder of Kuwait Energy, one of the leading independent oil and gas exploration and production companies in the Middle East. As one of the first women to hold a leading position in the oil and gas industry, she has held a number of senior positions in Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) and Kuwait Foreign Petroleum (KUFPEC). Akbar gained a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Engineering from Kuwait University and has a wealth of knowledge in projects relating to leadership, strategic development, portfolio management and strategic relationships. For information about the conference and registration, please visit: www.womeninthecorporate-world.com and follow Instagram account: @GDC2016 For inquiries and partnership opportunities, please contact events@alghanim.com



KUWAIT: (From Left) Ahlam Naeem, Fayza Al-Misbah, Nada Al-Shaiji, Shereen Bushehri and Humoud Al-Shaiji.

CREATIVITY KEY FOR DEVELOPMENT OF LITERARY WRITING: WRITER

SHARJAH: Kuwaiti Writer Nermin Al-Houti has underlined the importance of creativity in the development of different literary writings, especially fiction.

Speaking at a symposium, themed 'Writers' Journey Towards Creativity' and held on the sidelines of the Sharjah Children's Reading Festival (SCRF), Houti stated that the journey of a writer for a creative

works starts with asking a number of questions (how, where and why?) and answering them.

Each writer has his or her own way for creativity, and even if the approach of some writers may be similar in certain features, they are always unique and closely related to the artist himself/herself, she said. She noted that a writer's journey towards creativity must begin

with summarizing what he or she saw and what he or she read about.

The writer must also have a creative imagination to produce a high-quality literary piece, she said. She stressed that the writer must read much about the topic he or she wants to write about and do the necessary research as well as interacting with different segments and parts of the society.

"All these are only the information stored in his or her mind and recalled it when he or she thinks about it and starts writing."

Clear purpose

Houti said that the writer begins his or her writing journey with a clear purpose in mind or to imitate the reality. She added that the writer when he or she depicts characters of the literary work must introduce them through three dimensions, namely physical, social and psychological. Creative writers are those who draw their characters in an attractive way to convey their idea to the reader, she said.

She noted that the writers' journey ends when their literary prod-

ucts reach the hands of the reader to read his or her new ideas.

The Sharjah Children's Reading Festival brings together a large number of authors of children's books under one roof and is a cultural gathering for more than 120 publishers globally and locally to offer their books for reading, she said, noting that the event would conclude late this month.

The Sharjah Children's Reading Festival (SCRF) is a fun-packed, entertainment-filled 11 days of discovery, creativity and excitement. Some of the world's best children's authors descend upon the Sharjah Expo Centre, reading their popular works and meeting their fans; alongside more than 120 international and local publishers who offer their books for sale. The aim of SCRF is to promote a love of reading amongst young and old, showcase Arab literature to the world and give illustrators and artists alike the chance to feature their intricate works. The SCRF also provides a great place for fellow authors and publishing houses/publishers to network and interact. — KUNA



SHARJAH: Kuwaiti Writer Nermin Al-Houti (right) attends a symposium held during the Sharjah Children's Reading Festival. — KUNA

READERSHIP Q8 PARTICIPATES IN CHARITY FAIR, EXHIBITION

By Athoob Al-Shuaibi

KUWAIT: For the second year in a row, Readership Q8 participated in an annual charity fair and exhibition held by the Kuwait National Society for Protection of Children (NSPC). The event took place in Arraya complex between the 25th and the 27th of April, under the patronage of Sheikha Aida Salem Al-Ali Al-Sabah, and participation of the head of the NSPC Dr Siham Al-Furaih. "We were warmly invited by the society to participate for the second year in this exhibition, which was entitled with 'Together we care of them, so they live happily,'" said Readership Q8 member,

Humoud Al-Shaiji. "Our reading club 'Readership Q8' strongly believes that kids are the nucleus of communities. If we offer them a proper care and education, they will become a better citizens in the future."

Ahlam Naeem, another member of the book club, mentioned also that all the proceeds of their book sales will go to the society in order to help in educating children in need.

The Readership Q8 initiative, which was first founded in 2014, runs monthly book discussion Meet-ups. More information about Readership Q8 can be found on Twitter (@q8_readership) and Instagram (@readershipq8).

SHEIKHA UNDERLINES IMPORTANCE OF ARAB-AFRICAN COOPERATION

CAIRO: Chairperson of the Arab Businesswomen Council Sheikha Hessa Saad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah underlined Tuesday the importance of promoting Arab-African cooperation. Addressing an international conference on empowering African woman, Sheikha Hessa said geographical and environmental closeness between the Arab and African regions have created many similarities. Merchants were using land transportation to reach

Tanzania and Zanzibar all the way to Yemen, she said. Sheikha Hessa said lack of information about African needs and difficulties facing money transfer transactions as well as lack of sustainable economic and financial policies, were the result of political instability despite the economic potentials. She called for curbing custom restrictions, increasing technical cooperation in trade policies and improving investment atmosphere. — KUNA

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In Brief

MPS HEAD TO BRUSSELS

KUWAIT: A Kuwaiti parliamentary delegation headed MP Abdullah Al-Mayouf yesterday left for Brussels, Belgium to take part in the official visit of the Gulf parliamentary committee, which aims at boosting ties with the European Parliament. — KUNA



YOUTH DISCUSSION PANELS IN FARWANIYA

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Youth (PAY) launched yesterday the first of a series of discussion panels with the youth in Farwaniya governorate, in a bid to prop up support of the youth, attended by Farwaniya Governor Sheikh Faisal Al-Humoud Al-Malik Al-Sabah and Director General of PAY Abdulrahman Al-Mutairi. — KUNA



KFSD HOLDS WORKSHOP

KUWAIT: Kuwait Fire Services Directorate (KFSD) held a workshop that discusses the procedures of violations, common mistakes and how to avoid them. It took place in cooperation with the Interior Ministry's Criminal Investigations Department, and in presence of Acting KFSD Deputy Director General for Prevention Affairs Brig Khalid Fahad. Detective Ibtihal Al-Ali lectured in the workshop.



Photo

of the day



KUWAIT: A butterfly sits on flowers at a garden outside the National Assembly's building in Kuwait City. — Photo by Yasser Al-Zayyat

AMIR'S SPONSORSHIP OF 1,000 PROJECTS EXPO EMBODIES CARE FOR YOUTH: MINISTER



KUWAIT: Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah inaugurates the 1,000 Projects Exhibition. — KUNA photos

KUWAIT: Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Sheikh Mohammad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah underlined His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah's sponsorship of 1,000 Projects Exhibition embodies the Amir's keenness to increase youth's contributions to national economy.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the fourth edition of the exhibition on Tuesday, Sheikh Mohammad expressed his pleasure by the progress made since the launching of the first edition. He boasted the steady growth of participants. This growing participation shows that Kuwaiti youth have changed their concept about working in the private sector and launching their own businesses, he said.

He added that the remarkable event proves that caring for youth tops the agenda of state officials and institutions. The government spares no effort and employs all potential to provide youth with all their needs to develop and progress in various domains, he said.

Sheikh Mohammad noted that the future would be for youth who have the desire to have their own enterprises. He urged Kuwaiti youth to set their future plans and goals and to specialize in certain domains that match their inclinations and skills and to take the initiative and join private sector to pave the way for creativity and innovation.

He expressed delight after touring the expo and meeting the participating youth who opted to have their own businesses. He pointed out that the event encourages Kuwaiti youth to develop their skills and make the best use of the experience of their peers to create their own businesses.

On Saudi Deputy Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman's announcement of the Saudi Kingdom's vision of 2030 Tuesday, Sheikh Mohammad said that the vision reflected farsightedness that indicates a safe and prosperous future for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its people.

He hailed this comprehensive vision as involving all sectors and institutions and embodying genuine participation between the State and people as well as relying on human development as the basis for building a new promising



future and sustainable development. He noted that His Highness the Amir unveiled several years ago the state's 2030 vision to turn Kuwait into a commercial and economic hub. He wished Saudi Arabia continued progress, prosperity and stability under its wise leadership. — KUNA

7TH DERMATOLOGY FORUM OPENS

KUWAIT: Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health for Medical Services Affairs Dr Jamal Al-Harbi inaugurated the seventh annual dermatology forum on Tuesday. The three-day annual gathering, being held under the auspices of Minister of Health Dr Ali Al-Obaidi, provides a platform for local and foreign experts to discuss 18 researches on the latest developments in this specialty, Dr Harbi said.

"They will review the latest scientific and technological achievements in the treatment of skin diseases, including the applications of phototherapy and laser therapy," he told reporters on the sidelines of the opening ceremony.

"The participants will also discuss the ways of training the cosmetic dermatologists in the use of botox injections and wrinkle fillers. During their stay here, the global experts will visit the dermatology and venereology departments to inspect the patients and share experience with the local dermatologists," he pointed out.

"The Ministry of Health has introduced a small highly-effective multi-purpose laser appliance which is very helpful in the early detection of skin cancer; the appliance is now available at the primary health centers and hospitals of the Ministry," Dr Harbi revealed.

The forum is co-organized by the Ministry and the board of dermatology and venereology departments, he said, noting that the organizing committee is

keen on holding this annual event regularly in keeping with the strategy of the Ministry for improving the health services. Meanwhile, Dr Mohammad Fayhan Al-Otaibi, the general coordinator of the forum, said the successful holding of the event over the last seven years made it the largest forum in the Middle East in this specialty.

"The forum has established a good regional reputation thanks to its in-depth scientific agenda, including the sideline workshops and training courses, which

keep abreast with the world's latest achievements in this domain," he affirmed.

Dr Otaibi thanked the Minister of Health Dr Obaidi for his patronage of the event which "reflects the keenness of the Ministry on building the capacity of the medical personnel. He added that the participants in the forum will be granted 24 credit-hours of the continuing medical education (CME) from Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialization (KIMS). — KUNA



KUWAIT: Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Health for Medical Services Affairs Dr Jamal Al-Harbi tours an exhibition held as part of the seventh annual dermatology forum. — KUNA



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KUWAIT NOT OBLIGED TO NATURALIZE 4,000 BEDOONS ANNUALLY: JARRAH

By A Saleh

KUWAIT: The Ministry of Interior's Assistant Undersecretary for Citizenship and Passports Affairs Major General Mazen Al-Jarrah stressed that the ministry has not stopped holding citizens with dual citizenships accountable, and urged anybody with information about such citizens to report to the ministry. Jarrah added that the government is not obliged to grant citizenship to 4,000 bedoons (stateless) annually as the parliament demands. "Citizenship is not a means of public transportation," he said sarcastically, noting that some women of Indian, British, American and other origins had been granted Kuwaiti citizenship, creating what he described as a 'strange social mix.'



Sheikh Mazen Al-Jarrah

MP demands apology

On another concern, and in response to earlier statements made by Jarrah, MP Ali Al-Khamees urged the interior minister to hold Jarrah accountable for describing lawmakers as 'voters' representatives. "If you are annoyed by the word representatives, we are all representatives in service of the people," the minister replied, but Khamees added that Jarrah uses the word in an insulting manner and that he had a camera in his office to videotape MPs processing people's transactions. "He must apologize," he insisted.

Courts' roundup

The criminal court yesterday acquitted former MP Nasser Al-Duwailah and media figure Talal Al-Saeed in a case filed against them jointly over charges of slandering

Egypt. Separately, the criminal court yesterday sentenced citizen Abbas Ghloom, also known as Abbas Al-Shaabi, and another person to one year in prison with labor for taking part in an unlicensed rally and refusing security instructions to leave the place.

IS sympathizer

The suspect currently on trial for deliberately running over security men at a checkpoint during the national anniversary celebrations yesterday repeated his confessions before the court, confirming that he had prepared for his crime. "Yes, I ran them over, attempted to kill them and prepared for what I did," he said.

Notably, a policeman was killed, four others injured and one stabbed when the suspect, who admitted to be an IS sympathizer, drove his vehicle into a checkpoint and stabbed a policeman after being arrested.

Also yesterday, the public prosecutor yesterday referred the state security case filed against MP Abdulhameed Dashti over charges of slandering Saudi Arabia to the criminal court, which set May 18 to hear it. Notably, the public prosecutor had issued an order in absentia to detain Dashti for 10 days at the central prison.

In other news, the court of misdemeanor yesterday fined former MP Faisal Al-Mislem KD 150 for slandering Sheikh Nasser Al-Mohammed on his Twitter account. The same court meanwhile seconded an earlier verdict to fine Sheikh Khalifa Al-Ali KD 1,000 in a case filed against him by retired Lieutenant General Abdul Fattah Al-Ali for insulting him.



KUWAIT: A citizen's sports-utility-vehicle (SUV) yesterday fell from the second floor of a multi-storey parking building outside Mishref Co-op, said security sources. No injuries were reported. — By Meshal Al-Enezi



PHILIPPINE EMBASSY REPATRIATES 143 HOUSEMAIDS THROUGH KUWAIT'S AVR P

By Ben Garcia

KUWAIT: The Philippine Embassy in Kuwait repatriated 143 runaway housemaids to Manila on Tuesday evening through Kuwait government's Assisted Voluntary Repatriation Program (AVRP). With this scheme, repatriated workers are sent straight to the airport without passing through the deportation center (Talha). The repatriated workers were temporarily housed at the embassy's shelter in Hateen for various reasons ranging from maltreatment to sexual and verbal abuse. Around 300 more remain at the two embassy shelters in Faiha and Hateen awaiting repatriation. The repatriated workers are the biggest batch of returnees so far this year.

"Thank God, I can go back to my family in one piece," Mila, a repatriated worker, told Kuwait Times. "I was verbally and physically abused by my female employer, but I had to stay at the embassy because the employer would not want to cooperate and filed a case against me," she added. Some of the housemaids expressed hope and great aspirations for the positive change of leadership in the Philippines after the presidential election on May 9.

"I hope the next president will pay due attention to our plight. I am now very happy because I am finally heading home after five months. But I still have a few friends left behind who couldn't go home because of some cases filed against them by their employers. I hope the next president will look after their needs and if possible temporarily stop sending OFWs to the Middle East," said Annalyn, another repatriated worker.

Ramon Nerida, head of the Assistance to Nationals Unit of the embassy, said the volun-



KUWAIT: A number of runaway housemaids prepare to travel to Manila through Kuwait government's Assisted Voluntary Repatriation Program (AVRP).

tary repatriation program helps decongest the shelter tremendously. "The good thing about AVR P is that we were able to facilitate fingerprinting in the comfort of the embassy unlike the normal repatriation procedure where housemaids are asked to present themselves in the immigration area, AVR P or not," explained Nerida.

"The immigration authorities of Kuwait are extremely supportive of the program, and sometimes the only problem is the availability of flights back home because of periodic peak seasons," Philippine Consul General Raul Dado said.

He said all distressed OFWs who wish to go home can register their names at the embassy, whose basic policy focuses primarily on the safety and security of all Filipinos in Kuwait.

There are an estimated 200,000 Filipinos in Kuwait, more than one third of whom are engaged in domestic work. Around five to seven housemaids run away from their employers daily. According to Philippine Ambassador to Kuwait Renato Pedro Villa, the Philippines along with two other nations in Africa are the only remaining labor-exporting countries sending housemaids to Kuwait.

60 VEHICLES IMPOUNDED FOR DRIVING ON RIGHT SHOULDER

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: The Interior Ministry's General Traffic Department carried out a campaign against people who illegally drive on the right shoulder of Abdelkareem Al-Khatibi road during the morning rush hour. The crackdown resulted in issuing 74 citations and impounding 60 vehicles.

The department released a statement appealing to the public not to use the right shoulder at all, and comply with the timings of using the left shoulder, which are as follows:

From 6:00 am until 10:00 pm, provided that the speed does not exceed 45

km/hour in both directions.

- 1- King Abdulaziz Road from Sixth Ring Road to Third Ring Road, and back.
- 2- King Fahad Road from Sixth Ring Road until 1st Ring Road and back.
- 3- King Faisal Road from Sixth Ring Road until Fourth Ring Road and back.
- 4- Ghazaly road from Sixth Ring Road until Fourth Ring Road and back.
- 5- Sheikh Zayed Road (5th Ring) from King Abdulaziz Road with Sheikh Zayed until Andalus crossroad.
- 6- Sixth Ring Road from King Abdulaziz crossroad until Farwaniya hospital crossroad.

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Al-Anbaa

'ACTUARIAL' AND 'STRATEGIC' SIBLINGS

By Thaar Al-Rasheedi

The most two widespread bluffs in Kuwait's history that the government has been excessively using are the 'payroll strategic alternative' and 'actuarial deficit', though nobody has so far accurately defined either of them. The former was used as an entry to achieve vocational justice and the government promoted it through 'well-informed sources' speaking to the press. This payroll strategic alternative is supposed raise the salaries of low-paid employees and achieve equality amongst all public servants, from ministers to cops to cashiers.

The government has been promoting this 'alternative' for two years now, but nobody agrees on a unified definition of it. As a matter of fact, nobody even knows what it is exactly. All what we know is that this 'alternative' was based on studying 24,000 job titles in the government sector in order to unify salaries paid for the same job titles in all government bodies. As far as I know, this study is not yet complete and thus the strategic alternative is nothing but a study comparing government employees' salaries without even mentioning how and when it would be put into practice.

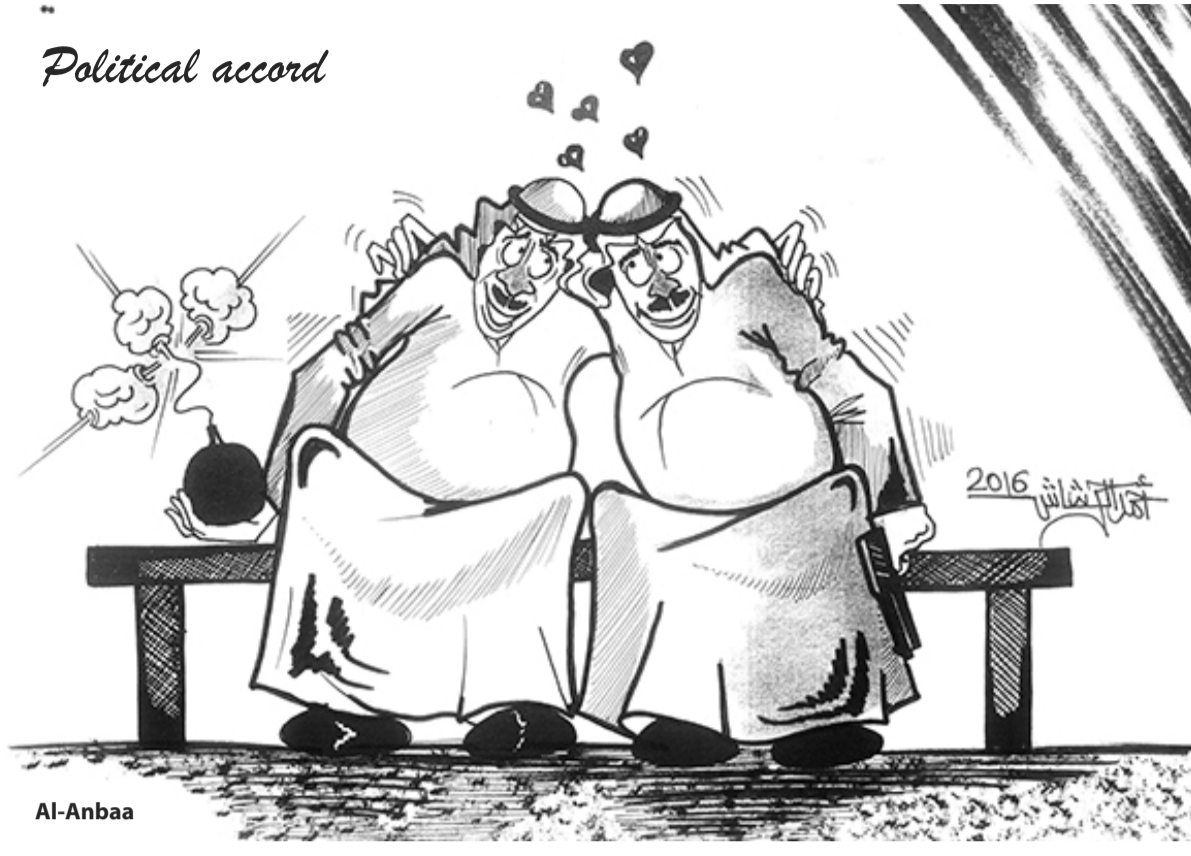
What is even funnier is that the government has been enclosing this 'strategic alternative', that it has not yet finished studying, as a major element of its economic reform document.

The question here is: How can the government present its economic reform plan while an integral part of it is still being studied? Should the government not finish the study and then present its full vision of an economic reform plan? The government announced that the 'alternative' is an integral part of its economic reform plan that has been submitted to the parliament. This means the reform plan itself is nothing but another governmental propaganda and will accordingly not pass or come to light through the parliament, not even in 2035.

The economic reform plan will be dismantled into smaller bills to get them passed in parliament, such as privatization, so whenever the government does so for any profit-making company or vital public facility, the idea would be publically accepted or passable.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

Political accord



Al-Anbaa

PANEL TO STUDY UNIONS' DEMANDS FOR TWO WEEKS

KUWAIT: While discussions continued with representatives in the oil sector with the tri-party committee formed by the Cabinet entrusted to study the benefits of those workers until the late hours of Monday, official sources said that it was decided to freeze the initiatives of rationalization in the oil sector for two weeks and form a neutral legal committee to discuss the merits of the dispute between oil unions and Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC). President of Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) workers'

union Salah Al-Marzouq said the committee includes the head of the fatwa and legislation department, council of ministers' secretary general and supervision from the office of His Highness the Prime Minister.

He said it was agreed not to deduct the strike days' salaries from workers, adding that all agreements and verdicts in favor of workers are not subject to discussion because they are binding rights. He said the benefits were not given by court rulings, and that is why they are being negotiated. — Al-Anbaa



ZAIN PARTICIPATES IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP MASTER CLASS COMPETITION

KUWAIT: Zain, the leading telecommunications company in Kuwait, participated in the Entrepreneurship Master Class competition organized by INJAZ, where the company's employees mentored and guided middle school students in a professional setting.

Zain's participation in the competition came in line with the company's strategic partnership with INJAZ Kuwait, and in line with its Corporate Social Responsibility and Sustainability strategies, which aim at developing the youth and education sectors within the

local community.

The Entrepreneurship Master Class (EMC) competition aimed at encouraging young students, from across Kuwait's public middle schools, to consider a business career and to educate them about the opportunities and skills associated with establishing a business and becoming young entrepreneurs.

INJAZ Kuwait was founded in 2005, as a non-profit, non-governmental organization, driven by Kuwait's private sector. Through strategic partnerships with Kuwait's business and edu-

cation sectors, and with the help of qualified and dedicated volunteers, INJAZ delivers educational programs on entrepreneurial and leadership skills aimed at inspiring and educating future generations. INJAZ Kuwait is operated by INJAZ Al-Arab. Since 2005, INJAZ-Kuwait reached over 40,000 students, through 3000+ volunteers at 60+ schools and universities to provide students with knowledge and experience that will assist them in their personal and career development.

METRO PROJECT TO BE FINISHED IN 23 YEARS

KUWAIT: A letter recently sent by the Partnership Technical Bureau (PTB) to an unspecified state department showed that the Kuwait metro project is still under consideration, and that its execution is supposed to go through five phases to build 160 km.

The project is expected to be entirely finished in 23 years starting from the date of commencing construction. The PTB did not give the exact cost of the project but it implied that according to the feasibility study, the cost of the first phase would be KD 5 billion, to be fully provided by the company executing the project.

The PTB also explained that the project's feasibility study was prepared by international consultants specialized in means of public transportation that had been approved by the state's relevant bodies. The PTB added that the project was divided into five phases to



facilitate its execution and operation as well as to deal with all contingencies such as resolving any traffic congestions resulting from the construction

process. Further, the authority stressed that once completed, each phase would be assessed by the project consultants. — Al-Qabas

Al-Qabas

ACTS OF VIOLENCE

By Khalid Al-Tarrah

There is no convincing justification for the decision of the Cabinet to refer acts of riot and violence to the permanent committee for national days celebration instead of the interior ministry, as such issues are the core of the ministry's work and not the committee, and requires strict security measures. Behaviors that aim at harming state facilities, citizens, visitors and expats, as what took place during the national days' celebrations lately, is not a new Kuwaiti phenomenon, rather it is a phenomenon that was given a blind eye for years.

Decisiveness in implementing the law is the concern of the interior ministry, and this matter should not be subject to courtesy, because the permanent celebrations committee is not a security authority, and does not have legal powers to face violence and chaos. The interior ministry did not fall short during the national days' period, and elevated the readiness level to face any danger that could threaten the country's security, and it is sad that Corporal Torky Al-Enezi paid with his life while on duty due to a Daesh monster, and recklessness that injured several policemen of various age groups.

Youth and children of chaos and violence did not follow this shameful behavior spontaneously, rather it is with the blessing of some families, fathers and mothers who found joy in roaming the streets and harming others. These are not strange events in the society, because several incidents preceded these, in which citizens and expats challenged civilized behaviors and also the law!

Meanwhile, coinciding with this, financial auditors were beaten, as was mentioned in the media, by a sheikh who has a post of general manager, who found that answering with the hand is the best way to prevent financial auditing. Does not the Cabinet have the right to question parallel to the legal procedures? Does not this incident, if it really happened, deserve suspension of the sheikh from work until investigations are over, and deter anyone who may think that the language of violence and attacking employees who seek to protect public funds is the shortest means to deal with financial issues?

We appeal to His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak to activate accountability so that chaos and attacks do not become a normal behavior for those who think that they are above the law.

— Translated by Kuwait Times

BURGAN BANK ANNOUNCES VALUE ACCOUNT DRAW WINNER

KUWAIT: Borgan Bank announced Mohammed Sharif Abdulnazar as the winner of its Value Account draw. The lucky winner took home a cash prize of KD 4000 which was presented to him by Haneen Al-Rumaihi, Assistant General Manager - Marketing and Product Development.

The Value Account has been re-launched with more added value features that have been designed for expatriates living in Kuwait. Account holders can now obtain a free credit card for one year, apply for a loan, and receive a chance to win KD 4,000 on a quarterly basis. All expatriates with salaries between KD 150 and KD 400 are eligible to be a Value account holder.

Borgan Bank's Value account presents a range of merchant discounts to the clients. Opening a Value account is simple, customers are required to visit their nearest Borgan Bank branch, or simply call the bank's Call Center 1804080 for more details. For further information visit www.borgan.com.



SHELL CONTRACT MODEL TO BE GENERALIZED



KUWAIT: Informed sources said Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) plans to generalize the concept of advanced technical services contracts to develop oil fields, and that after the Public Prosecution recently shelved Shell contract's case due to lack of evidence suggesting irregularities in the deal.

KOC CEO Jamal Jaafar said in a letter to employees that the contract to present developed technical services with Shell is unique, adding that the concept was invented by the company in cooperation with its advisors and others and abroad. He said the contract's form is unique and was not used before by any company, regional or international, in similar projects. — Al-Rai

Crime

Report

Maid accused of beating toddler

KUWAIT: A female citizen accused her domestic helper of beating her two-year-old daughter and lodged a complaint at Adan police station. A security source said the citizen heard her daughter crying hysterically, and when she went to see what happened, she discovered the domestic helper had beaten her and left bruises on her body that were mentioned in the medical report. Police are investigating.

Fraud

A young man and his two sisters established bogus accounts on social media in the name of Social Reform Society and asked people to donate for the Syrian people. The trio collected KD 240,000 from donors in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, from which they repaid their loans and deposited the rest of the money in their personal accounts. Banks got suspicious over the large amounts of money deposited and how the loans were paid, so they contacted detectives, who exposed the fraud. The criminal court postponed the ruling on this case until June 28 against the trio, who are citizens.

Car owner, mechanic fight

Police broke up a fight between two men, Kuwaiti and Syrian, on Zeena St in Shuwaikh because of a dispute over a car repair. A security source said the two were taken to Shuwaikh police station, where the Kuwaiti car owner said that the Syrian mechanic made a mistake while repairing his car. The mechanic denied the accusations, adding that the defect was in the car before he brought it.

Scam

A citizen who expected to make profit from sheep trading discovered that his business partner took the money and left for a Gulf country, so he filed a complaint against him at Sabahiya police station. He said that he and his partner contributed KD 8,000 each, and his partner bought sheep and kept it in his pen for several months and used to sell from them without telling him. This continued until then he discovered that the partner had sold the entire herd and left the country. He phoned him, but he said he was on vacation and denied that he owes him any money. Police are working on the case.

Harasser at large

Women sought the help of security when a cross-dresser harassed them and wanted to enter a clinic, but escaped before police arrived. Investigations went underway in search for the suspect.

Fugitive runs into police station

A fugitive could not find a place to escape other than a police station. A security source said a 23-year-old citizen went to the police station in the capital and told officers that his car, which is registered in his mother's name, was stolen, but policemen were surprised by criminal detectives entering and arresting the citizen, telling them he had run away from them. — Al-Rai

CLEAN FUEL FINANCING DEAL SIGNED TODAY

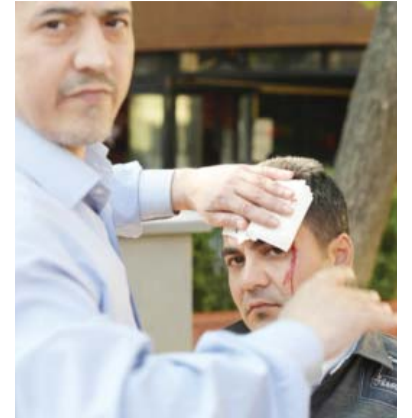
KUWAIT: Kuwait National Petroleum Company (KNPC) is set today to sign contracts to finance the clean fuel project with National Bank of Kuwait (NBK) and Kuwait Finance House (KFH). The deal is considered the largest bank finance operation in the history of Kuwait.

The value of financing the deal reaches KD 1.1 billion, sources said. They added that KD 600 million will be financed by traditional banks led by NBK, while KD 500 million will be financed by Islamic banks led by KFH. In addition to local financing, the deal requires financing from foreign banks and agencies. KNPC will finance 30 percent of the project which has an estimated cost of KD 4.68 billion. — Al-Anbaa



KUWAIT: Major General Adeb Al-Suwaidan, Director General of the Interior Ministry's Service Centers' Department visited the diwaniya of the ministry's retirees during their weekly gathering last Tuesday.





Female suicide bomber wounds 13 in Turkey

EX-US HOUSE SPEAKER GETS 15 MONTHS FOR SEX ABUSE

TRUMP, CLINTON PRESS CLOSER TO SHOWDOWN

TRUMP VOWS US ALLIES WOULD PAY FOR DEFENSE • CRUZ TO NAME FIORINA AS HIS NO. 2

WASHINGTON: Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump were a giant step closer to their parties' presidential nominations Wednesday after crushing their respective Democratic and Republican rivals in a string of presidential primaries. Clinton has now virtually cleared the way to become the Democratic nominee in the November presidential election, the first woman in US history to reach that milestone. The former secretary of state won four out of five primaries Tuesday in Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland and the night's big prize, the battleground state of Pennsylvania.



(Left) Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump delivers a speech about his vision for foreign policy at the Mayflower Hotel yesterday in Washington, DC. (Right) Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton addresses supporters during a primary night event in Philadelphia after winning the Pennsylvania state primary. — AFP

She conceded only the small state of Rhode Island to rival Bernie Sanders in a near sweep that gives her an almost insurmountable delegate lead. Clinton now has 2,168 delegates, including more than 500 "super-delegates," against Sanders's 1,401, with about 1,000 more to be distributed in the 14 remaining nominating races. She needs 2,383 delegates to win the nomination. "What a great night," Clinton told a thrilled crowd of supporters in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The 68-year-old former first lady telegraphed her eagerness to shift toward the general election and a showdown with Republicans. "Let's go forward, let's win the nomination, and in July let's return as a unified party," she said. Clinton's strong showing heaps pressure on the well-funded Sanders, a self-styled democratic socialist senator from Vermont who vowed to battle on until the California primary on June 7.

"The people in every state in this country should have the right to determine who they want as president and what the agenda of the Democratic Party should be. That's why we are in this race until the last vote is cast," Sanders said in a statement. "That is why this campaign is going to the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia with as many delegates as possible to fight for a progressive party platform."

'Presumptive Nominee'

Trump swept all five presidential races held Tuesday, strengthening his grip on the Republican race. He demolished his rivals Ted Cruz and John Kasich in Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island - a stunning show of force by a candidate seen as a populist political savior by millions despite being loathed by the party establishment. "I consider myself the presumptive nominee," the real estate mogul told a crowd at Trump Tower in New York, despite still being short of the 1,237 delegates required to win the nomination outright. "As far as I'm concerned, it's over."

The 69-year-old billionaire extended his lead in the delegates who will officially choose the Republican nominee at the party's convention in July. "For weeks, the stop Trump, dump Trump movement has tried to puncture" his rise, James Morone, a political science professor at Brown University, told AFP. "Today's results overwhelmingly tell you it's not working."

Trump also offered a preview yesterday of what a Trump-Clinton matchup would look like, repeating on CNN his assertion that Clinton is "playing the woman card left and right". But at her victory party in Philadelphia, Clinton told supporters that "if fighting for women's healthcare and paid family leave and equal pay is playing the woman's card, then deal me in". Trump recently faced criticism when a top aide revealed the candidate was preparing to reshape his image, but Trump insisted yesterday morning he was not undergoing a makeover. "I'm not going to be changing. I'm presidential anyway," he told CNN.

Foreign Policy

Later yesterday, rolling out a foreign policy that he said would always put America first, Trump vowed yesterday that if elected president, he would make US allies in Europe and

Asia take on more of the financial burden for their defense, or they would be left to defend themselves. In a major speech, Trump delivered a withering critique of Barack Obama's foreign policy, saying the Democratic president has let China take advantage of the United States and has failed to defeat Islamic State militants.

Trump pledged to "shake the rust off America's foreign policy" and said he would seek better relations with China and Russia. Trump, who was also critical of policies of the last Republican US president, George W. Bush, said he would use America's strength sparingly. He said he would build up the US military to keep pace with Chinese and Russian military programs but would use American armed forces only when absolutely necessary.

"I will not hesitate to deploy military force when there is no alternative. But if America fights, it must fight to win. I will never send our finest into battle unless necessary - and will only do so if we have a plan for victory," Trump said. With U.S.-Russian relations strained over numerous issues including Moscow's support for Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, Trump said "an easing of tensions with Russia from a position of strength" is possible.

Trump, a real estate magnate, also said he would use US economic leverage to persuade China to rein in North Korea's nuclear program. "China respects strength and by letting them take advantage of us economically we have lost all their respect," he said. Trump said he would call separate summits of NATO and Asian allies to discuss a "rebalancing" of the US financial commitment to their defense. He was stern in charging that American allies have benefited from a US defense umbrella but have not paid their fair share. "The countries we defend must pay for the cost of this defense. If not, the US must be prepared to let these countries defend themselves. We have no choice," Trump said. Trump said he would develop a plan to halt the spread and reach of Islamic State militants but that more would be needed beyond the use of military force. "Events may require the use of military force. But it's also a philosophical struggle, like our long struggle in the Cold War," he said.

VP Pick

Separately, Cruz yesterday was expected to announce that former business executive Carly Fiorina will be his vice presidential running mate if he wins his party's nomination, ABC affiliate WMUR reported, citing unnamed sources. The report by WMUR, an ABC station in Manchester, New Hampshire, followed a statement from Cruz that he would make a major announcement. Fiorina, 61, endorsed Cruz, a 45-year-old US senator from Texas, for the nomination in March, one month after dropping out of the Republican race herself.

The announcement of a running mate at this point in the campaign would be unusually early. Traditionally, the winners of the Republican and Democratic nominating contests announce their running mates for November's general election at their parties' summer national conventions. Picking a running mate could be seen as part of a bid by Cruz to recover from Tuesday's crushing loss to Trump.

The choice of Fiorina, a former Hewlett-Packard Co chief executive, could help Cruz with women voters, a group the pugnacious Trump has had difficulty winning over to his outsider campaign. Trump criticized Fiorina earlier yesterday as a potential Cruz vice presidential pick. "I think it would be a bad choice," he said, "not because she's a woman but because she did not resonate at all with people. It's too early to do it. And frankly, he's wasting his time because he's not going to be the nominee." — Agencies

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IRAN PARLIAMENT IN BALANCE IN ELECTION RUNOFFS

TEHRAN: Nearly a quarter of Iran's parliamentary seats are at stake Friday in an election in which reformists want to consolidate their recent comeback and minimize the clout of hardline lawmakers. The second round run-offs were triggered because no candidate in 68 constituencies managed to win 25 percent of votes cast in the initial nationwide ballot on Feb 26. Reformists who backed the country's moderate President Hassan Rouhani made big gains in the first round following Iran's implementation of a nuclear deal with world powers, which lifted sanctions blamed for long hobbling the economy.

Conservative MPs, including vehement opponents of the West who openly criticized the landmark agreement that reined in Iran's atomic program, lost dozens of seats. In the capital, even the head of the conservative coalition was ejected, in a

wipeout that saw the reformist faction - known as the List of Hope - win all 30 seats. Despite that loss, the conservatives held on nationally, winning 103 seats against 95 for their reformist and moderate rivals in the 290-member parliament.

But the split result - other seats were won by nominally independent candidates and minorities - meant no faction won a majority. Friday's contest, which sees the top two candidates in initial voting stand for the remaining seats in cities such as Tabriz and Shiraz, as well as dozens of smaller towns, could change that. A run-off in the city of Isfahan has been postponed to a later date. Mohammad Reza Aref, leader of the pro-Rouhani List of Hope, has set a target of at least another 40 seats, reiterating that February's poll showed Iranians want change and greater influence in parliament would make reforms more likely.

Unlike the vote two months ago, there has been little attention on Friday's election, which has been overshadowed by concern in Tehran that no benefits are being generated by the nuclear deal. The agreement between Iran and six powers - Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States, plus Germany - became possible because supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei backed Rouhani's government.

Nuclear Deal in Dispute

However Khamenei and top officials have since warned that the United States is not keeping its side of the bargain and is instead erecting barriers for European banks seeking to work in Iran. February's voting came less than six weeks after the nuclear deal formally came into force. Although Rouhani's reformist and moderate allies didn't win the most seats, the

president will likely be able to muster support from key backers across Iran's political spectrum and create a working majority when the new parliament is sworn in next month.

The election gave him more leverage to push for reform-minded legislation, and economic changes, including new laws to encourage foreign investment and privatization of state industries, are expected. The most dramatic outcome in February's election, however, was the resurgence of the reformists, a political camp largely silenced after a disputed election in 2009 saw Rouhani's hardline predecessor, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, returned to office. That vote was followed by bloody street protests in which dozens of people were killed.

If conservatives perform more strongly on Friday amid concern over the nuclear deal - Rouhani's main achievement since

his landslide election win in June 2013 - his hopes for a more pro-government parliament could founder. The conservatives have not changed tack since February's voting, keeping up pressure over what they say is a silent agenda among reformists to give up the principles of the 1979 Islamic revolution.

"We hope that people in this round can have a parliament in line with the goals of Imam and the leadership by electing principals," said Gholam-Ali Hadad Adel, head of the conservative coalition. He was referring to revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and his successor Khamenei, who is Iran's ultimate authority. From a population of almost 80 million - 60 percent of whom are aged 30 or under - 62 percent of 55 million eligible voters cast ballots in February. Around 17 million people are eligible to vote on Friday. — AFP



QALANDIA: Palestinians argue with Israeli security forces at the Qalandia checkpoint between Jerusalem and Ramallah in the Israeli occupied West Bank, after two Palestinians were shot yesterday. — AFP

ISRAELI FORCES KILL 2 PALESTINIAN SIBLINGS

JERUSALEM: Israeli police shot dead a Palestinian woman and her teenage brother on Wednesday, saying they were armed with knives and tried to carry out an attack at a checkpoint in the occupied West Bank. In the last half year, Palestinian attacks have killed 28 Israelis and two visiting US citizens. Israeli forces have killed at least 193 Palestinians, 130 of whom Israel says were assailants. Many others were shot dead in clashes and protests.

Police said the woman, holding a knife, and a man walked rapidly towards police and other Israeli security guards in a vehicles-only lane at the Qalandia checkpoint outside Jerusalem. "Police called on them several times to stop. When they kept advancing ... the officers neutralized the terrorists," a police statement said. The Palestinian Health Ministry identified the two dead as Maram Abu Ismail, 23, and her 16-year-old brother, Ibrahim Taha.

Police, who have been on high alert during the current Jewish Passover holiday week, issued a photograph of three knives on the ground which they said the two had been carrying. Alaa Soboh, a Palestinian

bus driver who said he witnessed the incident, told Reuters the pair appeared to be unfamiliar with crossing procedures and were swiftly challenged at the checkpoint. "As soon as the two crossed, (Israeli forces) started screaming 'Go back, go back,' and then they began shooting. The first one they shot was the girl ... the boy tried to go backward, when they fired seven bullets at him," Soboh said.

Factors behind the bloodshed that began in October include Palestinian bitterness over stalled statehood negotiations and the growth of Israeli settlements in the West Bank, stepped up Jewish access to a disputed Jerusalem shrine, and Islamist-led calls for Israel's destruction. The pace of what had been near-daily Palestinian stabbing, shootings and car-ramming attacks has slowed, although a suicide bombing on a Jerusalem bus that wounded 15 people on April 18 has fuelled Israeli security concerns. Israel attributes the fall-off in incidents partly to tighter cooperation with Palestinian security forces in the West Bank and more stringent monitoring of social media to identify potential assailants. — Reuters



BURSA, Turkey: A woman gives first aid to an injured woman following a bombing yesterday. — AFP

FEMALE SUICIDE BOMBER WOUNDS 13 IN TURKEY

ANKARA: A suicide bomber blew herself up in the Turkish city of Bursa yesterday, wounding 13 people in the latest attack to strike the country, officials said. The bombing took place near Bursa's 14th century Grand Mosque, a historic symbol of the city that was the first capital of the Ottoman empire. "A woman packed with a (bombing) mechanism believed to be a suicide bomber blew herself up. Seven citizens were injured according to initial findings," said a statement from the local governor's office.

Security sources confirmed that the blast was a "suicide attack", while Turkish media identified the bomber as a 25-year-old woman. Nobody has yet claimed responsibility for the blast. But Turkey remains on high security alert after a series of deadly attacks since last summer blamed on the Islamic State (IS) jihadist group and Kurdish rebels. The powerful explosion smashed the windows of shops near the mosque, and television footage showing the injured being treated in ambulances. Police sealed off the area for investigation. Health Minister Mehmet Muezzinoglu said 13 people had been injured, none of them critically. Most of the injuries were wounds from broken glass

and hearing problems following the strong explosion, he added.

Yesterday's attack came just a day after the US embassy in Ankara issued a new security alert for Turkey. "The US government continues to receive credible indications that terrorist groups are seeking opportunities to attack popular tourist destinations throughout Turkey," the embassy said on its website. "The US embassy reminds US citizens that foreign tourists in Turkey have been explicitly targeted by terrorist organizations, and advises US citizens to be mindful of the potential for danger in crowded public areas and at popular tourist destinations."

Bursa, once a major stop on the Silk Road trade route linking Asia to Europe, is an industrial hub and Turkey's fourth largest city with a population of 2.7 million. It lies across the Marmara Sea from Istanbul, the largest city in Turkey that has often been the target of attacks. Ankara launched an offensive against the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) after the collapse in 2015 of a two-year ceasefire in a renewed conflict that has left many dead in the mainly Kurdish southeast of the country. — AFP

ARTIFICIAL LIMBS OFFER SYRIANS NEW CHANCES

TECHNICIANS AT THE CLINIC ARE ALL REFUGEES

REYHANLI, Turkey: Every time 3-year-old Seif wears his new prosthetic legs, the toddler puts up a fight. He has already made peace with walking on his stumps, but there is no dodging his daily rehabilitation session at a prosthetic clinic in southern Turkey. In a small clinic in the dusty border town of Reyhanli, dozens of wounded Syrians come to be fitted each month with prosthetic limbs, their best shot at restoring a semblance of a normal life.

Treatment at the clinic is free and only for Syrian civilians and fighters who have lost body parts in the Syrian conflict. Workers at the clinic manufacture prosthetic body parts while patients are in therapy. Seif, whose last name wasn't disclosed, was riding in the back seat of a car in the Syrian city of Aleppo in February, when a rocket struck the car blowing off his two legs and the leg of his older brother. Their parents, who were sitting in the front, survived with minor injuries.

The family recently crossed into Turkey so that the brothers could be fitted with artificial limbs at the National Syrian Project for Prosthetic Limbs (NSPPL), a Syrian-run venture supported by three agencies: Syria Relief, SEMA, and Every Syrian. "The number of wounded people is growing," said Raed Al-Masri, who has been running the clinic since it opened in February 2013. He's unsure what is causing the spike in numbers. "Perhaps it is the Russian bombing or maybe people have become more aware of the center," he told AP. By his count, more than 50,000 Syrians are amputees in need of treatment. The clinic works on an average of 100 cases per month.

The technicians working at the clinic are all Syrian refugees. They largely learned their craft on the go, but training has brought personnel up to European standards, Masri said. It takes about five days to manufacture a limb, test it



REYHANLI, Turkey: Three-year-old Seif smiles as he tries to walk using his two new prosthetic limbs with the help of his mother on April 20, 2016 at a clinic in this Turkish border town where hundreds of wounded Syrians come in every week to receive prosthetic limbs. — AP

and fit it on a patient. The rehabilitation process can stretch from one week to several months depending on the condition and morale of the patient. "People who have prosthetic limbs are in a very difficult psychological state, so what about the people who have no limbs, or have a handicap?" Masri said. "They are in a different category, in an even more difficult state."

Those in the clinic are the lucky ones and, generally, they know it. Ahmed Abdullah, a 30-year-old rebel who lost both legs in 2012 while fighting against Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad's government, said his life was trans-

formed after being fitted with artificial limbs. "Before I had a prosthetic limb, I would get annoyed sometimes because I couldn't get things for myself," said the lightly-bearded former fighter. "I would need my brother or sister to get it for me. After ... my life became - I can't say 100 percent - but 90 to 95 percent good."

For Seif, who comes to the clinic dressed in prim shorts and shirt, the transition is impossible to put into words. The routine starts with tears but ends in a burst of laughter as he takes his first steps with the help of his mother. "He's happier," she said. — AP

BACK TO THE FUTURE AS SOUTH SUDAN OLD RIVALS 'END WAR'

JUBA: The metal gates are still twisted where troops in Dec 2013 stormed the house of South Sudan's now Vice President Riek Machar, as war erupted leaving tens of thousands dead. But on Tuesday, just a stone's throw away in his heavily-guarded state house, President Salva Kiir called the matter an "incident" as he welcomed the rebel chief turned "brother" Machar back to Juba, saying his return marked "the end of the war and the return of peace and stability".

Peace doves were released, and after Machar was sworn into office, the two men stood alongside each other with hands on hearts, as a red-coated band played the national anthem, "God bless South Sudan." Hopes are high but the challenges - and the expectations the new government will swiftly solve them - are huge, analysts warn. Many are cautious, pointing out that the pair have previously fallen out, fought, made up and fought again. Machar, who returned to the post of vice president that he was sacked from five months before war broke out, said he wanted to work for "full implementation" of an August 2015 agreement "to make sure peace breaks out all over the country".

'We are Tired'

For now, the war-weary population appears to be breathing a sigh of relief that for once, there is some hope for peace. "We want the killing to stop," said Teresa Nyadet in Juba, a 58-year-old mother of eight, one of over 180,000 living behind the razor wire protection of UN bases across the country. "We women, we want peace in South Sudan, and Machar must make sure the kind of life we are in stops."

The next few weeks will be critical for persuading people the country has turned a corner. "I am happy that Riek Machar has come, as this means that we are now going to get out of the camp," said Elizabeth Akol, a mother of four, also at a UN base in Juba. "We are tired and have suffered a lot." The conflict, which has torn open ethnic divisions, has been characterized by horrific rights abuses, including gang rapes, the wholesale burning of villages and cannibalism.

Deep Suspicions Remain

Ensuring that the sides work together in a unity government, and that the thousands of rival armed forces now in separate camps inside the capital keep their guns quiet, will be an even bigger challenge. Both sides remain deeply suspicious, and there is continued fighting between multiple militia forces who now pay no heed to

either Kiir or Machar. Jok Madut Jok, who heads the Juba-based Sudd Institute think-tank, warned the return was only one of many steps.

"The people of South Sudan may be holding their breath for the war to end... but I think they should also be cautious not to let down their guard," Jok said. Both Kiir and Machar are former rebel leaders who rose to power during Sudan's 1983-2005 civil war between north and south - a conflict in which two men fought each other - before South Sudan won independence in 2011.

Jok warned the old rivals "may disagree on several things along the way of the implementation, and that could easily return the country to a very messy situation". Machar's return to a country awash with weapons was stalled for a week by arguments that at one point came down to a dispute over some two dozen rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns that his security detail was allowed to have.

'Give Peace a Chance'

The pair now face far bigger problems. The economy is in ruins, inflation has eroded savings and salaries, and without another round of massive international support there is little cash to rebuild and prove that the profits of peace are better than those of war. With more than five mil-

lion people in need of aid and more than two million forced to flee this homes, aid agencies who are struggling to support them said they welcomed any move towards peace but that the crisis was far from over.

"Though the peace process resolves some national level political disputes, it does not resolve escalating humanitarian and protection needs on the ground," said Victor Moses, who runs the Norwegian Refugee Council aid agency in the country. Others warned that without justice to address the horrific abuses carried out by all sides, reconciliation would not be possible and hatred would fester.

John Prendergast, who played a key role in drumming up US-backing for South Sudan's independence in 2011 and who now runs the Enough Project campaign group, warned the root causes of the conflict remained unaddressed. "Forming a government with the same actors responsible for the collapse of the economy and atrocities holds open the possibility that grand corruption will return to its pre-war patterns," Prendergast said. "Without an emphasis on consequences for gross corruption and atrocities, it's unlikely the deadly patterns will be broken," he added. But it is the best chance yet for peace. — AFP



JUBA, South Sudan: A resident reads a daily newspaper yesterday reporting on the arrival and swearing-in of rebel leader Riek Machar, a day after his return. — AFP



CHICAGO: Former House Speaker Dennis Hastert leaves the Dirksen Federal Court House in a wheelchair after his sentencing yesterday. — AFP

EX-US HOUSE SPEAKER GETS 15 MONTHS FOR SEX ABUSE

WASHINGTON: Former US House speaker Dennis Hastert was sentenced to 15 months in prison Wednesday for paying hush money to a victim who said the former high school wrestling coach abused him as a boy, US media reported. As part of a sentence that also includes two years of supervised release, US District Judge Thomas Durkin in Chicago also recommended that Hastert participate in a treatment program for sex offenders, according to the reports.

Just before the sentence was handed down, Hastert admitted for the first time that he sexually abused boys when he taught and coached at Yorkville High School in Illinois from the 1960s to the early 1980s. Prosecutors have provided details of abuse of at least five boys as young as 14, and said Hastert's conduct was widespread. "What I did was wrong and I regret it," Hastert said after being pressed by the judge and finally admitting the abuse. "They looked to me and I took advantage of them," he added, according to comments reported by the Chicago Tribune.

Durkin, the judge hearing the case, donated a total of \$1,500 to Hastert's campaign in 2002 and 2004, according to federal records.

But it was President Barack Obama, a Democrat, who appointed Durkin to his post. Last year, Hastert pleaded guilty to illegally structuring bank withdrawals to avoid reporting where he was sending funds as part of a \$3.5 million settlement over the abuse, said to have been com-

mitted three decades ago. Statutes of limitations have long passed on the abuse, so he was only charged with breaking financial laws.

Federal prosecutors say Hastert paid the man a total of \$1.7 million - a little less than half the agreed amount - between 2010 and 2014 in regular payments that only stopped when the government started investigating him. The victim who received those payments, identified as "Individual A" in last year's federal indictment against Hastert, filed a lawsuit Monday seeking the \$1.8 million still missing under their agreement. That lawsuit claims that Hastert "violated the special trust" the victim placed in him by "sexually molesting and abusing plaintiff in a motel room" on a wrestling team trip.

'I Trusted Him'

At Hastert's sentencing hearing, another victim took the stand and revealed his identity. Scott Cross said Hastert violated him when the two were alone in a wrestling room. Hastert "told me he could help me lose weight by giving me a massage," Cross was quoted as saying in his testimony. "I trusted what he was saying and took him at his word." When the abuse started, "I was stunned by what he was doing - I jumped up," Cross said. Hastert resigned from Congress after allegedly turning a blind eye to a scandal involving another former lawmaker - Mark Foley - who sent sexually explicit or suggestive messages to teenage pages. — AFP

CLINTON RULES IN BATTLE FOR HOLLYWOOD SUPPORT, CASH

BERNIE-HILLARY DIVIDE HAS GROWN HEATED

LOS ANGELES: Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders' positions on fracking, free tuition and breaking up big banks wouldn't sound out of place in an Oscar winning-actor's acceptance speech. But in famously liberal Hollywood, long used as an ATM by Democratic campaigns, Sanders' message is not resonating as loudly as in other progressive bastions. The more moderate Hillary Clinton has far outpaced the Vermont senator in fundraising and has a deep line-up of A-list stars and top executives among her backers.

Celebrities don't sway votes, but they can persuade people to listen to a candidate's message, said historian Steven Ross, author of "Hollywood Left and Right: How Movie Stars Shaped American Politics". "It puts a candidate on their radar," he said. Hollywood actors, studio executives and other employees of the film, TV and music industries have donated at least \$8.4 million to Clinton's campaign and the independent Super PAC that supports her bid, Priorities USA Action, according to a Reuters analysis of campaign finance data through March 31.

A pair of Clinton fundraisers held by actor George Clooney this month, at which tickets went for as much as \$353,000 per couple, is not included in that total, but were reported by Deadline Hollywood to have raised an additional \$15 million. By contrast, Sanders' campaign had raised about \$1 million from entertainment industry donors through March 31, according to the campaign finance data. The Vermont senator, who called the price of the Clooney event "obscene", is not associated with a Super PAC and says he does not court wealthy donors. All Republican presidential candidates combined collected \$460,000, roughly 5 percent of entertainment industry donations, the data showed. Clinton's support in Hollywood can be traced back to strong ties her husband built during his first presidential campaign in 1992, said Donna Bojarsky, a Democratic public policy consultant who worked as national entertainment coordinator for Bill Clinton's campaign. Bill Clinton connected deeply with Hollywood, she said, in part because "he showed a real respect for and appreciation of pop culture. He followed it, and he enjoyed it".

Another reason for Hillary Clinton's success in Hollywood is the backing of executives. While business people in Hollywood may be liberals, they are less likely to embrace a candidate who attacks corporations, said Ross, the historian. Sanders describes himself as a democratic socialist who wants higher taxes on wealthy people and corporations to help pay for college, healthcare, and other programs. "Corporate Hollywood is about business and the bottom line," Ross said.

Dick Van Dyke for Sanders

The biggest Hollywood contributors to date are behind-the-scenes figures rather than stars, with



PHILADELPHIA: US Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton addresses supporters during a primary night event on Tuesday in after winning the Pennsylvania state primary. — AFP

about two-thirds of Clinton's industry support through March coming from just three donors. Haim Saban, CEO of Saban Capital Group, contributed \$3.5 million, while DreamWorks Animation CEO Jeffrey Katzenberg and director Steven Spielberg donated \$1 million each to Clinton and funds supporting her. But it is the celebrity backers who make headlines for a candidate, even if they're not making hefty contributions.

Pop singer Demi Lovato performed at a Clinton campaign rally, and "Scandal" star Kerry Washington recorded radio and TV ads for the former secretary of state. "I really believe in her capacity to deliver on her messages," Washington said in an interview. Sanders welcomed the band Vampire Weekend onto a stage in Iowa, where they joined the candidate to sing "This Land Is Your Land." The Red Hot Chili Peppers performed at a Sanders fundraiser in Los Angeles.

Clinton's celebrity support skews toward older men and women, and she attracts more minorities, while younger personalities gravitate to Sanders, said Dan Schnur, director of University of Southern California's Jesse M. Unruh Institute of Politics and a former Republican political strategist. These leanings reflect those of voters in general, Schnur said, though there are plenty of exceptions.

Ninety-year-old actor Dick Van Dyke, a Sanders supporter, is happy to buck the trend. "People in my generation are set in their ways," Van Dyke said in an interview. "Some people are afraid he might get a little too drastic, that he might do something to upset the apple cart." Sanders, not known for his sense of humor, has also attracted a number of

comedians as supporters, including Danny DeVito, Bill Maher and Sarah Silverman.

"Bernie is not for sale," says Silverman, a one-time Clinton backer, in a pro-Sanders video viewed more than 32 million times on Facebook. "This is a once-in-a-lifetime candidate who genuinely represents the people." Schnur finds Sanders' support among some comedians understandable. "If you decide to perform comedy for a living, you've probably got a little bit of an anarchist streak," he said, and Sanders "challenges the establishment."

The Bernie-Hillary Split

At times the Sanders-Clinton divide in Hollywood has grown heated. When actor Susan Sarandon, a Sanders supporter, said in an MSNBC interview last month that she wasn't sure she could vote for Clinton if she was the Democratic nominee, the reaction in Hollywood was intense. Her comments were seen as lending support to Trump. Actor Jamie Lee Curtis, a Clinton supporter, tweeted that she respected but disagreed with Sarandon, calling her position "dangerous 2 women, minorities & migrants."

Debra Messing, one of the stars of NBC sitcom "Will and Grace," also joined the Twitter fray, criticizing Sarandon for representing "the Bernie or BUST position which is so dangerous for our country". Sarandon, who has donated \$2,700 to Sanders, said her comments were reported incorrectly. "Of course I wouldn't vote for Trump," she said in an interview with Reuters. She is unrepentant in her support for Sanders. "We have to do something more than incremental change," Sarandon said. Sanders is "about real change, progressive change," she said. — Reuters

ANNOUNCEMENT

The MINISTRY OF EDUCATION - PRIVATE and QUALITATIVE SECTOR - announces its intention in taking the necessary measures to evacuate the part allocated for (NEW KUWAIT PHILIPPINES INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL) from its current location in Jleeb Al-Shiyoukh, in accordance with the ministerial decision No. 210 / 2008 issued on 29 / 5 / 2008.

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PARIS ATTACKS SUSPECT EXTRADITED TO FRANCE

PARIS: Salah Abdeslam, believed to be the sole survivor among a group of Islamist militants who killed 130 people in Paris in November, was extradited to France from Belgium yesterday. Abdeslam, 26, was Europe's most wanted fugitive until his capture in Brussels on March 18 after a four-month manhunt. He was taken by helicopter to Paris under armed guard and then driven to the capital's main law courts. French Justice Minister Jean-Jacques Urvoas said Abdeslam would be held in a high-security prison in the Paris region.

His capture in March came four days before separate suicide bomb attacks by Islamist militants at Brussels international airport and on a metro train which killed 32 people. Frank Berton, a high-profile French criminal lawyer, said he would lead Abdeslam's defense and had visited his client for more than two hours last week in his prison cell in Belgium along with Abdeslam's Belgian lawyer, Sven Mary. Investigators say Abdeslam told them he arranged logistics for the multiple suicide bombings and shooting attacks in Paris and had planned to blow himself up at the Stade de France sports stadium before backing out at the last minute.

He is suspected of having rented two cars used to transport the attackers to, and around, the French capital. "He told me naturally that he has things to say and he will say them. He wants to talk," Berton told BFM TV. "What counts and what matters for us as his lawyers is simply that he gets a fair trial, that he is sentenced for things he did and not things that he didn't do. That's vital because he is the sole survivor." Abdeslam's elder brother Brahim, with whom he used to run a bar in the Brussels district of Molenbeek, blew himself up in a suicide bomb attack on one of several Paris cafes targeted by a group of assailants armed with AK-47 rifles and suicide vests.

Salah Abdeslam's confession to investigators suggested he may have been the 10th man referred to in an Islamic State claim of responsibility for the multi-pronged attack on the stadium, bars and the Bataclan concert hall. Police found an abandoned suicide vest in a rubbish bin in a Paris suburb after the attacks, fuelling speculation that it may have belonged to Abdeslam, who escaped by car back to Belgium hours after the attacks. Abdeslam had been held in a prison in the Belgian town of Bruges. Last week, he was charged in Belgium over a shootout with police in an apartment in southern Brussels where his fingerprints were found days before his arrest.

Belgian police have arrested a number of his associates, including Mohamed Abrini, wanted over the Paris attacks and also a suspected Brussels attacker. Sven Mary, Abdeslam's main defense lawyer in Belgium, said in a newspaper interview he had been subjected to verbal and physical assault since taking up a case that he might now drop. Mary, who described Abdeslam as "gold dust" on the grounds that he was willing to talk, distanced himself from his client, telling France's Liberation: "He's a little jerk from Molenbeek, from a world of petty criminals - more of the follower than a leader, with the brains of an empty ash-tray." — Reuters

SURGE IN EU IMMIGRANTS FUELS BREXIT CAMPAIGN

NO INTEGRATION - THEY HAVE THEIR SHOPS, SPEAK THEIR LANGUAGE

PETERBOROUGH: In cities like Peterborough, a recent surge in immigration by mainly East European workers is giving momentum to "Brexiters" in the campaign ahead of Britain's referendum on EU membership in June. "The EU won't stop all the immigrants coming in and we can't cope," said John Fovargue, a resident of the city of 184,500 people in eastern England-one of the country's most euro-sceptic areas. Ginge Tuttlebee, out shopping on a rainy day in the town centre said that the new arrivals "don't have the same values that we once were able to have".

"They don't seem to want to integrate too much-they've got their own shops, they speak their own language," the pensioner said, echoing complaints in many towns that have seen a sharp increase in arrivals. Almost half of British voters, and nearly three-quarters of those who want to leave the European Union, identify immigration as the single most important factor in making their decision, according to a recent poll by Opinion. Peterborough has a history of immigration stretching back decades but it recorded its highest ever level in the decade from 2001 to 2011, with 24,166 newcomers arriving.

The town's Lincoln Road has been the focal point of immigration by Italians, Poles, South Asians and the Irish since World War II, and now hosts Polish station Radio Star, nestled among Eastern European supermarkets. Gosia Prochal, a DJ at the station said there were "lots of Polish people" integrated into British society who had "obvious concerns" about a British departure from the EU ahead of the



LONDON: Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron leaves 10 Downing Street for the House of Commons to attend his weekly Prime Ministers Questions in London yesterday. — AP

June 23 referendum. "British people are generally positive about individual immigrants, but when it comes to the idea of immigration as a whole, they would rather reduce it," said Prochal, who moved to Britain three years ago from Krakow in southern Poland.

'Darker side' of EU

Net migration into Britain-the difference between those coming in and those leaving the country-has reached 336,000 people a year. London School of Economics academic

Joseph Downing said concerns about strains on public services were "legitimate" but that this should be more than balanced out by the taxes paid by EU migrants.

"We've had a lot of migration from Eastern Europe, and those people have contributed quite a lot in terms of tax receipts," he said. "We've been bad at turning that into infrastructure investment."

That has led to resentment in communities like Peterborough, where local MP Stewart Jackson is among the Conservative lawmakers

who have rebelled against Prime Minister David Cameron to support a British departure from the EU, or "Brexit". "It's the pace of change that's concerned so many people and the impact on public services," he said. Pete Reeve, a local councillor for the anti-EU UK Independence Party said that residents "really experience the darker side of being in the EU".

'One big melting pot'

The picture is different in east London, where comparably high levels of immigration have not resulted in anything like the same anti-EU backlash.

Clapton FC, a lowly local football club, in the London borough of Newham has been rejuvenated with the help of the local immigrant population. Toiling away in the 17th level of English football, the 138-year old club were recently playing in front of "one man and a dog" at their home ground, according to club chief Vince McBean.

Home matches now attract hundreds of fans and reverberate to pro-refugee chants, Italian anti-fascist song "Bella Ciao" and bawdy hymns celebrating Polish lager Tyskie. At a recent game against Romania FC-a team comprising Eastern European expats-fans held a banners reading: "Welcome Romania and Bulgaria." "They are all unified together in one big melting pot," said McBean. "It brings a refreshing aspect to our club." An Italian fan said: "You have Italians, Spanish, Polish, English; it doesn't matter where you are from, it matters what you think. It 100 percent reflects the local area." — AFP

IMMIGRATION PUTS SWEDISH SCHOOLS TO THE TEST

STOCKHOLM: Sweden's schools were already struggling with demoralized teachers and declining test scores before the arrival of masses of young migrants whose needs have put unprecedented strain on the system. Of the roughly 245,000 migrants who have arrived in the Scandinavian country since 2014, 70,000 are under the age of 18. The majority of these youngsters are Syrians, Afghans and Iraqis who have been robbed of a proper schooling by war and exile. Their standard of education often lags far behind their Swedish peers' and, in addition to learning a new language and alphabet, they must also adapt to new ways of thinking and learning. "It's a real challenge," Education Minister Gustav Fridolin said in an interview with AFP. The Swedish school system already faces major challenges including an acute shortage of qualified teachers — 60,000 more are needed by 2019 — and declining scores in standardized international tests.

The quality of education can also vary significantly from school to school. A UNICEF report published in April showed that Sweden, along with neighboring Finland, is the country where school results declined most between 2006 and 2012. The Swedish National Agency for Education blames the decline in school performance on the large number of foreign students who they say drag down results because of language issues. In 2014, 14 percent of students had results too low to qualify for the second part of secondary school (for students aged 16 to 18), a 10 percent deterioration on the 2006 level.

The lower level of pupils qualifying for further education was due to the rising number of students who migrated to Sweden after school starting age-six-years-old in Sweden who struggled to catch up as a result, according to the report. Fridolin said that it is "much more costly" for society to pay for a school system that has failed migrants than it is to give them a good education in the first place. More than 20 percent of people born abroad are unemployed in Sweden, compared to around five percent of those born in the country, according to Statistics Sweden.

Segregation concerns

The far-right Sweden Democrats party, which regularly criticizes the government for its handling of the migrant influx, sees the declining school scores as a consequence of growing segregation in Sweden. In the Sodertalje municipality south of Stockholm, 37 percent of residents are born abroad. Three years ago, authorities decided to assign two teachers to each primary school class to ensure students got the attention they needed. "The students get more help, the classes can be adapted to their needs and the teachers feel less stressed," said Sodertalje's head of schools, Monica Sonde.

The gamble seems to be paying off, with the number of students qualifying for upper secondary school on the rise. At the Wasa primary and middle school, 90 percent of students speak Arabic and almost one in five students arrived in Sweden in the past two years. But Mark Khoazzoum, an 11-year-old whose father was a doctor in Aleppo, Syria, needed just three months in an adaptation class before he was ready to move into regular lessons. He now speaks good Swedish. But the language "is still an obstacle when I want to describe things," he said. The scale of the challenges facing new immigrants varies depending on their country of origin. "Syria has a pretty adequate school system while countries like Iraq, Afghanistan and Somalia have very weak school systems, which means that students from these countries may not have attended school before arriving in Sweden," said Anders Auer, a policy analyst at the country's education agency. — AFP



Models Available	Year	Mileage	Color	Price
MKS AWD 3.7L, 6 Speed Auto	2009	110,132	Ruby Red	KWD 2,990
MKS AWD 3.7L, 6 Speed Auto	2009	99,878	White Chocolate	KWD 2,990
MKS AWD 3.7L, 6 Speed Auto	2009	65,680	Tuxedo Black Metallic	KWD 3,190
MKS FWD 3.7L, 6 speed Auto	2011	46,400	Tuxedo Black Metallic	KWD 4,790
MKS FWD 3.7L, 6 speed Auto	2012	99,000	Crystal Champagne	KWD 5,290
MKS FWD 3.7L, 6 speed Auto	2012	63,395	Tuxedo Black Metallic	KWD 5,590
MKS FWD 3.7L, 6 speed Auto	2012	39,070	Tuxedo Black Metallic	KWD 5,990
MKS FWD 3.7L, 6 speed Auto	2012	37,772	Ruby Red	KWD 5,990
MKS FWD 3.7L, 6 speed Auto	2013	30,182	Kodiak Brown	KWD 7,990
MKS FWD 3.7L, 6 speed Auto	2013	29,800	Tuxedo Black Metallic	KWD 7,990
MKS FWD 3.7L, 6 speed Auto	2013	15,950	Ruby Red	KWD 8,290
MKS FWD 3.7L, 6 speed Auto	2014	8,500	Tuxedo Black	KWD 9,290
MKT AWD 3.5L, 6 speed Auto	2011	42,109	Earth Pearl	KWD 7,790
MKT AWD 3.5L, 6 speed Auto	2013	12,084	Kodiak Brown	KWD 11,490
MKT AWD 3.5L, 6 speed Auto	2013	43,982	Smoked Quartz	KWD 11,490
MKX FWD 3.7L, 6 speed Auto	2014	37,000	White Platinum	KWD 8,790
MKZ FWD 3.7L, 6 speed Auto	2014	10,000	White Platinum	KWD 9,290

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L I N C O L N

DANES FACE SMUGGLING CHARGES FOR GIVING MIGRANTS A LIFT

COPENHAGEN: Already under fire for ordering police to seize jewelry from asylum-seekers, Denmark is seeing its humanitarian credentials once again being questioned as it presses smuggling charges against people who gave migrants a ride to neighboring Sweden. Denmark's public prosecutor's office says 230 people have been charged for helping people transit through the country illegally at the height of Europe's migrant crisis last fall. Prosecutors note that Danish trafficking laws don't distinguish between smuggling people for financial gain and doing it for humanitarian reasons.

But critics say it's shameful to go after Danes who were touched by images of exhausted migrants walking along Danish highways, and just wanted to lend them a hand. "This is far away from the idea I had of our society, a humane society where we care about others," said Calle Vangstrup, who in September crossed the narrow strait between Denmark and Sweden four times with up to 20 Syrians. He and three sailor friends were charged with people-smuggling and are awaiting a trial date. Under European Union border agreements, Danish authorities were supposed to stop the migrants at the southern border with Germany and ask them to seek asylum in Denmark or turn back.

At first, police did try to do that. But as the migrant numbers swelled, authorities decided to let them travel to Sweden, one of the most popular European destinations for migrants. Denmark's state railroad company even let them cross the country for free. Danish authorities haven't explained how they tracked down individual offenders. But the bulk of those fined were people who spoke publicly about how they helped migrants. Many of the volunteers who offered migrants a ride by car or boat feel it's unfair that they are being punished when the railroad company was essentially doing the same thing.

Lisbeth Zorning Andersen and her husband drove six Syrian migrants across Denmark and served them coffee and buns on Sept. 6. "Those days were chaotic," she recalled. "When I stood there with a family boarding my car, there were three police officers and they didn't stop me or tell me it was against the law." In March, Zorning Andersen and her husband were fined 22,500 kroner (\$3,330) each. They have appealed the ruling. "I believe it is good that these people got fined. They broke the law," said Peter Kofod Poulsen of the populist, anti-immigration Danish People's Party that is the country's second-largest political group in Parliament.

"It is a scandal that DSB (the state railway) didn't feel the consequences of their acts. What they did was human smuggling, no discussion. ... But there was no political will to pursue them."

Denmark's justice and integration ministers didn't respond to requests seeking comment. Tens of thousands of migrants showed up on Denmark's southern border with Germany in September. Most of them wanted to travel through the country to Sweden to seek asylum there, or continue to Norway or Finland. More than 160,000 people applied for asylum in Sweden last year, eight times more than in Denmark.

Michela Bendixen, head of the Refugees Welcome volunteer group, said she was stunned by Denmark's crackdown on those who gave migrants a lift. "I find authorities have taken a very stringent and much harsher approach than I ever could have imagined," Bendixen said.

"We are not talking about people-smugglers who do it to make money but private people who act for humanitarian reasons." Earlier this year, Denmark made international headlines when a law was passed requiring asylum-seekers to hand over valuables worth more than 10,000 kroner (\$1,500), to help cover housing and food costs while their

cases are being processed. Although the government said it was in line with rules for unemployed Danes seeking welfare benefits, critics denounced the law as degrading and inhumane. As of mid-April, there had not been a single seizure of valuables. Some Danes have called for changing the law to differentiate between human trafficking for profit and aiding people in need. Others, though, have no sympathy for the volunteers who are being prosecuted. "They must take what comes when breaking the law," said Ingrid Holst, a 46-year-old office assistant in Copenhagen. "I don't feel any pity for them. I wouldn't have done it myself."

Some say the crackdown stands in contrast to how Danish citizens helped thousands of Jews escape the Nazis during World War II, by shuttling them in boats from German-occupied Denmark to neutral Sweden.

Zorning Andersen, though, said "the two things cannot be compared" because the Danes who helped Jews risked their own lives. Also, today's migrants aren't at risk of persecution in Denmark. Leo Goldberger, a New Yorker who escaped with his family from Denmark to Sweden in a fishing boat on Oct. 2, 1943, is an outspoken critic of Denmark's approach to the migrant crisis. —AP



DHARAMSALA: Sikyong (Prime Minister) of the Central Tibetan Administration Lobsang Sangay speaks during a press conference after the announcement of the Tibetan government election results in the Indian town of Dharamsala yesterday. — AFP

EXILED TIBETANS RE-ELECT LEADER TO SPEARHEAD AUTONOMY DRIVE

DHARAMSALA: Tibetans in exile have re-elected a Harvard-educated lawyer as their political leader to spearhead a campaign to press China to grant Tibet autonomy, a Tibetan government-in-exile said yesterday. Lobsang Sangay, who has led the 150,000-odd Tibetan diaspora since 2011, when religious leader the Dalai Lama gave up political power, won 57 percent of nearly 60,000 votes cast, Tibetan officials said in the Indian hill town of Dharamsala. "I voted for him because of his educated background," said Choezin, a 53-year-old crimson-robed monk who fled Tibet in 1985 to settle in Dharamsala, the exiled government's base. "His Holiness wants somebody who can continue the work he has done. He has said Sangay is the right man."

The Dalai Lama, 81, has sought to build a democratic system of government for exiled Tibetans strong enough to hold the community together and negotiate with China after his death. Question marks over what happens when the Nobel Peace Laureate dies, amid

competing assertions over his successor, have reinforced Tibetans' need for a leader endowed with democratic legitimacy. Exile groups say they seek genuine autonomy for Tibet, rather than independence. China says Tibet already has genuine autonomy, and that exile groups seek to split the country.

Tibetan Buddhism holds that the soul of a senior lama is reincarnated in the body of a child after he dies. China says it must sign off on the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama, who fled to India in 1959 after a failed uprising. Sangay will head the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) for five years. No country recognizes the body, and China has declined to talk to it.

Tibetans accuse China of eroding their deeply Buddhist culture by clamping down on religious practice and flooding the region with ethnic Han Chinese. China says it has brought development to what was a backward region and accuses the Dalai Lama of seeking independence. —Reuters



In this file photo, members of the Youth Wing of the Indonesian Communist Party (Pemuda Rakjat) are watched by soldiers as they are taken to prison in Jakarta following a crackdown on communists after an abortive coup against President Sukarno's government earlier in the month. The Indonesian government's decision to investigate massacres in 1965 is being met with wariness by rights groups, some of which are refusing to share information about mass graves until the government shows how it will conduct the probe. — AP

INDONESIA'S SEARCH FOR MASS GRAVES MET WITH SKEPTICISM

JAKARTA: The Indonesian government's decision to investigate anti-communist massacres in 1965 is being met with wariness by rights groups, some of which are reluctant to share information about mass graves until the government shows how it will conduct the probe. President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo instructed security minister Luhut Pandjaitan this week to investigate the killings by the military and religious groups and gather information about mass graves. His directive followed a conference earlier this month that broke a half-century taboo on public discussion of an atrocity that historians say killed half a million people.

But Pandjaitan, a retired army general, has not instilled confidence that a genuine investigation will take place, saying the government would never apologize and that the death toll is wildly exaggerated, and demanding that advocacy groups prove that mass graves exist. Haris Azhar of advocacy group KontraS said

Wednesday he was involved in mapping 16 burial sites nearly a decade ago, mainly in central Java, and at the time had information about hundreds of other sites including on Bali, now Indonesia's top tourist island, and Sulawesi.

But he said for his group to share its information, the government must announce a clear and highly specific plan for the investigation. Thirty to 40 groups throughout Indonesia have information about graves, Azhar said.

"From our side, we decided not to give it to them if there's no clear agenda on what they will do with the data," he said. The killings began in October 1965, shortly after an apparent failed coup in which six right-wing generals were killed. The dictator Suharto, a largely unknown major general at the time, filled the power vacuum and blamed the assassinations on Indonesia's Communist Party, which was then the largest outside the Soviet Union and China, with 3 million members. — AP

JUSTICE DELAYED, JUSTICE DENIED ON PACIFIC'S REMOTE KIRITIMATI

LACK OF JUDGES, LAWYERS MEANS CASES DRAG FOR MONTHS

KIRITIMATI ISLAND: When Joao Goncalves limped into Kiritimati Island's vast lagoon in the central Pacific Ocean earlier this year, his yacht damaged by storms while sailing from Tahiti, relief at finding a safe haven was short-lived. Goncalves, a surfer and hotel owner from the Portuguese town of Peniche, was raided by police who found a small quantity of marijuana and \$20,000 that had not been declared on his customs form.

He was locked up in a rudimentary prison on one of the world's most remote islands for more than three weeks, his boat impounded and access to his funds and property restricted. Months later, Goncalves, 41, remains trapped on the island in a judicial limbo that is all too common on isolated and poor islands across the Pacific: A shortage of lawyers and judges is hindering access to legal representation and preventing timely processing of cases for both visitors and locals alike.

"Our research has shown a serious lack of lawyers in the South Pacific," said Ross Ray, the chair of the South Pacific Lawyers' Association. "This is of concern as lawyers are critical to supporting the justice system." Kiritimati (pronounced Christmas) is a far-flung outpost of the Republic of Kiribati. The world's largest coral atoll, Kiritimati has just one flight a week to either Fiji or Hawaii, four-and-a-half hours in either direction. Tarawa, the capital of Kiribati (pronounced

Kee-ree-bahs) lies nearly 3,300 km (2,000 miles) to the west - about three weeks by boat.

No lawyers are based on Kiritimati and the High Court only comes once or twice a year to clear a backlog of the most serious cases, bringing a public lawyer for defendants who can't afford their own. Other cases are heard in a local magistrates court, where defendants usually appear without legal representation. Katokiau Maruai, a 35-year-old father of three, received a seven-year prison sentence from the local magistrate on three domestic violence-related offences last year, his first time in trouble with the law, he says. "No, no, no - no lawyer," Maruai told Reuters inside the prison when asked about legal representation. "There are no lawyers here. They live on Tarawa."

Day to freedom

While inmates in the prison have regular access to visitors and no complaints about their treatment, conditions inside are poor. Prisoners - numbering around 50 men, plus one woman and her baby - complain about the inadequate water from the well; the shortages of food; the cramped, hot communal sleeping conditions and the single latrine that often overflows. Flooding El Nino rains earlier this year left water almost knee-deep in the coral rubble yard, where inmates make fishing nets and handicrafts for a little income. Only a handful of

guards and a chain-link fence keep the inmates from freedom, though it's more than a day away by boat to the nearest island.

Across the 33 islands of Kiribati, there is just one lawyer for every 12,593 people, according to a 2011 survey by the South Pacific Lawyers Association. That compares with one lawyer for every 351 in Australia or 418 in the United Kingdom. Mikarite Temari, a development minister for the string of atolls and low lying islands scattered along the Equator, said the government plans to establish a lawyer's office "maybe this year or next year". While the marine life is rich, infrastructure is basic and legal services are not the only thing in short supply on Kiritimati, which is home to around 10,000 people.

The ship which delivers most of the island's food hadn't been sighted for several months and the weekly flights are also sometimes cancelled, most recently earlier in April. For Goncalves, the Portuguese surfer, the cancellation of the flight was a bitter blow. Having been bailed to a local hotel for several months, he was eagerly awaiting the arrival of his lawyer and the judge so his case could be heard. The next High Court hearing in Kiritimati is due, perhaps, in June, so Goncalves is trying to get his case moved to the capital Tarawa. "I need to be at a place that I can be judged," said Goncalves, his face etched by sun and worry. "All I want at this moment is to be judged. It's impossible." — Reuters

AUSTRALIA IMMIGRATION TURMOIL; PAPUA NEW GUINEA CLOSES CAMP

SYDNEY: Australia's hardline immigration policy was thrown into turmoil yesterday after Papua New Guinea ordered a processing camp to close, leaving the fate of hundreds of asylum-seekers hanging in the balance. The move to shutter the Australian-funded Manus island facility follows a Supreme Court ruling on Tuesday that detaining people there was unconstitutional and illegal. Piling further pressure on Canberra, just weeks out from an expected election campaign, an Iranian refugee set himself on fire during a visit by UN officials to Nauru, the other Pacific nation where Australia sends boatpeople.

Four others on the tiny outpost reportedly attempted suicide by drinking washing powder on Tuesday. "Respecting this (court) ruling, Papua New Guinea will immediately ask the Australian government to make alternative arrangements for the asylum-seekers currently held at the Regional Processing Centre," Prime Minister Peter O'Neill said of the Manus camp. Papua New Guinea's former opposition leader Belden Namah had challenged the Manus arrangement in court, claiming it violated the rights of asylum-seekers.

In a 34-page finding on Tuesday, the Supreme Court found that detaining them on the island was "contrary to their constitutional right of personal liberty". Despite this, Australian Immigration Minister Peter Dutton remained adamant that none of the 850 or so men held there would come to his country and that the government's policy - designed to deter others wanting to make the risky journey by boat - would not change. "As I have said, and as the Australian government has consistently acted, we will work with our PNG partners to address the issues raised by the Supreme Court of PNG," he said in a statement after O'Neill's decision.

"It is also the case that the government has not resiled from its position that people who have attempted to come illegally by boat to Australia and who are now in the Manus facility will not be settled in Australia. "We will continue discussions with the PNG government to resolve these matters." Canberra currently has an arrangement with Cambodia, along with Papua New Guinea, to resettle those found to be refugees, although only a handful have taken up the option. Australian media have reported that it is also trying to negotiate deals with Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines.

The court ruled that Australia and Papua New Guinea must "take all steps necessary to cease and prevent" the continued detention of asylum-seekers and transferees on Manus. O'Neill did not set a timeframe for the closure. He said he did not anticipate asylum-seekers being kept for so long at the Manus camp, which was reopened in 2012 by Australia after being closed five years earlier when the Labor government abandoned offshore processing. Offshore processing, and the use of Manus, was first introduced in 2001 as a deterrent to people-smuggling by Australia's former conservative government of John Howard in a punitive scheme known as the "Pacific Solution". —AFP



MANUS ISLAND: This file photo shows bunk beds under assembly at Australia's regional processing centre on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea. — AFP

PHILIPPINES' AQUINO VOWS TO 'NEUTRALIZE' ABU SAYYAF

MANILA: Philippine President Benigno Aquino vowed yesterday to launch a military assault aimed at "neutralizing" Islamic militants who beheaded a Canadian hostage and are holding more than 20 other foreigners. "Casualties are to be expected. But what has to be of utmost importance is neutralizing the criminal activities of the ASG," Aquino said in a statement, referring to the Abu Sayyaf militant group by a commonly used acronym.

Aquino released the statement after the severed head of Canadian John Ridsdel, kidnapped seven months ago from aboard a yacht, was dumped Monday on a street on Jolo, a remote southern island that is one of the Abu Sayyaf's main strongholds. "This murder was meant to terrorise our whole population. The Abu Sayyaf thought they could instill fear in us. Instead, they have galvanised us even further to ensure justice is meted out," Aquino said. "We have always been open to talks with those who desire peace, but those who commit atrocities can expect the full might of the state."

He did not give a timeframe for the assault. The Abu Sayyaf militants, whose leaders have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group, are holding more than 20 other foreigners captive. These include another Canadian, a Norwegian man and a Filipino who were abducted at the same time as Ridsdel at a marina near Davao, the biggest city in

the southern Philippines and about 600 kilometers from Jolo. The Abu Sayyaf is also believed to be holding a Dutch birdwatcher kidnapped from a southern Philippine island in 2012, as well as 18 Indonesian and Malaysian sailors abducted over the past month. Aquino said the captives were under the control of Radullan Sahiron, one of the Abu Sayyaf's founders who is famous for losing one arm in battle against the military.

'Smash' the Abu Sayyaf

He said Sahiron had consolidated his forces around himself and the captives in Sulu, a small Muslim-populated archipelago about 1,000 kilometers from Manila. Jolo is the biggest island in Sulu. "This presents both a problem and an opportunity. It is a problem because of the sizeable force surrounding Sahiron and the captives, but it is also an opportunity because smashing these forces is within our grasp," Aquino said.

The Abu Sayyaf is a radical offshoot of a Muslim separatist insurgency in the south of the mainly Catholic Philippines that has claimed more than 100,000 lives since the 1970s. It is believed to have just a few hundred militants but has withstood repeated US-backed military offensives against it, surviving by using the mountainous, jungle terrain of the southern islands to its advantage. — AFP



A crowd gathers around the massive carcass of a whale at a popular California surfing spot on Tuesday, in San Clemente. Authorities are trying to decide what to do with the rotting carcass. — AP

MPS BLAME GRAFT FOR FLYING GRAVEL

Continued from Page 1

The minister said that the government does not have a sword to "chop off" heads and hands of officials and contractors and all it could do under the law was to refer the suspected violations to the judiciary. Several MPs however charged that certain contractors have people inside the ministry who help them and turn a blind eye to whatever they do, and demanded an investigation. Other lawmakers expected that those referred to the public prosecution will be acquitted because the referrals have legal loopholes that force the judiciary to clear them.

MP Adnan Abdulsamad claimed that the contractors' influence inside the ministry allowed some contractors to increase costs from KD 200 million to as much as KD 500 million through variation in orders. The minister said that the ministry is prepared to carry out the necessary maintenance of the affected roads, but it needs funding and as long as it does not get the budget, it will not be able to do the repairs. He said that the ministry's technical department has tested new pavement materials and was going to use it on many roads. A ministry official told the debate that 74 percent of Kuwait's highways and 44 percent of all roads need maintenance and without financial allocations, the ministry will not be able to carry out the repairs. But at the end of the debate,

there was no quorum to vote on the recommendations for the government. The Assembly decided to vote on them in the next session.

In another development, the electricity and water ministry explained yesterday that only Kuwaiti citizens residing in villas or apartments are excluded from the law to hike power and water charges. The ministry said that neither bedoons (stateless persons) nor Gulf citizens are exempted from the new charges and they have to pay like other expatriates.

The Assembly on Tuesday overwhelmingly passed the law to increase electricity and water charges, which will become effective on expats 15 months after the publication of the law in the official gazette. The increase also applies to commercial activities, industrial and agricultural sectors and government offices. For electricity, the new charges for apartments are 5 fils for the first 1,000 kilowatts, 10 fils for the second 1,000 kW and 15 fils per kilowatt for consumption above 2,000 kW. The charges are calculated on a monthly basis and therefore the bills in the summer months will be extremely high.

For water, the new prices are as follows: For the first 3,000 gallons, KD 2 per 1,000 gallons; for between 3,000 and 6,000 gallons, KD 3 per 1,000 gallons, for consumption above 6,000 gallons, KD 4 per 1,000 gallons. The current price for water is 800 fils per 1,000 gallons regardless of consumption.

UAE MULLS NEW FIRE SAFETY LAWS

Continued from Page 1

Police said that faulty wiring sparked the blaze at The Address Downtown Dubai fire, which happened as onlookers awaited a New Year's Eve fireworks show on the towering Burj Khalifa. However, the cladding on the building provided kindling for the fire. Dubai's rapid growth, corner-cutting builders and regulators unaware of the danger the paneling posed made it "an unfortunate victim" for the fires, said Thomas Bell-Wright, the CEO and chief technical officer at the Dubai-based fire-safety tester Thomas Bell-Wright International Consultants.

"This was a collision of a massive building boom that was going on here and at the same time an attractive architectural finished product ... came on to the market,"

he said. "I'm sure there was some taking advantage of the absence or the lack of regulation and the regulators were not familiar with this product."

Under the yet-to-be formalized fire safety laws, Dubai would work with builders to test construction material and supervise to make sure the same material went up on buildings, al-Matrooshi said. Officials will also work with owners of buildings already standing to mitigate the danger, though it's unclear what that will mean, as retrofitting the structures could prove expensive.

But the danger of doing nothing always looms large among firefighters. Stephen Little, a battalion chief with the Chicago Fire Department who spoke at the seminar, offered the 1871 Great Chicago Fire as an example. "We didn't have really strict fire codes and as a result, we burned the city down," he said. — AP

KUWAIT FIRM IN SUPPORT OF COALITION...

Continued from Page 1

Moreover, he indicated that the international community was closely watching such meetings to obtain cues from it as to what ought to be done decisively to defeat the ideologies and activities of terrorist organizations. However, he cautioned that "all religions and faiths, among them Islam, espouse love, peace and tolerance, and eschew violence and extremism, and in that vein it would be inappropriate to link terrorist organizations with a particular religion or race of people."

Speaking at the meeting also was special presidential envoy for the global coalition to counter IS Brett McGurk, who commended Kuwait's role in the coalition. "We express our gratitude to our host, the State of Kuwait, for its important role in the coalition and as a leader in the area of humanitarian support to the Iraqi and Syrian people, recognizing that it has to date hosted three donor conferences for Syria, co-hosted the February 4, 2016 donors conference for Syria in London and pledged \$200 million for humanitarian aid in Iraq," he said.

Referring to IS specifically, he said: "We welcome the momentum we have witnessed in recent months against Daesh (IS) in Iraq and Syria. Daesh continues to lose territory as well as control of strategic resupply routes and resources." He added "Daesh continues to be degraded in other significant ways. It has been losing its leaders at a high rate and has lost large numbers of fighters. Its resource base is drying up as coalition strikes have lowered Daesh's oil production by at least 30 percent and destroyed millions of dollars stored in bank vaults and other locations."

McGurk added: "Mindful of the many challenges Daesh (IS) poses in diverse regions, we remain committed to sustaining the momentum of the global coalition to counter Daesh," noting that the next meeting of the coalition was planned for July 2016 in Washington.

In its statement later, the coalition stressed its continuing "deep concern" over the humanitarian situation in Iraq and Syria. The statement urged the international

community to keep tabs on the humanitarian situation in these two countries in line with the pledges made at the London donors' conference in February towards helping Syrian refugees. The statement noted that IS still remained a "threat" despite its recent losses and scaling back of its terrorist activities, stressing that defeating IS was "an arduous and long" task.

The statement emphasized the group's commitment to supporting civil and military undertakings to free the areas in Iraq and Syria currently occupied by IS, rehabilitate them and help the freed populations there to get back on their feet. Moreover, the statement said the group would stick by UN resolutions condemning and fighting terrorism and would seek to dry up funding for IS, its recruitment of foreign fighters and illegal trade.

The group welcomed the establishment of coalition centers that deal with fighting IS electronically through the use of the Internet and the social media networks, among other hi-tech methods. The coalition said that removing landmines and explosives from liberated areas from the grip of IS and training of local law enforcement were important in rehabilitating these areas.

The statement affirmed the coalition's support of the Iraqi government particularly as it is confronting the difficulties of coping with lower oil prices, rising cost of fighting terrorism and the pressing need to look after the internally displaced. On Syria, the statement said the coalition backs all efforts for a political transition of power in that country in line with the Geneva declaration of 2012 and UN Security Council Resolution 2254.

The statement urged for cessation of hostilities in Syria, ending sporadic bombings, continuing to fight IS there and the starting of a peace dialogue under the auspices of the UN, this being the only way to keep the country unified and with recognized sovereignty. As for Libya, the statement said the coalition was willing to help the government of national unity in its efforts at broadening the work of Libyan institutions and agencies to bring lasting peace and stability to the country and defeat IS there. — KUNA

UNEASE OVER UNDERCOVER TEHRAN MORALITY...

Continued from Page 1

Avoiding sartorial trouble in Iran has been fairly straightforward up until now. Police assigned to the morality-enforcement beat normally wore the same dark green uniform of regular Iranian police, and were stationed out in the open at major squares and crossroads. They would take a range of approaches to enforcing dress codes, including handing out scarves as gifts, giving verbal warnings or having female officers physically remove excessive makeup.

At worst, offenders would be sent to court and face fines of up to \$250 or hauled to the local police station until their family members gave a written promise that they would never commit the same offense again. Azizeh Shirazi, a mother of two college-aged daughters, said last week's announcement of the new force has left her worried that something might happen to them on the way to university. "When the girls do not answer my phone calls during the day, my heart beats faster," she said.

The outcry over the new undercover police force extends to senior officials. Shahindokht Molaverdi, vice president for women and family affairs, criticized the decision and expressed concern that it would be "limited to giving warnings to women over improper attire," according to local media reports. Molaverdi said many citizens have complained to her about the police decision, and she vowed that the Rouhani administration will review the proposed force.

Even the popular Hamshahri daily, which is linked to conservative opponents of Rouhani's government, raised questions about the plan in an editorial, asking why it was necessary now and whether there would be any way to verify the unit's reports. Police responded to

the criticism by saying that "demands by the people" led to the creation of the new unit and that concerned citizens could contact police about any ambiguities. They have found support from hardliners, including female parliamentarian Fatemeh Rahbar - who said the previous practice of uniformed morality police was too easy for violators to spot and evade. "The police are thinking about a more precise, more effective and more functional method since the previous open method did not bear fruit," she said. On Sunday, the spokesman of the hard-line dominated judiciary, Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejechi, added his voice of support, saying the "judiciary definitely supports the police plan to confront open social corruption."

Tehran-based political analyst Saeed Leilaz believes the new unit is a reaction to the resounding defeat of hard-line and conservative candidates in Tehran during recent parliamentary elections. A bloc led by moderates and reformists won a majority of seats around the country, but captured all 30 seats representing the capital in the 290-seat parliament. A runoff election for 68 remaining undecided seats will be held Friday.

Leilaz noted that these new plainclothes units have only been announced for Tehran, not for any other major Iranian city. "This is part of the establishment's reaction toward Tehran residents' attitude in the election," he said. "It's an expression of discontent and taking revenge, as well as applying efforts in restricting President Rouhani." Leilaz said the new initiative suggests previous hard-line dress code policies have failed. And he questioned how effective the new division would be. "The plan, as usual will have a short-term limited impact. Soon people will return to their routines," he said. — AP

Kuwait Times

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Focus

WHEN TECH
BITES BACK

By Lucie Godeau

From the 1912 sinking of RMS Titanic to the Chernobyl nuclear accident 30 years ago, technology has repeatedly confounded the confidence of its creators. But it is still somehow a surprise today when we are led astray by our closest technological companions - mobile phones, GPS navigators, self-driving cars, or software that mimics human speech to interact online with people who want a chat. "We are increasingly surrounded by machines that are meant to make our lives easier," said French philosopher Jean-Michel Besnier of the Paris-based National Centre for Scientific Research.

"The autonomous car, for example, is supposed to improve traffic, safety and give us more time. But man may feel increasingly that he is losing the initiative, that he is no longer at the controls and, because of it, no longer responsible." There is no end of GPS mishaps to attest to this. In March last year, a bus driver taking 50 Belgian tourists to a French ski resort in the Alps selected the wrong 'La Plagne' out of three similarly named locations on his GPS. At no point, apparently, did he lose faith in the machine as it led him 600 km in the wrong direction until passengers could spot the Mediterranean.

Bloody Clashes

Four months later, a 59-year-old bus driver said he was just following his GPS when he drove a trans-European bus with 58 passengers under a low bridge in northern France, shearing off the top and seriously injuring six people. Last month, two Israeli soldiers using the mobile phone navigating app Waze, which relies on users for real-time updates, mistakenly drove into a Palestinian refugee camp, sparking bloody clashes. Waze said the drivers were to blame for deviating from the suggested route and turning off a setting that warns of dangerous areas.

Indeed, our adaption to new technology is frequently blamed for mishaps and even serious accidents, rather than the technology itself. The World Health Organisation warns that drivers using a mobile phone are four times more likely to be involved in a crash. In other circumstances, too, the results of such distraction can be fatal. In Spain's famed Pamplona bullrun, a 32-year-old man was killed in August last year while he filmed the running of the bulls with his mobile phone and was surprised by one of the animals, which gored him from behind.

Deadly Train Crash

In one of the worst disasters blamed in part on mobile phone distraction, the driver of a Spanish train that crashed on July 24, 2013 outside the northern city of Santiago de Compostela was speaking on a mobile to a colleague onboard just before the train flew off the tracks and ploughed into a concrete siding, killing 79 people. One day, car drivers are supposed to surrender the wheel altogether. Not yet, though. Google took part of the blame in February after a self-driving car manoeuvred around some sandbags and was hit at low speed by a bus in Mountain View, California.

"This accident is more proof that robot car technology is not ready for auto pilot," Consumer Watchdog privacy project director John Simpson said at the time. Such risks cannot be blamed only on immature technology, said Valerie Peugeot, who looks into future developments at French telecoms leader Orange's research and development network, Orange Labs. "We delegate to technology choices that historically were human choices," she warned.

Racist Insults

Even the world's biggest technology firms can get it horribly wrong. Last month, Microsoft had to withdraw "bot" software, named Tay, that it had designed to respond like a teenage girl to written comments from other users on Twitter. "Unfortunately, within the first 24 hours of coming online, we became aware of a coordinated effort by some users to abuse Tay's commenting skills to have Tay respond in inappropriate ways," a Microsoft official said. After being led down the wrong path by other users, Tay's tweets ranged from support for Nazis and Donald Trump to sexual comments and insults aimed at women and blacks. "C U soon humans need sleep now so many conversations today," Tay said in its final post on Twitter. — AFP

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THE U.S. WILL USE THE
KNOCK-ON-THE-ROOF TACTIC
TO WARN SYRIAN CIVILIANS

AFGHAN FORCES DRAW ON PAST MISTAKES

By Josh Smith

Bullet-ridden bunkers and signposts shredded by rockets bear witness to dozens of Taliban attacks this month on police posts around Kunduz, the northern Afghan city that fell briefly in September in the insurgents' biggest victory to date. Unlike that short yet humiliating blow to Afghan security forces and the NATO troops deployed to support them, this time the main checkpoints held firm, in a sign that some lessons of the recent past have been learned.

"Last year the army didn't do anything and Taliban infiltration into the city took us by surprise," said police major Abdul Wahab. Now, he said, the army, police and Afghan intelligence were working closely together. While his comments reflect recriminations that flew between different branches of Afghanistan's fledgling security forces immediately after the fall of Kunduz, the fact that police and soldiers are coordinating closely is a significant shift.

Reinforcements of regular Afghan soldiers and commandos have been sent to the area, an acknowledgement by the government in Kabul that holding on to the city should be a priority. As part of a new strategy to go after the enemy rather than wait for militants to strike first, Afghan army commandos have carried out at least 10 operations against them around the city since mid-March, and more are planned.

"Last year Afghan forces learned that sitting back and being defensive is not working," said US Army Colonel Paul Kreis, top NATO adviser to acting Defence Minister Masoom Stanekzai. "This time they are being more manoeuvrable, more on the offensive," he told Reuters on a recent visit to the city. Taliban fighters bent on overthrowing the government still surround much of the city and say they have delayed an all-out assault in order to minimize civilian casualties.

But Afghan commanders believe the changes introduced mean their forces are better placed to defend Kunduz and other cities targeted by insurgents, who have grown stronger over the last 16 months since NATO's main combat mission ended. Stanekzai said battlefield successes in recent weeks had helped

restore residents' confidence in local forces, after panic set in last year causing thousands to flee. "Last time people were not sure if the government could defeat the Taliban," he told Reuters in Kunduz. "This time I see more confidence. We took the fight to the insurgents." Tahir Zarang, a local official with the World Food Programme, is one of those who agree. "Before this attack (in April) we were all worried that the city could fall again," he said. "But this showed that the Taliban have lost some of their power."

For How Long?

Wahab, the police major, tempers his enthusiasm with a note of caution. "We are not able to hold the city by ourselves," he said. "If the army doesn't clear the whole area, then the Taliban will come back." That raises the question of how long Kabul can sustain reinforcements in Kunduz at current levels while troops in the south of the country are struggling to keep the Taliban at bay in the militants' traditional stronghold.

Since NATO wound down its Afghan combat operation at the end of 2014 only a fraction of the force remains, and that is set to shrink further as the United States considers cutting its troop numbers to 5,500 by next year from 9,800 now. That would effectively put an end to the train-and-assist mission that has focused on helping Afghan forces to prevent the country descending into all-out war.

The fall of Kunduz, if only for a few days, was a symbolic triumph for the Taliban, who have just launched a spring offensive and claimed responsibility for a major attack in Kabul that killed 64 people. The Taliban say they stalled their Kunduz assault this month, because they had captured four "important points" outside the city and wanted to avoid harming civilians. "Local residents are now gradually leaving for safer places and the moment our fighters get approval from central leadership, they will start (the) advance," said the group's main spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid. Uncertainty over which side has the upper hand lingers in the streets of Kunduz, where memories of last year's deadly rout are fresh. Nearly 300 civilians were killed in the main

fighting, according to the most conservative estimates. "This is not how normal life should be," said Jawad Azadzooy, whose cousin was wounded when a makeshift bomb went off outside his shop in downtown Kunduz on Monday. "Life has not been normal for a long time."

Masoom Baha, a senior doctor at the city's public hospital, said medical staff were barely able to keep up with casualties of the fighting, mainly from rockets and artillery fire. Adding to the strain on emergency services, a US air strike in Kunduz on Oct 3 killed 42 people and destroyed a hospital run by Medecins Sans Frontieres, in what the US military has since called a "tragic mistake".

Infiltrators Thwarted?

To prevent the city from falling again, Afghan troops have tried to secure main roads leading into Kunduz, including Highway 3 to the east, after supply lines were cut during the 2015 siege, slowing efforts to regain control. Taliban fighters maintain strongholds close to the thoroughfares, however, and during recent skirmishes, some police checkpoints on Highway 3 were overrun. In the early hours of Wednesday, Afghan forces backed by coalition aircraft conducted raids on a district to the southwest of the city, witnesses said.

Both provincial police chief Mohammad Qasim Jangalbagh and Afghan Local Police commander Dawood, who like many Afghans goes by one name, agree that communication and mutual support between security agencies had improved. That has helped intelligence officers identify enemy infiltrators in the city, whose presence in late 2015 contributed to the sudden collapse of police and army positions.

Officials also announced the capture on Sunday night by Afghan special forces of Qari Salim, a senior commander of local Taliban units and a shadow governor in Kunduz province. Twenty minutes' drive from the city, in an area still under Taliban control, residents are waiting for signs of progress. One man, who asked not to be named for fear of reprisals, said locals were too afraid to venture out after dark. "When the two sides fight, it is the common people who lose." — Reuters

SAUDI REFORM PLANS FLIRT WITH SOCIAL CHANGE

By Angus McDowall

Reforms promised by a young Saudi prince are couched in references to the kingdom's Islamic tradition but include ideas likely to upset some conservatives, risking future ruptures over the direction of society. Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's "Vision 2030" plan, which the 31-year-old announced on Monday, largely aims to transform Saudi Arabia's economy in an era of low oil prices and made few specific pledges of social change.

However, it also stepped into areas that have long been cultural battlegrounds in a country defined by its religious conservatism. Presenting the plan, Prince Mohammed batted away the question of whether women would soon be allowed to drive. Instead, he turned to the usual formulation of Saudi rulers that their society was not yet ready for this, but he appeared to raise the possibility of change elsewhere.

Seemingly anodyne promises to invest in cultural events and entertainment facilities, to encourage sports and promote ancient heritage and Saudi national identity, are highly controversial among conservatives. In Saudi Arabia, cinemas are banned and women's sports are discouraged as promoting sin. The pre-Islamic era is dismissed as the age of ignorance, its relics deemed ungodly, and some clerics even see patriotism as tantamount to idolatry.

"When he talked about quality of life, about entertainment, he is aware of the changes in our culture and that's what people understood him to be talking about. But at the same time, he showed reluctance," said Jamal Khashoggi, a leading Saudi journalist. Prince Mohammed has presented himself as the face of Saudi youth, devoutly Muslim but in a way different from the older generation of clerics, being more open to the outside world and more accepting of its cultural influences. As a mark of the internationally-oriented nature of Prince Mohammed's ambitions, Vision 2030 used the Western calendar in its title, not the Islamic Hijri calendar officially

used in Saudi Arabia, under which this year is 1437. When he presented his plan, the prince gathered clergy, intellectuals and journalists from across the spectrum. But the government's recent decision to increase curbs on the religious police, and continued support for women working, have prompted conservative anger, showing how sensitive the cultural struggles are. A video posted on YouTube before Prince Mohammed announced the reforms was titled "Before the Catastrophe" and portrayed a society riven by the moral degeneracy of the West before succumbing to chaos and violence.

Wary Steps of Change

The Al Saud have always stepped warily with the clergy, aware that the most dangerous challenges to their rule in the kingdom's 70-year history have come from aggrieved religious conservatives. However, they have also traditionally balanced that caution by giving space to the Westernized business elite, and to those liberal intellectuals who have historically backed Al Saud rule, to push social boundaries and nudge the kingdom towards change.

Under a pact between the Al Saud and the Wahhabi clergy dating back to the 18th century, the princes had responsibility for governing and the clerics for religion. Over the centuries, however, the definition of where each of those spheres of influence begins and ends has shifted, often marking the boundary of cultural battlegrounds. In recent years changes to education, which is shifting from the domain of the clergy to that of government, to law, in which proposed reforms have encroached on clerical prerogatives, and to the public role of women, have dominated internal disputes.

"If you do it too fast, it has a negative impact. Reform in Saudi Arabia always has a precondition: It has to come from inside, it has to be gradual and it has to take into account what people believe is right," said Abdulaziz Al-Sager, head of the Gulf Research Centre based in Jeddah and Geneva.

Cultural Tussling

Saudi Arabians are avid consumers of Western media and culture. Despite the cinema ban, Hollywood films and recent television series are widely watched at home and discussed. Saudis view YouTube more than any other nationality, measured per capita, and both liberals and conservatives use social media to spread their views. Slick, often funny, online videos produced by young Saudis score millions of hits on YouTube and the 2012 movie Wadja - the work of a female Saudi director about a young girl navigating religious strictures - won awards at a number of international film festivals.

So when Prince Mohammed promises land for cultural and entertainment projects, and support for "talented writers, authors and directors", he seems to point towards a reversal of the ban on cinemas, but without explicitly doing so. But potentially most explosive of all is the renewed commitment to reform

education, a process started under King Abdullah who died last year. Prince Mohammed has sworn to create "an education system aligned with market needs", a far cry from schooling that still draws heavily on Quranic teachings.

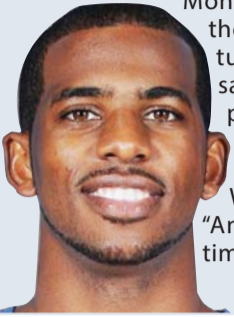
Traditionally, one way the Al Saud had of persuading the clergy to accept change was to spend money on a big religious project, thereby demonstrating their continued support for Islam in Saudi Arabia. While one aspect of the new plan was for a huge Islamic museum, even that may cause friction: Wahhabi doctrine holds the display of ancient artefacts, even those associated with the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) to risk committing idolatry. With his plan predicated on cutting the indiscriminate spending of the past, however, and with a new age of austerity looming due to cheap oil, Prince Mohammed might be denied the luxury to stage cultural warfare with petrodollars. — Reuters



Two men sit on wall overlooking the Red Sea at a popular cafe in the northwestern Saudi town of Al-Wajh on April 25, 2016. — AFP

CLIPPERS LOSE PAUL FOR REST OF PLAYOFFS

LOS ANGELES: The Los Angeles Clippers were hit with a double whammy on Tuesday. Point guard Chris Paul underwent surgery on his broken hand in Los Angeles and will miss the rest of the NBA playoffs. The team also announced that forward Blake Griffin will be out for the remainder of the postseason with a quad injury. In one day, the Clippers went from a team that saw a golden opportunity open in front of them when Golden State Warriors guard Steph Curry went down with a knee injury to one that likely will have to fight just to reach the next round of the playoffs. Paul left Monday night's game against the Portland Trail Blazers in the third quarter and did not return. X-rays showed a fractured third metacarpal bone. Clippers coach Doc Rivers said all the team can do at this point is to move on and prepare for Game Five in the Western Conference first-round series on Wednesday night in Los Angeles. The series is tied 2-2. "We don't have to be the best team. We just have to be the best team tomorrow," Rivers said. "And then we have to figure out how to do it one more time." —Reuters



RONALDO SET TO MISS REAL SOCIEDAD GAME

MADRID: Real Madrid forward Cristiano Ronaldo faces a race against time to be fit for the Champions League semi-final second leg with Manchester City on May 4. Ronaldo was surprisingly omitted from the squad for Tuesday's first leg in Manchester an hour before kick-off. Coach Zinedine Zidane explained after the goalless draw that Ronaldo felt a recurrence of a thigh strain a day earlier in training. Ronaldo was photographed entering a private clinic in Madrid on Wednesday for tests and according to Spanish press reports he has not torn the muscle, but will be unavailable against Real Sociedad on Saturday. Until injuring his thigh against Villarreal last Wednesday, Ronaldo had started every game in La Liga and the Champions League, but is now set to miss a third game in a row. The former Manchester United forward is the top scorer in the Champions League with 16 goals in 10 games and has 31 goals in La Liga, three fewer than leading marksman Luis Suarez. Ronaldo's mother Dolores Aveiro said she was hopeful he would be fit for the semi-final second leg in Madrid. —Reuters

SRI LANKA RESTORES JAYASURIYA AS SELECTION BOSS

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka yesterday brought back former skipper Sanath Jayasuriya to be the chief of a new panel of cricket selectors, following the country's abortive defence of the Twenty20 World Cup. The four-member panel was brought in to replace a previous ad-hoc committee headed by former Test player Aravinda de Silva, which was set up just hours before the team was due to leave for India. The World T20 tournament last month saw reigning champions Sri Lanka crash out at the group stages. Two selectors, Romesh Kaluwitharana and Ranjith Madurasinghe, have been retained in the new panel while the fourth man is Eric Upashantha, also a former player and selector. Jayasuriya previously headed the selection panel from January 2013 to March 2015. "The new (selection) committee will take office on May 1, 2016," Sri Lanka Cricket said in a statement. Sri Lanka tours England in May and June and will play three Tests, five One-Day Internationals and one T20 match. — AFP



Indosat Ooredoo & PSG Football Academy - Dery Ridwansah



OOREDOO AND PSG HOST FOOTBALL ACADEMIES IN MIDDLE EAST, N AFRICA AND SE ASIA

KUWAIT: Ooredoo and Paris Saint-Germain are successfully conducting the third annual "Paris Saint-Germain Academy brought to you by Ooredoo" coaching programme, reaching out to more countries than ever before. Started in 2014, the "Paris Saint-Germain Academy brought to you by Ooredoo" initiative is designed to encourage young people to get involved in sport, offering training and development opportunities for aspiring young footballers.

Over the past six months, sessions have taken place with Ooredoo Kuwait, Ooredoo Qatar, Ooredoo Tunisia, Ooredoo Oman, and most recently with Ooredoo Indosat in Indonesia. Another academy will take place in the Maldives shortly.

The first leg of the programme was organised in Kuwait in December 2015 and Qatar in February 2016, providing training for hundreds of boys and girls in those countries. The next stage was organised at the Oman Club in Al Khuwair, Oman, in March. The elite clinic provided Omani footballers with the chance to hone their skills and find out exactly what it takes to be a champion under the guidance of the French Ligue 1 leader's expert coaches.

More than 200 young Tunisian footballers, selected from training clubs and schools programmes across the country, participated in the next phase in Sousse, Tunisia, at the

grounds of the legendary club Etoile de Sahel. In addition, 30 coaches took part in the programme, learning training and development skills that will enable them to teach young players.

Most recently in April, the "Paris Saint-Germain Academy brought to you by Ooredoo" arrived in Jakarta and Palembang, Indonesia, offering young Indonesian footballers the chance to get involved. During the sessions, which were offered for free for selected children and schools from across the country, Paris Saint-Germain's top coaches taught football-related skills to more than 200 children. Each of the training sessions closed with the traditional ceremony that sees every participant receive an official certificate from the Paris Saint-Germain Academy and have the chance to take photos with their coaches.

Sheikh Saud Bin Nasser Al Thani, Group CEO, Ooredoo, said: "Our partnership with Paris Saint-Germain continues to promote sportsmanship and healthy living in conjunction with the Ooredoo brand to thousands of young players. These camps not only teach discipline and the rules of the game, but show young footballers that Ooredoo supports them, and hopes to help them achieve their football dreams and aspirations."

The "Paris Saint-Germain Academy brought to you by Ooredoo" programme



offers education and motivation for aspiring young football players, and helps them in a range of key areas, including match preparation and effective training methods. Young

footballers learn a host of key skills in each session, such as tactical and defensive playing, stamina training and the rules of football. Ooredoo began its partnership with Paris

Saint-Germain in September 2013, working together to develop youth and community support across Ooredoo's footprint in the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia.

SUTTON QUILTS AS BRITISH CYCLING CHIEF AMID ROW

LONDON: British Cycling technical director Shane Sutton resigned yesterday after being engulfed in a row about sexist and discriminatory remarks he is alleged to have made.

Australian Sutton was suspended on Tuesday pending the results of two internal investigations into reports that he made derogatory comments about rider Jess Varnish and, separately, para-cyclists, who British media, citing multiple sources, alleged he had called 'gimps' and 'wobblers'. In a statement issued by the governing body on Wednesday, Sutton, who has denied all

the allegations, said his departure was in the best interests of British Cycling. "The developments over the past few days have clearly become a distraction. It is for this reason that I believe it is in the best interests of British Cycling for me to step down from my position as technical director," he said.

"It is important that the review announced by British Cycling and UK Sport now takes place, and I will obviously co-operate fully with this.

The claims have left the sport in turmoil 100 days before it is expected to put up a strong

showing at the Olympic Games in Rio.

They first surfaced in a newspaper interview by Varnish in the Daily Mail. The former European sprint champion said Sutton told her to "move on and have a baby" and that her "ass" was too big. British Olympic cyclists Victoria Pendleton and Nicole Cooke backed her claims of sexism in British Cycling.

NEW ROW

Yesterday, a new row blew up over Paralympians when Darren Kenny, one of Britain's most decorated para-cyclists, told the Daily Mail: "The term used to refer to us was generally 'gimps' with another word in front of that. I don't think we were considered to be elite athletes in all honesty by certain people and since I've left I've not seen or heard of any change towards equality." The paper also quoted a source saying: "They were referred to as wobblers. It was an in-joke used to describe para-cyclists." In yesterday's statement, Sutton denied the allegations made against him. "I have made clear that I reject the specific claims that have been made against me in recent days, and I look forward to taking a full part in the review process so I can respond to the allegations in detail." His departure is a blow to British Cycling. The 58-year-old, who joined the organisation in 2002, played a major part in the Olympic success of Chris Hoy and Bradley Wiggins before taking over the top job from Dave Brailsford.

British Cycling chief executive Ian Drake thanked Sutton for his work with British Cycling and "the part he has played in our success.

"I understand and respect Shane's decision to stand down. His primary focus has always been the athletes, and this decision is something he has taken to allow them to focus on their preparation for Rio," said Drake. He added that programmes director Andy Harrison would take over Sutton's role. — Reuters



LONDON: This file photo taken on August 5, 2012 shows Shane Sutton, observing a race in the London 2012 Olympic Games men's omnium 1km time trial cycling event, at the Velodrome in the Olympic Park in east London. Shane Sutton resigned yesterday as technical director of British Cycling following allegations he had used sexist and discriminatory language towards team riders. — AFP



MOUDON: Germany's Marcel Kittel of Etixx-Quick Step team reacts as he celebrates winning the first stage of the 70th Tour de Romandie cycling race, 100 km between Moudon and Moudon, yesterday, in Moudon, western Switzerland. — AFP

KITTEL TAKES ROMANDIE SPRINT

MOUDON: German sprinter Marcel Kittel won the second day of racing in the Tour of Romandie yesterday after the course was shortened because of overnight snow and slippery roads.

Jon Izagirre of Spain, who won Tuesday's prologue, kept his overall lead after stage one of the six-day race. A second-category climb and 60 kilometers (37 miles) of racing were removed yesterday. Kittel finished a wheel's length

ahead of Niccolo Bonifazio of Italy. They reeled in a late move by Michael Albasini of Switzerland, who placed third. Izagirre retained his six-second lead over Dutchman Tom Dumoulin. Britain's Geraint Thomas moved up a place to third, trailing Izagirre by seven seconds. Today's stage two is a 173.9-kilometer (108-mile) ride to Morgins ski station, home of 2010 Olympic downhill champion Didier Defago. — AP

S KOREA SEEKS ZIKA PROTECTION IN RIO, BRITS GO PATRIOTIC

LONDON: South Korean athletes will make their Rio Olympics entrance covered up in long sleeves and trousers, uniforms its designers say were made to protect them from Zika-carrying mosquitoes. With 100 days to go until the Games start in Rio de Janeiro, South Korea's Olympic Committee unveiled yesterday the uniforms its athletes will be dressed in when they arrive in Brazil and take part in ceremonies. An outbreak of the

mosquito-borne Zika virus, linked to numerous cases of the microcephaly birth defect in Brazil, has spread in Latin America and the Caribbean, causing panic and leading some athletes to consider whether to attend the Games. Olympic medallists including taekwondo competitor Lee Dae-hoon strutted down a short catwalk in blue jackets and white trousers as well as white and blue and white and brown zip-up tracksuits,

designed by fashion brand Bean Pole. "We designed the uniform with long sleeves, long pants and socks so that it protects the entire skin down to the ankles," Kim Soo-jung, a designer at Bean Pole, said.

After the fashion show, Lee added: "The uniforms that used to be short-sleeved ended up with long sleeves because of the Zika virus ... But (they are) comfortable to wear and move (around)

in." In London, Britain presented a patriotic, lightweight kit its athletes will compete in at the Aug. 5-21 Olympics. British fashion designer Stella McCartney unveiled the gear in the Union Jack's red, white and blue, alongside Olympic medallists such as Jessica Ennis-Hill and Tom Daley dressed in the sportswear.

The kit is said to be 10 percent lighter than the one worn by Team GB at London's 2012 Olympics, which

McCartney also helped design.

It features plenty of logos and emblems, including a new British coat of arms designed as "a unifying symbol" for the Olympic and Paralympic teams.

The new designs drew some negative reaction. "I'm not a fan of the new Team GB Olympic kit. Too busy," former heptathlete and Olympic medallist Kelly Sotherton tweeted, adding that she would still be proud to wear it. — Reuters



RIO DE JANEIRO: Picture taken during a sports event to mark the 100-day-countdown to the Rio 2016 Olympic Games, at the Central do Brasil train station in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, yesterday. Greece yesterday handed the Olympic flame over to Rio Games officials setting off the 100-day countdown to the August 5 opening ceremony. — AFP

US TO TOP MEDAL TABLE, CHINA AND RUSSIA NEXT

RIO DE JANEIRO: If the Rio de Janeiro Olympics were held today, the United States would win the most medals - and the most golds. And American swimmer Michael Phelps would collect five more gold medals and a bronze, bringing his overall total to 28 with a career gold-medal haul of 23.

Simon Gleave has been crunching the Olympic numbers for four years, putting them through a data-processing program as the head of analysis for US-based Gracenote, a sports and entertainment data provider.

"In terms of medal-count and order, it's going to be close to what we have," said Gleave, who in 2012, using a less sophisticated program, predicted within four medals the results of 16 of the top 20 teams. Gleave will

issue updates again in June, July and August, just days before the Aug 5 opening. He expects a few minor changes, but nothing major. Gleave is picking the United States to top the table with 42 gold and 102 overall. China will be second with 31 gold and 78 overall, which is the same 1-2 order as London four years ago. The next teams in order of gold are: Russia (22), Australia (18), Britain (17), Germany (15), Japan (12), South Korea (12), France (10) and the host-country Brazil (9).

"You could look at this as if these are the stories before they happen," Gleave said in an interview with The Associated Press. For years, Italian Luciano Barra has predicted the medal count, basing his results on world-championships results leading up to the games.

Gleave has gone several steps beyond. He tracks world championships, grand prix events, grand slams and even some continental championships - then gives more weight to the most recent events, and the most important events. Although Gleave has Russia placing third in the gold-medal and overall standings, some Russian athletes could be banned from the games over a doping scandal. "It's a bit difficult to know with Russia at the moment," Gleave said. "We don't know the sports they are going to be competing in with all the stuff that's been going on around Russia."

WORST PERFORMANCE

Gleave also has Phelps down for six more medals - five gold. He's picking him to win

gold in the 100- and 200-meter butterfly and the 200-meter individual medley. He's had to guess on which relays Phelps will swim, but he picks him for gold in the 4x100 medley and 4x200 freestyle. And he figures he'll get bronze in the 4x100 freestyle. "We are speculating to an extent on the relays," Gleave said. "But I don't think that it's a wild thing to guess." A few other highlights from Gleave's predictions: American gymnast Simone Biles will win four gold medals, and one silver.

Australian swimmer Emily Seebohm will win three golds and a silver. Chinese table-tennis star Ma Long will win two golds. American swimmer Katie Ledecky will take four gold medals. Brazil will set a national record with 25 medals overall and nine gold, taking advan-

tage of being the host nation. Argentina will win only two medals, its worst performance since 1992 in Barcelona when it won only one. Spain's medal total will fall for the fourth straight Olympics. The predictions are fun for fans, but they also make money.

Gleave said Gracenote sells its data to national Olympic committees, including the United States, Australia and Britain. It also sells to media clients like the American television network CBS, and Canada's CBC.

"We provide them with data, and they use it in their decision-making," Gleave said. Gleave laughed when he was told he was taking all the suspense out of the Olympics. "As we all know, sport doesn't always work the way we expect it to," he said. — AP



ATHENS: Hellenic Olympic Committee President Spyros Kapralos (C) holds the torch with the Olympic flame prior to passing it to the Rio 2016 organizing committee president during the handover ceremony at Panathenian stadium in Athens, yesterday. — AFP

RIO GETS OLYMPIC FLAME

ATHENS: The Olympic flame was handed to organizers of the Rio de Janeiro Games yesterday, 100 days before the opening ceremony.

Dressed as a high priestess, actress Katerina Lechou led the brief ceremony at the Panathenian Stadium, a horseshoe-shaped marble venue where the first modern Olympics were held in 1896.

Lechou, who lit the flame in Ancient Olympia last week, used a torch to light a cauldron inside the Athens stadium. The flame, placed in a lantern, was handed over to Greek Olympic Committee president Spyros Kapralos, who, in turn, passed it to Rio Games organizing head Carlos Nuzman.

Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff, who is fighting impeachment over allegations of erroneous budget figures, declined an invitation to visit Greece for the lighting ceremony and start of the Olympic torch's six-day journey around Greece.

During the Aug. 5-21 Games, Nuzman said, Brazilians would come together in celebration. "Our mission, dear friends, is bigger than Brazil itself. We represent all the

peoples of South America," he told a crowd of several thousand Athenians.

In a highlight of the Greek torch relay, the flame made a symbolic stop Tuesday at a United Nations-run refugee camp in Athens. The torch was carried by Syrian refugee Ibrahim Al-Husseini.

After yesterday's ceremony, the flame will travel to Switzerland, where it will visit the United Nations building in Geneva and the Olympic Museum in Lausanne. The flame will reach Brazil next Tuesday, starting in the capital of Brasilia. Organizers say it will reach most of the vast country's 200 million population, covering 20,000 kilometers (12,000 miles) by road and 16,000 kilometers (10,000 miles) by air to reach hundreds of cities and towns in a giant effort involving 12,000 torchbearers.

The torch will reach Rio's Maracana Stadium for the opening ceremony on Aug 5. "We will take the Olympic experience to every corner of our country, to every state capital," Nuzman said. "When you arrive in Rio there will be plenty of music, poetry and excitement. ... Rio is ready to deliver history!" — AP

RIO SHRUGS OFF OLYMPIC GAMES DOUBTS FOR 100 DAY COUNTDOWN

RIO DE JANEIRO: Rio de Janeiro yesterday launched the 100 day countdown to hosting South America's first Olympic Games with government and global sports leaders insisting they can overcome Brazil's political meltdown and troubled preparations.

Countdown events were held around the world and Rio organizers were to take the Olympic flame in Athens for the start of its long journey, involving some 12,000 torchbearers, through Latin America's biggest country to the Maracana stadium in Rio.

New Zealand athletes staged a sunrise traditional haka dance on an Auckland beach to mark the day. Britain unveiled its Olympic uniform designed by Stella McCartney.

Despite the insistence of the Brazilian government and International Olympic Committee that the Games will be ready, storm clouds are gathering. President Dilma Rousseff appears likely to be suspended from office through impeachment in the next few weeks. Even her vice president, Michel Temer, who would normally take over-and whom she accuses of mounting a coup-could face action.

The economy is in deep decline for the second straight year, unemployment has shot up to 10.2 percent and Olympic organizers have had to slash budgets. Despite this, they say that the stadiums are 98 percent ready.

DEADLY CITY

Crime remains out of control and Brazil's human rights record came under fire yesterday with a demand by Amnesty International for action over rising police killings, particularly in Rio's favela shanty towns. The rights group said 11 people were killed in police shootings in Rio in just the past month and at least 307 people were killed by police in the city last year amounting to 20 percent of all homicides. "Despite the promised legacy of a safe city for hosting the Olympic Games, killings by the police have been steadily increasing over the past few years in Rio," said Atila Roque, head of Amnesty International Brazil. Murders and violent muggings in even the most heavily policed, well-off parts of Rio in the last few weeks have fed growing concern is for the safety of the estimated half to one million tourists expected to flood the city. Terrorism is another worry, although Brazilian officials say a high-tech center to coordinate international security teams will be up to the task. Rio authorities also admitted that 11 people have died over the past three



RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazilian Sport Minister Ricardo Leyser answers question during an interview with AFP in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on April 24, 2016. — AFP

years on Rio Olympics construction projects.

"It's a frightening number," said Robson Leite, inspector for the labor office in the Rio de Janeiro state, who said only eight workers were killed during construction of sites for the whole 2014 World Cup.

DOWN TO LAST DETAILS

IOC president Thomas Bach has predicted Rio will lay on an "excellent" Games and Brazil's Sports Minister Ricardo Leyser insisted to AFP that the political crisis will have no impact on the event.

"From the point of view of preparing the Games, the crisis has no effect at all," Leyser said in an interview declaring himself "at ease" with the remaining duties.

"The main expenses have been met and now we are starting to deal with thousands of smaller issues. Our planning and execution plan was truly very good."

Greek President Prokopis Pavlopoulos and Rio 2016 Organizing Committee chairman Carlos Nuzman were attending the handing over of the Olympic flame in Athens at about 1530 GMT.

The flame will make a short stopover in

Switzerland before arriving in Brazil's capital Brasilia on May 3.

Torchbearers will then carry the flame through Brazilian towns and cities ahead of the opening of the Games at the Maracana football stadium. On Tuesday, Ibrahim al-Husseini, a Syrian swimmer who lost part of his leg in a bombing carried the torch through Eleonas camp in Athens, where some 1,600 asylum seekers are being given temporary shelter.

OLYMPIC SCANDALS

The Olympics themselves are dealing with controversy. Russian athletics, facing one of the biggest doping scandals in sporting history, is suspended from competition and not sure to be reinstated for Rio. Russia's women's Olympic high jump champion Anna Chicherova is training without knowing whether she will go to Rio. And she acknowledged the strain. "There are times when you don't know where you're going, when you lose sight of the goal," Chicherova, 33, told AFP. The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) suspended Russia in November and will not decide on whether Russia can return for the Rio Olympics until June. — AFP

JAPAN'S UCHIYAMA FLATTENED AS RECORD HOPES VANISH

TOKYO: Japan's Takashi Uchiyama suffered a shock defeat by Panama's Jezreel Corrales yesterday, a brutal second-round knockout dashing his hopes of a 12th defence of his WBA super featherweight title.

The 36-year-old Uchiyama, considered Japan's best pound-for-pound boxer in recent years, had never tasted defeat in his professional career—until Corrales unleashed a violent flurry of

punches to flatter the champion.

Uchiyama, who won the belt from Mexican Juan Carlos Salgado in 2010, had been looking to overhaul Yoko Gushiken's Japanese record of 13 title defences between 1976 and 1981.

But the Nagasaki-born tough guy, dubbed "Knockout Dynamite" by Japanese fans and media, was sent crashing to the canvas three times in the second round by top-ranked challenger

Corrales, who put Uchiyama out of his misery with a vicious left hook.

Corrales entered the ring with a skeleton mask and the fight quickly turned into a horror story for Uchiyama, who was caught flush on the chin by the southpaw early in the first round.

Corrales knocked Uchiyama down again with a left hook at the start of the second and with the Japanese star still wobbling on his knees, the challenger clin-

ically finished him off. "I didn't see those punches coming," said a stunned Uchiyama, who refused to comment on his future.

"I hadn't even got warmed up. I tried to stay calm and fight back but then he caught me again. That's what happens in this game."

Corrales, 12 years Uchiyama's junior at 24, improved his professional record to 20 wins against one loss. Uchiyama

has a record of 24 wins — 20 of them by KO—against one defeat and one draw.

On the undercard, Ryoichi Taguchi defended his WBA light flyweight crown for a third time after battering Venezuela's Juan Landaeta in the 11th round.

Super flyweight champion Kohei Kono followed suit by outpointing Thai challenger Inthanon Sithchamuang for his third title defence. — AFP

RAMS EYE QUARTERBACK, FUTURE AT NFL DRAFT

LOS ANGELES: The Los Angeles Rams aim to land a franchise quarterback capable of leading them into a bold new era today when the NFL draft gets under way with all eyes on the California team's first pick.

The Rams, whose move back to Los Angeles from St Louis was confirmed in January, stunned the league earlier this month after completing a trade with the Tennessee Titans to secure the No.1 pick in the draft.

The deal means the Rams are all but certain to select a rookie quarterback for next season, with the choice expected to fall between the University of California Berkeley's Jared Goff and Carson Wentz of North Dakota State.

Both players have been interviewed by the Rams ahead of Thursday's D-day in Chicago, but officials have so far stayed tight-lipped on who they plan to entrust with the task of running their offense for years to come.

"We're probably going to take an offensive player," Rams coach Jeff Fisher quipped at a press conference in Los Angeles on Tuesday. The stakes could not be higher for the Rams, who are desperate to hit the ground running on their return to Los Angeles, which has been without an NFL presence since 1994.

The Rams will play their home games next season in the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, the iconic venue for the 1984 Olympics, before moving into a gleaming new \$1.8 billion 80,000-seat venue in 2019.

It is part of a long-term strategy by team owner Stan Kroenke, who also owns English Premier League side Arsenal as well as NBA and NHL teams in Denver, to establish the Rams as an international brand.

BUILDING A TEAM

The key component of that strategy however will be building a team capable of emerging from the powerful NFC West—which also contains the Arizona Cardinals,

Seattle Seahawks and San Francisco 49ers—and challenging for the Super Bowl.

All of which circles back to Thursday's draft, and the Rams' potentially pivotal choice between Goff and Wentz.

"If you do this pick right, it's the gift that keeps on giving for a decade," veteran agent Leigh Steinberg told NFL.com, reflecting on the potential upside of picking the right quarterback.

Yet NFL history is littered with infamous examples of No.1 picks who have spectacularly failed to live up to expectations.

Moreover, when the first two overall picks of the draft have been quarterbacks—as are Goff and Wentz—rarely if ever have both players gone on to establish themselves among the elite.

The broader history of second choice quarterbacks in the draft also highlights the risks. Recent second quarterback picks include Tim Tebow, Johnny Manziel and Jake Locker. All are no longer attached to a team. Both Wentz and Goff are loaded with pros and cons.

Wentz has the physical attributes and arm of an elite quarterback but naysayers point to the fact that his college career was spent at North Dakota State, regarded as a "small school".

Goff meanwhile has earned plaudits for his speed, footwork and mentality but questions persist about his arm strength and physique.

Les Snead, the Rams general manager, insisted however he did not feel overburdened by pressure as he weighed a decision which could have long-lasting implications for the franchise.

"You don't feel pressure because at the end of the day—and I'm not being political—both players are very good," Snead said Tuesday. "They're both going to have good careers. And I can tell you that we wanted to get to number one (pick) so that we would have a choice to pick one of the two." — AFP



MANCHESTER: British heavyweight boxer Tyson Fury (L) poses alongside Ukrainian heavyweight Wladimir Klitschko, during a press conference to publicise their forthcoming world heavyweight title fight, at the Manchester Arena in Manchester, north-west England yesterday. Wladimir Klitschko has insisted he was "glad" to have lost his world heavyweight titles to Tyson Fury in December 2015, ahead of a re-match with the British boxer on July 9, 2016. — AFP

KLITSCHKO 'GLAD' OF FURY DEFEAT

LONDON: Wladimir Klitschko has insisted he was "glad" to have lost his world heavyweight titles to Tyson Fury in December ahead of a re-match with the British boxer.

The 40-year-old Ukrainian, world champion for nine years, is now set to face Fury again in Manchester, northern England, on July 9. "Losing feels good," he told BBC Radio Five. "I'm glad that my hand was not raised that night.

"Failure is not an option unless it is the only way to get better, and I had to get better. I needed a push to get better and I got it. I feel it." Klitschko, was then the World Boxing Association, International Boxing Federation and World Boxing Organisation champion, suffered a unanimous points loss in Dusseldorf, with Fury's victory considered an upset by some pundits. "I didn't show my full potential in the fight," Klitschko said. "Physically I was in one of my best shapes, but mentally I wasn't there, not present in the ring.

"After a while, you get used to defending and not conquering the man in front of you. It will be different on 9 July."

Klitschko, beaten just four times in 68 bouts, had not lost for more than 11 years until he faced Fury, unbeaten as a professional. "If you want to destroy a person, give him five years of success. I had no failures for 11-and-a-half-years," said Klitschko.

"After a while it's OK to make a mistake and I made a mistake against Fury. I want to make that clear in my revenge and it is what I'm looking forward to." When Klitschko's brother Vitali retired in 2013, the pair held all the major heavyweight titles between them.

'CHEF IN THE KITCHEN'

But following Wladimir's loss to Fury, the belts are now spread far and wide, with Fury holding the WBA and WBO titles, fellow Briton Anthony Joshua the IBF champion and Deontay Wilder of

the United States, the World Boxing Council's heavyweight king.

"Before, it was clear: one champion, one family name," said Klitschko. "When the chef is not in the kitchen, the belts get lost-Fury, Wilder, Joshua. "When the chef leaves, the rats dance on the table. I want to show who the chef is in the kitchen."

After beating Klitschko, Fury was stripped of the IBF title because he would not face mandatory challenger, Vyacheslav Glazkov. The IBF belt was won this month by London 2012 Olympic super-heavyweight champion Joshua in only his 16th professional fight. "There are so many champions but that's no disrespect to Anthony Joshua, because I've always been a fan," said Klitschko. "He's a talented guy that will conquer the division for a long time.

"He still has a lot to learn, but I'm putting a lot of hope in him. He will represent the heavyweight division better than Tyson Fury." — AFP



CHICAGO: Ohio State's Ezekiel Elliott kneels as he laughs with other athletes during an NFL Play 60 event at Grant Park, yesterday, in Chicago before today's first round of the NFL football draft. — AP

TAYLOR REPLACES MALINGA IN MUMBAI INDIANS IPL TEAM

NEW DELHI: West Indies fast bowler Jerome Taylor yesterday signed for the Mumbai Indians, replacing Lasith Malinga who was ruled out of this season's Indian Premier League (IPL) with a knee injury. The 31-year-old Taylor will join the Ricky Ponting-coached side for the rest of the Twenty20 tournament after the required paperwork was completed, India's cricket board said in a statement.

The Jamaican played just one match for the West Indies, in the group stages, during

the World Twenty20 earlier this month when the Caribbean side clinched the title for the second time, defeating England in the final. Taylor has played in previous IPL editions, representing the Kings XI Punjab and the former Pune Warriors franchises.

Sri Lankan veteran Malinga returned to Colombo after the first three IPL matches without having played in the tournament to recover from the lingering injury that also kept him out of the World T20 held in India. — AFP



KOLKATA: In this photograph taken on April 2, 2016, West Indies' Jerome Taylor bowls in nets during a training session on the eve of the World T20 cricket tournament final match at The Eden Gardens Cricket Stadium in Kolkata. West Indies pacer Jerome Taylor was yesterday signed in as replacement for injured Lasith Malinga in the Indian Premier League franchise Mumbai Indians. — AFP

AUSTRALIA EYE S AFRICA GREAT DONALD AS BOWLING COACH

MELBOURNE: South Africa fast bowling great Allan Donald will join Australia as bowling coach for their tour of Sri Lanka this year, local media reported yesterday.

The 49-year-old, who took 330 test wickets at an outstanding average of 22.25, could then stay on as part of the top-ranked test nation's coaching team for series against Pakistan and South Africa in the coming home summer, News Ltd media said.

Cricket Australia declined to comment on the report but a team spokeswoman said the governing body hoped to have the coaching set-up for Sri Lanka settled within a "week or so".

Craig McDermott, who helped guide Australia to victory in last year's World Cup and a 5-0 whitewash of England in the last Ashes series on home soil, stepped down as bowling coach after the World Twenty20 in India.

Donald, nicknamed "White Lightning" during a 72-test career from 1992-2002, stepped down as bowling coach of South Africa a year ago, after four years mentoring the Proteas' feared pace battery of Dale Steyn, Vernon Philander and Morne Morkel.

After Australia's two-test tour of Sri Lanka in July and August, Donald was expected to remain in the post for a one-day series in South Africa, News said.

Darren Lehmann remains Australia's head coach across the three formats but the make-up of his staff remains unsettled. Batting coach Michael Di Venuto departed last month to take up a post with England county side Surrey, with former test batsman Greg Blewett stepping in temporarily.

Justin Langer, widely tipped to be Lehmann's successor, is to guide the side during a one-day tournament against West Indies and South Africa in June to give Lehmann a break before the Sri Lanka tour.

Langer will be assisted by Western Australia bowling coach Adam Griffith and former England batsman Graeme Hick in the Caribbean.

Cricket Australia also announced yesterday the country's top men's coaches, including Langer, Blewett and Hick, would head to the United States at the end of June on a study trip to learn from leading sports teams, companies and media outlets.

Apart from Major League Baseball's San Francisco Giants, the coaches will also engage with Silicon Valley giants Apple, Google and Facebook. — Reuters



HARARE: This file photo taken on August 12, 2014 shows South Africa's bowling coach Allan Donald on day four of the one-off Test match between South Africa and host Zimbabwe at Harare Sports Club. Donald is set to join the Australian team as temporary bowling coach, including for a series against the Proteas, a report said yesterday. — AFP

NADAL TO BE SPAIN'S FLAG-BEARER AT RIO

MADRID: Rafael Nadal is getting a second chance to be Spain's Olympic flag-bearer. Four years ago, Nadal was selected to carry the Spanish flag at the opening ceremony of the London Olympics, but had to pull out of the games with an injury. The honor went to NBA star Pau Gasol instead.

Yesterday, Nadal was chosen as Spain's flag-bearer for the games in Rio de Janeiro. The announcement was made at an event in Madrid marking the 100-day countdown to the Aug. 5 opening ceremony at Rio's Maracana Stadium. "This is a great honor," Nadal, winner of 14 Grand Slam titles, told local media. "I'm very excited. I hope the games will be great and that the entire Spanish team can do well."

Nadal won the singles gold medal in 2008 at the Beijing Games and also played in the 2004 Athens Olympics. "Spanish sport was in debt to Nadal," Spanish Olympic Committee president Alejandro Blanco said. "He gave us a lot more than results." Nadal will lead a Spanish delegation of about 300 athletes in

Rio. The tennis player has been a longtime enthusiast of the Olympics and stayed with the other athletes in the Olympic Village at previous games.

The announcement came as Nadal defends himself against unproven doping allegations. This week, he filed a lawsuit against a former French minister who accused him of doping and asked the International Tennis Federation to reveal all of his drug-test results to show that he is clean. Blanco said recently that Nadal deserved to be the flag-bearer in Rio in part because of what he had to go through following the doping allegations made in France. Roselyne Bachelot, former minister for health and sport, said on French television that Nadal's seven-month injury hiatus in 2012 was "probably due to a positive doping test."

Her remarks outraged Spaniards and prompted Nadal to take legal action to defend his "image as an athlete" and to keep "any public figure from making insulting or false allegations against an athlete without any evidence or foundation." — AP

CRISTIANO RONALDO INTERVIEW FOR SACOR BROTHERS

I FEEL YOUNG, STRONG AS A FOOTBALLER: RONALDO



Cristiano Ronaldo with his golden boot awards.

JOURNALIST - If you could walk down the street without being recognised, what would you do?

CRISTIANO RONALDO - I'd go to a shopping centre, for example. I'd buy a bag of popcorn, a Coke. I'd go with my friends and spend two or three hours there having fun and see a movie. After the cinema, I'd buy some clothes...

JOURNALIST - Do you feel a need to be able to go unnoticed?

CRISTIANO RONALDO - I'm used to it now. I don't look at it like that anymore. Obviously, at the beginning, it was a bit strange because very often, walking along the street without being recognised is complicated. Even more so now. But in the past, in my first or second year, I could still go unnoticed. But there came a time when that became impossible. But, I'm used to it now.

JOURNALIST - How do you spend your days?

CRISTIANO RONALDO - I like doing my work well, both on the pitch and off it. Whether that means going to the gym, warming up to music, being surrounded by people who make me feel good, in a tranquil environment, a happy environment. I think that's part of me, not just in football... For example, today, when I'm recording, I'm with the people I get on best with and they're also the people I work with. The Spanish enjoy having a good time and that's what I always try to do.

JOURNALIST - You've released a film about you. Do you see yourself acting in a Hollywood film?

CRISTIANO RONALDO - Why not? It's not my goal at the moment, but I've had some invitations. Because of my extremely complicated schedule of training and games and the tournaments I'm in, it's been complicated. But I'm not closing any doors. That's an area that I actually like.

JOURNALIST - When the opportunity arises, will you play a tough guy?

CRISTIANO RONALDO - No. I wouldn't want to be a lead or supporting actor. I'd like to do small parts. I'd like to learn, to be surrounded by good actors. That's the only way to learn, as it's an area I'm not familiar with because it has nothing to do with football. But I think I could get there, with practice.

JOURNALIST - An athlete's exposure at this level involves a bit of acting...

CRISTIANO RONALDO - In my opinion, acting is a different kind of work. It's very complicated. I think it's a very interesting, but difficult, profession. That's why, as I said, I'm sure that sooner or later I'll be on the cast of some film or other. I have no doubt about that. But I'll just do small things to begin with, to get used to it, to gain experience. Then we'll see. The future is bright. I've just finished making my film and things went well. But when it's your own film, it's natural, it's not fake.

I'm not an actor in that film, but I'm not closing the doors on the future.

JOURNALIST - Are you seduced by American society?

CRISTIANO RONALDO - Of course. It's a very interesting country. It's no accident that I've been going there on holidays for ten years now and I really like it. And Real Madrid's pre-season training is usually in Los Angeles, at least it was for three years in a row. And it's also the place where films are given more importance. So, it's a world I'll be spending a lot of time in when my career is over.

JOURNALIST - Having had such a long and successful career, what still motivates you in football?

CRISTIANO RONALDO - It's the competition. It's enjoying it and doing what I love most, playing football. And I feel good, I feel young, strong. So I want to keep going. I don't set time limits for myself as a footballer. My body will tell me, and my mind too. I want to enjoy it and win more, both as a team player and on my own. If everybody had the chance to do what they like doing, I think the world would be a much better place... but that's not possible.

JOURNALIST - Do you worry about the time when you'll have to hang up your football boots?

CRISTIANO RONALDO - In a way, that motivates me to keep on working harder and better and continuing in my area, which is football. The longer I am at the highest level, the better the future will be because it brings more things with it, more contracts, everything. That's why I know that I get a lot out of being at a high level in football. That's my major motivation, because I know that when football is over for me, I'll have plenty to do.

JOURNALIST - And always with the intention of helping others...

CRISTIANO RONALDO - I've always done that and I will keep on doing it because, when I do, God always pays me back twofold. Obviously, you can't help everybody but my team and I decided to help with the basics and that makes me feel good. It's something that makes me happy.

JOURNALIST - There's a very curious expression in English, "the meaning of life". What is your meaning of life?

CRISTIANO RONALDO - To keep going as I am, to keep on with my work at the highest level. Maintaining this level over so many years is extremely complicated. You can count on your fingers the number of top world footballers who were able to maintain the demanding level at the top for six, seven, eight, nine, ten years and stay at the top for so long. I feel very privileged to be one of those. Leaving football aside, it means doing what I enjoy most and as there is so much, I'll choose what's best for me.



TORONTO: Avisail Garcia #26 of the Chicago White Sox hits a single in the seventh inning during MLB game action against the Toronto Blue Jays on Tuesday at Rogers Centre in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. — AFP

SALE EXTENDS PERFECT START AS WHITE SOX DOWN BLUE JAYS

TORONTO: Chris Sale pitched eight innings, Avisail Garcia, Dioner Navarro and Adam Eaton hit home runs, and the Chicago White Sox defeated the Toronto Blue Jays 10-1 on Tuesday. Sale, who matched a career best by winning his first five decisions to open the season, had a one-hitter until Edwin Encarnacion hit his third homer of the season with one out in the seventh inning. Sale (5-0), who had pitched 22 innings without allowing an earned run before Encarnacion's home run, also started the 2014 season 5-0. The White Sox left-hander allowed four hits, two walks and one run while striking out six as Chicago (15-6) extended their winning streak to five games.

ATHLETICS 5, TIGERS 1

Rich Hill tossed seven shutout innings and Marcus Semien hit a two-run homer, leading Oakland past Detroit at Comerica Park. Hill (3-2), a journeyman left-hander on his seventh major league team, allowed just four singles and didn't issue a walk while striking out eight. He has recorded 37 strikeouts in his five starts and has not allowed more than three earned runs in any of his starts.

RAYS 3, ORIOLES 1

Tampa Bay are back at .500 for the first time since the opening week of the season, winning their third straight game on Tuesday thanks to Kevin Kiermaier's two-run homer in a victory over Baltimore at Tropicana Field.

The Rays got out of all kinds of jams-turning three double plays, another runner picked off and received production from the bottom of the order for the second game in a row.

RED SOX 11, BRAVES 4

David Price recovered from one of the worst starts of his career to match his career high with 14 strikeouts and help Boston hand Atlanta their seventh straight loss. Price did not resemble the same pitcher who allowed a career-high-tying eight earned runs in his last start. In improving his record to 3-0, Price pitched eight innings and allowed two runs on six hits and two walks.

METS 4, REDS 3

Pinch-hitter Yoenis Cespedes tied the score with a three-run homer on the first pitch he saw in four days and David Wright laced the go-ahead RBI single three batters later as New York stormed back in the seventh inning to beat Cincinnati at Citi Field. The Mets (12-7) have won four in a row and 10 of their last 12. The Reds

have lost three straight and 11 of their last 15.

RANGERS 10, YANKEES 1

It was only a matter of time before the Texas Rangers starting hitting and scoring runs again, according to their manager. That time came on Tuesday. The Rangers snapped a four-game losing streak while overpowering the New York Yankees 10-1 at Globe Life Park.

PHILLIES 4, NATIONALS 3

Maikel Franco hit a tiebreaking double in the seventh inning, and the Philadelphia Phillies beat Washington 4-3 Tuesday, ending the Nationals' eight-game home winning streak. The Franco double scored Andres Blanco, who doubled off Oliver Perez (1-1) for his third hit of the game. Franco came up limping after the hit but stayed in the game.

CARDINALS 8, DIAMONDBACKS 2

St. Louis first baseman Brandon Moss had four hits, including a three-run homer, and Carlos Martinez pitched eight scoreless innings in the Cardinals' 8-2 victory over the Arizona Diamondbacks at Chase Field on Tuesday. Moss' homer, his fifth of the season, capped a five-run inning that snapped a scoreless tie. He also doubled and scored in a three-run seventh inning and singled in the second and ninth innings.

PIRATES 9, ROCKIES 4

A day off revived Andrew McCutchen. The

Pittsburgh center fielder hit three home runs and drove in five runs Tuesday night, leading the Pirates to a 9-4 win over the Colorado Rockies. It was McCutchen's second career three-homer game. The other was Aug. 1, 2009, against the Washington Nationals. He joined Hall of Famers Willie Stargell, Ralph Kiner and Roberto Clemente as the only Pirates to have multiple three-homer games.

CUBS 4, BREWERS 3

Addison Russell went 2-for-4 with a two-run triple in the sixth inning to help the Chicago Cubs to a 4-3 victory over the Milwaukee Brewers on a frigid Tuesday night at Wrigley Field. Russell's triple, his first of the season, drove in Kris Bryant and Ben Zobrist to break a 1-1 tie. Adam Warren (2-0) worked two relief innings and struck out three to pick up the win for the Cubs (15-5). The Brewers (8-12) dropped their fourth in five games.

TWINS 6, INDIANS 5

Miguel Sano's RBI single with one out in the bottom of the ninth inning lifted the Minnesota Twins to a 6-5 win over the Cleveland Indians on Tuesday night at Target Field. Following a one-out double by Brian Dozier, Joe Mauer was intentionally walked, setting up Sano, who hit a 1-1 fastball off Indians closer Cody Allen (0-2) into center field.— Reuters

MLB Results/Standings

Philadelphia 4, Washington 3; Chicago White Sox 10, Toronto 1; Oakland 5, Detroit 1; Tampa Bay 3, Baltimore 1; Boston 11, Atlanta 4; NY Mets 4, Cincinnati 3; Chicago Cubs 4, Milwaukee 3; Texas 10, NY Yankees 1; Minnesota 6, Cleveland 5; Pittsburgh 9, Colorado 4; St. Louis 8, Arizona 2; LA Angels 9, Kansas City 4; Seattle 11, Houston 1; Miami 6, LA Dodgers 3; San Francisco 1, San Diego 0.

American League Eastern Division				National League Eastern Division					
	W	L	PCT	GB		W	L	PCT	GB
Baltimore	11	8	.579	-	Washington	14	5	.737	-
Boston	11	9	.550	0.5	NY Mets	12	7	.632	2
Tampa Bay	10	10	.500	1.5	Philadelphia	10	10	.500	4.5
Toronto	10	12	.455	2.5	Miami	8	11	.421	6
NY Yankees	8	11	.421	3	Atlanta	4	16	.200	10.5
Central Division				Central Division					
Chicago White Sox	15	6	.714	-	Chicago Cubs	15	5	.750	-
Kansas City	12	8	.600	2.5	Pittsburgh	12	9	.571	3.5
Cleveland	9	9	.500	4.5	St. Louis	11	9	.550	4
Detroit	9	10	.474	5	Cincinnati	9	12	.429	6.5
Minnesota	7	14	.333	8	Milwaukee	8	12	.400	7
Western Division				Western Division					
Seattle	11	9	.550	-	LA Dodgers	12	9	.571	-
Oakland	11	10	.524	0.5	Arizona	11	11	.500	1.5
Texas	11	10	.524	0.5	San Francisco	11	11	.500	1.5
LA Angels	10	11	.476	1.5	Colorado	9	11	.450	2.5
Houston	6	15	.286	5.5	San Diego	7	14	.333	5

RAPTORS STUN PACERS, ATLANTA TROUNCE CELTICS

LOS ANGELES: DeMar DeRozan returned to form with 34 points as the Toronto Raptors overturned a double-digit deficit to defeat the Indiana Pacers 102-99 and seize control of their best-of-seven playoff series on Tuesday.

DeRozan, who had entered the game averaging just 13.3 points, turned on the style as the Raptors fought back from 13 points down to seal a win which gives them a 3-2 lead.

"I felt like my normal self," said a relieved DeRozan, who admitted Toronto had struggled to concentrate as the Pacers took an early lead. "Me and the guys weren't thinking too hard. It's all about patience, you can't get flustered, you can't get frustrated, you've got to stay the course. And that's what we're going to continue to do, whatever it takes to win," DeRozan said.

Toronto had found themselves staring down the barrel of a home defeat after Indiana raced into a 90-77 lead in the third quarter. But a 15-2 Raptors points blitz in the opening 5 mins 29 sec of the fourth quarter hauled the home side back into the contest with rookie Norman Powell scoring a monster dunk to tie it 92-92.

DeRozan then stepped up to drain a three-pointer to give the Raptors their first lead as Toronto held on for a pulsating win.

Pacers star Paul George had a game-high 39 points including eight rebounds and eight assists while George Hill added 15 points and Myles Turner had 14.

George bemoaned the Pacers' failure to hang on for what would have been a potentially pivotal road victory.

"We didn't make enough plays, that is what it came down to in the fourth quarter," said George. "We have to put this (game) away. Friday (Game 6) is a new day and we have to get a win-it's a must win. It's awful to have a chance to win on the road and then come back home, but we failed to live up to the moment."

The Pacers had appeared to be firmly in control after opening up a 61-52 halftime lead. Indiana had looked the more polished side throughout the opening half, with George scoring 22 of his points in the first two quarters. Toronto had lagged 35-20 after the first quarter following Indiana's freescoring start. George led the Pacers scoring with 12 points and four assists in the quarter while Hill added nine points.

In Tuesday's other game, Atlanta also took a 3-2 series lead after a blowout 110-83 win against the Boston Celtics.

Atlanta's Mike Scott top scored after weighing in with 17 points off the bench as the Hawks hassled the Celtics into 19

turnovers in what rapidly became a rout.

The victory means Atlanta lead 3-2 in the best-of-seven series heading into Game Six in Boston on Thursday.

It was a night to forget for Celtics point guard Isaiah Thomas who was jeered at every turn by a fiercely partisan Hawks crowd.

Thomas, who finished with dismal numbers of seven points from 3-of-12 shooting, limped off the court in the fourth quarter after appearing to roll an ankle.

A rollercoaster series has seen Boston repeatedly claw back big deficits to overhaul Atlanta. But their luck ran out on Tuesday as Atlanta cut loose in the second and third quarters to leave Boston scrambling to recover. The Celtics had started brightly, compiling a healthy 29-19 lead at one point in the first half. But a 28-10 run by the Hawks helped the home team into a 47-39 lead at half-time. Boston attempted to get back into the contest after the break, but Kyle Korver, Scott, Paul Millsap and Dennis Schroder all drained threes during a frenzied burst of scoring to put Atlanta 22 points clear.

"It was a good team win," Hawks coach Mike Budenholzer said. "All up and down the roster, guys playing well on both ends of the court. Now, we just have to take this same type of mentality, same type of effort and take in the road." — AFP



TORONTO: Toronto Raptors guard Kyle Lowry (7) picks up a foul against Indiana Pacers' Monta Ellis (11) during the second half of Game 5 of an NBA first-round playoff basketball series, Tuesday, in Toronto. — AP

INFANTINO BRINGS VISION OF NEW FIFA TO ASIA

SEOUL: FIFA President Gianni Infantino dangled the carrot of more World Cup spots for Asia during a visit to Seoul yesterday.

FIFA BOSS WANTS NORTH-SOUTH KOREA FRIENDLY

SEOUL: FIFA President Gianni Infantino said yesterday he was willing to try and set up a football match between North and South Korea as a way of easing hostility on the divided peninsula.

On a visit to South Korea which coincided with a recent upsurge in tensions between Seoul and Pyongyang, Infantino said such a match would highlight the spirit of football as a game "beyond borders" that can unify rather than divide.

"We should bring everyone together around a football pitch... I'm ready to help and assist in whatever way is necessary," Infantino told reporters.

Military tensions have been running high on the peninsula following North Korea's nuclear test in January and a ballistic missile test staged a month later. Cross-border relations have sunk to their lowest level in years, with almost all official communications cut off. The two Koreas last held a friendly match in Seoul in 2005. Before that they played two consecutive games in October 1990, in Seoul and Pyongyang, under the title "Inter-Korea Unification" matches.

Sporting exchanges pretty much halted, along with other ties, as relations soured. "Sometimes imagination can come true. Sometimes dreams can come true. These things can become a reality," Infantino said.

The FIFA boss also defended moves to increase the number of teams participating in the World Cup to 40, beginning in 2026.

"I believe that it's important to increase the number of teams on the World Cup because we have to be more inclusive," he said.

"Eight more teams will be perfectly justifiable," he said, adding he was considering six more berths for the Asia region. — AFP

day but while the Swiss was keen to press his case for an enlarged 40-team tournament, he will not try to twist anyone's arm.

Infantino, who arrived in South Korea earlier in the day to meet with sponsors Hyundai Motor Group, said his visit was aimed at rebuilding trust with corporate partners and presenting his vision of a 'new FIFA'. World football's scandal-hit governing body is in the midst of the worst crisis in its 112-year history, with more than 40 individuals and entities, including many former FIFA officials, charged with corruption-related offences in the United States.

Infantino, elected in February to replace the disgraced Sepp Blatter, told reporters that adding eight more teams to the World Cup from 2026 was "perfectly justified".

"Football is not only Europe and South America. Football is the world," he said.

"I'm not a dictator so I can't impose anything but I'm trying to convince everyone. I believe we have to increase the number of teams... because we have to be more inclusive."

Asia currently has four automatic spots at the World Cup, with a fifth up for grabs in an inter-confederation playoff, and Infantino said that number could rise to at least six under an expanded format.

FIFA has struggled to find new sponsors since the current crisis erupted and Asia's financial muscle could see the region play a bigger role.

Hyundai Motor Co. and Kia Motors Corp., South Korea's two largest automakers and affiliates of the Hyundai conglomerate, have extended their partnership with FIFA until 2022.

China has also shown its ambition on the global football stage with Dalian Wanda Group, the country's biggest commercial property developer, becoming the first Chinese top level sponsor of FIFA last month.

A source close to the deal said the 15-year sponsorship agreement with Wanda would be worth "hundreds of millions of dollars".

Infantino said the nature of football took the sport beyond borders to new frontiers and that the organisation could work as a vehicle to bring people together, though his suggestion for a goodwill match between the two Koreas fell somewhat flat.

"FIFA went through a difficult time... but times have changed," he added. "This is a new FIFA."

Infantino will next travel to Bangkok on Thursday to take part in the Thai FA's 100th anniversary celebrations. — Reuters



VILA-REAL: Liverpool's players run during a training session at the Madrigal Stadium in Vila-real yesterday on the eve of the UEFA Europa League semifinals first leg football match Villarreal CF vs Liverpool FC. — AFP

MANAGER KLOPP SEEKS BRAVE LIVERPOOL AGAINST VILLARREAL

VILA-REAL: Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp called for bravery from his players if they are to overcome Villarreal to reach the Europa League final and maintain their hopes of Champions League football next season.

Klopp's men produced a sensational second-half comeback from 3-1 down to beat his old side Borussia Dortmund 4-3 at Anfield to reach the last four. However, the German warned against complacency as, despite their lack of European pedigree compared to the English giants, Villarreal are enjoying a great season.

They sit fourth in La Liga behind perennial powerhouses Barcelona, Real Madrid and Atletico Madrid. "We have to play brave football," Klopp told UEFA.com. "We are now in the semifinals. We got there because we deserved it, and now we have to show we are strong enough to go through. "They are having a wonderful season, they are a wonderful club in a small city. "It is clear there are a lot of smart people behind their success." Klopp will be without a number of players crucial to Liverpool's upturn in fortunes over recent weeks.

French defender Mamadou Sakho didn't travel to Spain on Wednesday as he awaits the result of a UEFA investigation into an alleged failed doping test. Emre Can, Divock Origi and captain Jordan Henderson are also sidelined by injury.

The build-up to the game has been overshadowed by the ruling that the 96 Liverpool fans that died at the Hillsborough tragedy 27 years ago were unlawfully killed in the biggest inquest

in English legal history. Villarreal have announced they will mark the decision with a tribute to the victims before the game.

However, once the action gets underway, the Yellow Submarine are intent on causing an upset to reach their first ever Cup final. "Maybe Liverpool could be considered favourites because of their history as a club," said Villarreal coach Marcelino.

"But we don't consider ourselves in any way inferior to them and we think we can beat a team as legendary as Liverpool."

It is 10 years since Villarreal came excruciatingly close to reaching the Champions League final against English opposition as Jens Lehmann saved Juan Roman Riquelme's last-minute penalty to send Arsenal to the final 1-0 on aggregate.

However, Marcelino believes having almost sealed their place in next season's Champions League already through La Liga, his players have no pressure on them to reach the final.

"The context is similar (to 10 years ago), but we are convinced that we can eliminate Liverpool," he added.

"It is a privilege to play this semi-final. There was much more pressure in the previous ties and now we have a great chance to make history in this club."

GOOD MEMORIES

Sevilla continue their quest to win a third consecutive Europa League in the other semi-

final when they travel to face Shakhtar Donetsk in the first leg in Ukraine.

The match will be played in the western Ukrainian city of Lviv as Shakhtar have defied their exile from war-torn Donetsk to reach the last four. "We fully respect them and we know the difficulties they will pose," said Sevilla midfielder Vicente Iborra.

"They are an experienced team with a mixture of Ukrainians and Brazilians, they are quick and have the quality to surprise us." Sevilla have good memories of facing Shakhtar as an amazing stoppage-time equaliser from goalkeeper Andres Palop sent their last-16 tie into extra time before the Spaniards went on to win the competition in 2007. "Hopefully, the luck that helped Sevilla in 2007 will be on our side this time," said Shakhtar boss Mircea Lucescu. — AFP



SEOUL: FIFA President Gianni Infantino speaks during a press conference in Seoul yesterday after meetings with FIFA Partners Hyundai Motor Group and Korea Football Association (KFA) ahead of the country hosting next year's FIFA U-20 World Cup. — AFP

SIMEONE BANNED FOR 3 MATCHES

MADRID: Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone must watch his team's remaining La Liga matches from the stands after being handed a three-game touchline ban for allowing a ball to be thrown onto the pitch during Atletico's 1-0 win over Malaga on Saturday. The Spanish Football Federation's Competition Committee announced the ban on Wednesday and said Simeone would be fined 3,005.00 euros (\$3,399.86) and Atletico 1,050.00 euros. Simeone was sent off at the end of the first half of Atletico's game with Malaga after a ball was thrown on to the pitch from the home side's technical area just as Malaga launched a counterattack nearby.

Simeone said the ball was thrown by one of the ball boys, although replays show the coach appearing to encourage the boy to toss the ball onto the pitch. The Spanish

Football Federation justified its ruling in a statement, applying law 101.2 of its disciplinary code which refers to "a grave alteration of the order of play". The disciplinary code also states that "in a case where the suspect cannot be identified, the coach will be sent off for allowing an act which goes against the rules and will be sanctioned with a minimum of three games".

According to newspaper AS, Atletico President Enrique Cerezo said the club would appeal against the decision, which prohibits Simeone from taking charge of the team for the final matches against Rayo Vallecano, Levante and Celta Vigo. All three are crucial to Atletico's bid to win the La Liga title. Atletico are second in the table, level on 82 points with leaders Barcelona, who are top because of their superior head-to-head record. — Reuters



MADRID: Atletico Madrid's Argentinian coach Diego Simeone gestures during the UEFA Champions League semi-final first leg football match Club Atletico de Madrid vs Bayern Munich at the Vicente Calderon stadium in Madrid yesterday. — AFP

MAN CITY 'NOT AFRAID' OF REAL MADRID: PELLEGRINI

MANCHESTER: Manchester City manager Manuel Pellegrini vowed that his team would play with no fear in their Champions League semi-final second leg against Real Madrid following a 0-0 first-leg draw.

Missing the injured Cristiano Ronaldo, Madrid created the better chances in Tuesday's game, but substitute Jese saw a header hit the bar and City goalkeeper Joe Hart produced late saves to thwart Casemiro and Pepe. City, appearing in their first semi-final, did not work visiting goalkeeper Keylor Navas until Kevin De Bruyne found the target with a stoppage-time free-kick, but Pellegrini said that his side would show a greater cutting edge in next week's return leg in the Spanish capital.

"I don't think they are favourites," said the Chilean, who was sacked after only one season as Madrid head coach in 2010.

"We have the same option as Real Madrid. Of course they have the advantage to play the first game away, so they try to manage the tempo of the game. "After that they finish at home. But this team play away very similar to how we play at the Etihad. We had good results playing away against Paris Saint-Germain, against Dynamo Kiev and against Sevilla. "We are not afraid to go to the Bernabeu and we will see which team plays better in that game."

Pellegrini claimed that his side had shown the "most intent to win the game" and that Madrid had arrived at the Etihad Stadium "with a result in mind". His opposite number, Zinedine Zidane, contested the claim, asserting that his team "always go out to win", but he agreed that neither side had procured an outright advantage.

"We could have scored a goal, but even with scoring a goal we would not have been sure of being in the final," said the Frenchman, whose memorable volley against Bayer Leverkusen inspired Madrid to Champions League glory in 2002. "I think it is still 50-50. We have got a game at home. We know what we are capable of. Right until the death it will be the same. We are going to have to work hard."

Both teams have fitness concerns ahead of the second leg, but Zidane was upbeat about both Ronaldo, who missed out with a thigh strain, and Karim Benzema, who went off at half-time due to a knee problem.

'GOOD OLD-FASHIONED RUMBLE'

"We hope that they can both be in the second leg," he said. Pellegrini was more pessimistic about David Silva's chances of gracing the Bernabeu after the Spaniard suffered a hamstring injury in a first-half challenge on Gareth Bale that earned him a booking. "It is quite tough for him to recover in one week," Pellegrini said. "We will have a clearer picture tomorrow."

The City manager also expressed a measure of annoyance that his side will have a day less to recover for the return fixture due to the scheduling of their Premier League game at Southampton on Sunday. "Unfortunately for us, we are going to have one day's less rest than Real Madrid (who visit Real Sociedad on Saturday)," he said. "We tried to change our

game and it was impossible, so we need to play on Sunday. "But we trust in what we are going to do and we are sure we will give all we can to arrive to the final."

Hart was typically bullish, buoyed by two late saves that saw him thwart Casemiro and then, brilliantly, Pepe from point-blank range. "We've set it up for a good, old-fashioned rumble at the Bernabeu," said the England international.

"We are not disappointed with the result. Bring it on."

Bale, meanwhile, backed the Bernabeu crowd to make their presence felt. "We're quite happy with it," the former Tottenham Hotspur winger told BT Sport. "We're very, very strong at home. The crowd gets behind us. It's going to be a difficult game, we know that, but one we're confident about and looking forward to." — AFP



VILLENEUVE D'ASCQ: Angers' Congolese defender Arnold Bouka Moutou (C) vies with Lille's French midfielder Morgan Amalfitano (R) during the French L1 football match Lille vs Angers yesterday at the Pierre Mauroy stadium in Villeneuve d'Ascq northern France. — AFP

Live Matches on TV
(Local Timings)

UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE

Shakhtar Donetsk v Sevilla 20:00
beIN SPORTS 3 HD

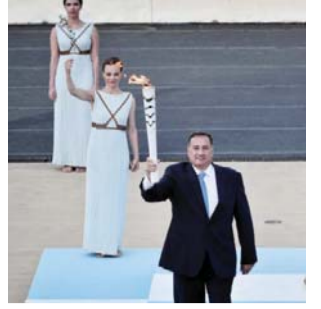
Villarreal v Liverpool 21:00
beIN SPORTS 2 HD

Sports

Sutton quits
as British Cycling
chief amid row



Rio gets
Olympic
flame



THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2016

SOMEONE BANNED FOR 3 MATCHES

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MADRID: Atletico Madrid's midfielder Saul Niguez (C) vies with Bayern Munich's Spanish midfielder Javi Martinez (R) and Bayern Munich's Austrian midfielder David Alaba during the UEFA Champions League semi-final first leg football match Club Atletico de Madrid vs Bayern Munich at the Vicente Calderon stadium in Madrid yesterday. — AFP

SAUL STUNNER HANDS ATLETICO LEAD OVER BAYERN

MADRID: A sensational solo effort from Saul Niguez handed Atletico Madrid a precious 1-0 advantage over Bayern Munich from the first leg of their Champions League semi-final at the Vicente Calderon yesterday.

The Spanish under-21 international skipped past four Bayern players before firing into the far corner to give Atletico the perfect start after 11 minutes. Bayern dominated for long spells thereafter, but the closest they came to a vital away goal was a thunderous long-range effort from David Alaba that came back off the crossbar.

Atletico will travel to Bavaria for the return next Tuesday looking to complete the job to reach their second final in three years and exact revenge for their defeat to Bayern in the 1974 final.

Bayern lost the first legs of their semi-finals in Spain

in the previous two seasons to Real Madrid and Barcelona on their way out of the competition.

And they couldn't have made a worse start once more in the Spanish capital as, roared on by a vociferous support, Atletico flew out of the blocks early on.

Niguez had already had a long-range effort saved by Manuel Neuer before he opened the scoring in stunning style. The 21-year-old picked the ball up near halfway and skipped past four half-hearted Bayern challenges before curling a left-footed shot in off the inside of the far post. Atletico nearly gifted Bayern an equaliser immediately as Jose Maria Gimenez's miscued clearance pinballed around the area before the Uruguayan atoned for his initial error by clearing off the line.

Bayern were dominant in possession, but struggled

to create clear-cut chances against an Atletico side that now hasn't conceded at home in their last seven Champions League knockout ties.

Alaba shot wide from distance, while Douglas Costa's free-kick nearly caught out Jan Oblak at his near post.

Yet, it was Atletico who squandered a big chance to make it 2-0 before the break when Antoine Griezmann's shot from a narrow angle was turned behind by Neuer.

Bayern were completely dominant after the break as Atletico tired and dropped deeper towards their own goal. Alaba smashed a wonder strike off the underside of the bar from fully 35 yards before Javi Martinez's powerful header from Costa's corner was gratefully grasped by Oblak low to his right.

Guardiola had controversially left Thomas Mueller on

the bench despite his 31 goals in all competitions this season. The future Manchester City boss eventually called upon the German World Cup winner and Franck Ribery in search of a vital away goal.

Costa came close again seconds after Mueller's arrival as his attempted lob over Oblak dipped just over the bar. Oblak was called into action again to parry an Arturo Vidal piledriver from distance.

Yet, once more Atletico had the best chance to put the tie beyond the German champions in the final stages as Fernando Torres hit the post from Griezmann's fine through ball and Neuer saved Koke's follow-up effort. Oblak made simple saves from Mehdi Benatia and Vidal in stoppage time as Atletico held out to record their 33rd clean sheet of the season. — AFP

LIVERPOOL UNITES FOR HILLSBOROUGH TRIBUTE

LIVERPOOL: A bell tolled in Liverpool to commemorate the Hillsborough disaster victims yesterday as the city paid tribute after a landmark inquest found 96 Liverpool football fans were unlawfully killed in the 1989 stadium crush.

The Liverpool Municipal Buildings bell was struck 96 times from 3:06pm—the time the match at Hillsborough was stopped—as thousands of sympathisers in the city prepared to pay tribute.

The commemorations came a day after a jury said police blunders caused the crush, raising the pressure for criminal prosecutions of those responsible following the two-year inquest.

"Their search for justice has been met with obfuscation and hostility instead of sympathy and answers... This whole process took far too long," Prime Minister David Cameron told parliament. Two criminal investigations into Hillsborough should conclude by the end of the year and prosecutors will then consider whether charges can be brought. One probe is looking at the lead-up to the tragedy and the day of the match itself. The second is investigating the alleged cover-up attempt afterwards. Possible offences included gross negligence manslaughter, perverting the course of justice and perjury, Home Secretary Theresa May told parliament.

POLICE 'LYING FOR 27 YEARS'

There is set to be a particular focus on the role of David Duckenfield, the officer in charge of policing the Hillsborough ground in Sheffield, northern England, on the day of the disaster.

He ordered the opening of a perimeter gate to relieve pressure outside the ground. That enabled 2,000 fans to surge into already over-full terracing pens, causing the fatal crush.

Duckenfield, now 71 and retired, admitted at the inquest he told a "terrible lie" in the immediate aftermath of the disaster by claiming fans had stormed the gate.



LIVERPOOL: Youth team players from the Liverpool and Everton football clubs prepare to lay 96 single red roses, representing the 96 victims of the 1989 Hillsborough disaster, on the steps of St George's Hall in Liverpool. — AFP

The inquest heard evidence of how the police—at the height of English football hooliganism—tried to minimise their role in the tragedy. In the wake of the disaster, The Sun and several other newspapers published allegations—long since retracted—about the conduct of Liverpool fans. They were based on a Sheffield news agency report quoting senior police officers, and a local MP reiterating their claims.

They included that drunken fans picked the pockets of victims, urinated on police officers and attacked an officer giving the kiss of life. Kelvin MacKenzie, who edited The Sun at the time, told BBC television Wednesday that he felt

"completely duped" and was "appalled to discover the police had been lying for 27 years".

'YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE'

Opposition Labour home affairs spokesman Andy Burnham was instrumental in the Hillsborough justice campaign.

He urged that those responsible for the unlawful deaths and for a "27-year cover-up" be held to account. May told parliament that families had faced "attempts to cover up what really happened", and "most of the general public... believed the stories that they read about the fans." — AFP

KYRGIOS TO FACE CORIC IN ESTORIL QUARTER-FINAL

ESTORIL: Last year's finalist Nick Kyrgios got his delayed clay season off to a winning start yesterday to set up an ATP showdown with Croatian teenager Borna Coric at the Estoril Open.

The Australian, who has not competed since an April 1 Miami semi-final, made his Portuguese return as he beat Spain's Inigo Cervantes 7-6 (7/4), 7-5 in the second round following a bye. He earned the victory in 72 minutes on his 21st birthday to set up the high-profile first-time meeting with Croatian 19-year-old Coric.

Kyrgios is back at this seaside resort outside of Lisbon after winning the first trophy of his career in February in Marseille. The world number 20 claimed his 15th victory of the season as he broke in the 11th game of the second set and finished a game later on the first of his three match points. He ended with nine aces.

Coric had to go the two-hour distance as he held off a charge from Rogerio Dutra Silva 6-3, 4-6, 6-1. The sixth-seed duplicated his showing from a year ago on his debut when he moved into the last eight.

"I was happy with how I played in the first set," said the winner. "But in the second set his level rose and I realised I was playing too passively. In the third I went back more offense. The quarter-final with Nick will be tough and I'm not favoured."

"But that doesn't mean that I'm not going out there to fight and to try and win." Coric looked like advancing in straight sets against 101-ranked Dutra Silva, but he lost his way as he dropped serve to trail 4-5 in the second set after earning the first. The Brazilian levelled at a set each but faded in the third as Coric fought back to stake his claim on victory through five aces and the same number of service breaks.

Coric stands just 13-11 this season despite finals in Chennai and Marrakech. In the first round, Spanish wild card Fernando Verdasco, who replaced injured Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, made only a token 58-minute showing as he lost his first-round match to eighth seed Pablo Carreno Busta 6-1, 6-3. Verdasco, ranked 51st after once standing inside the ATP top 10, only arrived on Tuesday after winning a rain-delayed final in Bucharest on Monday for the seventh title of his career.

"Conditions here were difficult and Pablo put me under a lot of pressure. I did what I could but it would have been tough for me to win today," the Spaniard said.

"When you are not at 100 per cent and are facing a good player, these things can happen. Coming here so late after the final did not help me." Spain's fifth seed Guillermo Garcia-Lopez advanced into the quarters as he defeated Stephane Robert of France 6-3, 7-6 (7/3). — AFP



SOUR APPLE RESULTS HIT TECH SHARES



BEIJING: Visitors look at an Arcfox-7 electric sports car by Chinese automaker BAIC on display at the Beijing International Automotive Exhibition in Beijing yesterday. — AP

TECH DRIVE SEES 'CONNECTED CAR' LINK-UPS IN CHINA AUTOMAKERS RACING TO OFFER 'CONNECTED' CAR SERVICES

BEIJING: China has the youngest premium car buyers in the world, and their tech-savvy demand for "connected cars" - coupled with Communist regulations-is driving international automakers into the arms of the country's Internet giants. Growth is slowing and competition intensifying in the world's number one car market, but it also boasts Mercedes Benz buyers with an average age of 37, and Audi's customers even younger at 36. In contrast, the average Mercedes buyer in the US was over 54, according to IHS Automotive.

China's "Internet savvy" cohort is the youngest premium customer group in the world, Hubertus Troška, China chief for Mercedes' parent Daimler, said at the Beijing Auto Show this week. "We really want to be at the forefront of connectivity and telematics in this country, so we're going with the best technology that we have," he added.

Automakers are racing to offer "connected" car services, which include in-car internet

access, entertainment systems, and easy integration with smartphones, traffic lights, and other vehicles. The global market for such connected-car technologies will be worth about 123 billion euros by 2021, according to consultancy PwC. With more than 600 million smartphone users, China's consumers particularly prize such features. As many as 60 percent of Chinese drivers would switch car brands solely in order to have complete access to data and applications inside their vehicle, according to consultancy McKinsey, compared to only 20 percent of Germans.

Baidu vs Google

Whereas Apple's Carplay and Google's Android Auto are taking off in the rest of the world as the leading car smartphone apps, China requires certain "adaptations", Daimler's Troška said. For a start, many Google services-including its crucial maps application-are blocked in the Communist-ruled country. "As

foreign technology companies, Apple and Google are facing many regulation barriers placed by Chinese government in recent years," Celina Li, senior analyst at IHS Automotive, said in a note.

That leaves the field clear for local players such as Chinese Internet giants Baidu, Alibaba and Tencent, Li added. Audi will start integrating "Baidu CarLife" into some of its models in China this year, it says, while Volkswagen and GM have also announced plans to adopt the China-specific operating system. A locally-designed rival to Apple and Google software, Baidu CarLife offers music streaming, smartphone integration, and access to Baidu maps-the dominant player in China.

Fellow domestic giant Alibaba, which in 2014 purchased Chinese interactive mapping and navigation firm Autonavi for \$1.5 billion, is collaborating with China's leading auto manufacturer SAIC. Audi also announced at the weekend it will be working with Tencent, which operates

the country's hugely popular messaging service WeChat, to allow location sharing in vehicles. "In China, it's very common to send your location (to your friends) in your WeChat: you will use it in your car, and have your destination automatically sent if you want," said Intakhab Khan, Audi's director of electronics in China.

'Tough competition'

Global and local players are vying for Chinese market share over price, quality, and innovative offerings. "I can tell you, on autonomous driving, on connectivity, and on electric cars, competition is going to be very tough. You cannot be complacent," said Carlos Ghosn, CEO of Renault-Nissan. BMW has enabled some vehicles to use several popular Chinese apps, including microblogging platform Weibo. And all vehicles sold by French automobile maker PSA Peugeot-Citroen in China will be connected via 4G SIM card by 2020 - compared to 20 percent of its current

upmarket DS range. PSA will also equip some cars with a wi-fi hotspot in collaboration with Alibaba, and offer an app to remotely check the vehicle's location and petrol levels.

Chinese buyers have lower privacy concerns than elsewhere, and are the most willing in the world to share their data, McKinsey found in a 2015 study. "The Chinese want up-to-date interactive maps showing places of interest like restaurants and shops," said Celine Le Cotonnet, PSA's China head of connected services, digital marketing and mobility. "They are also really into social messaging and games," which offer relief from the tedium of traffic jams, she added. But while the large tech companies are working with carmakers for now, some may soon become auto competitors themselves as the lines between the two industries begin to blur. At the Beijing auto show, Alibaba and Baidu displayed their own self-driving cars, while online video giant LeEco unveiled an electric car. — AFP

VENEZUELA ENFORCES PUBLIC SECTOR LEAVE ON 3 WEEKDAYS

CARACAS: Venezuela's government has announced enforced leave for public sector employees three workdays a week, in a bid to tackle an electricity shortage that is causing power cuts and protests. "There will be no work in the public sector on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, except for fundamental and necessary tasks," Vice President Aristobulo Istariz said on television Tuesday. It is the latest drastic measure by the government as it grapples with an economic crisis that has left Venezuelans queuing for hours in shops to buy scarce supplies.

President Nicolas Maduro said the new reduction in workdays, which affects the country's two million public sector employees, would last "at least" two weeks, as he addressed the nation in his weekly state television program Tuesday. As part of its energy-saving push, the government on Monday launched a rationing plan with power cuts of four hours a day for 40 days in towns and cities across multiple states-but not in Caracas.

The move raised discontent among citizens already suffering from shortages of medicines and basic goods such as toilet paper and cooking oil. "I ask for greater understanding, support, solidarity, action and awareness," Maduro said of the new energy-saving measures. He also rejected the protests and vio-

lence that have erupted as the measures were implemented in the western city of Maracaibo, where attacks on businesses and at least one food-transporting truck have taken place, media reports said. "Whoever attempts violence during circumstances such as these... will be hit with the fullest weight of the law, because they are committing serious crimes against security and the homeland," he said.

Maduro's latest announcement comes after the government cut reduced the workday for public sector employees to six hours and put them on paid leave on Fridays until June 6. His vice president also said Tuesday that primary and high schools would now be closed on Fridays. The government blames the power shortage on a drought caused by the El Nino weather phenomenon, which has caused the country's hydroelectric dams to run low. Venezuela is hoping for a lot of rain over the coming weeks to replenish the reservoirs while the restrictions are in place. Critics say the shortage is the result of economic mismanagement and inefficient running of the energy network. Last week, the government also said it was shifting its time zone forward by 30 minutes to save power by adding half an hour of daylight.

Venezuela's economy has plunged along with the price of the oil it relies on for foreign revenues.



SAN CRISTOBAL: A power generator remains outside stores in the border state of San Cristobal, Venezuela, 600 km west of Caracas. Recession-hit Venezuela will turn off the electricity supply in its 10 most populous states for four hours a day for 40 days to deal with a severe power shortage. — AFP

Maduro blames the collapse on an "economic war" by capitalists. The president is under growing pressure from the center-right opposition, which vowed to oust him when it took control of the legislature in January after winning an election. His opponents advanced Tuesday in their mission to drive him from office when electoral authorities gave them authorization to take initial steps seeking a recall referendum. The National Electoral Board said it would hand over the paperwork allowing them to seek nearly 200,000 signatures needed as a first step towards calling a referendum. — AFP

APPLE REVENUE STREAK ENDS

SAN FRANCISCO: Apple has reported its first-ever drop in iPhone sales since launching the smartphone in 2007 as the tech giant's long streak of rising revenue ended. Apple said iPhone sales dropped year-over-year for the first time, slipping to 51.19 million units in the recently ended quarter compared with 61.17 million in the same period a year ago.

Profits fell as well: Apple reported net income of \$10.5 billion in the fiscal quarter to March 26 from \$13.6 billion last year. With iPhones the main driver of sales for the company, revenue fell on a year-to-year basis for the first time since 2003: \$50.6 billion from \$58 billion a year earlier. Apple shares dove more than eight percent to \$95.90 in after-market trades that followed release of the earnings figures. Sales of iPhones, the heart of Apple's mobile age money-making machine, were down 16 percent, according to the earnings report.

Apple chief executive Tim Cook said of the slump that "this too shall pass." Analysts said it was not surprising to see the drop given the saturation of the global smartphone market. "Following a rapid expansion into new markets over the years from 2007-2011, Apple was approaching saturation of the available distribution channels, and many of those already in the smartphone market who could afford to buy an iPhone had one or one of its high-end Android competitors," said Jan

Dawson at Jackdaw Research. Dawson said Apple managed to boost sales in a slow-growing market with its large-screen models, but that it is unclear if it can regain momentum.

Boosting share buy-back

Apple also announced that its board has authorized \$35 billion more to be spent on buying back shares, along with money for the dividend to be increased to 57 cents per share. Apple has been making inroads into wearable technology with its Apple Watch and moving into services such as music subscriptions, but remains largely dependent on the iPhone for profit and revenue. "While Wall Street was disappointed with Apple missing core revenue and earnings numbers, we aren't talking about a company in trouble," said Patrick Moorhead, president and principal analyst at Moor Insights and Strategy.

"Apple is still driving iPhone market share in nearly every region, and we will shortly know if the iPhone SE enables continued market share gains in the mid-range." The analyst noted that Apple rivals Samsung, LG, HTC and Huawei have "dramatically amped up their smartphone games" and the effect of that should be seen in the current quarter. Apple last month went small, cutting prices as well as screen size with the introduction of a new iPhone and iPad aimed at first-time buyers and customers in emerging markets. — AFP

SAUDI'S FLYNAS TO DECIDE ON BOEING V AIRBUS ORDER

BOMBARDIER CS300 RULED OUT; NOT TESTED IN MIDEAST CLIMATE

DUBAI: Saudi Arabia's Flynas will decide whether to order Boeing 737MAX or Airbus 320NEO planes before the start of the holy month of Ramadan in early June, the airline's chief executive said yesterday. The low-cost carrier is considering an initial order of 60 planes, with the possibility of a further 40, as it seeks to replace its existing fleet and expand. Flynas currently leases Airbus A320s so choosing Boeing would create complications such as retraining staff to work on the US firm's aircraft, Paul Byrne told reporters on the sidelines of an industry event in Dubai.

"To switch ourselves, they (Boeing) have to do a phenomenal deal for us. That deal will have to cover that pain of transition, as it will be painful," said Byrne. "We are open to that argument, we see them as a player and what we want is something

that will see the long-term future of Flynas. That door is wide open to both." Ultimately, with Flynas in the process of phasing out its leased Airbus fleet, whichever manufacturer it chooses will over time become the sole supplier. Byrne was quoted earlier this year as saying the airline was also considering Bombardier for the potential order. However, yesterday, he said it had decided against the Canadian manufacturer as its new CS300 aircraft had not been flown by a Middle Eastern carrier in the region's harsh climate.

Competition

Flynas, which turned a profit for the first time in 2015, was expected to do so again this year, Byrne said. But while he welcomed increased competition in the regional airlines industry, he said the firm was

feeling its impact. "The optimism of 4-5 months ago has dampened down as we're seeing a lot of extra capacity in the market, a lot of state carriers flexing their muscles and dumping capacity with no real plan," said Byrne. Competition is expected to increase as Saudi Arabian Airlines launches its new low-cost carrier, Flyadeal.

Beginning services in mid-2017, it could have up to 50 planes flying by 2020, a senior executive said on Monday. Flynas, 65-70 percent of whose flights are domestic, also faces caps on fares imposed by the Saudi government. These would remain in place for at least the next five years, Byrne said, although the limits would be eased on an annual basis. He argued these charges were unfair on Flynas as, unlike flag-carrier Saudi Arabian Airlines, it was not subsidized by the state. — Reuters



THE ALL NEW Z7 NOW AT AL MULLA SHOWROOMS

KUWAIT: Al Mulla Motors (Maseelah Trading company) has announced the arrival of the all new family car CMC Z7 2016, which redefines the concept of comfort through its cabin that can accommodate seven passengers and with its technical evolution and advanced technology. The new Z7 is a family car in every sense of the word since it can transport family members and friends in total comfort thanks to the spacious cabin and the seven luxurious seats allowing passengers to extend their legs, in addition to the large storage capacity considered the best option for collective comfort and for sharing the joy of spending time together during short and long trips. The new Z7 differs than the remaining family cars with its sporty design that provides space, comfort, strong performance and high fuel consumption, providing customers with a great high quality family car.

Powerful engine

Z7 is equipped with a Japanese fuel engine from Mitsubishi Motors Corp which supervised the manufacturing of this car in full, powered with a 2.4-liter capacity, 4 cylinders, 16 valves and 136 horsepower, in addition to the 5-speed automatic transmission specifically designed to guarantee an easy drive on all types of terrain.

Sporty design

The new Z7 design is considered more attractive and elegant by any standards. The sporty independent design shows characteristic and coherently clear features such as engine carved car hood and large HID crystal headlights, which beside its attractive design grants a broader lighting, front fog lamps and a network of ventilation made of chrome where Z7 logo stands in the middle with a neat bumper emphasizing the sporty character, in addition to soft side lines and elegant side mirrors. As for the rear design, Z7 is characterized by the modern crystal rear lamps powered by light-emitted diode (LED) covered with high definition lenses, which appears in an integrat-

ed manner thanks to the back sports door topped with an elegant sports pavilion. The new Z7 is able to traverse rough bumpy roads and to face all obstacles with ease. It also features width that allow it to be steady during maneuvers and when driving at high speeds.

Spaciousness and grandeur

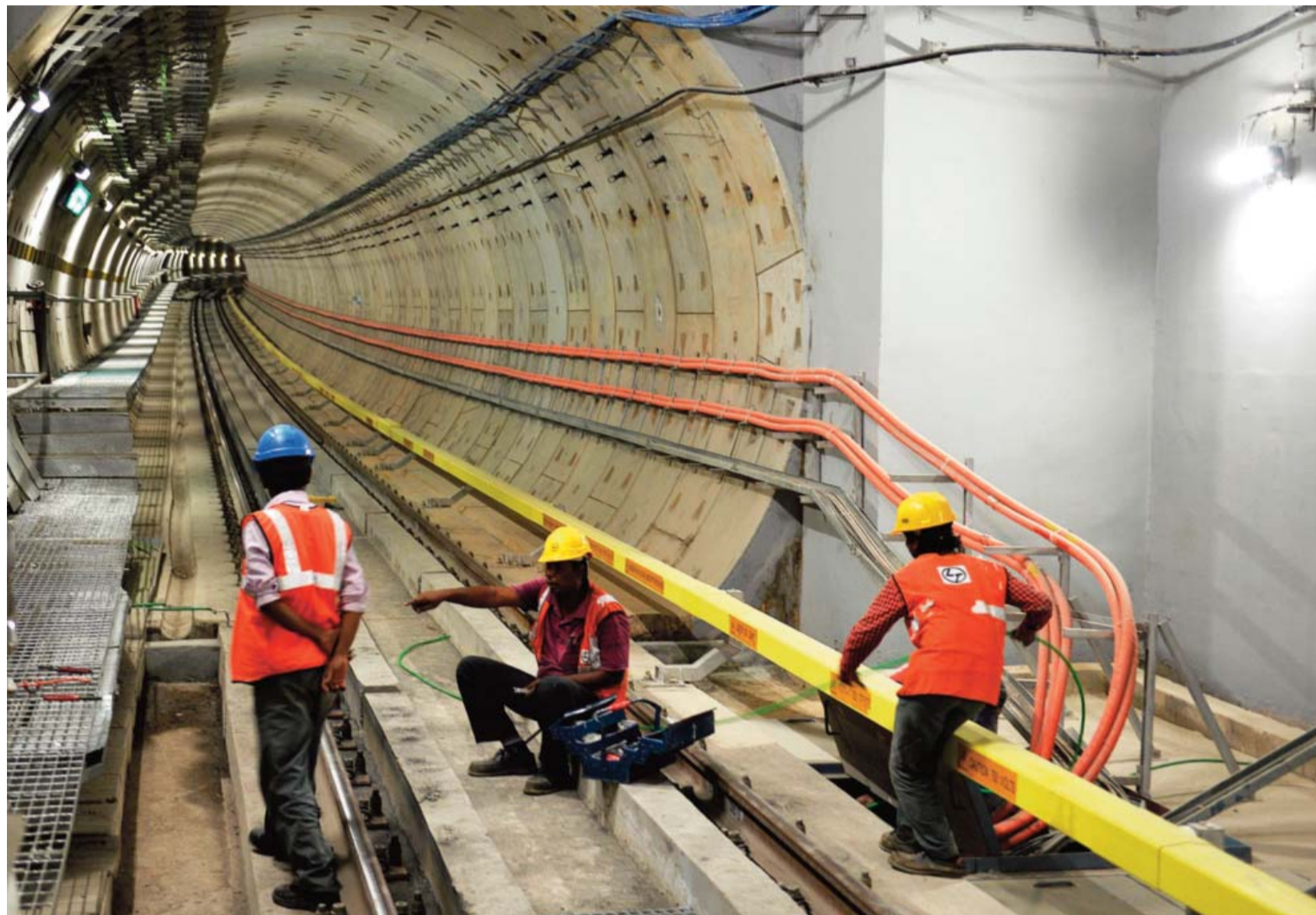
"Z7" is characterized from the inside with a gorgeous design combining between elegance, roominess and spaciousness, with seven comfortable seats, in addition to the option of folding the third or second row of seats for more storage space. Spaciousness is also provided thanks to the large wheelbase while tranquility is provided with the sleek design, the comfortable driving position and a creative and modern driving board, as well as an innovative and organized dashboard that is easy to use by the car driver and that is easily accessed while driving.

Modern techniques

Z7 features additional comfort technologies such as the air conditioning system, independent rear AC, central info display, CD player, USB Port, and many storage spaces, namely the sunglasses and glove box and storage space tray in doors and carriers for cups.

Safety features

The all new Z7 2016 provides a wide range of standard safety features in all categories, including the bodywork and the internal department, in addition to advantages represented either by the protection of children, either by the safety features while driving or upon having an accident. Safety in "Z7" is guaranteed by the following full system: safety measures, Japanese techniques which includes the outer steel structure, dual SRS airbags, anti-lock brakes, electronic brake distribution system, as well as the steel chassis that provides a stable and comfortable ride at the same time, not to mention the additional safety features including the reversing sensors.



BANGALORE: Indian employees of the Namma Metro Rail carry out inspection work near a tunnel that will connect two major parts of Bangalore. Namma Metro is scheduled to inaugurate south India's first 4.8km underground line, with the first commercial run taking place on April 30. — AFP

QATAR AIRWAYS URGES AIRBUS TO RESOLVE A350 JET 'ISSUES'

DUBAI: Gulf carrier Qatar Airways said yesterday it had some "issues" with the A350 passenger jet and it was putting pressure on planemaker Airbus to resolve the problems. "We have some issues with the A350, which was expected because it's a new program. However, we feel that Airbus is losing steam in resolving these problems with the A350," chief executive Akbar Al Baker told a travel conference in Dubai.

When asked what issues Qatar Airways had with the A350, Al Baker declined to comment, other than to say they related to the supply chain. Deliveries of A350s are being delayed due to shortages of cabin equipment, sources told Reuters this month. The comments come after Al Baker earlier this week also voiced criticism over the latest variant of Airbus's A320 narrowbody jet. A spokesman for Airbus said it had no comment ahead of the group's quarterly results on Thursday. Qatar Airways is the largest customer of the A350, a mid-sized carbon-composite jetliner designed to compete with the Boeing 787 Dreamliner and the larger Boeing 777. It has ordered 80 A350s and has taken delivery of the first eight. A person familiar with the matter said Qatar Airways had raised concerns over the reliability of parts and equipment supplied by UTC Aerospace Systems (UTAS) on both the A350 and the Boeing 787. —Reuters

INDIA MAY BECOME NET IMPORTER OF SUGAR; DROUGHT DRIES FIELDS

MUMBAI: India is likely to become a net importer of sugar in 2016/17 as back-to-back drought years dry irrigation channels and ravage cane fields, with output in the country's biggest producing state seen dropping over 40 percent. That would mark the first time the nation has been a net importer of the sweetener in four years, with the switch likely to support global prices that have already been rising this year. It would also give rival producers such as Pakistan, Thailand and Brazil the chance to boost shipments from their ports.

"India will need to import next year due to a production shortfall," Ashok Jain, president of the Bombay Sugar Merchants Association (BSMA) said. "Drought has severely affected cane plantations in Maharashtra. The government should stop exports now to reduce import requirements in the next season." The El Nino weather phenomenon, which brings dry conditions to many regions, has stoked the worst drought in decades in some parts of India, with thousands of small-scale sugar cane growers in Maharashtra state failing to cultivate crops for the next marketing year, starting October.

"Even for drinking water we are relying on water tankers. It wasn't possible for anyone from

our village to cultivate cane," said Baban Swami, a farmer standing in a parched field in the Latur district of Maharashtra, around 500 km south-east of Mumbai. That could help push overall output below consumption for the first time in seven years. "Next year, Maharashtra's production could drop below 5 million tons. This may pull down the total output to 22.5 million tons," said BB Thombre, president of the Western India Sugar Mills Association. Next season's local consumption is pegged at around 26 million tons.

The world's biggest sugar consumer is set to churn out 25.7 million tons in the current season, with Maharashtra contributing 8.5 million tons. Indian mills are contracted to export nearly 1.5 million tons this season. "I think there is a possibility we could see imports to India next year," said Tracey Allen, a commodity analyst at Rabobank in London. Indian imports have in the past boosted global sugar prices, traders said. "The global supply deficit is going to rise with the Indian shortfall. This could trigger a rally, although a lot depends on how much sugar India needs to import," said a Singapore-based dealer with a global trading firm. He declined to be identified as he was not authorized to speak with media. —Reuters

The Ideal Family Car Z7 2016

- Powerful engine
- Sporty design
- Spaciousness and grandeur
- Modern techniques
- Safety features

EXCHANGE RATES

AL-MUZAINI EXCHANGE CO.

ASIAN COUNTRIES

Japanese Yen	2.730
Indian Rupees	4.544
Pakistani Rupees	2.890
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.075
Nepali Rupees	2.836
Singapore Dollar	224.390
Hongkong Dollar	39.028
Bangladesh Taka	3.859
Philippine Peso	6.461
Thai Baht	8.618

GCC COUNTRIES

Saudi Riyal	80.763
Qatari Riyal	83.194
Omani Riyal	786.642
Bahraini Dinar	804.300
UAE Dirham	82.457

ARAB COUNTRIES

Egyptian Pound - Cash	32.550
Egyptian Pound - Transfer	34.479
Yemen Riyal/for 1000	1.216
Tunisian Dinar	150.600
Jordanian Dinar	426.580
Lebanese Lira/for 1000	2.018
Syrian Lira	2.158
Morocco Dirham	31.696

EUROPEAN & AMERICAN COUNTRIES

US Dollar Transfer	302.700
Euro	342.350

Sterling Pound	440.730
Canadian dollar	239.760
Turkish Lira	106.690
Swiss Franc	312.060
Australian Dollar	234.590
US Dollar Buying	301.500

GOLD

20 Gram	249.640
10 Gram	127.740
5 Gram	64.710

DOLLARCO EXCHANGE CO. LTD

Rate for Transfer	Selling Rate
US Dollar	302.800
Canadian Dollar	239.220
Sterling Pound	436.895
Euro	340.921
Swiss Frank	297.350
Bahraini Dinar	801.065
UAE Dirhams	82.680
Qatari Riyals	83.895
Saudi Riyals	81.425
Jordanian Dinar	426.550
Egyptian Pound	34.002
Sri Lankan Rupees	2.076
Indian Rupees	4.543
Pakistani Rupees	2.884
Bangladesh Taka	3.851
Philippines Peso	6.497
Cyprus pound	576.735
Japanese Yen	3.700
Syrian Pound	2.375

Nepalese Rupees	3.850
Malaysian Ringgit	78.585
Chinese Yuan Renminbi	47.075
Thai Bhat	9.585
Turkish Lira	107.525

BAHRAIN EXCHANGE COMPANY

CURRENCY	BUY	SELL
British Pound	0.430830	0.439830
Czech Korune	0.004660	0.016660
Danish Krone	0.041930	0.046930
Euro	0.0335428	0.0343428
Norwegian Krone	0.032989	0.038189
Romanian Leu	0.086889	0.086889
Slovakia	0.009030	0.019030
Swedish Krona	0.033377	0.038377
Swiss Franc	0.303631	0.313831
Turkish Lira	0.100984	0.111284
Australasia		
Australian Dollar	0.225752	0.237252
New Zealand Dollar	0.201914	0.211414
America		
Canadian Dollar	0.234177	0.242677
US Dollars	0.298800	0.303300
US Dollars Mint	0.299300	0.303300
Asia		
Bangladesh Taka	0.003444	0.004018
Chinese Yuan	0.045208	0.048708
Hong Kong Dollar	0.036981	0.039731

Indian Rupee	0.004346	0.004736
Indonesian Rupiah	0.000018	0.000024
Japanese Yen	0.002686	0.002866
Kenyan Shilling	0.003115	0.003115
Korean Won	0.000255	0.000270
Malaysian Ringgit	0.073887	0.079887
Nepalese Rupee	0.002886	0.003056
Pakistani Rupee	0.002671	0.002951
Philippine Peso	0.006464	0.006744
Sierra Leone	0.000067	0.000073
Singapore Dollar	0.221484	0.227484
South African Rand	0.015208	0.023708
Sri Lankan Rupee	0.001698	0.002278
Taiwan	0.009256	0.009436
Thai Baht	0.008303	0.008853

Arab		
Bahraini Dinar	0.796879	0.804879
Egyptian Pound	0.030721	0.035839
Iranian Riyal	0.000084	0.000085
Iraqi Dinar	0.000192	0.000252
Jordanian Dinar	0.423217	0.430717
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.000000	1.000000
Lebanese Pound	0.000152	0.000252
Moroccan Dirhams	0.020848	0.044848
Nigerian Naira	0.001249	0.001884
Omani Riyal	0.780333	0.786013
Qatar Riyal	0.082488	0.083701
Saudi Riyal	0.079887	0.080837
Syrian Pound	0.001284	0.001504
Tunisian Dinar	0.147242	0.155242
Turkish Lira	0.100984	0.111284
UAE Dirhams	0.081487	0.082636
Yemeni Riyal	0.001369	0.001449



RATNAPURA, Sri Lanka: A Sri Lankan gem dealer holds a palmful of rough precious and semi precious stones in Ratnapura district, some 100 kilometers southeast of Colombo. — AFP photos



RATNAPURA, Sri Lanka: A Sri Lankan gem miner washes stones in Kalu River in Ratnapura district, some 100 kilometers southeast of Colombo.

FAKE STONES THREATEN TO UNDERMINE SRI LANKA'S GEM TRADE

RATNAPURA: From the Queen of Sheba to Britain's Duchess of Cambridge, Sri Lanka's sapphires have adorned royalty through the ages, but a flood of cheap imitations is threatening the island's reputation for the precious stones. Ceylon sapphires, known after the island's colonial-era name, enjoyed a huge boost five years ago when it was revealed that one formed the centerpiece of the engagement ring Prince William gave Catherine Middleton.

They are renowned as the best sapphires in the world, but gem traders say artificial stones-colored glass that to the untrained eye are virtually indistinguishable from sapphires—are being passed off as the real thing to unsuspecting buyers. They fear that is tarnishing the image of the gems, seen as a major potential income stream for an economy still recovering from decades of civil war.

"This is the biggest threat to our industry.

Our reputation is at stake," said Nissanka Weerasena, who owns a chain of upmarket jewelry stores in Sri Lanka. "These colored pieces of glass im-

ported by the kilo are killing the market for gems." Stories of buyers getting conned into buying fakes are legion. National Gem and Jewelry Authority chairman Asanka Welagedara recalled how one Australian buyer who spent \$14,000 only discovered that nearly half the stones he had been sold were fakes when he had them tested by the state-run regulator by which time it was too late.

Another scam is to heat treat opaque, semi-precious stones to give them the color and clarity of a real sapphire. "The technique of heat treating semi-precious stones originated in Thailand, but our people have now perfected the art," Welagedara said. "There is a 10-fold price difference between a heat-treated blue sapphire and a natural stone, so naturally

there is a temptation to sell treated stones as natural ones." Problems are particularly common along Sri Lanka's southern coast, a popular tourist draw. "We are seeing a new trend of cheating, especially along the coastal tourist belt," said a senior Sri Lankan police officer who spoke to AFP on condition of anonymity.

Illegal miners

Geologists say more than four-fifths of Sri Lanka's 65,000 square kilometer land mass could contain underground gems. The best-known mining area is Ratnapura, or the City of Gems, where a stone thought to be the largest blue star sapphire in the world was discovered last year. Blue star sapphires, so called because they reveal a six-line star when placed under light, are particularly sought after. The owner—a Sri Lankan gem dealer who told AFP he wanted to remain anonymous for fear of being robbed—has valued the stone at \$300 million, although

he won't disclose how much he paid for it.

On the banks of the Kalu river that flows through Ratnapura, hundreds of young men pan for gems, hoping that they too might one day strike it rich.

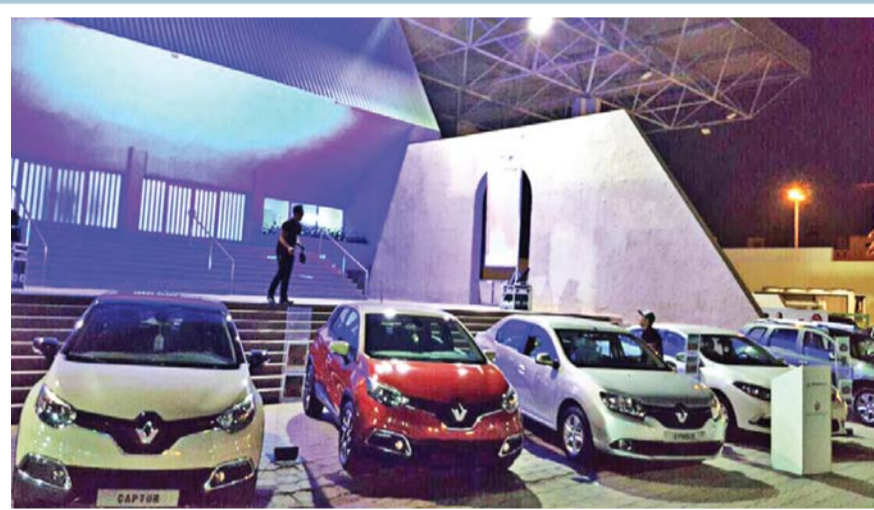
Officially, there are 200,000 miners employed in the industry, but another half a million are believed to be working illegally. Eranga Kumara, 22, is an illegal prospector who dives between 10 and 15 feet (three and 4.5 meters) to the river bed to look for stones. "Usually we get a few stones and I make about 10,000 rupees (\$70) a day," Kumara said on the banks of the Kalu river as his friends kept a look out for police. "But we can only work during the dry season, from January to March."

Dulgalage Jayatilake acts as a middleman between these small-time miners and the merchants who come to Ratnapura from Colombo and elsewhere in search of gems. At a makeshift exchange on a bridge in

Ratnapura where he and dozens of others line up every morning waiting for buyers, there are concerns that artificial stones are scaring away buyers. "I meet the miners directly and buy from them. That is to make sure I don't get caught out by fakes," Jayatilake said. "Imitation stones are giving everyone a bad name."

The Gem and Jewelry Authority says it can't stop the import of artificial stones, which are necessary for the low-end costume jewelry industry. But it is taking steps to prevent fraud by vetting dealers and giving them a stamp of approval that buyers can trust.

For 500 rupees (\$3.50) it will issue a certificate of authenticity, which its chairman Welagedara says is the "best guarantee against fraud". Gem expert Rohan Pitigala said it was difficult for the untrained eye to spot an imitation gem stone, but not impossible. "If you see a stone which is flawless it is too good to be true," he said. — AFP



RENAULT AL BABBAIN SPONSORS THE BEY2OLLAK COMEDY SHOW 3

EGYPTIANS IN KUWAIT
STANDUP COMEDY SHOW
22 APRIL 2016



PRESENTED BY:
EIK ASSOCIATED WITH ALGAS

KUWAIT: Abdulmohsen Abdulaziz Al Babbain Co, the exclusive agent of Renault in Kuwait was the main sponsor of the theatrical play Bey2ollak - Comedy Show 3, which was held on April 22, 2016 at the Abdulaziz Al-Khatib hall in Al Arabi Sports club in Mansuriya. 3500 people enjoyed attending this three hours long show. The theatre play starring Akram Housni, the number one star in Egypt known as 'Sayid Abu Hafitha', along with other popular standup comedy actors including Mina Nader, Alaa Elsheikh, and Waleed Abulmagd.

Renault Al Babbain is keen to be pres-

ent in this event as part of its interest in sponsoring entertainment events, especially the French Renault vehicles are known for its youthful character, which goes in line with the atmosphere of such shows and events.

Renault Al Babbain gave out 50 gifts under 50 lucky winners' chairs. Renault Al Babbain is also keen to stay in touch with its clients, which is best presented in the after-sales-service. The company is aware of the fact that its relation with the customers is not limited on sales only, thus it goes beyond that to provide all means of comfort.

EGYPT CENTRAL BANK 'EXPECTED' TO HOLD INTEREST RATES STEADY

CAIRO: The Egyptian Central Bank's monetary policy committee is expected to hold interest rates steady today as it continues to assess the impact of last month's rate hike of 150 basis points, a Reuters poll showed. Eight out of 10 contributors to the Reuters poll said they expect the committee to keep rates unchanged on April 28. Egypt has been facing a foreign currency shortage since the 2011 uprising drove away tourists and foreign investors, both major sources of hard currency. Reserves more than halved from 2011 to \$16.56 billion in March.

On March 14, the central bank devalued the pound to 8.85 pounds per dollar from 7.73. Two days later it strengthened the currency slightly to 8.78 per dollar as it adopts a more flexible exchange rate policy. In an attempt to curb inflationary pressures after the devaluation, the central bank exceeded expectations and raised its overnight deposit rate to 10.75 percent from 9.25 percent and the overnight lending rate to 11.75 percent from 10.25 percent.

"The central bank increased interest rates by an aggressive 150 basis points at the last meeting as a preemptive move against likely inflationary pressures following the March 14 devaluation of the pound," said Mohamed Abu Basha, economist at EFG Hermes. "We don't see another hike as likely at this meeting. The central bank needs to assess the impact of the pre-

vious hike before embarking on its next move, in our view," he said.

Annual urban consumer inflation eased for the third consecutive month in March to 9 percent from 9.1 percent in February. Economic and political instability since the popular uprising in 2011 that toppled autocrat Hosni Mubarak contributed to comparatively slow growth of around 4.2 percent in the last fiscal year. The government expects growth of around 5 percent this fiscal year. Bankers said a black market for dollars has sucked up foreign exchange liquidity from banks and put pressure on the pound. But the central bank has been taking measures to divert liquidity back into the banking system.

In March, it eased capital controls that were imposed a year earlier. Egypt's top two state banks, the National Bank of Egypt and Banque Misr, began offering Egyptian pound investment certificates with a 15 percent yield in return for foreign currency. Two economists expected the central bank to defend the Egyptian pound further by hiking rates at today's meeting. "The central bank would have to raise rates to attract deposits," said Angus Blair, chairman of business and economic forecasting think-tank Signet Institute. "The pressure to attract deposits remains and we expect an increase in interest rates with the goal of doing so," he added, expecting a 100 basis point hike. — Reuters

CHINA STRONGER INDUSTRIAL PROFITS ADD TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY HOPES

CHEMICAL, AGRI-FOOD SECTORS POST BEST GAINS

BEIJING: Profits earned by Chinese industrial companies rose 11.1 percent in March from a year earlier, adding to signs that the country's economic slowdown may be bottoming out. Industrial profits rose to 561.24 billion yuan (\$86.50 billion) in March, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said on its website yesterday. That brought total first-quarter profits to 1.34 trillion yuan, up 7.4 percent from a year earlier and improving from a 4.8 percent rise in the January-February period. The data covers large enterprises with annual revenue of more than 20 million yuan from their main operations.

The first-quarter gains were largely led by chemical companies and agricultural and food processing companies, which posted 20.8 percent and 12.1 percent growth compared with the same period a year earlier. But heavy industry and mining continued to struggle, with ferrous metal smelting and rolling firms seeing profits fall 15.8 percent in the quarter and profits for coal miners slumping 92.6 percent. Oil and gas producers posted a loss. Debt at Chinese industrial companies increased 5.2 percent on a yearly basis to 55.22 trillion yuan as of end-March, the bureau said.

China's economy grew 6.7 percent in the first quarter this year from a year earlier, its slowest pace in seven years, but better-than-expected consumer, investment and factory data have fueled hopes that the economy's prolonged downturn may be easing. Still, analysts are worried that the improvement may be largely driven by companies taking on more debt, raising questions about whether the seeming pick-up in the broader economy can be sustained. Adding to that caution, the statistics bureau warned that profits from investment and non-core activities "increased dramatically", and that the rise in profits was not seen across the industrial spectrum.

The bureau said that 30.5 percent of industrial profits in March stemmed from investments and non-core activities. "The pickup in March industrial profits was partly due to an improving economy, but it was not a balanced and stable recovery," NBS official He Ping said in a statement accompanying the data. Slowing demand, high inventories and financing difficulties still trouble the sector, he added, and it remains to be seen whether the increase in profits is sustainable. Producer prices in March fell 4.3 percent from a year earlier, extending their decline to a full four years, but at a slower rate than a median forecast in a Reuters poll of a 4.6 percent decline.

Economists said the slower fall in producer prices was driven by recovering global commodity prices and also an uptick in construction activity at home. Premier Li Keqiang said at a State Council meeting last week that China will take steps to boost exports, including encouraging banks to boost lending, expanding export credit insurance and raise tax rebates for some firms. Profits at China's state-owned firms fell 13.8 percent in the first quarter from a year earlier, though the rate of decline eased slightly from the first two months of the year, the Ministry of Finance said on Tuesday.

Iron ore, steel

Meanwhile, Iron ore and steel futures in China fell again yesterday as authorities raised trading costs to deter speculative investors believed to be behind last week's big spike in prices and volumes, which had raised fears of a destabilizing crash. The Dalian Commodity Exchange said it would double the transaction fees on steelmaking raw materials coking coal and coke futures from Thursday, the fourth increase in a week. Dalian has also raised the transaction fees on iron ore futures twice this week as the exchange, along with other commodity platforms in Shanghai and Zhengzhou, imposed curbs to restore calm in markets after a week-long surge unsettled global investors.



BEIJING: A child stands in the middle of the car as passengers ride a train in Beijing yesterday. — AFP

The curbs implemented by the exchanges seemed to be having the desired effect, said Wang Di, analyst at CRU consultancy in Beijing. "What they're trying to do is minimize too much speculation, especially from the retail investors." Analysts say speculators were betting that a rise in infrastructure spending in China would lift raw material prices, which have been depressed for years by a persistent supply glut. The rapid price gains have defied the supply-demand fundamentals of the commodities, and analysts warn there is a risk of a bigger correction ahead, similar to last summer's crash in Chinese shares,

which also followed a frothy run-up.

"If prices in China go too far off from fundamentals, markets in China could lose credibility, similar to what had happened in the stock market," Citigroup analysts said in a report.

The most traded September iron ore on the Dalian Commodity Exchange dropped by its 6 percent downside limit for a second day in a row yesterday, before closing 5.4 percent lower at 434.50 yuan (\$66.95) a ton. Coking coal and coke on Dalian also slid by the 6 percent maximum allowed by the exchange, but coke slightly trimmed losses to end down 4.9 percent. — Agencies

IN RUSSIA'S DETROIT, LAYOFFS ARE BLAMED ON FOREIGN INTERLOPERS

TOGLIATTI: In the heartland of Russia's struggling car-making industry, people blame foreigners for their economic hardship, not their country's rulers. The Volga river city of Togliatti is the nearest there is to a Russian version of Detroit, and it was hit hard when Russia's economy slowed down, aggravated by a fall in global oil prices and Western sanctions over Russia's role in the Ukraine crisis.

Russian consumers responded to the slowdown by cutting their biggest item of discretionary spending, and for most people that meant putting off buying a new car; a body blow for a city where car-making underpins the local economy. Thousands of staff at Avtovaz, the company that dominates the city about 1,000 km (600 miles) southeast of Moscow, lost their jobs, and a web of businesses that depend on the auto industry saw their revenues drop.

Residents share an opinion about who is to blame: the Renault-Nissan alliance which holds a controlling stake in Avtovaz, and the foreign managers the owners hired. "The company's foreign owners are doing nothing to protect the workers," local member of parliament Leonid Kalashnikov wrote in an election pamphlet. "It's not surprising that today Togliatti is on the very brink of a social explosion." Avtovaz declined to comment on accusations that it was damaging the domestic auto industry or mistreating workers.

Culture clash

Blaming foreigners for Russia's misfortune is a common theme under the rule of President Vladimir Putin. The Kremlin promotes the view that the economic crisis is in part a Western plot to punish Moscow for standing up to the United States. In Togliatti, a city of more than 700,000 named after a former Italian communist leader where the roads are filled with the boxy Lada

saloons churned out from the Avtovaz plant, there is a more immediate reason to dislike foreign influence. Bo Andersson, the Swedish head of the firm until he was removed last month, had been on a drive to weed out inefficient suppliers, in some cases giving the contracts instead to foreign firms. That program contributed to the shutdown of the biggest Avtovaz supplier, Avtovazagregat, and two Avtovaz subsidiaries, leading to thousands of lay-offs. At the same time, Andersson was laying off staff at Avtovaz itself, a process that accelerated as sales of Lada cars plummeted. Sales last year were 40 percent lower than in 2013. In 2008, Avtovaz employed about 110,000 people, or around one in seven of Togliatti's population. By the end of February this year, the number was down to about 44,000, according to Sergei Zaitsev, an Avtovaz union boss who also sits on the company's board.

In a newspaper interview shortly before he was removed, Andersson said tough economic times required difficult decisions and Avtovaz shareholders had given him carte blanche to take the decisions he deemed necessary, including on lay-offs. The redundancies are standard Western corporate practice. But they collided with a different culture in Russia, one that views the auto industry as a source of national pride and tends to avoid job cuts in favor of cutting pay and working hours.

"Avtovaz is being wrecked more than anything by Bo Andersson and his henchmen, by the invaders," said Oleg, a jobless former Avtovaz employee who was standing in a line at a labour exchange in Togliatti last month. Yevgeny, a former procurement specialist who lost his job at Avtovaz, said foreign producers were wrecking Avtovaz so they could then take its market. "It's obviously sabotage," he said. They declined to be identified by their full names because they did not want to jeopardize their job prospects. — Reuters

SOUR APPLE RESULTS HIT TECH SHARES

SPANISH BONDS UNDERPERFORM AS VOTERS FACE NEW ELECTION

LONDON: European shares followed Asia's lower yesterday, as technology stocks fell after worse-than expected results from Apple and Twitter, while a weaker dollar before a US monetary policy decision kept oil close to 2016 highs. Apple shares dropped nearly 7 percent in after-hours US trade on Tuesday after company reported a decline in iPhone sales and its first drop in revenue in more than a decade. Twitter lost more than 10 percent

after first-quarter revenue lagged expectations. The pan-European FTSEurofirst 300 index fell 0.3 percent in early trade. Austria's AMS fell 2.4 percent, though Dialog Semiconductor and ARM reversed early declines.

Japan's Nikkei index closed 0.4 percent lower and Taiwan shares fell 0.2 percent as shares of suppliers of parts for iPhones fell. Banks helped support European shares.

Several, including Barclays and Santander, reported lower first-quarter profits. However Barclays shares rose nearly 4 percent and Santander 2.85 percent. Earlier, MSCI's broadest index of Asia-Pacific shares outside Japan retreated 0.7 percent. Australian shares closed down 0.6 percent. Banks fell there after weak inflation data revived prospects for a rate cut as early as next week. On Tuesday, the S&P 500 index closed up 0.2 percent, but the

Apple and Twitter results dragged index futures lower.

The dollar fell 0.3 percent against a basket of currencies as investors waited for a Federal Reserve decision on US rates at 1800 GMT. No change in rates is expected, but the Fed may signal its intention to tighten policy later this year. Economists polled by Reuters expect two increases this year, although futures prices show traders do not expect rates to rise until late 2016, according to CME Group's FedWatch. "On a risk/reward basis there is more scope there for a hawkish surprise, because the market's been pricing itself for more dovishness for a very long time," said Rabobank currency strategist Jane Foley.

The euro rose 0.3 percent to \$1.1327 while the yen gained 0.1 percent to 111.15 per dollar. The Bank of Japan announces its policy decision today. The Australian dollar was the big mover, falling 1.7 percent to \$0.7618. Sterling held close to Tuesday's 12-week high of

\$1.4640 hit on rising expectations Britons will vote in June to stay in the European Union. The weaker dollar helped lift oil prices. Brent crude, the international benchmark, rose 61 cents to \$46.35 a barrel, within a whisker of Tuesday's 2016 high of \$46.49.

Copper fell for a third consecutive day as the benefits of a weaker dollar were outweighed by worries over demand for China. The metal fell 0.9 percent to \$4.917, close to Tuesday's one-week low. Gold edged up about 0.1 percent to \$1,245 an ounce. In euro-zone debt markets, German 10-year benchmark yields held steady at 0.29 percent. Spanish equivalents edged up after a final round of talks on forming a Spanish government failed on Tuesday, meaning a new election will be held in June. "The problem markets have not really digested is that polls point to a similar election outcome to what we saw in December," said DZ Bank strategist Christian Lenk. — Reuters

Daily Kuwait Stock Exchange Report. Wednesday 27 April 2016. Includes tables for Market Indices, Traded Stocks, and Sectoral Performance.



NEW YORK: People walk past the Nasdaq MarketSite in New York. Nasdaq reports financial results yesterday. — AP

OIL HITS 2016 HIGH

SAUDI, KUWAITI OILFIELD OUTAGE SUPPORTS BRENT

LONDON: Oil hit its highest level this year yesterday, driven by a falling dollar and evidence of declining US supply, putting the price on course for its strongest monthly performance since last April. The prospect of an agreement among the world's largest exporters to limit production, which had provided the catalyst for a 55 percent rally since mid-February, evaporated almost two weeks ago when a meeting between OPEC members and their non-OPEC counterparts ended in stalemate. Since then, Brent has hit its highest since November and, aided by further evidence of declining output anywhere from the US shale basin to the North Sea, attracted fresh investment cash.

US West Texas Intermediate crude futures rose 86 cents to \$44.90 a barrel. Brent received extra support from news that Saudi Arabia and Kuwait appear no closer to restarting their jointly operated Khafji oilfield, which produced 280,000 to 300,000 barrels per day before environmental problems forced a closure in October 2014. WTI was further bolstered after the American Petroleum Institute reported a draw of nearly 1.1 million barrels in US crude inventories last week. Analysts had expected a 2.4-million-barrel build.

"There was definitely a bit of a turning point when we had the initial sell-off after the producer meeting," CMC Markets strategist Jasper Lawler said. "That got reversed and went on to show that (a production freeze) was a fairly small part of what had been supporting the price and really, it's the supply outlook for the US coupled with the dollar that is really driving returns." Brent crude futures were up \$1.03 at \$46.77 a barrel by 0835 GMT, having risen nearly 20 percent in April, their largest one-month gain in a year. The international benchmark earlier hit a 2016 high of \$46.81.

The dollar was down on the day, having fallen about 5 percent against a basket of currencies since the start of the year, even as US interest rates are expected to rise. The Federal Reserve's policy-setting committee meets yesterday but is not expected to announce any change in rates, leaving traders to scour the post-meeting statement for any clues on the outlook. A weaker dollar cuts the cost to non-US investors of buying dollar-denominated assets such as oil futures. "A weaker US dollar and expectations of stronger fundamentals drove crude oil prices higher. Sentiment continues to improve, with major producer BP suggesting the markets may rebalance by the end of the year," ANZ bank said. — Reuters

GOLD RISES AS US DOLLAR WEAKENS

LONDON: Gold rose for a third straight session yesterday as weaker-than-expected US data weighed on the dollar ahead of the Federal Reserve's policy decision later in the day. The Fed is likely to keep rates steady, and the focus rests squarely on the tone of its statement and any timing for an eventual rate hike. The US central bank raised rates in December for the first time in nearly a decade. Spot gold was up 0.2 percent at \$1,245.80 an ounce by 1006 GMT. "The gold market is on hold before the Fed meeting ... but nobody thinks the Fed will hike rates today and June is hardly an option, which should be negative for the dollar and positive for gold," Danske Bank senior analyst Jens Pedersen said.

unchanged economic outlook and a more balanced assessment of the risks should enhance the Fed's confidence to proceed with further normalization," it said.

Data on Tuesday showed orders for long-lasting US manufactured goods rebounded far less than expected in March, implying that business spending and economic growth were weak in the first quarter. Another report showed an ebb in consumer confidence in April. "Gold ground higher, continuing to trade in a tight range. The weaker dollar has supported demand, but investors remain wary heading into the central bank meetings," ANZ said in a note. "An

Gold is highly sensitive to rising rates, which lift the opportunity cost of holding non-yielding bullion, while boosting the dollar, in which it is priced. Bullion has rallied 17 percent so far in 2016 on speculation that the Fed may not raise rates this year amid uncertainty over the global economy. OCBC Bank said the Fed "could strike a careful balance between calling for gradual policy normalization and making sense of the recent spate of mixed economic data amid slightly stronger crude oil prices."

A slump in demand from key Asian consumers will likely push gold prices lower in the short term, GFMS analysts at Thomson Reuters said in a report on Tuesday. Global gold demand tumbled by 24 percent year-on-year to 781 tons in the first three months of the year, its weakest quarter in seven years, GFMS said. Among other precious metals, silver rose 1.1 percent to \$17.34, while platinum added 0.9 percent to \$1,017 and palladium gained 0.4 percent to \$603. — Reuters

HOUSEHOLDS WARY OF HOLLANDE'S 'GOING BETTER' CLAIM

FRENCH JOBLESS CLAIMS FALL MOST IN OVER 15 YEARS



MONTPELLIER: People wait in a branch of France's national employment agency Pole Emploi where a board read "Reception without appointment" in Montpellier, southern France. A relief for the French government in a tensed social context: unemployment decreased in March by -1.7%, to reach 3.53 million of job-seekers without any activity. — AFP

PARIS: If France's latest consumer confidence figures are anything to go by, President Francois Hollande is failing to convince voters that the economy is turning the corner as decisively as the deeply unpopular leader says it is. A year away from a presidential election in which Hollande has yet to say whether he will run, household confidence stagnated in April versus March at an eight-month low, data from the INSEE statistics agency showed yesterday. The monthly survey of households also found expectations for their standard of living over the next 12 months declined for the fourth month running, reaching the lowest point since January 2015.

That jars with comments this month from Hollande on prime-time television in which he said that his policies were bearing fruit and things were at last improving. "Things are going better," he said. "Things aren't getting better yet. We'll have to see in a few months or so, but I'm not sure that it's getting better now," said Franck Puget, a 45-year-old worker in the insurance industry, stopped in a central Paris street by Reuters TV. Hollande can take some relief in monthly jobless figures yesterday which showed that the number of people out of work fell in March by the most in over 15 years. The

figures nevertheless raise some questions. Much of the decline was due to people dropping out of the tally because they had not updated their job-seeker status. That could be a sign they found work. However, with the average time people stay unemployed at a record 580 days, it could also be down to people giving up hope of finding a job and so not bothering to update their status. Going by INSEE's survey, households are not yet buying into the idea that a sustained recovery in the labor market is taking hold. Unemployment fears rose in April to the highest level since October.

"There are not a lot of people that believe (in a recovery)," said Francoise Escoffier, a lawyer, told Reuters TV ahead of the data. "There's no reason to expect a decrease in unemployment and a stronger economy." The government expects the economy to grow 1.5 percent this year, but a Reuters poll this month of private economists showed that on average they expect 1.2 percent - the same as last year. Economists estimate anything less than 1.5 percent growth would not be enough to get unemployment falling sustainably, which would be bad news for Hollande since he has said he will not run for re-election unless joblessness comes down. — Reuters

EASTERN LIBYA SHIPS FIRST OIL CARGO IN DEFIANCE OF TRIPOLI

BENGHAZI: A government based in eastern Libya has shipped its first cargo of crude in defiance of authorities in the capital Tripoli, a bold move that could deepen the divisions that have brought chaos since the fall of Muammar Gaddafi. The Tripoli authorities asked the UN Security Council on Tuesday to blacklist the India-flagged tanker Distya Ameya, which left the eastern Libyan port of Hariga overnight carrying oil they said could not be lawfully sold.

The eastern government has set up its own National Oil Corporation (NOC) to act in parallel to the Tripoli-based NOC that is recognized internationally as the only legitimate seller of Libyan oil. The tanker departed Hariga carrying 650,000 barrels of crude late on Monday bound for Malta, said Mohamed Al-Manfi, a spokesman for the eastern NOC. Maltese national TV said the ship was in international waters near Malta. The island's Port Directorate said the tanker was not authorized to dock there and requests would be refused.

The ship last reported its position through the publicly available AIS tracking system earlier on Tuesday as still in Libyan waters. Libya's economy depends almost exclusively on oil export revenue and the fight over who controls those funds has driven chronic instability and civil war since long-serving autocrat Gaddafi was toppled and killed by Western-backed rebels in 2011. Parallel parliaments and governments have operated in Tripoli and the east since 2014. Much of the country is in the hands of dozens of armed groups loyal to one or other government, while small areas are controlled by Islamic State fighters.

Political division, labor disputes and security threats have reduced Libya's oil output to less than a quarter of the 1.6 million barrels per day produced before the uprising. A UN-backed unity government, which arrived in the capital last month, includes figures from across Libya's divides but has not yet been fully accepted by either of the two loose alliances fighting for power since 2014.

UN resolutions

It was not immediately clear how the eastern NOC could conduct a sale given the international opposition. One possibility might be to attempt a ship-to-ship transfer in international waters. "We are concerned about purchases of Libyan oil outside of legitimate channels," US State Department spokesman John Kirby said on Tuesday, emphasizing that all sales should go through the Tripoli-based National Oil Corporation. The United States has stopped unauthorized sales of Libyan oil in the past, sending special forces in 2014 to board a tanker off Cyprus loaded with crude shipped by a group pressing for more autonomy in eastern Libya. The US troops forced that ship to return. Another senior US official declined to be drawn on whether Washington might undertake a similar operation, saying it would "look at all appropriate mechanisms to address the situation."

If the shipment went through, it could spark copycat sales that would further shrink the unity government's revenues. "That's very bad for Libya and very threatening, potentially, to the viability of any Libyan government," the second US official said on condition of anonymity. Among US concerns are that such oil sales could fund arms purchases by those resisting the unity government's authority. The official said the United States and other nations could impose sanctions on those found to violate UN Security Council resolutions on Libya, though he did not provide details.

The eastern NOC has long been trying to sell its own oil, but until now those efforts have been blocked by the NOC in Tripoli, with the support of Western countries. The NOC in Tripoli says any sale by its eastern rival would breach UN Security Council resolutions and put the future of Libya's economy at risk. NOC Tripoli officials said on Tuesday they had notified the United Nations, countries with naval forces in the Mediterranean and a unity government now working in Tripoli that the shipment had not been authorized and should be stopped. "We have done our job and we are waiting for them to do theirs," said spokesman Mohamed al-Harari. — Reuters

GERMAN CONSUMER MORALE ON THE RISE

PUBLIC SECTOR STRIKE GROUNDS OVER 1,200 FLIGHTS

FRANKFURT: Consumer confidence in Germany is on the rise again as households feel that economic recovery will gather pace in the coming months, a poll found yesterday. "Consumers are working from the assumption that the German economy will regain momentum again in the months to come," market research company GfK said in a statement. "Economic expectations rose in April, pulling up income expectations and consumers' willingness to spend from already very good levels," the statement said.

Looking to May, GfK's headline household confidence index was forecast to rise to 9.7 points from 9.4 points, the institute said. The rise "confirms the GfK's forecast that private consumption will rise by around two percent in this year, after growth of 1.9 percent last year," it continued. With the economy projected to grow by 1.6 percent overall, domestic demand would remain one of the main pillars of recovery, supported by rising employment, increasing income and very moderate inflation, GfK said.

Public sector strike

Meanwhile, walkouts by members of Germany's biggest services sector union, Verdi, led to the cancellation of more than 1,200 flights into and out of the country's main airports yesterday, with flag carrier Lufthansa among the hardest hit. Six airports are being targeted by Verdi members working in air safety control, ground services, at check-in counters and in engineering workshops at the airports. They are so-called "warning" strikes intended to increase the pressure in a battle the union is fighting over public sector wages with local and federal governments.

In Munich alone, 740 flights were scrapped a spokesman for the airport said. And in Frankfurt, more than 390 flights were cancelled, a spokesman for airport operator Fraport said. More than 90 flights were cancelled taking off or landing at Cologne/Bonn airport and 54 in Dusseldorf, and passengers faced delays at the airports of Hanover and Dortmund. Germany's biggest airline Lufthansa took the brunt of the strike with more than 900 flights cancelled and 87,000 passengers grounded.

A spokesman for rival Air Berlin said that 87 domestic flights were hit. Lufthansa has been repeatedly hit by strikes over the past year in wage disputes of its own, with both pilots and cabin staff staging a number of walkouts over pay and early retirement provisions. It slammed the stoppages by Verdi as unacceptable, insisting that it was not involved in the dispute this time. Yesterday's strike follows similar stoppages Verdi has recently organized in other institutions, including hospitals, town halls and child care centers.

Verdi is demanding pay increase of six percent for more than two million public sector workers around the country. Unions and management could also be on confrontation course in other sectors, with giant engineering sector union IG Metall demanding wage increases of five percent for its members. France is set to see industrial action hit flights today with the civil aviation authority DGAC saying carriers should prepare to reduce services out of Orly south of Paris by 20 percent after the CGT union threatened industrial action over controversial labor reforms. A spokesman said the Charles de Gaulle main hub north of Paris would see delays rather than cancellations.



SYDNEY: Shoppers visit a shopping arcade in the central business district of Sydney yesterday. — AFP

AUSTRALIA'S QUARTERLY CPI SEES FIRST FALL SINCE 2008

SYDNEY: Australian consumer prices fell in January-March for the first time since 2008 during the global financial crisis, data showed yesterday, putting pressure on the central bank to cut interest rates and sending the local dollar tumbling. The statistics bureau said the consumer price index (CPI) fell 0.2 percent in the quarter from the previous three months-when prices had risen 0.4 percent - as plunging world oil prices sent the cost of fuel lower. The Australian dollar sank from 77.66 US cents to 76.54 cents soon after the figures were released as traders bet on a fresh cut in interest rates.

The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) has already slashed borrowing costs to a record low of two percent as authorities try to shore up the economy which is exiting an unprecedented mining investment boom at a time of tumbling commodity prices. For the year to March, inflation came in at just 1.3 percent, well down from the 1.7 percent hike over the year to December. ANZ senior economist Jo Masters said the figures were "extremely weak, with both headline and underlying inflation well below expectations".

The RBA has targeted an underlying rate of 2.0-3.0 percent

but the latest figures had the underlying measures of trimmed and weighted mean at 1.7 percent and 1.4 percent in the year to March. "Today's data puts the RBA in a difficult position," Masters said. "The inflation pulse is weak and it now seems likely that underlying inflation will remain below the policy target band for some time." That said, domestic activity looks solid at the moment, although the RBA would be cognizant that some of the tailwinds are likely to fade in the second half of this year.

Chris Weston, chief market strategist at IG in Melbourne, said inflation had now become "a major headache" for the central bank. However, TD Securities said it still expected the RBA to keep interest rates at 2.0 percent when it holds its next policy meeting on Tuesday. "The RBA board does not tend to jump at shadows, and will no doubt next week discuss at length the details of the report," it said in a note. The Tuesday RBA meeting comes on the same day Treasurer Scott Morrison releases the national budget. Canberra is looking to spur growth as it seeks to rein in a budget deficit that last year ballooned to Aus\$37.4 billion. — AFP

News

in brief

Tunisia plans to issue \$500 million bond within weeks

TUNIS: Tunisia plans to issue a \$500 million bond within a few weeks after securing a US loan guarantee and has postponed a previously planned issue of a bond dominated in euros, two government sources told Reuters yesterday. The sources said the government decided to delay the planned 1 billion euro-denominated bond until the second half of the year after obtaining the \$500 million US loan guarantee, which will give it more favorable rates on the US market. "In two to five weeks, Tunisia will issue a \$500 million bond on the US market after getting the loan guarantee," one of the sources said. A second source confirmed the details of the dollar-denominated bond and the decision to push back the euro-denominated issue until the second half of 2016.

Nintendo sinks into a bigger quarterly loss

TOKYO: Japanese video-game maker Nintendo Co reported a 24 billion yen (\$216 million) loss for January-March yesterday, bigger than the loss it reported the previous year. Nintendo also said yesterday that its new game platform codenamed NX will be launched globally in March next year. Some game fans had expected the machine might be shown at the annual E3 electronics show in Los Angeles in June. Quarterly sales fell 26 percent on-year to 78.8 billion yen (\$708 million) as overseas revenues were hurt by a stronger yen. Nintendo racked up a nearly 18 billion yen quarterly loss the previous year. The Kyoto-based company behind Pokemon and Super Mario games said yesterday it expects to recover to a 35 billion yen (\$314 million) profit for the fiscal year ending in March 2017. For the fiscal year just ended, it earned 16.5 billion yen (\$148 million), down 61 percent from the previous fiscal year.



MAPUTO: Fishing boats from 'Ematum' and 8 speed-boats, belonging to Mozambique state company 'Proindicus' are seen on a quay at the Maputo Harbor in Maputo. — AFP

Mozambique explains \$1.4 bn 'hidden debt'

MAPUTO: Mozambique said most of \$1.4 billion in previously hidden loans had been used to fund maritime security and shipyards, a week after the IMF suspended the country over the undisclosed sum. The Washington-based International Monetary Fund last Wednesday called off a staff mission to Mozambique, one of the 10 poorest countries in the world. Maputo "did not inform (the IMF) at the time" of its debt, government spokesman Mouzinho Saide said yesterday. The Mozambican state was guarantor for a \$622-million loan taken out by the public capital enterprise Proindicus in 2013 and another loan of \$535 million to Mozambique Asset Management in 2014, Saide said. Proindicus was created in 2012, primarily to protect areas where offshore gas is drilled, as well as fighting piracy, illegal immigration, drug trafficking and illegal fishing. Mozambique Asset Management supports two shipyards in the country, providing maintenance services to public and private vessels.

Ethihad Airways net profit hits \$103 m

ABU DHABI: Etihad Airways said yesterday its net profit for 2015 surged 41 percent to \$103 million on the back of rising passenger numbers and cargo volumes. The Abu Dhabi-based carrier said its consolidated revenues reached \$9.02 billion, compared with airline-only revenues of \$7.55 billion the year before. Revenues from partner companies amounted to \$1.38 billion, compared to \$1.13 billion in 2014. Etihad acknowledged that the inclusion of non-airline revenues, such as catering and ground handling, in the 2015 figures meant they were not directly comparable with the previous years. The carrier said it transported 17.6 million passengers in 2015, up 18.9 percent from the year before, while cargo tonnage increased to 591,000 tons from 569,000 tons in 2014. "Our mandate is to build a sustainably profitable airline."

Kia Motors Q1 profit up on SUV demand

SEOUL: Kia Motors Corp, South Korea's second-largest automaker, posted a solid first-quarter net profit yesterday on the back of a weaker Korean won and strong demand for its SUVs and motorhomes. Net profit stood at 944.6 billion won (\$822.7 million) during the January-March period, up 4.6 percent from a year earlier, the company said in a regulatory filing. "Profits have greatly increased thanks to the won's depreciation, popularity of new models such as Sportage (SUV) ... and a greater share of RVs (motorhomes) in our product line-up," it said. Operating profit jumped 23.8 percent on-year to 633.6 billion won on sales of 12.65 trillion won, up 13.2 percent from the previous year. Kia Motors, along with the country's largest automaker Hyundai motor, forms the world's fifth-largest automaking group. Hyundai on Tuesday posted an 11.6 percent on-year drop in net profit for January to March.

Total austerity diet limits the Q1 losses

PARIS: French oil giant Total yesterday unveiled first quarter net profits down 40 percent on lower oil prices yet better than forecast on higher production and cost cuts. Net income fell to \$1.6 billion (1.4 billion euros), better than the \$1.2 billion consensus of a panel of analysts consulted by Bloomberg albeit down from \$2.66 billion for the same period last year. Net adjusted results, stripping out elements such as stock, dropped 37 percent to \$1.6 billion on sales of \$32.8 billion, down 22 percent. In the face of persistently weak oil prices Total has embarked on austerity to slash costs and said it would be ramping down investments in 2016 with organic investments below the \$19 billion announced in February, which was already down on \$23 billion for 2015. "Operating costs are decreasing as planned with the objective of achieving \$900 million in savings during the year," Total said.

BARCLAYS REVEALS PROFITS DIP, MOVE TO SELL ITS FRENCH UNIT

LONDON: Troubled British bank Barclays posted sliding profits yesterday, hit by losses in non-core assets flagged for disposal, adding it was in exclusive talks to sell its French retail division. Earnings after taxation declined seven percent to £433 million (\$630 million, 558 million euros) in the three months to March, Barclays said in a results statement. That compared with net profit of £465 million last time around.

Revenues slid 13 percent to £4.6 billion in the reporting period. Pre-tax profits sank 25 percent to £793 million, hurt also by rising credit impairment charges and a poor performance by its investment banking arm. That undershot market expectations of £846 million. The group meanwhile stressed its "cautious" outlook

ahead of Britain's crucial referendum on European Union membership on June 23.

The bank added it has entered "exclusive discussions" with AnaCap Financial Partners over the possible sale of its French retail banking activities, in a move which would mark its exit from continental European retail banking. No possible price tag was given for the French division, which employs around 1,000 people according to a company spokeswoman. The talks are part of Barclays' ongoing efforts to shed non-core assets, as it attempts to recover from several scandals. The French operations include its network of 74 branches, life insurance business, and wealth and investment management operations.

Barclays will continue to operate its corporate and investment banking activities in France. "Accelerating the disposal of our non-core unit is the key to creating a simpler, more focused Barclays, and to eliminating the drag on the performance of our strong core business," said chief executive Jes Staley. "Today's announcement, together with the sale of our Asia Wealth operations announced earlier this month, represent significant steps forward, and are tangible evidence of the progress we continue to make. "This transaction, once completed, would effectively finish our exit from Continental European branch-based retail banking," said Staley, adding that the French unit "no longer fits" with the group's strategic ambitions. — AFP

JAZEERA AIRWAYS NET PROFIT UP 33 PERCENT

KUWAIT: Jazeera Airways yesterday announced its financial results for the first quarter of 2016. The company registered a net profit of KD 4.0 million, an increase of 33.0% from the same quarter last year. Q1 2016 Highlights: Operating revenue: KD11.9 million, less 7.8% from Q1 2015; Net profit: KD4.0 million, up 33.0% from Q1 2015; Passengers: up 5.1% from Q1 2015; Load factor: up 2.4% from Q1 2015; On-time Performance: 90.9%.

Jazeera Airways Chairman, Marwan Boodai, said: "We've had a busy and exciting quarter as we lay the ground-work for the growth and expansion of our offering in 2016 and beyond. Soon we will start flights to Taif, our third destination in Saudi Arabia, with the first flight scheduled for June 7th. On the product development front, we kicked-off various construction programs for initiatives that fall under our 'The Next Big Thing' strategy, launched in February of this year, and we are on track to deliver starting with the dedicated business class at Kuwait International Airport and the remote check-in and long-term parking facility.

Both initiatives are in development today and are set to launch in the third quarter of this year. "Our outlook for the year remains unchanged and

in line with our sector's seasonality. While the excessive overcapacity on the sectors we operate poses a downward pressure on our yields, we expect to counter this pressure in the peak summer season and close the year with growth in our operational profits and our bottom line."

The Next Big Thing

The Next Big Thing is a series of new ambitious and game-changing initiatives that will boost Jazeera Airways' offering, reinforce its brand, and attract and retain more customers in 2016 and beyond. Below is a glimpse into the four new initiatives and how they will transform Jazeera Airways' offering.

Remote check-in

Jazeera Airways is constructing a state-of-the-art check-in facility located two minutes away from the airport to serve as a second option for flight check-in. Operational by end of 2016, the facility is a single-stop remote check-in facility with valets for both short-term and long-term parking and luggage assistance. Once travelers and their luggage are checked in, they will be shuttled to the terminal



where they can proceed directly to passport control, thus completely bypassing the hassle of navigating Kuwait International Airport's parking and check-in congestion.

Exclusive lounge

Starting Q3 2016, Jazeera Airways Business Class travelers will enjoy exclusive access to what will be the newest lounge at Kuwait International Airport, and the only lounge at the airport with a direct and unobstructed view of the tarmac. High-speed internet, comfortable seating, food, and drinks will be offered at the lounge.

In-flight broadband

Starting Q1 2017, Jazeera Airways' fleet will be equipped with cutting-edge broadband internet technology from Rockwell Collins, who have chosen Jazeera Airways to be the launch customer for this new service. In 2017 Jazeera Airways travelers will have the opportunity to live stream their favorite TV shows, movies, news, and sports on any personal device.

Jazeera Airways Long-Haul

Jazeera Airways is currently looking to expand its network to include key long-haul destinations by partnering with an international operator. Though still in its early stages, the airline confirms the new routes will be non-stop and offered through a true partnership with a global airline.

Jazeera Airways Terminal

The airline is in an advanced planning stage to establish a dedicated terminal at Kuwait International Airport, which will help Jazeera Airways better serve its travelers and help relieve the congestion at the country's single-terminal airport.



WIN UP TO 15 KILOS OF GOLD THIS FESTIVE SEASON AT MALABAR GOLD & DIAMONDS

KUWAIT: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the leading jewelry retailer unfurled the details of its much awaited campaign to celebrate this festive season. This campaign will run at all Malabar Gold & Diamonds outlets in Middle East & Far East from 27 April 2016 to 14 May, 2016. The customers get unprecedented opportunities to win a total of 15 kilos of gold. A true shopper's delight, Malabar Gold & Diamonds will captivate the customers by exhibiting eye catching designs in gold, platinum, diamonds and precious stones from different parts of the world to flaunt any occasion or event and are well priced too.

For every purchase of gold jewelry above KD150, the customers get a 'Scratch & Win' coupon through which they can win a guaranteed gold coin or up to 250 gold coins instantly. The customers will get guaranteed pearl jewelry on every diamond jewelry purchases. Customers also have a great opportunity to pay 10% of the value on their desired jewelry and get gold rate protection until 14 May, 2016, during this festive season. The customers also get a fabulous chance to buy 22K 8 gm gold coins with absolutely no making charges from any of Malabar Gold & Diamonds outlets in GCC during this period.

To add more glitter to this season, the brand has also unveiled the latest collection of jewelry specially designed for the festive season in gold, diamonds and precious gems to suit the tastes of their multicultural and multinational customers. Moreover, the customers can update any of their old ornaments purchased from GCC with the brand new enticing collection of Malabar Gold & Diamonds without any loss. Any 22K old gold ornaments purchased from GCC can be exchanged with Malabar Gold & Diamonds designs by paying only making charges ensuring they don't lose any value on the rate of gold. All these offers will be valid at their outlets in GCC until 14 May 2016.

DRAGON CITY LAUNCHES 'MONDAY WHOLESALE, OFFER & ORDER'

MANAMA: Dragon City will conduct a series promotion action in the coming May and June - where a special weekly event will be launched to local retailers and group buyers, which is called "Monday Wholesale - Offer & Order", where all Bahrain businessmen are invited to bargain with the Dragon City tenants for the best wholesale price. The 1st Event will be started on Apr. 25, 2016, Monday morning between 10.00 am to 2.00 pm, and each Monday will have the same Offer.

"According to statistics of footfall of the Dragon City Mall, Dragon City has received over 1 million visitors since the past four months, and especially attracted more and more visitors from KSA and Kuwait," said Patrick Zheng, G Manager of the Chinamex Bahrain Management Company. "But this is not the Dragon City's goal", he added. "Dragon City is aiming to act as a wholesale and re-export business hub in the Region, it is a different business model than the other shopping malls.

To tell its special business model, Dragon City will commence a series of business promotion actions in the coming months, and people especially the businessmen will see something new." Dragon City was grand opened on Dec 27, 2015, under the patronage of His Highness Prime Minister. Till today, nearly 600 shops have initiated their trade business in Dragon City, and 90% are from China, serving the local consumers and retailers with tens of thousands categories of selected products from building materials to house hold products and children products.

INVESTORS WANT MUTUAL FUNDS TO GET TOUGHER ON CEO PAY PACKAGES

POLLS UNDERSCORE A GROWING ANGST OVER CEO PAY

BOSTON: Individual investors are angry about CEO pay, and they want their mutual fund firms to do something about it. Top money managers such as BlackRock Inc and Vanguard Group oversee trillions of dollars for individuals, but the firms rarely challenge CEO pay in their proxy votes on behalf of investors. That practice may not match well with the views of their clients. When asked directly, most investors in American fund firms are critical of CEO pay packages, according to a national Reuters/Ipsos poll.

Among respondents, 59 percent said chief executives at S&P 500 companies were paid "too much," and 56 percent said mutual fund firms "should challenge executive pay more often." The survey was conducted between March 22 and March 31. It included 1,024 people who said they invested with one or more of five top asset managers and 722 people who said they had at least some understanding of what a fund manager is. It has a credibility interval of about 4 percentage points.

The poll results underscore a growing angst over large-company CEO pay, which now runs more than 300 times that of US rank-and-file workers, according to a study by the AFL-CIO, the largest US federation of unions. Many CEOs at major companies have pay packages worth \$10 million or more. One poll participant, Fargo, North Dakota cabdriver Brent Hartz, said CEO pay is often "ridiculous" and worries that managers of funds he owns - such as the \$50 billion Vanguard Growth Index Fund - are too cozy with corporate chiefs. "It's almost

like they're in cahoots with each other," Hartz said in a telephone interview.

Asset managers hold about 30 percent of US corporate stock, giving them great influence over executive compensation and other corporate governance issues. Retail investors have about 89 percent of the nearly \$16 trillion held in mutual funds, according to trade group Investment Company Institute. All of the five large firms - BlackRock Inc, Vanguard Group, Fidelity Investments, State Street Corp and T. Rowe Price - emphasize that executive pay should be linked to company financial performance. Their voting history, however, shows that they rarely use their ballots to challenge compensation packages for perceived underperformance.

Last year, the firms cast their advisory "say on pay" votes in support of senior executives 96 percent of the time or more at S&P 500 firms, according to research firm Proxy Insight. That level of support was typical for recent years, as median pay among S&P 500 CEOs rose to \$11.3 million in 2014 from \$9.4 million in 2010, according to pay consultant Fariant Advisors. Big fund firms are facing more questions about their pay votes. BlackRock faces a shareholder proposal that calls for the world's largest asset manager to report on how it might bring its voting practices in line with its stated support of linking pay and performance. BlackRock calls such a report unnecessary.

BlackRock spokesman Ed Sweeney said the firm believes that talking privately with company officials is the best way to address pay issues. Last year, the firm engaged with about 700

US companies and focused on executive compensation matters in 45 percent of those meetings, he said. Vanguard spokeswoman Linda Wolohan said via email that executive pay "is a matter on which people have a wide variety of views (as supported by your survey results)." Pay is just one factor Vanguard considers in its proxy voting and it often addresses pay issues with company boards privately, she said.

Fidelity spokesman Charlie Keller said that its funds "are managed with one overriding goal: To provide the greatest possible return." Spokespeople for T. Rowe Price and State Street declined to comment. Publicly-traded US companies were required to submit the pay of their top executives for advisory votes by their investors under the 2010 Dodd-Frank financial reform act. With thousands of votes to cast each year through electronic platforms, the companies each have their own governance specialists to oversee their voting decisions.

Retired Massachusetts congressman Barney Frank, one of the act's creators, has suggested that funds with highly paid executives make poor overseers of CEO pay. BlackRock CEO Laurence Fink, for instance, made \$25.8 million last year. Several leaders of union and state pension funds, which vote against executive pay more often, said the Reuters/Ipsos poll results suggest that most investors want funds to take a harder line. "Ultimately, it has got to be driven by their clients," said Mike McCauley, a governance officer for the Florida State Board of Administration, which manages \$178 billion.—Reuters



NEW MERCEDES-BENZ COMPACT MODELS LAUNCHED IN KUWAIT

KUWAIT: Athletic, modern, urban, powerful - this is just a glimpse of the Mercedes-Benz compact cars made for the new generation seeking design and performance and the chance to own a Mercedes-Benz. The A-Class, GLA and CLA offer more driving pleasure and emotional appeal than ever before in the compact car segment, and thanks to the authorised General Distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait, Abdul Rahman Albisher & Zaid Alkazemi Company, the cars are now available in Kuwait with variant engines that will make every car enthusiast's dream come true.

The new A-Class

The new-generation A-Class from Mercedes-Benz reconciles the conflicting aims of sporty performance and enhanced comfort: Mercedes-Benz has increased the range of available engines with an A 250 that produces a peak output of 155 kW (211 hp) and maximum torque of 350 Nm. With its dramatic design in the style of the successful MERCEDES AMG PETRONAS Formula 1 team, the special "Motorsport Edition" model will particularly appeal to racing fans. The Mercedes-AMG A 45 4MATIC also benefits from the model update. With a peak output of 280 kW (381 hp) and maximum torque of 475 Nm, the entry-level model from Mercedes-AMG is the world's most powerful mid-sized sports model. The revised gear ratios, aerodynamic fine-tuning and the new DYNAMIC SELECT driving modes raise overall performance to a higher level, underlining the claim to leadership in this market segment.

GLA: Fit for rough terrain

Progressive in design, the Mercedes-Benz GLA is a trusted day-to-day motoring companion ready for any adventure, and with good off road capability to match. Whether in the city, to the office or on the beach it reinterprets the crossover segment and

effortlessly masters all challenges while being tough enough for rough terrain. The GLA is highly manoeuvrable around the city, lively on the open roads beyond the metropolis, and dynamic and efficient on the busy streets and highways.

The high-quality elements, developed with attention to detail, and the flexible interior clearly position the GLA as a premium crossover with a young spirit - making it the most recent model in the new entry level segment that is widening the world of Mercedes-Benz for customers in the region. As a versatile day-to-day companion the GLA has a flexible and variable interior. The rear seat backrests can not only be folded down completely, but are also adjustable for angle if required (optional). The large luggage compartment (421 - 1235 litres) is well laid-out and can be loaded without difficulty thanks to the low loading sill and the wide tailgate, which opens and closes automatically as an option.

Delivering even greater performance, the Mercedes-AMG GLA 45 holds the pole position with regard to driving dynamics: it accelerates from zero to 100 km/h in 4.8 seconds and reaches a top speed of 250 km/h (electronically limited). Thanks to the combination of standard-fit performance-oriented AMG 4MATIC all-wheel-drive and the AMG SPEEDSHIFT DCT 7-speed sports transmission, the GLA 45 impresses with its equally sporty and efficient drive system concept. The design of the GLA 45 exudes fascination with its powerful and distinctive character. As the powerful AMG top-of-the-line model of the GLA class, the high-performance crossover combines the hallmark sensual clarity of Mercedes-Benz as an expression of modern luxury with muscular elements exclusive to AMG.

Instinctively different

The CLA sets a new segment, with world-leading aerodynamics (Cd = 0.22), avant-garde coupé design and 4MATIC all wheel drive. As a new four-door coupé it follows the idea of the

CLS-Class, whose design concept has spawned more than its fair share of imitators since its debut in 2003. With its frameless doors, the coupé adopts the design of the Concept Style Coupé into series production. The newcomer features a radar-based braking system (COLLISION PREVENTION ASSIST) as standard which is able to warn the driver of an obstacle from a speed of 7 km/h and to initiate precision braking when the driver steps on the brake pedal.

Following overwhelming response to the Concept Style Coupé and feedback to "please put this car into series production" the CLA-Class has arrived, with its sporty design expected to attract a new target group of drivers and owners. The CLA is a style rebel and, although serially avant-garde, it remains true to Mercedes-Benz core values by setting new standards in aerodynamics, efficiency and technology. Its unique design idiom and exceptional performance holds strong appeal - even for those who hadn't expected to drive a Mercedes-Benz.

Offering an even greater level of performance, the dynamic CLA 45 AMG is a perfect representative of the AMG's Driving Performance brand claim: with a peak output of 265 kW (360 hp) and maximum torque of 450 Newton meters, its turbocharged engine is the most powerful four-cylinder unit in series production in the world. The performance-oriented AMG 4MATIC all-wheel drive of the CLA 45 AMG similarly sets a new benchmark in its competitive segment.

"The current line-up of Mercedes-Benz compact cars is the strongest and most exciting to date. Not only are these compact sports cars the most powerful, they are also the most agile models in their class, making every one highly appealing for our customers in Kuwait," said Michael Ruehle, CEO A.R. Albisher & Z. Alkazemi Co. The new Mercedes-Benz A-Class, GLA and CLA are available in A.R. Albisher & Z. Alkazemi Company's Shuwaikh showroom now.



KASPERSKY LAB EXPERTS DISCOVER WHY IT'S SO EASY TO MAKE AN ATM OBEY HACKER COMMANDS

DUBAI: Almost any ATM in the world could be illegally accessed and jackedpotting with or without the help of malware. According to research conducted by Kaspersky Lab experts, this is because of the widespread use of outdated and insecure software, mistakes in network configuration and a lack of physical security for critical parts of the ATM.

For many years the biggest threat to the customers and owners of ATMs were skimmers - special devices attached to an ATM in order to steal data from bank card magstripes. But as malicious techniques have evolved, ATMs have been exposed to more danger. In 2014, Kaspersky Lab researchers discovered Tyupkin - one of the first widely known examples of malware for ATMs, and in 2015 company experts uncovered the Carbanak gang, which, among other things was capable of jackingpotting ATMs through compromise banking infrastructure. Both examples of attack were possible due to the exploitation of several common weaknesses in ATM technology, and in the infrastructure that supports them. This is only the tip of the iceberg.

In an effort to map all ATM security issues, Kaspersky Lab penetration testing specialists have conducted research based on the investigation of real attacks, and on the results of ATM security assessments for several international banks. As a result of the research, the experts have demonstrated that malware attacks against ATMs are possible due to several security issues. First is that



all ATMs are PCs running on very old versions of operation systems such as Windows XP. This makes them vulnerable to infection with PC malware and attack via exploits. In the vast majority of cases, the special software that allows the ATM's PC to interact with banking infrastructure and hardware units, processing cash and credit cards, is based on XFS standard. This a rather old and insecure technology specification, originally created in order to standardize ATM software, so that it can work on any equipment regardless of manufacturer. Should malware successfully infect an ATM, it receives almost

unlimited capabilities in terms of control over that ATM: it can turn the PIN pad and card reader into a "native" skimmer or just give away all the money stored in the ATM, upon a command from its hacker.

In many cases observed by Kaspersky Lab researchers, criminals don't have to use malware to infect the ATM or the network of the bank it's attached to. That is possible because of the lack of physical security for the ATMs themselves - a very common issue for these devices. Very often ATMs are constructed and installed in a way that means a third-party can easily gain access to the PC

inside the ATM, or to the network cable connecting the machine to the Internet. By gaining even partial physical access to the ATM, criminals potentially can:

Install specially programmed microcomputer (a so called black box) inside the ATM, which will give attackers remote access to the ATM; Reconnect the ATM to a rogue processing center. A fake processing center is software that processes payment data and is identical to the bank's software despite the fact that it doesn't belong to the bank. Once the ATM is reconnected to a fake processing center, attackers can issue any command they want. And the ATM will obey. The connection between ATMs and the processing center can be protected in various ways. For example, using a hardware or software VPN, SSL/TLS encryption, a firewall or MAC-authentication, implemented in xDC protocols. However, these measures are not often implemented. When they are, they are often misconfigured and even vulnerable, something that might only be discovered during an ATM security assessment. As a result, criminals don't have to manipulate the hardware, they just exploit insecurities in the network communication between the ATM and the banking infrastructure.

How to stop ATM jackingpotting

"The results of our research show that even though vendors are now trying to develop ATMs with strong security features, many banks are still using old insecure mod-

els and this makes them unprepared for criminals actively challenging the security of these devices. This is today's reality that causes banks and their customers huge financial losses. From our perspective this is the result of a longtime misbelief, that cybercriminals are only interested in cyber attacks against Internet banking. They are interested in these attacks, but also increasingly see the value in exploiting ATM vulnerabilities, because direct attacks against such devices significantly shortens their route to real money," said Olga Kochetova, security expert at Kaspersky Lab's Penetration Testing department.

Although the security issues listed above most probably affect a lot of ATMs around the world, it doesn't mean that the situation cannot be fixed. ATM manufacturers can reduce the risk of attack on cash machines by applying the following measures:

Firstly, it is necessary to revise the XFS standard with an emphasis on safety, and introduce two-factor authentication between devices and legitimate software. This will help reduce the likelihood of unauthorized money withdrawals using trojans and attackers gaining direct control over ATM units. Secondly, it is necessary to implement "authenticated dispensing" to exclude the possibility of attacks via fake processing centers. Thirdly, it is necessary to implement cryptographic protection and integrity control over the data transmitted between all hardware units and the PCs inside ATMs.



BERLIN: German transport minister Alexander Dobrindt gets into a BMW i3 electric drive after a joint press conference with finance minister and economy minister on a national strategy of promoting electric vehicles by giving purchase subsidies to buyers, in Berlin yesterday. — AFP

US LOOKS INTO GOOGLE EDGE ON ANDROID: REPORT

SAN FRANCISCO: The US is looking into whether free Android mobile software is giving an unfair advantage to other Google offerings such as its search engine, the Wall Street Journal reported Tuesday. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) staffers have met with companies in recent months about concerns that Alphabet-owned Google is abusing the dominant position of Android software for powering smartphones or tablets, according to the Journal.

Concerns at issue are similar to some targeted by European Union regulators, and the FTC is even interested in learning about evidence being used to back a case there, it reported. Citing people familiar with the matter, the newspaper said the FTC's move extends a probe that began last year. Google and the FTC declined to comment on the report. The Android operating system accounts for about 80 percent of the world market for mobile phones, far ahead of Google's closest rival, Apple. EU

Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager says the Silicon Valley giant has used practices such as making manufacturers pre-install its market-leading search engine as the default in phones to "abuse its dominant position."

Brussels believes such practices breach EU competition law. The EU has accused Google of obstructing innovation by giving unfair prominence to its own apps, especially its search engine, in deals with mobile manufacturers such as Samsung and Huawei. Google must now respond within three months to avoid sanctions which could amount to fines of up to 10 percent of the group's annual global sales or \$7.4 billion based on their 2015 results.

Google has sought to downplay its anti-trust battle with the European Commission and stressed in a recent blog post that people who buy Android-powered devices can change applications such as "search" that are pre-loaded on devices. — AFP

GERMANY TO SUBSIDIZE ELECTRIC CARS TO HELP OWN AUTO INDUSTRY

BERLIN: Germany's auto industry risks being overtaken by foreign competitors unless it receives greater domestic support, the country's economy minister said Wednesday, announcing a 1 billion euro (\$1.13 billion) plan to subsidize electric cars that are seen as the technology of the future. Electric vehicles have had a sluggish start in Germany, the country where the combustion engine-powered automobile was born. A government plan to get 1 million e-cars on the streets by 2020 is far behind schedule, with just 50,000 sold so far. "After a long debate we have agreed to a subsidy program that aims to show on the home market that we can master these new drive trains, from plug-in hybrid to battery-powered vehicles, and make them suitable for the mass market," Economy Minister Sigmar Gabriel said at a news conference in Berlin.

Starting in May, buyers will get 4,000 euros (\$4,514.80) toward the purchase of an all-electric vehicle, while plug-in hybrids will receive a subsidy of up to 3,000 euros. The cost will be shared equally by the government and industry.

Finance Minister Wolfgang Schauble said he would set aside 600 million euros for the rebates, which will be available on a first come, first serve basis. Another 100

million euros will be used to procure electric vehicles for the government's own fleet and 300 million euros will be invested in electric charging stations.

Gabriel said the goal was to increase the number of electric cars in Germany tenfold to 500,000 by 2020 - still only half the original target. While foreign car manufacturers will be able to benefit from the subsidy, too, if they agree to contribute their share of the rebate, the only automakers that have signed up so far are Volkswagen, Daimler and BMW. Given German buyers' tendency to purchase domestic brands, the country's car industry is likely to benefit most from the program.

"This country will only have a chance to preserve its social, ecological, cultural standards if it remains a successful industrial nation," Gabriel said, noting the success of the program to create a European aircraft manufacturer, Airbus, decades ago.

Japanese automaker Toyota has been commercially successful with its plug-in hybrids for years, while California-based Tesla is considered the cutting edge of all-electric vehicles. "Now we're in a similar position," said Gabriel. "The reinvention of the automobile is currently being driven by companies that aren't based in Europe." — AP

ENCRYPTION ROW SPOTLIGHTS FEARS ON SECURITY, PRIVACY

WASHINGTON: Has encryption technology given the bad guys a way to operate in the dark? Or has the new tech age gifted law enforcement with unprecedented surveillance powers? A weeks-long showdown between the FBI and Apple ended last month without a clear winner, but the debate rages on over government access to encrypted data in an era of evolving mobile technology.

Some worry new forms of encryption are creating dark corners for criminals and terrorists to conspire in secret, while others contend just the opposite—that it has led to a golden age for snooping on citizens. On both sides, the passions run deep.

The US government dropped its legal battle to compel Apple to help unlock an iPhone used by one of the shooters in the December killing rampage in San Bernardino, California, after saying it had found a means to do so without Apple's help.

But those involved say it's only a matter of time before a new case emerges which tests the boundaries of law enforcement and data protection. "This has created one of the most difficult policy dilemmas of the digital age, as encryption both improves security for consumers and businesses and makes it harder for governments to protect them from other threats," said a policy paper from the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, a Washington think tank. "There is no way to square this circle, so any choice will come with tradeoffs."

GOING DARK?

For years the debate on encryption, privacy and security had been simmering, amid warnings from the FBI and others that law enforcement was "going dark" in an age of new mobile technology, where traditional tools like wiretaps don't always work and wrongdoers can increasingly operate unseen. But revelations from former US intelligence contractor Edward Snowden stoked fears that electronic surveillance has on the contrary become pervasive and in some cases spun out of control.

Moves by Apple and Google to step up encryption, making it impossible for the companies themselves to use "keys" to unlock data, made the debate all the more urgent.

So did reports that attackers in last November's Paris massacre may have used encrypted communications to avoid detection. More recently, WhatsApp said it had implemented "end to end encryption" that would allow only those sending and receiving messages to view the content. "No one can see inside that message. Not cybercriminals. Not hackers. Not oppressive regimes. Not even us," said the Facebook-owned messaging service with a billion users worldwide. Its move has drawn fierce criticism, with US Senator Tom Cotton calling it "an open invitation to terrorists, drug dealers, and sexual predators to use WhatsApp's services to endanger the American people."

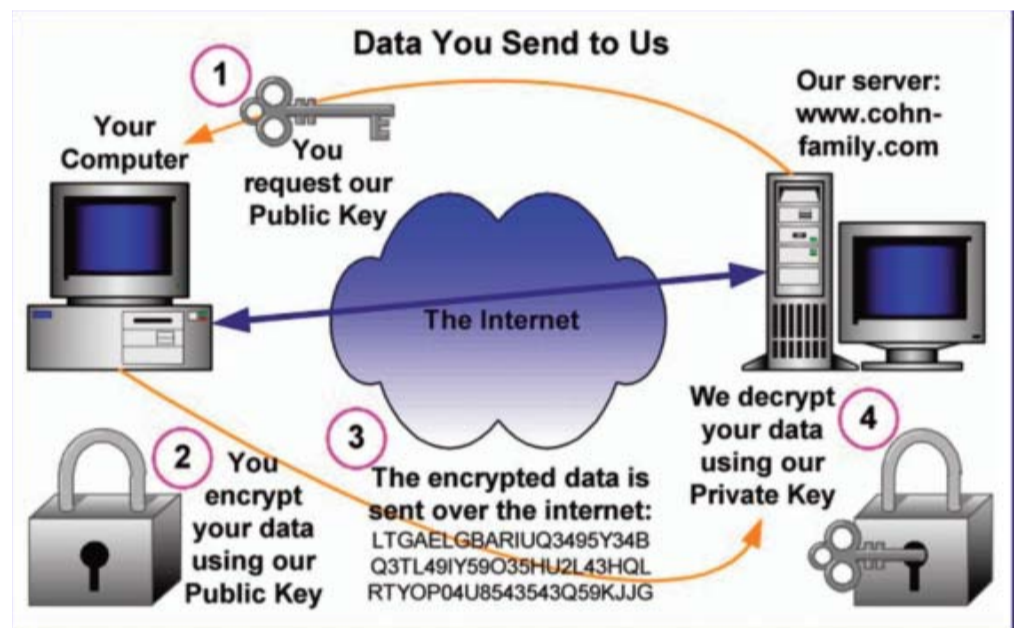
ABSOLUTE PRIVACY?

David Bitkower, a senior official in the Justice Department criminal division, notes a tendency "to underestimate the risks to public safety from the implementation of warrant-proof encryption" a term cited by the FBI and others to describe encryption so tough that investigators cannot access data with a court order.

Bitkower, speaking at an ITIF forum, argued that it's not clear "end to end" encryption will make people safer than prior generations, when companies stored data that could be requested under court order. "It's very important to recognize there are tradeoffs to be made," he told the forum. FBI director James Comey also warned of dangers from these new tools. "I love strong encryption. It protects us in so many ways from bad people," he told a group of students in Ohio recently. "Many of us like the idea of a storage space in our lives that no one can get into. But it takes us to a place—absolute privacy—that we have not been to before... No matter how you feel about it, you have to understand there are costs to this new world."

The next key chapter in the debate is set to play out in Congress, where a proposal that would require tech firms to enable law enforcement access has been drafted. Similar measures are under consideration in Britain, France and other countries.

"No entity or individual is above the law," said Senator Dianne Feinstein, a Democrat sponsoring the measure with Republican Richard Burr. "Today, terrorists and criminals are increasingly using encryption to foil law enforcement efforts, even in the face of a



court order. We need strong encryption to protect personal data, but we also need to know when terrorists are plotting to kill Americans."

Meanwhile a broad coalition of technology companies and activists backing Apple have argued against any rules to allow "special access" for law enforcement, claiming these would create vulnerabilities that could be exploited by hackers or repressive governments.

DIGITAL 'BREADCRUMB' TRAIL

Critics of the FBI claim the government's complaints about "going dark" are disingenuous—saying the digital age has made more data available, but that law enforcement is failing to use its tools productively. "We live in a 'golden age' of surveillance, more so than in any other point in history," said Amit Yorán, president of the security firm RSA, at a congressional

hearing. "In just about everything we do, we leave an incredibly insightful digital breadcrumb trail."

Yorán said law enforcement "has an overwhelming volume of information readily available to it, creating challenges to efficiently manage and fully leverage it."

Chris Calabrese of the Center for Democracy and Technology argued the smartphone has become a highly personal device that includes users' most private thoughts and conversations.

"We're not saying that the government should never be able to look at your phone," Calabrese said. "What we're saying is that the phone is incredibly sensitive. It is perhaps one of the most private spaces that exist today and has ever existed in America. "Therefore, it deserves a commensurate high level of security and we need really good arguments for why that security should be breached." —AFP

PACKING A PUNCH ONLINE, DAILY MAIL MOVES FOR YAHOO

LONDON: Shortlisted as a potential buyer of US Internet giant Yahoo, the Daily Mail has made an online empire out of the kind of content readers can't resist clicking on.

The parent company of the tabloid founded in 1896, Daily Mail and General Trust (DMGT), confirmed this month that it is in talks with interested parties regarding a bid for the struggling Yahoo.

Though DMGT boasts revenue of some £1.8 billion (\$2.6 billion, 2.3 billion euros), it is still short of Yahoo's \$5 billion.

But experts told AFP that the British group has cleverly expanded into the online world already through its Internet portal MailOnline, while keeping the circulation of its paper version at a respectable 1.6 million copies daily.

"The MailOnline is quite different to the newspaper in most respects," said London School of Economics professor Charlie Beckett. "It's much more about celebrity... people don't go there for a sort of serious information, they go there as a snack. "They are going there usually for five or 10 minutes during their working day, or when they are bored." MailOnline has on occasion crossed a line. A row broke out after US actor George Clooney accused the newspaper of fabricating an article about his then-fiancee Amal in 2014.

The online newspaper has also been accused of bigoted language in its coverage of the migrant crisis in Europe—particularly with a cartoon published in the wake of the November attacks in Paris that showed a caricature of Muslims entering Europe along with rats. Pascal Lechevallier, media consultant at What's Hot, told AFP that MailOnline has a "populist and popular" recipe for success that gives people "what they are looking for on the Internet: entertainment".

Its audience speaks for itself: MailOnline

says it is the most viewed online newspaper in English, with more than 200 million hits a month, divided equally between Britain, the United States, and the rest of the world.

CHALLENGE OF VIDEO

The online content often differs from the Daily Mail and is generated by a separate team of 800 people.

"It's like a factory. They take material from loads of different sites," Beckett said, adding that it has young and speedy workforce. Yet although the site generated nearly £73 million in revenue last year, mainly through advertising, DMGT admits the freely accessible site is not yet profitable, saying it needs to tip the £100 million mark. Online advertising also faces the road bumps of ad-blocking software and the smaller space available on smartphones and tablets.

Competition is fierce from sites such as BuzzFeed and Vice, which have proved to be highly skilled in creating video content—a rapidly growing area.

"Integrating video is very expensive but people want more and more of it," said Lechevallier. "We're in a kind of race that makes this business model totally unstable." MailOnline "is definitely ahead of the others but it still doesn't have the perfect business formula". Making a move to buy Yahoo can be explained by the fact that the maturing Internet continues to reward research and analysis services, which could help MailOnline to grow. The US Internet giant has also itself absorbed new gems such as microblogging site Tumblr and the image sharing website Flickr, which the British group could hope to leverage to drive more traffic to its site—while relying on the large assets of Yahoo to achieve economies of scale. — AFP



Last year, a Chinese national report said adult obesity rates had reached 9.6 per cent in 2012, more than doubling in a decade. — AFP



The percentage of overweight boys in China had grown from 0.7 percent to 16.4 percent, and girls from 1.5 percent to nearly 14 percent.



A leaflet on a table at a McDonald's outlet in Shanghai.

JUNK FOOD IS FATTENING RURAL CHINESE CHILDREN

PARIS: Researchers raised the alarm yesterday about an obesity explosion among children in rural China as a Western-style diet high in sugar and carbohydrates starts taking its toll. A 29-year survey of kids in China's eastern Shandong province revealed that 17 percent of boys younger than 19 were obese in 2014, and nine percent of girls-up from under one percent for both genders in 1985.

"This is extremely worrying," the European Society of Cardiology's Joep Perk said of the study published in the European Journal of Preventive Cardiology. "It is the worst explosion of childhood and adolescent obesity that I have ever seen." The data comes from six government surveys of some 28,000 rural school children (aged 7-18) in Shandong. The percentage of overweight boys had grown from 0.7 percent to

16.4 percent, and girls from 1.5 percent to nearly 14 percent, it found. The study used different measures of Body Mass Index (BMI) for overweight and obesity than the World Health Organisation (WHO) standard.

BMI is a ratio of weight-to-height squared. For the UN's health body, a BMI of 25-29.9 is classified as overweight, and from 30 upwards obese. The study authors used a stricter cut-off of 24-27.9 for overweight, and 28 and above for obese. This means it would be difficult to compare the numbers to other countries, but does not invalidate the fattening trend observed within China itself, said Perk. "China has experienced rapid socioeconomic and nutritional changes in the past 30 years," study co-author Ying-Xiu Zhang of the Shandong Centre for Disease Control and Prevention said in a statement. "In China today,

people eat more and are less physically active than they were in the past. The traditional Chinese diet has shifted towards one that is high in fat and calories and low in fibre."

Fat will 'cost lives'

The WHO says being overweight is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke, diabetes, and some cancers. "China is set for an escalation of cardiovascular disease and diabetes, and the popularity of the Western lifestyle will cost lives," said Perk. The study found that the trend was growing faster in children aged seven-12 than in adolescents. And they speculated that the higher prevalence among boys could be the result of a "societal preference" for males which "could result in boys enjoying more of the family's resources". A 2005 National Youth Risk Behaviour

Surveillance had found that 4.3 percent of boys and 2.7 percent of girls frequently enjoyed soft drinks. Nearly 13 percent of boys and 4.3 percent of girls spent more than two hours per day playing computer games. "The adoption of Western foods, notably American junk food high in calories and sugary drinks, is the cause of this phenomenon," observed French obesity expert David Nocca.

The authors warned the findings had implications for the entire nation, with almost half of its 1.36 billion population living in rural areas in 2014. "The rises in overweight and obesity coincide with increasing incomes in rural households and we expect this trend to continue in the coming decades in Shandong province and other regions of China," said Zhang. "This is a wake-up call for policymakers

that rural China should not be neglected in obesity interventions. We need to educate children on healthy eating and physical activity, and monitor their weight to check if these efforts are making a difference."

Last year, a Chinese national report said adult obesity rates had reached 9.6 percent in 2012, more than doubling in a decade. A study in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology in March 2015 said three out of four people in China were in poor cardiovascular shape. Cardiovascular disease has become the leading cause of death in China, and the prevalence of diabetes has more than doubled in 10 years. China's expansion is part of a global one: a major survey in April, published in The Lancet medical journal, said one in five adults in the world could be obese by 2025. — AFP



BOGOTA, Colombia: A Center for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC, pathologist Brigid Bollweg works in Colombia's National Institute of Health in Bogota. — AFP

BRAZIL: ZIKA OUTBREAKS TOPS 91,000 CASES

BRASILIA: Brazil's outbreak of Zika—which has been linked to the devastating microcephaly birth defect in newborns—has topped 91,000 cases, health officials said on Tuesday.

Between January 3 and April 2, 91,387 suspected cases of Zika were reported, with a disproportionate share (30,286) in the poorer northeast of the country, the Health Ministry said. Three people have died of the mosquito-borne virus, it said.

Despite a flurry of research, very little is

known about the virus—how long it can hide out in the human body, the degree of risk via sexual transmission, the full list of diseases and disorders it may cause, and all the mosquito types capable of transmitting it. Recent scientific consensus is that Zika causes microcephaly, a form of severe brain damage in newborns, and adult-onset neurological problems such as Guillain-Barre Syndrome, which can cause paralysis and death.

There is no vaccine or treatment for the

virus, which in most people causes only mild symptoms—a rash, joint pain or fever.

Among the infected to date have been 2,844 pregnant women. "So far, it is not possible to determine what percent of Zika-positive pregnant women may have babies with microcephaly," said Infectious Disease Monitoring director Claudio Maierovitch. Meanwhile, dengue cases surged to 802,429 — 13.7 percent more than in the same period a year earlier, government data showed. — AP

ENGLISH JUNIOR DOCTORS HOLD SECOND DAY OF ALL-OUT STRIKE

LONDON: English junior doctors staged an all-out strike for a second day yesterday in a bitter row with the government over a new contract, forcing more than 13,000 operations to be postponed. The strike, from 0700 GMT to 1600 GMT, is the fourth industrial action by doctors since the start of the year but the first to be extended to hospital emergency units. Some 21,600 junior doctors took part in the first day of the strike on Tuesday — 78 percent of the number who had been due to work. Prime Minister David Cameron condemned the strike called by the British Medical Association (BMA) union as the "wrong thing to do", but public support remains strong.

A new YouGov poll for The Times found 52

percent of respondents blamed ministers for the dispute, compared with nine percent who blamed the BMA. A further 27 percent blamed both equally. There are 53,000 junior doctors-graduates with years of experience but who have yet to complete their training in England's National Health Service (NHS).

The taxpayer-funded NHS, which is administered differently in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, was established in 1948 and is one of Britain's most respected institutions, providing largely free medical care. While it has been shielded from austerity cuts to public services, experts warn it still faces increasing financial strain due to factors like rising treatment costs and an ageing population. — AFP

PROTEST PLANNED TO SUPPORT ARGENTINE WOMAN JAILED FOR MISCARRIAGE

BUENOS AIRES: Women's and abortion rights groups will march demanding the release of a woman sentenced to eight years in jail following a miscarriage. The woman, 27, called Belen in press accounts, has become a symbol of the lamentable state of women's rights in Argentina, where abortion is legal only in cases of rape or if the mother's life is in danger. Belen had been jailed for two years following the miscarriage in 2014 in the northern province of Tucuman.

Last week, she was sentenced to an eight-year jail term for "homicide aggravated by betrayal and the bond." The woman, whose real name was not disclosed, was admitted to a hospital in her home province in March 2014 complaining of stomach cramps. She claimed after the fact that she did not know at the time that she was pregnant. The hospital gave her a sedative, and then sent her to the obstetric unit where officials accused her of carrying out an illegal abortion on herself. A doctor

told her, she said, that she was miscarrying at five months pregnant. "Then a male nurse brought me the fetus in a little box, and insulted me. I told him that was not mine, and he said 'look here, this is your child,'" Belen told the court.

She was taken from the hospital straight to jail to await trial. Rights groups say that the woman's rights have been violated. "After being sentenced arbitrarily, and with no crime proven, we demand the immediate release of Belen who has been in jail since 2014," said Raquel Vivanco, director of rights organization MuMala. Center-left lawmaker Victoria Donda said the woman had been subjected to degrading treatment. "Back alley abortions are the number one cause of death of mothers in Argentina. This is something that happens at all income levels, but poorer women are paying with their lives," Donda said. About 100 women die every year in Argentina, where an estimated 500,000 abortions are carried out annually, NGOs say. — AFP

CONSTRUCTION IS BUSTLING AT FLORIDA'S FIRST 'SUSTAINABLE TOWN'

'PRESERVATION AND RESPONSIBLE GROWTH CAN WORK TOGETHER'

PUNTA GORDA, United States: With deep pockets and an environmentalist's zeal, retired American football player Syd Kitson dreamed up a plan to build the United States' first solar-powered town on a vast swath of rural land in southwest Florida. Now, nearly a decade after he first purchased the 91,000 acres (37,000 hectares) known as Babcock Ranch, construction is bustling at what developers say will be the nation's first eco-friendly city, built from the ground up, with enough room for some 50,000 people.

No homes have been built yet, but the first residents will move in by early next year says



PUNTA GORDA, United States: A solar farm under construction in Punta Gorda, Florida where enough energy will be produced to power 21,000 homes. — AFP photos

Kitson, 57, who played professional football for five years-first with the Green Bay Packers and later, the Dallas Cowboys-before he became a real estate developer. "We are building a new town together. It is just remarkable," Kitson told a crowd of several hundred visitors at an Earth Day event last week to show off plans for Babcock Ranch to the public. "It is our mission to prove that preservation and responsible growth can work together."

The big idea

Rather than build another gated community or a cluster of homes far away from a city center, Kitson's idea was to build an eco-friendly town that contains most of the necessities for modern life. Plans allow for a public school, a downtown area with shops and

restaurants, hiking trails and lakes for kayaking. Eventually, residents may use their smart phones to hail driverless cars to shuttle them from one area to another.

Housing options will include condominiums and larger homes with front porches, priced between \$200,000 to \$800,000, designed to accommodate residents both young and old, Kitson says. The first phase of 1,100 homes is to be complete by 2017. The entire town aims to use the latest in green technologies, and will be certified as sustainable by the Florida Green Building Coalition.

Many hurdles

Along the way, Kitson faced a steady stream of obstacles, beginning with the global financial crisis which struck in 2007, just after



PUNTA GORDA, United States: Wetlands restored around Babcock Ranch in Punta Gorda.

he purchased the land. The real estate market took a dive, and construction stalled. Some local residents have opposed the plans, fearing harm to the environment and the eventual loss of their rural lifestyle. The Sierra Club—a leading grassroots environmental group—threatened to file a lawsuit to block Kitson's purchase of the land from the Babcock family, owners since 1914. But Kitson overcame opposition by buying the 91,000 acre ranch and selling most of it — 73,000 acres-back to the state of Florida for a wildlife preserve.

Kitson bought the family-owned corporation that held the land, Babcock Florida Company, for about \$700 million and sold the Babcock Ranch Preserve to the state of Florida for \$350 million, his spokeswoman told AFP. Since then, wetland areas have been restored and some farmland has been converted to

panther habitat. "Here we have conservation," said Eric Draper, executive director of the Audubon Society environmental group. Kitson "stepped in at a critical moment" to protect the water and wildlife in the area, he said.

'Never been done'

There were also doubts about the feasibility of making solar energy affordable. "A city that is powered by the sun? It had never been done before, anywhere in the world," said Eric Silagy, president and CEO of the state utility company Florida Power and Light (FPL). Upon meeting the real estate developer for the first time nine years ago, Silagy told him about the high price of solar, explaining why Kitson's vision was just too costly. "Syd was dutifully paying attention and he said 'Ok. We'll just give you the land,'" Silagy recalled. — AFP



PUNTA GORDA, United States: Real estate developer Syd Kitson addresses a crowd of several hundred people on the latest plans for Babcock Ranch, a sustainable city being built from the ground up.



WONJU, South Korea: Dogs sit in a cage during a publicized rescue event involving the closure of a dog farm organized by Humane Society International (HSI) in Wonju. — AFP photos

KOREAN DOG MEAT FARMERS SEEK FRESH START

WONJU, South Korea: "It's a dying business," Gong In-Young said yesterday as he watched US activists clear out the cages of the South Korean dog meat farm he has been running for the past decade. Close to 200 dogs, including Golden Retrievers, Siberian Huskies, Rottweilers, Japanese Tosas and Korean Jindo dogs, paced in circles inside the small wire cages, barking furiously at their rescuers. The dogs in Gong's farm, one of thousands across the country, were bred specifically for consumption and confined in their cages from birth until slaughtered for their meat.

South Koreans are believed to consume somewhere between 1.5 million-2.5 million dogs every year, but the meat farming industry is in decline, with little demand among the younger generation. Gong's business is the fifth and the largest dog meat farm to be closed down by the US-based Humane Society International (HSI), and Gong said he was happy to get out. "In the past, people ate dogs because there was nothing else to eat but nowadays, young people don't have to eat it," Gong said. "It's becoming weird for people," he added.

Changing tastes

A poll conducted by Gallup Korea last year showed that only 20 percent of men in their 20s consumed dog meat in the past year, compared to half of those in their 50s and 60s. Gong also noted that the increasing popularity of dogs as domestic pets had played a large part in reducing demand for their meat. The HSI rescued a total of 225 dogs last year, closing down four farms in what they call a "constructive and collaborative" approach to phase out an industry that has long been criticized by international animal welfare groups. Most of the dogs are flown to the United States and Canada for adoption.

In return for shuttering his business for

good, a farmer receives up to \$60,000 — depending on the number of dogs being bred that can be used as seed money for a more "humane" farm, growing anything from blueberries to green peppers. Through its well-publicized rescues, HSI seeks to raise awareness about the cruelty of dog meat farms and "initiate a conversation with South Korean policymakers," the group's campaign manager Andrew Plumbly said. South Korea is preparing to host the 2018 Winter Olympics, and Plumbly said the global publicity surrounding the event provided an opportunity to push for change.

Olympics spotlight

"Part of the spotlight will touch on the dog meat trade so they may feel pressure in that regard and hopefully they will respond constructively," he said. The South Korean authorities are sensitive to the negative publicity attached to the dog meat industry, and dog restaurants in Seoul were shut down ahead of the 1988 summer Olympics. Gong, who stumbled into the dog meat industry after many failed business attempts, admits he was "never proud" of his farm, which only ever earned him a modest living. In a normal year, he would sell around 200 animals, with an average price depending on size-of about \$200.

"I realized the dogs will become a lot happier if I changed my mind," Gong said, while Snow, his pet Spitz, sauntered between rows of crates with dogs awaiting their departure. Running a dog farm in South Korea requires no special license, although Gong said there were regular government checks to ensure neighbors weren't being disturbed and dog waste was being properly disposed of. Asked to compare the living conditions of Snow and the dogs in the cages, Gong admitted: "It's the difference between heaven and hell!" — AFP



WONJU, South Korea: Members of the Humane Society International (HSI) load dogs onto a truck during a publicized rescue event.

'PIONEER' COMMUTERS GO ELECTRIC IN POLLUTED MEXICO CITY

MEXICO CITY: Martin Vazquez glides silently through the pandemonium of rush hour in Mexico City, drives his sky-blue scooter up to a charging station and plugs it in. When Vazquez, a 28-year-old professional, moved to the Mexican capital a year ago, he drove here by car. But the city's notorious traffic soon convinced him to sell it and look for ways to cut through the gridlock. He tried cycling to work, but eventually settled on the sky-blue electric scooters rented out by the half-hour by a company called Econduce. "It's the easiest, fastest way for me to get around," said Vazquez.

"I have to go to work in a shirt and tie. When I biked, I would show up all sweaty. On a scooter, you just sit and accelerate. It's like a car, but with the size and ease of a bike." Electric vehicles are gaining a foothold in this sprawling megacity of 21 million people and 5.5 million cars. Many early adapters of the technology are, like Vazquez, seeking a less painful commute. But as an added bonus, these vehicles are not adding to the polluting emissions spewed by fuel-powered vehicles which have surged back into the headlines just as the city was starting to shed its smog-choked image.

Authorities declared an air pollution alert in Mexico City last month—the first in more than a decade—and have imposed strict limits on car use. The temporary measures take 20 percent of the city's cars off the road each day. On April 6, the smog was so bad officials doubled the restriction, ordering 40 percent of cars off the road as well as, for the first time, 40 percent of motorcycles. The ban caused chaos on the over-stretched public transportation system.

Bike-share with vroom

But it was a boon for Eduardo Porta, the entrepreneur behind the Econduce scooters, who says his clients increased by 50 percent. The 33-year-old industrial engineer launched the company last year, modeling the service on bike-sharing programs in cities like Paris, Berlin, New York and, since 2010, Mexico City itself. The company has a network of charging stations throughout the city, enabling users to pick up a scooter near home and drop it off near work. "We are pioneers worldwide. The only similar service is in San Francisco ('Scoot,' which launched in 2012). We wanted to tackle the double problem of traffic and pollution," Porta told AFP. The scooters go up to 55 kilometers (35 miles) per hour. A half-hour trip costs a little over 50 US cents with a monthly subscription fee of \$11. In a year, the company has expanded from five charging stations to 37 and tripled its initial fleet of 50 scooters. It now has 1,800 users.

Pocketbook test

Then there are electric bicycles, which give users a battery-charged boost as they pedal.



MEXICO: Commuters in Mexico city search for ways to beat the morning gridlock. — AFP

They can go up to 30 kilometers per hour and cover up to 60 kilometers with a single battery charge. "Since the air pollution alert was declared, interest has soared. Sales have doubled," said electric bike salesman Daniel Cruz of a local firm called Prodecotech.

"Electric bicycles don't require an intense physical effort. You don't sweat, you don't get tired and you don't have to inhale so much air." The mayor's office has launched an e-transport task force. However, officials say more money is needed to make the city's bus fleet electric and expand the number of electric taxis from around 20 to a target of 1,500. And it is still early days for electric cars. The infrastructure for recharging

cars has expanded, but it is still not enough, said Fausto Cuevas Mesa, head of the Mexican Automobile Industry Association.

And there are no tax incentives for people to buy electric, he said. "There could be greater interest in electric cars, but the issue is people's pocketbooks. They cost two or three times more," he said. At a Chevrolet dealership in an upscale neighborhood, electric car specialist Vicente Cuevas admits the typical client reaction upon learning what the vehicles cost — \$22,000 for an entry-level model—"is not favorable." But "with the new anti-pollution measures, people are starting to view our vehicles with greater interest," he said. — AFP

CAMBODIA FIRM TO REDUCE ELEPHANT WORK HOURS AFTER HEATSTROKE DEATH

PHNOM PENH: A Cambodian tour operator said Tuesday it would reduce work hours for elephants during high temperatures following the collapse and death of an animal which had been ferrying tourists in 40C heat. The female elephant, aged between 40-45, died by the roadside on Friday after carrying tourists around Cambodia's famous Angkor Wat temple complex outside Siem Reap. Photos were widely shared on social media, prompting calls for Cambodia to reform the already controversial elephant ride industry. Oan Kiri, manager of Angkor Elephant Company, told AFP Tuesday that vets believed heatstroke was the cause of death. "Veterinarians concluded that the elephant's death was caused by the hot temperatures which caused stress, shock, high

blood pressure and a heart attack," he said. The elephant had been working around 45 minutes, walking 2.1 kilometers carrying tourists, before she collapsed on her way to an enclosure.

He added that the company was "regretful and felt pity" and would now let the 13 remaining elephants work fewer hours until temperatures drop. The Greater Mekong region is experiencing its hot and dry season where temperatures of 40C (104 Fahrenheit) are not unusual. This year has seen particularly hot spells.

Animal rights groups have long complained that elephants which give rides to tourists across the region are routinely overworked and brutally broken in during training. Thailand has seen multiple cases in

recent months where elephants have killed their handlers or attacked tourists. A petition on Change.org calling on Cambodian authorities to end elephant rides at Angkor had garnered 24,500 signatures by Tuesday afternoon. "There is no such thing as cruelty-free elephant rides," it stated.

Handlers and tour operators have long argued that tourism provides much needed income and employment for people and for domesticated elephants that would otherwise risk abandonment and starvation. But Jack Highwood, from the Elephant Valley Project, a Cambodian ecotourism group, said the country only boasted about 70 domesticated elephants—"too small a number not to regulate their use to protect their health and welfare." — AFP

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Dr. Fahad Al-Mukhaizeem
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(From left) Egkw's founder Osama Galal, Egyptian Ambassador Yasser Atef and UETC owner Hussein Jouhar.



A man dances to patriotic music.

EGKW ORGANIZES RECREATIONAL DAY AT SHAAB PARK

By Hassan Abdel Bari

Under auspices and with the attendance of the Egyptian Ambassador to Kuwait Yasser Atef, and in collaboration with the United Entertainment and Tourism Company (UETC), the Egyptians in Kuwait website (www.egkw.com) recently organized a special recreational day for

members of the Egyptian community in Kuwait, where UETC allocated 10 percent of the tickets' value to the 'Long Live Egypt' fund.

Speaking on the occasion, board chairman of Kuwait Commercial Markets Complex Company (KCMC) and UETC owner Hussein Jouhar announced allocating further 15 percent of the tickets' value to sup-

port the fund, adding up the total donation value to 25 percent.

Starting early in the afternoon, the recreational day included various folkloric dance, music shows, and concluded by a special concert in the evening where the audience enjoyed many Egyptian patriotic songs until midnight, while children enjoyed playing with the park's games.

Towards the end of the day, a draw was made and many visitors won various valuable prizes including flight tickets, TVs, iPhones, iPads, electrical appliances, watches and diamond sets.

Also speaking on the occasion, Egkw's founder and the head of the organizing committee Osama Galal thanked Ambassador Atef, UETC, Al-Shaab Park and

the sponsors that included Western Union, Al-Mulla, Egypt Air, Al-Anbaa, Musaed Al-Saleh Travels, Muzaini, Mastoura and Four Media for their role in making the activity a successful one. He promised to organize similar events after the summer break.



A view of the audience.



A winner receives her gift.



The Egyptian 'Tannura' dance.



A Kuwaiti participant wins a flight ticket.



Egkw's founder Osama Galal welcomes kids at the event.



A participant receives a smart phone during the event.

THINK GREEN, LIVE GREEN CELEBRATED AT IISM'S KG

Think Green, Live Green was celebrated recently with a great deal of enthusiasm and activities by the school. Kindergarten (KG) students and teachers actively took part in the various activities. The main aim of the event was to motivate and spread awareness among the students about some ways to save the ailing Mother Earth. Then a speech was given by the KG Head Nilofar Qazi guiding the tiny bobbies to work for the environment and gave valuable information on how to preserve natural resources without polluting them.

Our Director was happy to be a part and parcel of this 'Green celebration - the need of the hour. He insisted that it was time for all of us to sit back and think ways of protecting our Earth. F M Basheer, our Principal, Vice Principal and other Vice Principals also accompanied the Director and graced the occasion.

The cheerful students of KG sang songs in the morning assembly. They were shown flash cards on conservation of nature, banners and colorful charts, reading 'Think Green, Live Green' and 'Plant a tree today' were put up. Children learnt the importance of preserving the planet earth. The students were sensitized about the importance of saving the environment. A play 'The Earth Story' was organized to motivate all to keep the planet as beautiful as ever. Students took a pledge to donate their used toys to poor children and made recyclable paper bags. They were reinforced about the importance of trees and recycling.

Overall, the event was a great success inspiring the students to adopt simple ways that will improve the deteriorating condition of mother earth due to increased human activities causing pollution.



NSH CONDUCTED EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

NSH conducted their employee engagement program recently. In his inaugural address, Corporate HR Manager Pani J Anthony said: "Our learning and development initiatives empower our people, as we work together to increase the efficiency. It is designed to have signifi-

cant impact on the employees of NSH, and that all employees have an opportunity to achieve their full potential in an environment that is respectful and challenging. The multinational business conglomerate NSH places priority on employee learning and development to offer a good expert-

ise, and is committed in the employee engagement to promote the culture of excellence."

The subjects like communication, leadership, positive thinking, time management, aware of health hazards were discussed in the session.

The engineers said that on-going effort of NSH with a paternalistic approach to make the employees realize their potential will enhance them to contribute at the maximum, and lead them to a professional growth.



Happy Birthday



Ibrahim Kamal recently celebrated the birthday of his son Seif. Congratulations!

AGILITY ISSUES 2016 CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY REPORT

CSR LEADER IN SUPPLY CHAIN, TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY

KUWAIT: Agility, a leading global logistics provider, released 'Deepening Impact,' a detailed report that showcases its commitment to ethical business conduct, employee rights, workplace safety, community investment and the environment in more than 100 countries where it operates. The report is Agility's third comprehensive look at its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts. It was put together using the Sustainability Reporting Guidelines developed by the Global Reporting Initiative, an independent international organization that is the gold standard for reporting on corporate efforts to address climate change, human rights, anti-corruption initiatives and other issues.

In 2015, EcoVadis, an independent group that analyzes CSR programs based on their environmental and social practices, put Agility in the top

16% of logistics and transportation providers. Agility has won 24 CSR and sustainability awards in recent years. Agility's 2016 report highlights achievements in:

- Sustainability**
- Major reduction of carbon emissions, cost and time in supply chains of large, global customers, including an oil major, sports apparel giant and leading telecom provider.
 - Free carbon reporting for customers.
 - Greening of Agility operations through reduction of electricity use and packaging waste; internal CO2 reporting; sustainable construction and upgrades to warehouses and logistics facilities; ISO 14001 certification; and employee awareness. Since 2010, Agility has cut emissions by 10% through these initiatives.

- Disaster Relief**
- Response to more than 40 natural disasters around the world in support of humanitarian partners.
 - Logistics support in the aftermath of emergencies in Bangladesh, Chile, China, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Libya, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Samoa, South Sudan and the United States.

- Community Involvement**
- A decade of investments in nearly 1,400 community projects that have reached more than 1 million people in 80 countries.
 - Community contributions with a strong focus on education. The report offers details on construction of six preschools in Cambodia serving 400 children a year; an Afghan school (200 children/year); a school in Indonesia (200 children/year); a trade school in India offering night classes (600 young people to date); secondary school scholarships in Ghana for 100 girls a year; and mentoring for more than 1,500 young people in Kuwait through a global youth empowerment program.
 - Details on volunteer efforts by Agility's 22,000-strong global workforce. More than 20% of Agility employees volunteer in CSR activities each year.

- Fair, Diverse, Safe, Healthy Workplaces**
- An in-depth look at Agility's fair labor program, which focuses on addressing human rights challenges in the supply chain, particularly migrant worker rights in high-risk regions. Since 2011, Agility has trained nearly 7,000 workers in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa in the company's fair labor principles. Its training program will continue to roll out through 2016.
 - A snapshot of Agility's highly diverse workforce. Eighty percent of employees are based in emerging markets. Agility employs more than 120 nationalities, and the vast majority of man-

agement is "local" in every country in which it operates. A quarter of the Agility workforce is female (30% of management positions are held by women).

- An overview of Agility's global health and safety program, based on the best practices of award-winning HSE programs developed by its Agility Chemicals and Agility Project Logistics businesses. The program has reduced workplace injury rates by more than 80%. Agility's recordable injury rates and lost work day incidents rates are among the lowest in the industry.

Ethics

- Agility's Code of Business Conduct and other key initiatives, such as its voluntary commitments to the World Economic Forum's Partnership Against Corruption Initiative. Agility employees have taken more than 82,000 mandatory ethics courses over the last three years.
- Monitoring and enforcement mechanisms that give Agility employees the opportunity to report ethical concerns in person, by email, or through an anonymous hotline answered by an independent third-party company. "We are proud of what we have achieved, and we look forward to doing more," said Agility CEO Tarek Sultan. "All of the initiatives we have undertaken to better our company and our communities can be advanced. I am particularly proud of our employee volunteers, who have had an enormous impact on communities around the world."

Looking Ahead

Agility plans to expand its global subcontractor management program, which includes standards for ethics, environmental responsibility and fair labor practices. In health and safety, it is working to provide better tools and encourage change designed to bring about improvement at the local level. Agility also will expand its human rights and fair labor program by training additional workers and auditing its local operations in Africa and Asia.



On the environmental front, the company hopes to improve data and data collection about resource consumption and emissions from its operations. It will work with carriers, vendors, customers, NGOs and industry groups to further reduce emissions and other impact on the environment.

Agility remains committed to the work it does in response to natural disasters and other catastrophes. It has pledged to continue working with international institutions, relief groups and industry partners to better prepare for disasters and provide humanitarian assistance in their aftermath. Community projects, driven by Agility volunteers around the world, will continue to emphasize initiatives aimed at education, training and health for girls and women, especially in Africa.



AL-MUHALLAB MALL LAUNCHES ITS FIRST 'FITNESS DONATION PROGRAM'

Al-Muhallab Mall announced the launch of its first ever fitness program where donations are dedicated to Fawzia Sultan Rehabilitation Institute (FSRI). The announcement was made through a press event organized by the mall and in collaboration with Flare Gym and Fawzia Sultan Rehabilitation Institute (FSRI). The event witnessed an overwhelming participation by prominent media representatives and social media influencers who were informed and educated about the upcoming program which starts today and lasts until December 31st, 2016, aiming to help participants lose weight while presenting the monetary reward to those in need.

The launch ceremony featured a speech by Shaikhah Al-Fadhlah, Senior Marketing Officer at Al-Muhallab Mall, explaining Al-Muhallab Mall's philanthropic initiative. Fadhlah said: "We

are pleased to focus our efforts into giving back to our community in a meaningful way and to engage all segments of the community in one competition for one social cause. We hope this campaign leads to more awareness, bigger donations, and to help improve the quality of life of others in the community." Moreover, Sara Al-Omar, Al-Muhallab Mall's Manager, commented on the campaign saying: "We at Al-Muhallab Mall pledge to launch initiatives that work on familiarizing the public with the benefits of maintaining a healthier lifestyle in an interactive and informative manner in collaboration with recognized entities. Therefore, this initiative will hopefully be a beginning of many more to come."

Meanwhile, Dr Elham Al Hamdan, Director of Fawzia Sultan Rehabilitation Institute (FSRI) said: "Such community interactions further reinforces our ability

to serve the people of Kuwait in the best way possible. We are pleased to have joined forces with Al-Muhallab Mall and Flare Gym to not only engage the society in a noble cause, but rather to create a social bond of sympathy and compassion." Moreover, other speakers at the event included Yousef Al-Shayea, Managing Partner at Flare Gym, who emphasized on the importance of focusing on a healthy lifestyle and the well-being of the community as a whole.

The 'Fitness Donation Program' invites all sects of the community to collectively lose 300,000 Calories until the end of the year, through running on the track in the 1st floor, every Tuesday from 5-7 pm, while timings in Ramadan will be everyday on weekdays before Iftar timing. After jointly accumulating 300,000 Calories, the participants will be able to donate 3,000 Kuwaiti Dinars to

those in need in FSRI.

It is worth mentioning that FSRI is a pioneer in providing the highest quality of compassionate rehabilitation care in Kuwait, which optimizes function and improves the quality of life for the people of Kuwait and the GCC Region by engaging qualified clinicians and supporting research and education.

Al-Muhallab Mall's recently refurbished brand identity and corporate strategy aims at engaging with the general public through specially designed monthly activities and events that would meet the needs of every segment of the society.

To know more about Al-Muhallab Mall, follow the Mall's social media channels on Instagram: @AlmuhallabMall, Twitter: @AlmuhallabMall, or Facebook: AlmuhallabMall.



Al-Muhallab team with Dr Elham Al Hamdan, Director of Fawzia Sultan Rehabilitation Institute.



Al-Najat Private High School held an honoring ceremony yesterday for 11th grade students. Talal Islam Al-Sharaa celebrated his graduation with honors with his family and friends.





- 00:25 Rob Roy
02:40 Behind Enemy Lines
04:10 The Hills Run Red
05:40 Death Rides A Horse
07:35 The Night They Raided Minsky's
09:15 The Magnificent Seven
11:20 The Indian Fighter
12:50 One Summer Love
14:30 The Beast Of Hollow Mountain
15:50 The Crocodile Hunter: Collision Course
17:20 Empire Of The Ants
18:50 The Man In The Iron Mask
21:00 Breaking Bad
22:00 Dracula 2000

- 12:30 Culture Express
13:00 Africa Live
14:00 News Update
14:30 Dialogue
15:00 News Update
15:15 China 24
16:00 News Update
16:15 Global Business
17:00 News Update
17:15 World InSight
18:00 Asia Today
18:30 Culture Express
19:00 News Update
19:30 The Heat
20:00 Africa Live
21:00 Global Business
21:30 Dialogue
22:00 News Update
22:15 China 24
23:00 News Update
23:15 World InSight

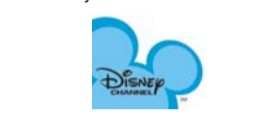
- With Morgan Freeman
10:23 Invent It Rich
11:08 How The Universe Works
11:53 Mega Builders
12:38 Mythbusters
13:23 Through The Wormhole
With Morgan Freeman
14:10 Ecopolis
14:57 Food Factory
15:20 Food Factory
15:44 How The Universe Works
16:31 Mega Builders
17:18 Ecopolis
18:05 Mythbusters
18:50 Secret Space Escapes
19:40 How The Universe Works
20:25 Through The Wormhole
With Morgan Freeman
21:15 Ecopolis
22:00 Secret Space Escapes
22:45 How The Universe Works
23:35 Mythbusters



- 00:45 Mountain Monsters
01:40 In Search Of The King
02:35 Tanked
03:25 Queens Of The Savannah
04:15 Gator Boys
05:02 Treehouse Masters
05:49 In Search Of The King
06:36 Swamp Brothers
07:00 Swamp Brothers
07:25 My Cat From Hell
08:15 In Search Of The King
09:10 Treehouse Masters
10:05 Tanked
11:00 My Cat From Hell
11:55 Bondi Vet
12:25 Bondi Vet
12:50 In Search Of The King
13:45 Gator Boys
14:40 Treehouse Masters
15:35 Tanked
16:30 Queens Of The Savannah
17:25 River Monsters (Best Of Series 1-5)
18:20 Ten Deadliest Snakes With Nigel Marven
19:15 Tanked
20:10 Animal Cops South Africa



- 00:00 The Edge
00:30 The CNBC Debate
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



- 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 Gravity 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
14:50 Liv And Maddie
14:55 Dog With A Blog
15:20 Dog With A Blog
15:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
16:00 Sofia The First
16:25 Jungle Cubs
16:50 Aladdin
17:15 The Lion Guard
17:40 Goldie & Bear
18:05 Miles From Tomorrow
18:30 Sofia The First
19:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
19:30 The Lion Guard
20:00 Goldie & Bear
20:30 Sofia The First
21:00 Jungle Cubs
21:25 Aladdin
21:50 Gummi Bears
22:20 Lilo And Stitch
22:50 Zou
23:05 Henry Hugglemonster
23:20 Calimero
23:35 Zou
23:50 Loopdidoo



- 00:00 I Escaped My Killer
01:00 The Haunting Of...
02:00 The Haunting Of...
03:00 Cursed: The Bell Witch
04:00 I Escaped My Killer
05:00 The Haunting Of...
06:00 I Didn't Do It
07:00 Britain's Biggest Heists
08:00 Crime Stories
09:00 Frenemies
09:30 Frenemies
10:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
11:00 The First 48
12:00 The FBI Files
13:00 I Didn't Do It
14:00 Crime Stories
15:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
16:00 Britain's Biggest Heists
17:00 The First 48
18:00 The FBI Files
19:00 I Didn't Do It
20:00 Crime Stories
21:00 Fred Dinenage: Murder Casebook
22:00 Bill Cosby: The Women Speak
23:00 The Jail: 60 Days In



- 00:20 Fast N' Loud
01:10 You Have Been Warned
02:00 Troy
02:50 Superhuman Science
03:15 Superhuman Science
03:40 GI Dough
04:05 Storage Wars Canada
04:30 Auction Hunters
05:00 How Do They Do It?
05:30 Fifth Gear
06:00 Outback Truckers
06:50 Wheeler Dealers
07:40 Fast N' Loud
08:30 GI Dough
08:55 Storage Wars Canada
09:20 Auction Hunters
09:45 How Do They Do It?
10:10 Fifth Gear
10:35 You Have Been Warned
11:25 Troy



- 00:25 Eastenders
00:55 New Tricks
01:55 New Tricks
02:50 Silent Witness
03:45 Waking The Dead
04:40 Eastenders
05:10 Doctor Who
06:00 Doctors
06:30 Doctors
07:00 Eastenders
07:30 Stella
08:15 The Paradise
09:10 Doctor Who
10:00 Doctors
10:30 Eastenders
11:00 Death In Paradise
11:55 Stella
12:45 The Paradise
13:40 Doctor Who
14:30 Doctors
15:00 Eastenders
15:30 Death In Paradise
16:25 Dickenson
17:15 Doctor Who
18:00 Doctors
18:30 Eastenders
19:05 Death In Paradise
20:00 Hobby City
21:00 Stag
21:55 Silent Witness
22:50 Orphan Black
23:50 Doctors



- 00:00 Charlie Rose
01:00 Bloomberg West
02:00 First Up With Angle Lau
03:00 First Up With Angle Lau
04:00 Trending Business



PREDATOR 2 ON OSN MOVIES HD ACTION

- 05:00 Trending Business
06:00 Asia Edge
07:00 Bloomberg West
08:00 Countdown
09:00 Countdown
09:30 On The Move
10:00 On The Move
11:00 The Pulse
12:00 Bloomberg Surveillance
13:00 Bloomberg Surveillance
14:00 Bloomberg Go
15:00 Bloomberg Go
16:00 Bloomberg Go
17:00 Bloomberg Markets
18:00 Bloomberg Markets: European Close
19:00 Bloomberg Markets
20:00 Bloomberg Markets
21:00 Bloomberg Markets
22:00 Bloomberg Markets
23:00 What'd You Miss?

- 12:15 Superhuman Science
12:40 The Carbonaro Effect
13:05 GI Dough
13:30 Storage Wars Canada
14:20 Outback Truckers
14:50 Wheeler Dealers
15:10 Fast N' Loud
16:00 Fast N' Loud
16:50 Fifth Gear
17:15 How Do They Do It?
17:40 Salvage Hunters
18:30 For The Love Of Cars
19:20 What On Earth?
20:10 Storage Wars Canada
20:35 Salvage Hunters
21:00 For The Love Of Cars
21:50 For The Love Of Cars
22:40 Ed Stafford: Into The Unknown
23:30 Wheeler Dealers

- 02:05 Calimero
02:20 Zou
02:30 Loopdidoo
02:45 Art Attack
03:10 Henry Hugglemonster
03:20 Calimero
03:35 Zou
03:45 Loopdidoo
04:00 Art Attack
04:25 Henry Hugglemonster
04:35 Calimero
04:50 Zou
05:00 Loopdidoo
05:15 Art Attack
05:35 Henry Hugglemonster
05:50 Calimero
06:00 Zou
06:20 Loopdidoo
06:35 Art Attack
07:00 The Hive
07:10 Zou
07:25 Loopdidoo
07:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
08:05 Sofia The First
08:30 Goldie & Bear
08:45 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
09:10 Sheriff Callie's Wild West
09:20 Doc McStuffins
09:35 Doc McStuffins
10:00 Sofia The First
10:10 Goldie & Bear
10:50 Minnie's Bow-Toons
11:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
11:25 The Lion Guard
11:50 Handy Manny
12:15 Jungle Junction
12:30 Special Agent Oso
12:45 The Hive
13:00 Sofia The First
13:25 Miles From Tomorrow



- 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



- 00:20 Through The Wormhole
09:20 With Morgan Freeman
01:08 Invent It Rich
01:55 How The Universe Works
02:42 Ecopolis
03:29 Mythbusters
04:16 Invent It Rich
05:03 How The Universe Works
05:50 Mega Builders
06:37 How Do They Do It?
07:00 How Do They Do It?
07:23 Mythbusters
08:08 Ecopolis
08:53 Mega Builders
09:38 Through The Wormhole



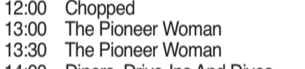
JENNIFER ANISTON GERARD BUTLER THE BOUNTY HUNTER THE PURSUIT BEGINS MARCH 19

THE BOUNTY HUNTER ON OSN MOVIES HD COMEDY

- 13:50 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
14:15 The Lion Guard
14:40 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
15:10 Miles From Tomorrow
15:35 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
16:00 Sofia The First
16:25 Jungle Cubs
16:50 Aladdin
17:15 The Lion Guard
17:40 Goldie & Bear
18:05 Miles From Tomorrow
18:30 Sofia The First
19:00 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
19:30 The Lion Guard
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21:00 Jungle Cubs
21:25 Aladdin
21:50 Gummi Bears
22:20 Lilo And Stitch
22:50 Zou
23:05 Henry Hugglemonster
23:20 Calimero
23:35 Zou
23:50 Loopdidoo

- 18:00 El News
19:00 House Of DVF
20:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
00:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
00:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
01:00 Chopped
02:00 Cutthroat Kitchen
03:00 Man Fire Food
04:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
04:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
06:00 Chopped
07:00 Man Fire Food
07:30 Man Fire Food
08:00 Chopped
09:00 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
09:30 Barefoot Contessa: Back To Basics
10:00 The Kitchen
10:00 Trisha's Southern Kitchen
11:30 Trisha's Southern Kitchen
12:00 Chopped
13:00 The Pioneer Woman
13:30 The Pioneer Woman
14:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:30 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
15:00 Man Fire Food
15:30 Man Fire Food
16:00 Chopped
17:00 The Kitchen
18:00 Trisha's Southern Kitchen
18:30 Trisha's Southern Kitchen
19:00 Chopped
20:00 Guy's Grocery Games
21:00 Private Chef
21:30 Valerie's Home Cooking
22:30 Valerie's Home Cooking
23:00 Iron Chef America

- 10:10 Get Your Act Together
11:05 Coach Trip
11:35 Harry's South Pole Heroes
12:30 Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover
13:25 Emmerdale
13:50 Coach Trip
14:20 Coronation Street
14:45 The Jonathan Ross Show
15:35 The Queen's Worst Year
16:30 Black Work
17:25 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
18:20 Emmerdale
18:45 Coach Trip
19:10 Coronation Street
19:35 The Queen's Worst Year
20:30 Black Work
21:25 Autopsy: The Last Hours Of...
22:20 Coronation Street
Emmerdale
23:15 Peter Andre's 60 Minute Makeover



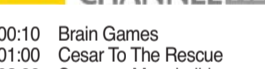
- 00:10 Brain Games
01:00 Cesar To The Rescue
02:00 Super Megabuild
02:55 Secrets Of The King Cobra
03:50 Brain Games
04:45 24 Hours In A&E
05:40 Filthy Riches
06:35 Mega Factories
07:30 Showdown Of The Unbeatables
08:25 Building Wild
09:20 24 Hours In A&E
10:15 Super Megabuild
11:00 The Yard
12:30 Dirty Rotten Survival
13:00 Building Wild
14:00 Showdown Of The Unbeatables
15:00 Megastructures
16:00 Super Megabuild
17:00 The Yard
18:00 Dirty Rotten Survival
19:00 Mine Kings
20:00 Super Megabuild
20:50 The Yard
21:40 Dirty Rotten Survival
22:30 Megastructures
23:20 Filthy Riches



- 00:20 Shipping Wars
00:45 Shipping Wars
01:10 Lost In Transmission
02:00 Ice Road Truckers
02:50 Ax Men
03:40 American Restoration
04:05 American Restoration
04:30 Pawn Stars
05:00 Lost Worlds
06:00 Mountain Men
06:50 Swamp People
07:40 Ax Men
08:30 Shipping Wars
08:55 American Restoration
09:20 American Restoration
09:45 Banger Boys
10:35 Counting Cars
11:00 Lost Worlds
11:25 Lost Worlds
12:15 American Pickers
13:05 Storage Wars
13:30 Storage Wars
13:55 Fifth Gear
14:45 Shipping Wars
15:10 Shipping Wars
15:35 Shipping Wars
16:00 Mountain Men
17:40 Ice Road Truckers
18:30 Lost Worlds
20:10 Pawn Stars
20:35 Pawn Stars
21:00 Duck Dynasty
21:25 Duck Dynasty
21:50 Pawn Stars
22:15 Pawn Stars Australia
22:40 Grave Trade
23:30 Duck Dynasty
23:55 Duck Dynasty



- 00:10 Dream Cruises
01:00 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces



- 00:30 The Muppets
01:00 Breaking In Comedians
01:30 The Big C
02:30 Louie
03:00 The Carmichael Show
03:30 Living With Fran
04:00 \$#!* My Dad Says
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
05:30 Suburgatory
06:00 The Bernie Mac Show
06:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:00 \$#!* My Dad Says
08:30 Suburgatory
09:00 The Carmichael Show
09:30 The Last Man On Earth
10:00 Playing House
10:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
12:00 Your Family Or Mine
12:30 \$#!* My Dad Says
13:00 Suburgatory
13:30 I Hate My Teenage Daughter
14:00 Living With Fran
14:30 The Last Man On Earth
15:00 Playing House
16:00 The Muppets
16:00 Breaking In
17:00 Your Family Or Mine
18:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
18:00 My Big Fat Greek Life
18:30 Living With Fran
19:00 Mad Love
19:30 Mad Love
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
21:00 The Muppets
21:30 Breaking In Comedians
22:00 Comedians
22:30 The Big C
23:00 Louie
23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers



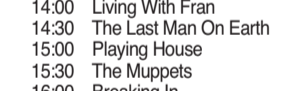
- 01:50 Top Tables, Top Cities
02:15 Sara's New Nordic Kitchen
02:40 Tom's Istanbul Delight
03:05 Glamour Puds
03:30 Glamour Puds
03:55 David Rocco's Dolce India
04:20 Maximum Foodie
04:45 Maximum Foodie
05:10 Food School
05:35 Rustic Adventures Italy
06:00 Rustic Adventures Italy
06:25 Carnival Eats
06:50 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
07:40 Top Tables, Top Cities
08:05 Sara's New Nordic Kitchen
08:30 Tom's Istanbul Delight
08:55 Glamour Puds
09:20 Glamour Puds
09:45 David Rocco's Dolce India
10:10 Maximum Foodie
10:35 Maximum Foodie
11:00 Food School
11:25 Rustic Adventures Italy
11:50 Rustic Adventures Italy
12:15 Carnival Eats
12:40 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces
13:35 Bondi Rescue Outback Adventure
14:30 Tom's Istanbul Delight
14:55 Glamour Puds
15:25 Glamour Puds
15:50 David Rocco's Dolce India
16:20 Maximum Foodie
16:45 Maximum Foodie
17:15 Grandma's Boy
17:40 Rustic Adventures Italy
18:10 Rustic Adventures Italy
18:35 Carnival Eats
19:05 Glamour Puds
19:30 Glamour Puds
20:00 David Rocco's Dolce India
20:25 Maximum Foodie
20:50 Maximum Foodie
21:15 Grandma's Boy
21:40 Rustic Adventures Italy
22:05 Rustic Adventures Italy
22:30 Carnival Eats
22:55 George Clarke's Amazing Spaces



- 00:20 Deadly Instincts
01:10 Man And The Wild
02:00 Africa's Creative Killers
02:50 I, Predator
03:45 Caught In The Act
04:40 Outback Wrangler
05:35 Africa's Creative Killers
06:30 I, Predator
07:25 Caught In The Act
08:20 Outback Wrangler
09:15 Race Of Life
09:40 Race Of Life
10:10 Nordic Wild
11:05 Animals Gone Wild
12:00 Monster Fish
12:55 Intimate Enemies
13:50 I, Predator
14:45 Caught In The Act
15:40 Dangerous Encounters
16:35 Race Of Life
17:00 Race Of Life
17:30 Nordic Wild
18:25 Animals Gone Wild
19:20 Caught In The Act
20:10 Dangerous Encounters
21:00 Race Of Life
21:25 Race Of Life



- 01:00 One Last Look
03:00 Short Term 12
05:00 Foreverland
07:00 1911
09:00 The Truth About Emanuel
11:00 Foreverland
13:00 Short Term 12
15:00 Barefoot
17:00 The Truth About Emanuel
19:00 Nightcrawler
21:00 Blood Ties
23:00 Suite Francaise



- 01:00 Eight Below
03:00 Mulan
04:45 The Mighty Ducks
06:45 Oz The Great And Powerful
09:00 Ice Princess
11:00 Tinker Bell And The Legend Of The NeverBeast
13:00 The Shaggy Dog
15:00 The Gabby Douglas Story
17:00 Night At The Museum: Battle Of The Smithsonian
19:00 Treasure Planet
21:00 First Kid
23:00 The Gabby Douglas Story



- 00:00 The People vs Larry Flynt
02:30 A Beautiful Mind
05:00 Boyhood
08:00 Belle
10:00 Evita
12:30 A Beautiful Mind
15:00 Dr. Strangelove
17:00 Merchants Of Doubt
19:00 Jersey Boys
21:30 The Sixth Sense
23:30 Jayne Mansfield's Car



- 01:00 The Lovers
03:00 Some Girls
05:00 Metallica: Through The Never
07:00 So Undercover
09:00 Godzilla
11:00 The Rewrite
13:00 Jack And The Cuckoo Clock Heart
14:45 Philomena
16:30 Insurgent
18:30 Avengers: Age Of Ultron
21:00 Poltergeist
23:00 Ex Machina



- 01:30 Mamma Moo And Crow
03:00 Marco Macaco
04:30 True Story Of Puss'n Boots
06:00 Miffy The Movie
08:00 Dixie And The Zombie Rebellion
10:00 Worms
11:30 Saving Santa
13:00 Marco Macaco
14:30 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure
16:00 The Heart Of The Oak
18:00 Worms
20:00 The Adventurer: The Curse Of The Midas Box
22:00 Pim And Pom: The Big Adventure
23:30 The Heart Of The Oak

- 01:00 Premier League Darts
04:30 Golfing World
05:30 Live PGA European Tour
07:30 The PGA Tour Champions Highlights
08:30 Inside The PGA Tour
09:00 European Tour Weekly
09:30 Live PGA European Tour
12:30 Golfing World
13:30 The PGA Tour Champions Highlights
14:30 Inside The PGA Tour
15:00 Live Snooker World Championship
19:00 The PGA Tour Champions Highlights
20:00 Inside The PGA Tour
20:30 European Tour Weekly
21:00 Live Snooker World Championship

CLASSIFIEDS



SHARQIA-1
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 12:30 PM
 CRISTIANO RONALDO: WORLD AT HIS FEET 2:45 PM
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 4:15 PM
 THE ONES BELOW 6:30 PM
 CRISTIANO RONALDO: WORLD AT HIS FEET 8:30 PM
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 10:00 PM
 THE ONES BELOW 12:15 AM

SHARQIA-2
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 12:45 PM
 SARRAINODU - Telugu 2:00 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 3:00 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 5:15 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 7:30 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 10:00 PM
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 12:15 AM

SHARQIA-3
 CRISTIANO RONALDO: WORLD AT HIS FEET 12:00 PM
 CRISTIANO RONALDO: WORLD AT HIS FEET 1:30 PM
 CRIMINAL 3:00 PM
 CRISTIANO RONALDO: WORLD AT HIS FEET 5:15 PM
 FAN- Hindi 6:45 PM
 FAN- Hindi 9:45 PM
 SARRAINODU - Telugu 3:30 PM
 SARRAINODU - Telugu 6:45 PM
 SARRAINODU - Telugu 9:45 PM
 CRIMINAL 12:45 AM

MUHALAB-1
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 12:30 PM
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 2:45 PM
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 5:00 PM
 CRISTIANO RONALDO: WORLD AT HIS FEET 7:15 PM
 CRISTIANO RONALDO: WORLD AT HIS FEET 8:45 PM
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 10:30 PM
 NO FRI-MON
 SARRAINODU - Telugu 10:30 PM

MUHALAB-2
 FAN- Hindi 12:30 PM
 KUNG FU PANDA 3 1:30 PM
 FAN- Hindi 3:30 PM
 FAN- Hindi 6:30 PM
 FAN- Hindi 9:30 PM
 SARRAINODU - Telugu 3:30 PM
 SARRAINODU - Telugu 6:30 PM
 SARRAINODU - Telugu 9:30 PM
 FAN- Hindi 12:30 AM

KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY

MUHALAB-3
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 1:00 PM
 SARRAINODU - Telugu 1:30 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 3:30 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 5:45 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 8:00 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 10:15 PM
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 12:30 AM

FANAR-1
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 12:30 PM
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 2:45 PM
 CRISTIANO RONALDO: WORLD AT HIS FEET 5:00 PM
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 6:45 PM
 CRISTIANO RONALDO: WORLD AT HIS FEET 9:00 PM
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 10:30 PM
 THE HUNTSMAN WINTER'S WAR 12:45 AM

FANAR-2
 FAN- Hindi 12:30 PM
 FAN- Hindi 3:30 PM
 FAN- Hindi 6:30 PM
 FAN- Hindi 9:30 PM
 SARRAINODU - Telugu 3:30 PM
 SARRAINODU - Telugu 6:30 PM
 SARRAINODU - Telugu 9:30 PM
 CRIMINAL 12:30 AM

FANAR-3
 DEMOLITION 12:00 PM
 THE ONES BELOW 2:15 PM
 DEMOLITION 4:00 PM
 THE ONES BELOW 6:15 PM
 DEMOLITION 8:00 PM
 THE ONES BELOW 10:15 PM
 DEMOLITION 12:15 AM

FANAR-4
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 12:15 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 2:30 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 4:45 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK -3D 7:00 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 9:15 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 11:30 PM

FANAR-5
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 1:30 PM
 THE JUNGLE BOOK 3:45 PM
 CRIMINAL 6:00 PM
 FAN- Hindi 8:15 PM
 FAN- Hindi 11:15 PM

SITUATION WANTED

M.Com sixteen years experience in independently handling accounts of medium sized companies upto finalization, familiar with accounting systems, at present working in hospital, seeking suitable position. Mobile: 66019422. **C 5161**
28-4-2016

CHANGE OF NAME

Kanagamani Packirisamy son of Packirisamy and Saroja bearing an Indian Passport No. Z2443141 and having address A2K Vilavanapadugai, Kalam Pulivalam, Thiruvaur Dt, Tamil Nadu, India had embraced Islam and changed the name as Kamaludeen. **(C 5167)**

Balveni Dadala daughter of Dadala Pullaiah and Dadala Nagaratamma bearing an Indian Passport No. G0613666 and having an address D.No 2-13-3, Plot No. 10/2 Reddy buildings Venkat Nagar Kakinada, east Godavari Dt, Andhra Pradesh, India, had embraced Islam and changed the name as Ayesha. **(C 5167)**
25-4-2016

I, Ali Akbar Husaini Bangaliwala, holder of Indian Passport No. M3187871, address: Temba, Mohammediyapura, Sagwara, Dungarpur 314025, Rajasthan, hereby change my name to Ali Akbar Husain Housami. **(C 5165)**

I, Nilofer, holder of Indian Passport No. N5195350. address: Temba, Mohammediyapura, Sagwara, Dungarpur,

REQUIRED

A Leading Kuwaiti Company Require A Clerk(Indian) For Tender Section & Order Section Mainly Dealing With Koc, Knpc, Pic, Mew Etc. Asking For Quotations From Foreign Principals, Preparation Of Order / Quotations - 4-5 Years Experience Is Needed.

Interested Candidates With Transferable Residence 18, Please

Send Your C.V.By

EMAIL: thuwayni@qualitynet.net, E-MAIL: thuwayni@kems.net

Rajasthan, hereby change my name to Nilofer Husain Housami. **(C 5165)**

ACCOMMODATION

Room available in Salmiya, near City Centre, Indian or Pakistani bachelor, rent KD 100. Tel: 99959140. **(C 5166)**
23-4-2016

EIG
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 We Are Providing
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 Decoument Clearing.
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 Email: Info@Eiglcoman.Com

EMERGENCY 112

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is
1889988



PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr: 03:44
Shorook 05:09
Duhr: 11:46
Asr: 15:21
Maghrib: 18:22
Isha: 19:45

Directorate General of Civil Aviation Home Page (www.kuwait-airport.com.kw)

In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers to use seats

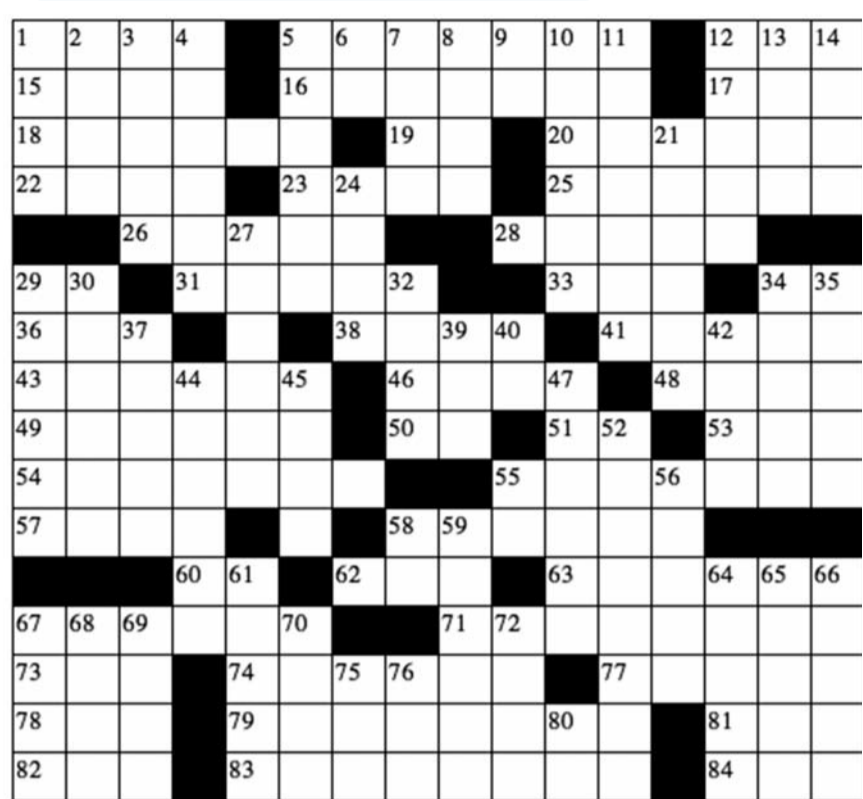


Flight Schedule

Arrival Flights on Thursday 28/4/2016				Departure Flights on Thursday 28/4/2016			
Airlines	Flt	Route	Time	Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10	UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10	PAL	669	Dubai/Manila	14:45
JZR	267	Beirut	00:30	KAC	773	Riyadh	15:00
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55	KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
KKK	6506	Istanbul	00:55	GFA	222	Bahrain	15:05
DLH	635	Doha	01:00	FDB	058	Dubai	15:10
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15	AXB	394	Kozhikode	15:10
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20	KNE	381	Taif	15:10
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30	KAC	617	Doha	15:15
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40	QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
RJA	642	Amman	01:45	JZR	189	Dubai	15:50
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45	KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
JZR	552	Alexandria	01:50	KAC	613	Bahrain	16:00
GFA	211	Bahrain	02:15	SYR	342	Damascus	16:00
UAE	853	Dubai	02:25	SVA	505	Jeddah	16:00
OMA	643	Muscat	03:05	OMA	646	Muscat	16:10
FDB	067	Dubai	03:15	ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
MSR	612	Cairo	03:15	ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
ETD	305	Abu Dhabi	03:15	JAD	302	Amman	16:35
QTR	1076	Doha	03:25	RJA	641	Amman	16:55
KAC	544	Cairo	03:40	KNE	532	Jeddah	16:55
LMU	510	Cairo	04:00	KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
QTR	8511	Doha	04:30	FDB	052	Dubai	17:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10	JZR	266	Beirut	17:10
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15	QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
JZR	529	Asyut	06:00	UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
KAC	412	Bangkok/Manila	06:15	NIA	252	Alexandria	17:50
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:25	SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
BAW	157	London	06:40	GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
IRA	673	Ahwaz	07:15	JZR	184	Dubai	18:20
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15	JZR	538	Cairo	18:30
JZR	503	Luxor	07:25	JZR	554	Alexandria	18:50
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30	KAC	563	Amman	19:00
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	07:35	QTR	1081	Doha	19:05
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:40	JZR	238	Amman	19:15
KAC	204	Lahore	07:40	JZR	124	Bahrain	19:20
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50	MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:50	GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50	FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15	ABY	124	Sharjah	19:55
KAC	344	Chennai	08:15	FDB	060	Dubai	20:30
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20	KAC	283	Dhaka	20:30
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20	UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25	JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00	KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:45
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:05	DLH	634	Doha	20:50
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05	ABY	122	Sharjah	20:50
IRA	667	Esfahan	09:05	KAC	351	Kochi	20:50
QTR	1070	Doha	09:30	KAC	353	BLR	20:55
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40	KAC	343	Chennai	20:55
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40	KAC	543	Cairo	21:00
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40	KNE	234	Riyadh	21:10
MEA	404	Beirut	11:00	MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
JZR	561	Sohag	11:25	OMA	648	Muscat	21:15
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30	MSR	619	Alexandria	21:30
JZR	165	Dubai	11:50	QTR	1089	Doha	21:45
NIA	151	Cairo	12:20	DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25	FDB	5054	Dubai	21:55
JZR	241	Amman	12:30	ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	21:55
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45	ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00	UAE	860	Dubai	22:25
KAC	620	Doha	13:10	KLM	417	Dammam/Amsterdam	22:25
QTR	1078	Doha	14:05	KAC	381	Delhi	22:25
JZR	779	Jeddah	14:05	KAC	301	Mumbai	22:30
KAC	672	Dubai	14:05	GFA	220	Bahrain	23:00
KNE	231	Riyadh	14:10	KAC	205	Islamabad	23:00
AXB	393	Kozhikode	14:10	ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
FDB	057	Dubai	14:20	QTR	1083	Doha	23:20
				KAC	411	Bangkok/Manila	23:25
				MSC	502	Alexandria	23:30

DIAL161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

CROSSWORD 1240



ACROSS

1. An informal term for a father.
5. So lacking in interest as to cause mental weariness.
12. Thickening of tissue in the motor tracts of the lateral columns and anterior horns of the spinal cord.
15. A barrier consisting of a horizontal bar and supports.
16. Cooked in hot water.
17. The facility where wild animals are housed for exhibition.
18. Reach a destination.
19. Informal terms for a mother.
20. The state of being without clothing or covering of any kind.
22. A small ball with a hole through the middle.
23. Wearing or provided with clothing.
25. Apathy and inactivity in the practice of virtue (personified as one of the deadly sins).
26. Tropical American tree producing cacao beans.
28. Small tropical American tree bearing edible plumlike fruit.
29. The square of a body of any size of type.
31. The capital and largest city of Bangladesh.
33. The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet.
36. A guided missile fired from shipboard against an airborne target.
38. The (prehensile) extremity of the superior limb.
41. Swelling from excessive accumulation of serous fluid in tissue.
43. A disease of cattle and sheep attributed to a dietary deficiency.
46. A Hindu prince or king in India.
48. A feeling of strong eagerness (usually in favor of a person or cause).
49. The mountain peak that Noah's ark landed on as the waters of the great flood receded.
50. A soft heavy toxic malleable metallic element.
51. A soft silvery metallic element of the alkali earth group.
53. A type of submachine gun that is designed and manufactured in Israel.
54. A tricycle (usually propelled by pedalling).
57. Any place of complete bliss and delight and peace.
60. A rare silvery (usually trivalent) metallic element.
62. A gradual decline (in size or strength or power or number).
63. A genus of orb-weaving spiders including common garden spiders and barn spiders.
67. An Asian temple.
71. A person being ordained.
73. A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.
74. A former unit of electric current (slightly smaller than the SI ampere).
77. One of two pieces of armor plate hanging from the fault to protect the upper thighs.
78. (in Scotland or Ireland) A mountain or tall hill.
79. An Indic language.
81. Uncastrated adult male sheep.
82. A condition (mostly in boys) characterized by behavioral and learning disorders.
83. North American evergreen with small pinkish bell-shaped flowers and oblong leaves used formerly for shipplasters.
84. Up to the present time.

DOWN

1. Lacking in liveliness or charm or surprise.
2. A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
3. English theoretical physicist who applied relativity theory to quantum mechanics and predicted the existence of antimatter and the positron (1902-1984).
4. Surveying instrument consisting of the upper movable part of a theodolite including the telescope and its attachments.
5. A medicinal drug used to evoke vomiting (especially in cases of drug overdose or poisoning).
6. An artificial language for international use that rejects rejects all existing words and is based instead on an abstract analysis of ideas.
7. God of love and erotic desire.
8. Any of a number of fishes of the family Carangidae.
9. A midwestern state in north central United States in the Great Lakes region.
10. Something that is a source of danger.
11. Give an education to.
12. (chemistry) Relating to or containing the azido group N3.
13. The basic unit of money in Lesotho.
14. Erect bushy hairy annual herb having trifoliate leaves and purple to pink flowers.
21. A period of 10 years.
24. A long narrow inlet of the sea in Scotland (especially when it is nearly landlocked).
27. A high-crowned black cap (usually made of felt or sheepskin) worn by men in Turkey and Iran and the Caucasus.
30. Having the surface damaged or disfigured.
32. An association of people to promote the welfare of senior citizens.
34. Affect with wonder.
35. An irrational but irresistible motive for a belief or action.
37. English economist noted for his studies of international trade and finance (born in 1907).
39. Tag the base runner to get him out.
40. A person who announces and plays popular recorded music.
42. The twelfth month of the civil year.
44. Any plant of the genus Eryngium.
45. Male red deer.
47. Away from the mouth or oral region.
52. Taken before a meal as an appetizer.
55. A state in southeastern United States.
56. A city in southern Turkey on the Seyhan River.
58. A metallic element having four allotropic forms.
59. (anatomy) Opposite to or away from the mouth.
61. American Revolutionary patriot.
64. Offensive or even (of persons) malicious.
65. Issue or terminate (in a specified way, state, etc.).
66. Having or showing knowledge and skill and aptitude.
68. In bed.
69. Port city in northwestern Belgium and industrial center.
70. A woman hired to suckle a child of someone else.
72. A network of intersecting blood vessels or intersecting nerves or intersecting lymph vessels.
75. The 21st letter of the Greek alphabet.
76. Bulky grayish-brown eagle with a short wedge-shaped white tail.
80. A hard gray lustrous metallic element that is highly corrosion-resistant.

STAR TRACK



Aries (March 21-April 19)

In-depth discussions and probing conversations in the workplace find you at your mental best. Get some good business ideas from co-workers. A moneymaking idea has merit. It will not happen overnight-be patient. Don't over stress yourself with imaginings. Someone may remind you of what you thought humanity was doing to improve life on the planet earth. You may be reassessing the goals of your country and wondering how we got to where we are now. You may feel we have moved away from the respect of life and land and want to do something to help guide the world in a more positive direction. The clock will only hold so many minutes, similar to you only being able to exert so much effort... One thing at a time.



Taurus (April 20-May 20)

You may be finishing up some long-term projects soon but your mind is already whirling around with plans for a few new activities. You keep quite busy and could even be a believer that a busy mind is most healthy. You are good at networking and today is full of opportunities to make new and helpful contacts that will be beneficial to all for a long time to come. After the noon break, you set your consciousness to focus on the day-to-day events and you enjoy the results of good teamwork. This is a personal high-cycle time. You are inspired and you are ready, willing and able to handle whatever comes your way. Your activities this afternoon are fun and lean toward the creative. Enjoy the activities of celebration.



Gemini (May 21-June 20)

It is easy for you to get your message across to others today. You can demonstrate your abilities to compromise and may need to do so before the afternoon is over. Your ideas can change things for the better in the workplace but others may not be ready to merge their ideas with yours. You are constantly in pursuit of new and different ways to improve moneymaking abilities. This may be a good time to consider a business of your own-perhaps an antique store. Your charm and outgoing personality will draw others to your viewpoint. The feeling of being constrained this evening may find you eating dinner out. An irritating neighbor will become more considerate if you build a better relationship through common communication.



Cancer (June 21-July 22)

You are hopeful concerning money matters today. There is a desire to excel in the workplace. When you work with others, you can be very effective. You develop a knack for being in the right place at the right time and that can win you the admiration of others. Noon time may find you at a library, researching ways in which to beautify or update the furniture in your home. Be prepared for unexpected changes in the home this afternoon. With self-confidence you are able to create good luck all around you. You rule over your own territory this evening and there is much pleasure to be enjoyed with the ways in which your ideas have taken shape. Combined interests between you and your partner may find you both planning a trip.



Leo (July 23-August 22)

Changes could occur in your environment this day. You could find yourself working to make contacts with city officials to change things in a positive way-others will help if you ask. Working with-rather than against-the flow should be easy this afternoon. You are moved by high achievers and may learn some new technical procedure through some of your high-achiever friends. Others are impressed by your productivity today. Your nature may be stoical this evening, as you take a serious attitude to just about all aspects of your life. Balance your activities between your sense of duty to the world and your sense of duty to yourself. This is an excellent time to sit down alone and get many personal projects accomplished.



Virgo (August 23-September 22)

New ways to share with others make conversations and interactions go well at this time. You may find yourself more talkative and easy going than usual. A light-hearted dialogue with an older person may take place this morning. A connection with people on a grand scale-lectures, convention activities and business travel-begins to play a bigger part in your life; there is much activity and involvement now. Your communication with others has a way of outlining new directions in your life. This is a time when you should enjoy a professional success. Being in the spotlight is common to you during this time and you should realize that it is also a good time to be humble and help others. This is truly a mentally and socially active period.



Libra (September 23-October 22)

Your boss wants action and you are the one to make things happen. Your ideas and thoughts will impress others, especially if you have the power to mold your ideas into a firm plan. Very productive conference calls will draw out the adjustments that need to be made on budgeting or advertising or some other important matter. Fresh challenges and initiatives light your enthusiasm now, as a new cycle begins-there is a powerful urge to be first or to come out on top. Away with the old and on to the new-let nobody and no thing stand between you and your objective! Headstrong impulses and rash courage may create mistakes so pay attention to your motivation. You and your family may talk about a summer vacation.



Scorpio (October 23-November 21)

Self-confidence is increased and so is your capacity for leadership. You have increased concentration and perception into the motives of others in your workplace. This period is favorable for any research or for revealing hidden factors and inhibitions. If there are secret manipulations, or conspiracies, they can surface where you can gain control. Older people and those in positions of power tend to give you their approval and trust. Your status in the working world is very important. You want to achieve as much as possible. Your chance of winning in competitions is good and you could find yourself involved in a competitive game this afternoon. Taking a little time to relax before you get into bed this evening will help you sleep well.



Sagittarius (November 22-December 21)

Making and keeping appointments has you busy much of today. You find that you can really use your mind to make clear choices. If there is an urge for change, it would be a time to review your routine, if you have a routine. Perhaps settling down to a half-day routine would be a beginning point for you as you seem to desire a break from the same patterns each day. A business venture with a friend looks profitable at this time-especially if a legal advisor is consulted. The beauty and scent of freshly cut flowers, in your home or office, can be enjoyed today-to the max! You make your way through ideas and concepts. Your ability to converse well is a big help to others. Consider keeping a journal so as to find where you can make changes and bring about a balance.



Capricorn (December 22-January 19)

Today has much to do about money-how you feel about it and how you protect and use it. Taxes, investments and other financial ties or obligations grab your attention. Put your mind to work and take care of any details that need your attention, for mental discipline should come easily. Problems and obstacles that were previously a problem should find easy explanations under your keen examination. Your attitude to life and the way you live is in the process of changing for the better. You have been more relaxed and less frustrated by outside circumstances than most. Sympathy and understanding are emotional qualities that take on greater importance with friends at this time. It's wisdom, not knowledge, that counts. Relax this evening.



Aquarius (January 20- February 18)

This day is a great time to work with others. Have faith in yourself and your talents. Working for the pleasure of a job well done is a good motivation, but aiming for the highest success and prosperity is better. Your management abilities are in high focus. There are intensely favorable conditions for professional progress all throughout this month. You may be inclined to overdo your physical activities and work stress may increase as well. It should be easy to relieve work tension with a little humor. A friend from the past has found you and is looking forward to a visit. Communicating feelings and showing a positive reception for this friendship is important for the two of you-satisfaction and appreciation rule. There is new music to enjoy.



Pisces (February 19-March 20)

There is a great deal of progress in the workplace today. Continue to tie up unfinished work this morning. There may be some recognition surrounding your work. Be quick to compliment your co-workers when you see accomplishments worthy of compliments. You will be pleased with the long-term effects. You can improve your relationship with co-workers by taking at least one day out of the week to communicate during the noon meal or visit with those that work near you. This afternoon an acquaintance will ask you for money. Your generosity is commendable; however, some people need to learn how to handle money and a loan from you might not help-think first-things may not be as they seem. If asked, you could do some excellent counseling.

WORD SEARCH

80's Songs

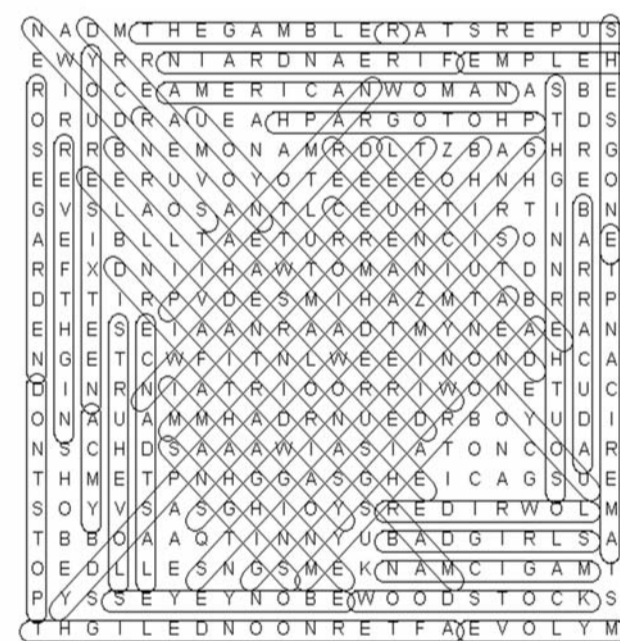
Find and circle all of the 1980's song titles that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the title of a U2 song.



- | | | | |
|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| ABRACADABRA | DRIVE | LEGS | RAPTURE |
| ALLENTOWN | FAITH | LONGER | ROSANNA |
| ALONE | FIRE LAKE | LOVE BITES | SARA |
| AMANDA | FOOTLOOSE | LOVE SHACK | SLEDGEHAMMER |
| ANGEL | FUNKY TOWN | LUKA | SMALL TOWN |
| BATDANCE | HEARTLIGHT | MAGIC | SUDDENLY |
| BILLIE JEAN | HELLO | MANEATER | SWEET DREAMS |
| CARS | HIM | MANIAC | TAINTED LOVE |
| CELEBRATION | HOLD ON | MICKEY | TIME |
| CHERISH | JEOPARDY | MR. ROBOTO | UPTOWN GIRL |
| COME DANCING | JESSE | NASTY | URGENT |
| CONGA | JUMP | NIGHTSHIF | VALERIE |
| COOL NIGHT | KEY LARGO | OH SHERRIE | VENUS |
| CRYING | KISS | PHYSICAL | YOU ARE |
| DANGER ZONE | KYRIE | PRIVATE EYES | YOUNG TURKS |
| DESIRE | LADY | | |

Yesterday Solution

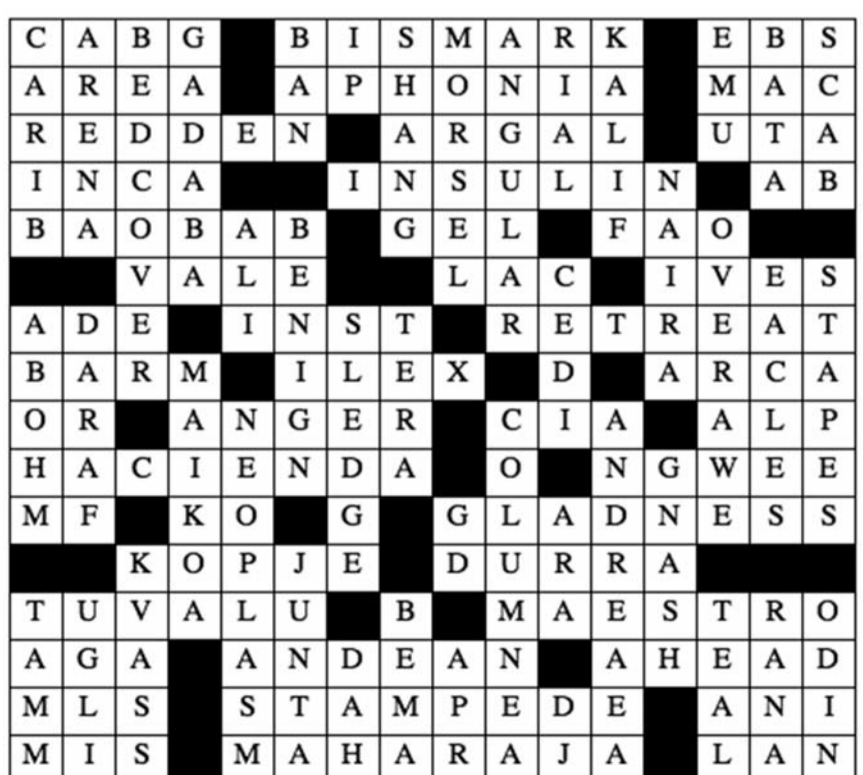
More 70's Songs



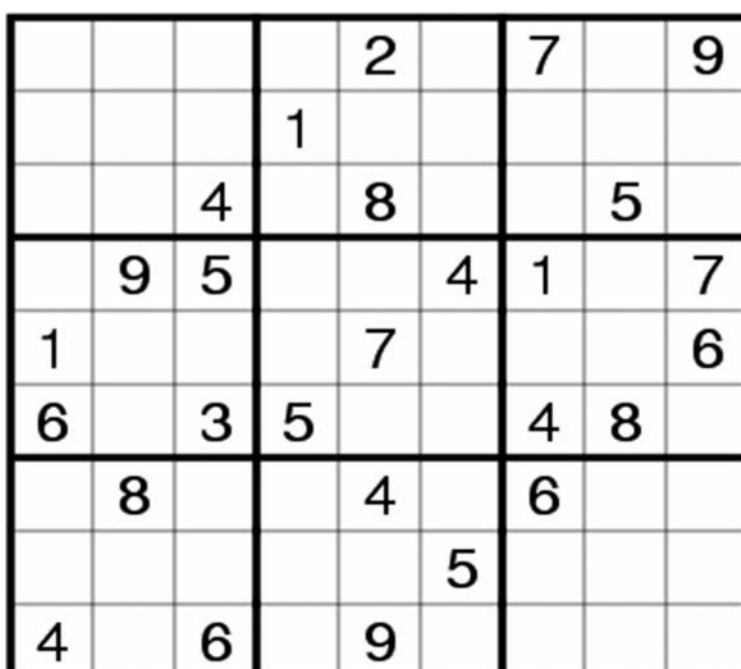
- | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|
| AFTERNOON DELIGHT | DREAM ON | MAGIC MAN | SHE'S GONE |
| AMERICAN PIE | DREAM WEAVER | MAIN STREET | SIGNS |
| AMERICAN WOMAN | DRIFT AWAY | MARGARITAVILLE | SOUTHERN NIGHTS |
| ANNIE'S SONG | EBONY EYES | MY LOVE | SUMMER NIGHTS |
| BAD GIRLS | FIRE AND RAIN | MY SHARONA | SUNDOWN |
| BARACUDA | HELP ME | NIGHT FEVER | SUPERSTAR |
| BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY | IMAGINE | PHOTOGRAPH | THE GAMBLER |
| BROTHER LOUIE | LAST DANCE | PIANO MAN | WITHOUT YOU |
| CRAZY ON YOU | LET IT BE | REUNITED | WOODSTOCK |
| DELTA DAWN | LOVE HURTS | ROSE GARDEN | Y.M.C.A. |
| DON'T STOP | LOW RIDER | SHADOW DANCING | YOU'RE SIXTEEN |

Hidden words: AMERICA BREAD NAZARETH HEART BLONDIE BOSTON CHICAGO ABBA QUEEN KISS

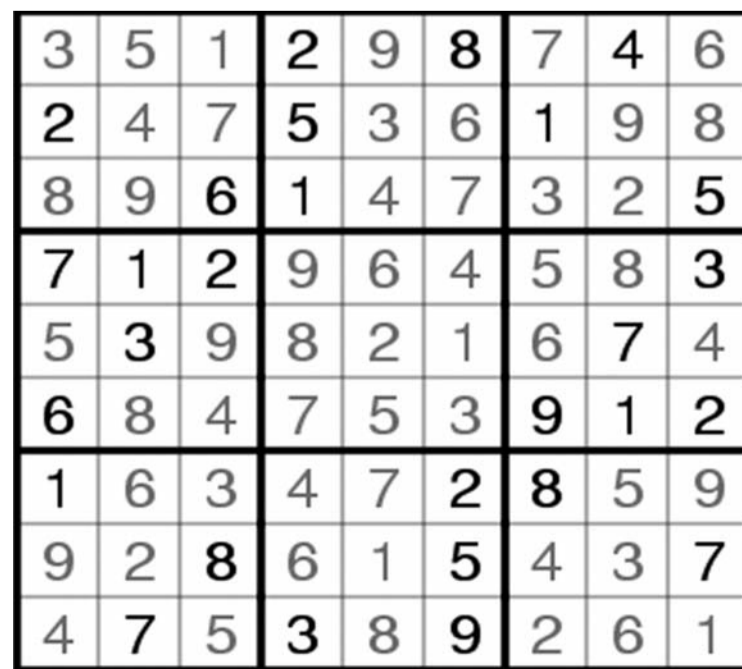
Yesterday's Solution



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

INTERNATIONAL CALLS



Afghanistan	0093	Lithuania	00370
Albania	00355	Luxembourg	00352
Algeria	00213	Macau	00853
Andorra	00376	Macedonia	00389
Angola	00244	Madagascar	00261
Anguilla	001264	Majorca	0034
Antiga	001268	Malawi	00265
Argentina	0054	Malaysia	0060
Armenia	00374	Maldives	00960
Australia	0061	Mali	00223
Austria	0043	Malta	00356
Azerbaijan	00994	Marshall Islands	00692
Bahamas	001242	Martinique	00596
Bahrain	00973	Mauritania	00222
Bangladesh	00880	Mauritius	00230
Barbados	001246	Mayotte	00269
Belarus	00375	Mexico	0052
Belgium	0032	Micronesia	00691
Belize	00501	Moldova	00373
Benin	00229	Monaco	00377
Bermuda	001441	Mongolia	00976
Bhutan	00975	Montserrat	001664
Bolivia	00591	Morocco	00212
Bosnia	00387	Mozambique	00258
Botswana	00267	Myanmar (Burma)	0095
Brazil	0055	Namibia	00264
Brunei	00673	Nepal	00977
Bulgaria	00359	Netherlands	0031
Burkina	00226	Netherlands Antilles	00599
Burundi	00257	New Caledonia	00687
Cambodia	00855	New Zealand	0064
Cameroon	00237	Nicaragua	00505
Canada	001	Niger	00227
Cape Verde	00238	Nigeria	00234
Cayman Islands	001345	Niue	00683
Central African	00236	Norfolk Island	00672
Chad	00235	N. Ireland (UK)	0044
Chile	0056	North Korea	00850
China	0086	Norway	0047
Colombia	0057	Oman	00968
Comoros	00269	Pakistan	0092
Congo	00242	Palau	00680
Cook Islands	00682	Panama	00507
Costa Rica	00506	Papua New Guinea	00675
Croatia	00385	Paraguay	00595
Cuba	0053	Peru	0051
Cyprus	00357	Philippines	0063
Cyprus (Northern)	0090392	Poland	0048
Czech Republic	00420	Portugal	00351
Denmark	0045	Puerto Rico	001787
Diego Garcia	00246	Qatar	00974
Djibouti	00253	Romania	0040
Dominica	001767	Russian Federation	007
Dominican Republic	001809	Rwanda	00250
Ecuador	00593	Saint Helena	00290
Egypt	0020	Saint Kitts	001869
El Salvador	00503	Saint Lucia	001758
England (UK)	0044	Saint Pierre	00508
Equatorial Guinea	00240	Saint Vincent	001784
Eritrea	00291	Samoa US	00684
Estonia	00372	Samoa West	00685
Ethiopia	00251	San Marino	00378
Falkland Islands	00500	Sao Tome	00239
Faroe Islands	00298	Saudi Arabia	00966
Fiji	00679	Scotland (UK)	0044
Finland	00358	Senegal	00221
France	0033	Seychelles	00284
French Guiana	00594	Sierra Leone	00232
French Polynesia	00689	Singapore	0065
Gabon	00241	Slovakia	00421
Gambia	00220	Slovenia	00386
Georgia	00995	Solomon Islands	00677
Germany	0049	Somalia	00252
Ghana	00233	South Africa	0027
Gibraltar	00350	South Korea	0082
Greece	0030	Spain	0034
Greenland	00299	Sri Lanka	0094
Grenada	001473	Sudan	00249
Guadeloupe	00590	Suriname	00597
Guam	001671	Swaziland	00268
Guatemala	00502	Sweden	0046
Guinea	00224	Switzerland	0041
Guyana	00592	Syria	00963
Haiti	00509	Serbia	00381
Holland (Netherlands)	0031	Taiwan	00886
Honduras	00504	Tanzania	00255
Hong Kong	00852	Thailand	0066
Hungary	0036	Togo	00228
Ibiza (Spain)	0034	Tonga	00676
Iceland	00354	Tokelau	00690
India	0091	Trinidad	001868
Indian Ocean	00873	Tunisia	00216
Indonesia	0062	Turkey	0090
Iran	0098	Tuvalu	00688
Iraq	00964	Uganda	00256
Ireland	00353	Ukraine	00380
Italy	0039	United Arab Emirates	00976
Ivory Coast	00225	United Kingdom	0044
Jamaica	001876	Uruguay	00598
Japan	0081	USA	001
Jordan	00962	Uzbekistan	00998
Kazakhstan	007	Vanuatu	00678
Kenya	00254	Venezuela	00582
Kiribati	00686	Vietnam	0084
Kuwait	00965	Virgin Islands UK	001284
Kyrgyzstan	00996	Virgin Islands US	001340
Laos	00856	Wales (UK)	0044
Latvia	00371	Yemen	00967
Lebanon	00961	Yugoslavia	00381
Liberia	00231	Zambia	00260
Libya	00218	Zimbabwe	00263
Lesotho	00266		

STATE OF KUWAIT DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT



Tel: (+965) 161 Ext: 2627 - 2630
Fax: (+965) 24348714
www.met.gov.kw

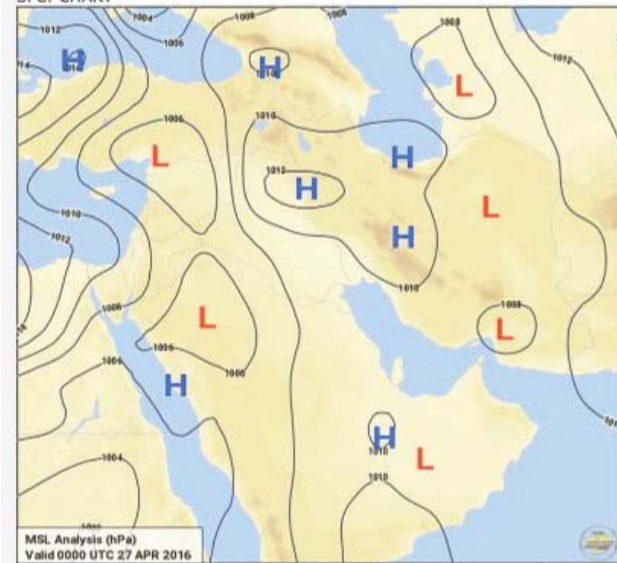
Expected Weather for the Next 24 Hours

Issued 27/04/2016-07:00 LT UTC +3hr

Max Temperature 44 °C

By Day : Hot with light to moderate south westerly changing to south easterly wind, with speed of 15 - 38 km/h and some high clouds will appear later on
By Night : Fair with light to moderate south easterly to southerly wind, with speed of 12 - 32 km/h and some scattered clouds will appear

SFC. CHART



MSL Analysis (hPa)
Valid 0000 UTC 27 APR 2016

Four-Day Forecast

	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Expected Weather	clouds to increase	partly cloudy + scattered thunder rain later	partly cloudy + scattered thunder rain later	clouds to decrease + scattered rain
Min Temp °C	24	24	25	23
Max Temp °C	42	39	39	40
Wind Direction	southerly to south easterly	south easterly	north westerly to northerly	variable wind changing to light to moderate south easterly
Wind Speed km/h	12 - 35	15 - 40	12 - 32	08 - 30

All times are local time (GMT+3) unless otherwise stated

Warnings & Weather Watches

no warnings or weather watches

Kuwait Forecast

Station	MIN °C	REC	Max °C	EXP
KUWAIT CITY	29		42	
KUWAIT AIRPORT	23		44	
ABDALLY	21		43	
BUBYAN	24		37	
JAHRA	28		44	
FAILAKA ISLAND	24		40	
SALMIYAH	26		36	
AHMADI	29		40	
JAL ALIYAH	27		43	
QAROH ISLAND	24		32	
UMM AL-MARADEM	25		33	
NUWAISIB	24		44	
WAFRA	23		43	
MANAGISH	24		43	
SALMY	26		41	
MUTRIBA	27		44	

Recorded Yesterday at Kuwait Airport

Max Temp (°C)	43
Min Temp (°C)	24
Max Rel Hum (%)	31
Min Rel Hum (%)	06
Max Wind Speed (km/h) and Direction	39 S
TOTAL RAINFALL IN 24 HR	0 mm

Sunrise	05:09
Sunset	18:21

Prayer Times

Fajr	03:44
Sunrise	05:09
Zuhr	11:46
Asr	15:21
Sunset	18:21
Isha	19:43



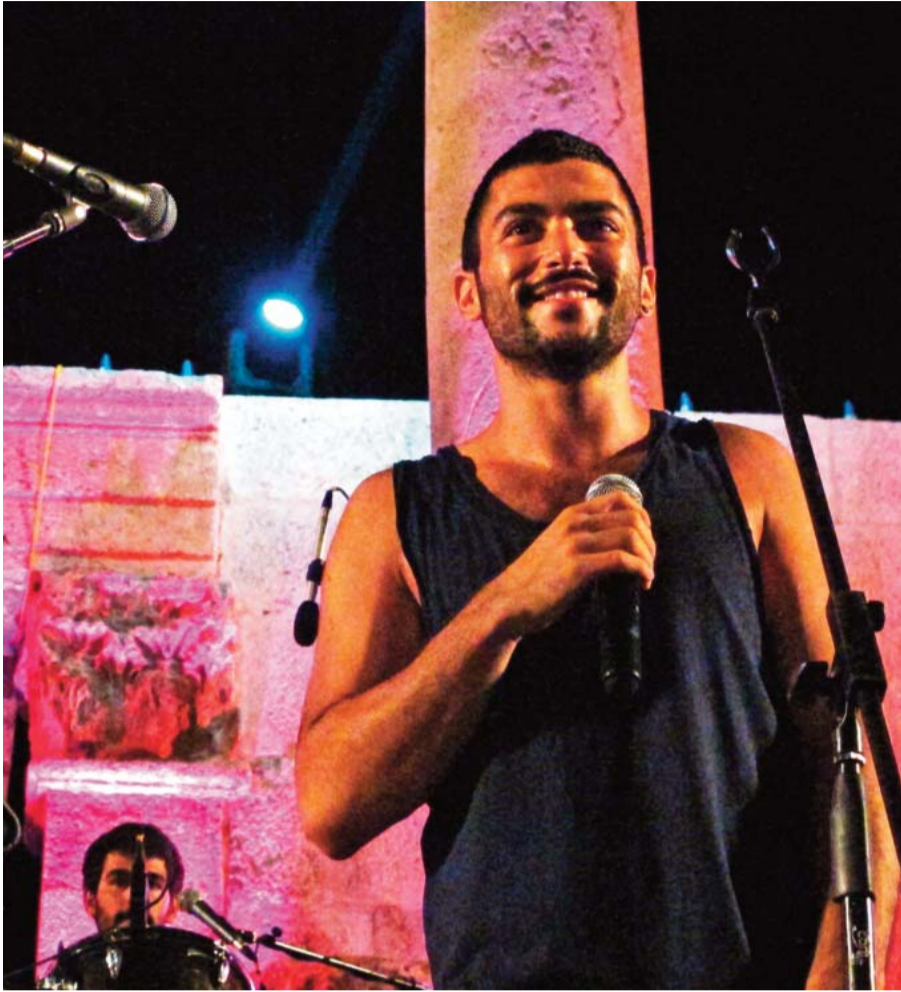
PRIVATE CLINICS

Ophthalmologists	
Dr. Abdallah Al-Mansoor	25622444
Dr. Samy Al-Rabea	25752222
Dr. Masoma Habeeb	25321171
Dr. Mubarak Al-Ajmy	25739999
Dr. Mohsen Abel	25757700
Dr. Adnan Hasan Alwayl	25732223
Dr. Abdallah Al-Baghly	25732223
Ear, Nose & Throat (ENT)	
Dr. Ahmed Fouad Mouner	24555050 Ext 510
Dr. Abdallah Al-Ali	25644660
Dr. Abd Al-Hameed Al-Taweel	25646478
Dr. Sanad Al-Fathalah	25311996
Dr. Mohammad Al-Daory	25731988
Dr. Ismail Al-Fodary	22620166
Dr. Mahmoud Al-Booz	25651426
General Practitioners	
Dr. Mohammed Y Majidi	24555050 Ext 123
Dr. Yousef Al-Omar	24719312
Dr. Tarek Al-Mikhaizeem	23926920
Dr. Kathem Maarafi	25730465
Dr. Abdallah Ahmad Eyadah	25655528
Dr. Nabeel Al-Ayoobi	24577781
Dr. Dina Abdallah Al-Rafea	25333501
Urologists	
Dr. Ali Naser Al-Serfy	22641534
Dr. Fawzi Taher Abul	22639955
Dr. Khaleel Abdallah Al-Awadi	22616660
Dr. Adel Al-Hunayan FRCS (C)	25313120
Dr. Leons Joseph	66703427

Plastic Surgeons	
Dr. Mohammad Al-Khalaf	22547272
Dr. Abdal-Redha Lari	22617700
Dr. Abdel Quttainah	25625030/60
Family Doctor	
Dr Divya Damodar	23729596/23729581
Psychiatrists	
Dr. Esam Al-Ansari	22635047
Dr Eisa M. Al-Balhan	22613623/0
Gynaecologists & Obstetricians	
Dr Adrian arbe	23729596/23729581
Dr. Verginia s.Marin	2572-6666 ext 8321
Dr. Fozeya Ali Al-Qatan	22655539
Dr. Majeda Khalefa Aliyami	25343406
Dr. Ahmad Al-Khooly	25739272
Dr. Salem soso	22618787
General Surgeons	
Dr. Amer Zawaz Al-Amer	22610044
Dr. Mohammad Yousef Basher	25327148
Internists, Chest & Heart	
Dr. Adnan Ebil	22639939
Dr. Mousa Khadada	22666300
Dr. Latefa Al-Duweisan	25728004
Dr. Nadem Al-Ghabra	25355515
Dr. Mobarak Aldoub	24726446
Dr Nasser Behbehani	25654300/3

Paediatricians	
Dr. Khaled Hamadi	25665898
Dr. Abd Al-Aziz Al-Rashed	25340300
Dr. Zahra Qabazard	25710444
Dr. Sohail Qamar	22621099
Dr. Snaa Maarouf	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. Abdallateef Al-Katrash	22525888
Dr. Abdallah Al-Duweisan	25653755
Dr. Bader Al-Ansari	25620111
Neurologists	
Dr. Sohal Najem Al-Shemeri	25633324
Dr. Jasem Mola Hassan	25345875
Gastrologists	
Dr. Sami Aman	22636464
Dr. Mohammad Al-Shamaly	25322030
Dr. Foad Abdallah Al-Ali	22633135

Endocrinologist	
Dr. Abd Al-Naser Al-Othman	25339330
Dr. Ahmad Al-Ansari	25658888
Dr. Kamal Al-Shomr	25329924
Physiotherapists & VD	
Dr. Deyaa Shehab	25722291
Dr. Mused Faraj Khamees	22666288
Rheumatologists:	
Dr. Adel Al-Awadi	25330060
Dr. Khaled Al-Jarallah	25722290
Internist, Chest & Heart	
DR.Mohammes Akkad	24555050 Ext 210
Consultant Cardiologist	
Dr. Mohammad Zubaid MB, ChB, FRCP, PACC Assistant Professor Of Medicine Head, Division of Cardiology Mubarak Al-Kabeer Hospital	25339667
Dr. Farida Al-Habib MD, PH.D, FACC	2611555-2622555
Inaya German Medical Center	Te: 2575077 Fax: 25723123



AMMAN: Hamed Sinno, 24, lead singer and song writer of the Lebanese group Mashrou' Leila performs with the band in the ancient Roman amphitheater on Sept. 14, 2012.

AMMAN: Arab fans of the Lebanese group Mashrou' Leila cheer as the band performs in the ancient Roman amphitheater on Sept. 14, 2012.

— AP photos

Jordan bans Lebanese band, says songs contradict religion

Jordan has banned a performance by a popular Lebanese rock band on religious grounds, spurring criticism of the Western-allied kingdom, which portrays itself as an island of tolerance in a turbulent region. The band Mashrou' Leila ("Leila's Project") is known internationally for violin-laced pop music with catchy Arabic lyrics. Songs often tackle controversial subjects such as corruption, censorship, state violence and sexual freedom.

Jordan's Antiquities Department initially said it would not permit a show at the Roman Theater in the capital, Amman later this week because it would contradict the "authenticity" of the ancient venue. However, Amman district governor Khalid Abu Zeid told The Associated Press yesterday that the band's material "contradicts" the beliefs of the

three Abrahamic faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Media analyst Hosni Ayesh said the decision to prevent Friday's performance at the last minute reflects a rise in religious conservatism in Jordan. "The government wouldn't ban this band if the society was more open and tolerant," Ayesh said. "The government fears the society and some elements in the government are as conservative as the society."

Sara Qudah, a commentator at the Jordanian newspaper al-Ghad, said that "some forces in Jordan reject new and open cultures, and this stream is growing in our society." She said both Muslim and Christian lawmakers and clerics had apparently urged the Amman governor to ban

the group, "just because they didn't understand their message."

The governor did not respond to phone calls after his initial comment on the matter. Jordanian government spokesman Mohammed Momani was not immediately available for comment. The band is on a global tour promoting their latest album "lbn El-Leil" ("Son of the Night"), which boasts a cover image of a man with wings and a wolf mask.

Some local media in Jordan blasted the imagery as Satanic. Other Jordanians are organizing a protest over the cancelled concert. Guitarist Firas Abou Fakher, 28, said Wednesday that the band was surprised to learn of the permit being denied. He said the band had played at the same site three times before, as well as across Jordan. The current

pressure will make it "very tough for us to ever play in Jordan again," he said.

A conservative backlash against the liberal ideas of the Arab Spring uprisings of 2011 has led to a "catastrophic" rise in suppression of the arts, he said, adding that the band's "fame or notoriety" has made them a target. "It's really a very sad thing what is going on in the Arab world these days," he added.

The band's lead singer, Hamed Sinno, posted what he said was a comment from his mother, a Jordanian, on his Facebook page. The post said that she is proud of her son, his band and "the courage behind every song." — AP

minpechaya
ไม่ฝากบ้านนะยู



Instagram pics of Hermes bags may be costly for Thai actress

Flaunting one's wealth is a popular avocation among Thailand's well-to-do, but one actress may find it as costly as a few high-fashion handbags. Pechaya Wattanamontri posted photos of herself on Instagram with nine boxed Hermes handbags that she purchased abroad. A video also circulated of her purchasing one of the luxury bags, which cost upward of \$3,000 apiece.

It wasn't long before people raised a few awkward questions, such as whether she paid the 30 percent Customs duty on such items and whether celebrities get special treatment. The Customs Department chief told inquiring reporters that the actress has been contacted to clarify the matter.

The photos have been deleted from Instagram, but in their captions Pechaya called the bags she bought in Singapore a pre-birthday gift to herself. The actress on a number of Thai television dramas and soaps turns 27 next week.

Customs Director-General Kulit Sombatsiri said if duties still needed to be paid, then the tariff plus a fine will be levied. "There are over 1,000 flights arriving a day so we can't check everyone," he was quoted as saying in Friday's edition of The Nation newspaper. But as to any special treatment, he said, "We don't observe double standards here."

Pechaya could not be contacted Friday, but her father Supat said her purchases were not a problem and the issue would be clarified next week at a news conference to be held at an orphanage. — AP

The posts that got Thai Actress Pechaya Wattanamontri in trouble



BEVERLY HILLS: Vashti Whitfield, widow of actor Andy Whitfield, poses at the premiere of the film "Be Here Now (The Andy Whitfield Story)". — AP

'Be Here Now' film follows 'Spartacus' star's cancer fight

Andy Whitfield found himself on the fast track in Hollywood in 2010, thanks to a starring role in the Starz series "Spartacus: Blood and Sand." Then he was diagnosed with cancer. He attacked the disease with the same tenacity he brought to the "Spartacus" role, ultimately undergoing 11 rounds of chemotherapy for Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Whitfield also saw a greater opportunity. He and his wife, Vashti, allowed cameras to follow the highs and lows of what was to come. "It was kind of like handing it over," said Vashti Whitfield. "And so we just continued on, you know, with the journey day by day, month by month."

Whitfield died in 2011, 18 months after he was diagnosed with cancer, leaving behind his wife and two young children. He was 39. Vashti decided to let the documentary, called "Be Here Now," move forward. A Kickstarter fundraiser to finish the film became the third most successful campaign in the crowd-sourcing site's history.

"A new beginning formed," said Vashti. "And so it felt just as appropriate and in fact even more important as Andy's legacy to share the continuum of his kids and our, I guess, healing. And moving on with life." Vashti Whitfield, director Lilibet Foster and family friend, actor Jai Courtney ("Insurgent"), talked about "Be Here Now," playing in limited release, in recent interviews with The Associated Press.

Associated Press: Vashti, were there any points during Andy's cancer battle that you wanted to stop filming?

Whitfield: There were moments for me where, honestly, I would've rather kind of, you know, plucked out my own eyelashes at the thought of the interview coming up. But I also knew that every time we did a one-on-one interview and all the times the cameras

were with us, that it took you out of fear, it took you out of some of the thoughts that weren't necessarily supportive to being in the moment.

AP: What do you hope viewers will take away from the film besides Andy's courage in fighting cancer?

Foster: The love story. This incredible interplay that he and Vashti have with one another. They're extremely funny and I really wanted to capture that because I just thought it leapt out at me, so one of the things about the film is the story of the caregiver, and that's Vashti. And that's rarely told in stories like this, or under-told in many ways. So it's really about the two of them and this journey that they go on.

Courtney: I think what we're separating here is, you know, how he and Vashti decided to handle the circumstances. Cancer doesn't discriminate so the way they were able to create something out of a situation and do something extraordinary with it, is testament to their, you know, incredible force.

AP: Vashti, what's it like to watch the film now?

Whitfield: Look, for anybody that's been through losing somebody and understands the kind of different layers of grief, it's not linear. So, on one side, it's interesting because your whole nervous system responds to you now seeing something visually that recalls something that could almost make you feel like you literally want to burst into tears or throw up, it's so evocative, the memory. But that's actually for me subsided now, and so now when I watch the film I'm able to see all these different layers to it. You know, I'm able to enjoy hanging out with my husband and listen to his voice for two hours. — AP

Is 'Becky with the good hair' designer Rachel Roy?

By Thari F AlRashed

Beyoncé's new visual album "Lemonade" has set the world on fire. Not only has it taken the spotlight off of the death of singer Prince, it has also led her "beehives" (what Beyoncé's fans call themselves) to go on a manhunt to take revenge on who they believe was involved in an illicit affair with Jay Z.

Within 24 hours of the album's release on iTunes, it reached the top spot in 25 countries. And that's only on iTunes! In short, the album is doing very well obviously, no shocker there. The shocker was that Beyoncé used her new platform to declare that her husband has been unfaithful to her, allegedly. The lyrics of the song "Sorry" (the fourth song listed on the album) ends with the lyrics "He better call Becky with the good hair".

Speculation on who this "Becky" is started right after the song aired on Beyoncé's HBO special that also had the same title as the album. The beehives did not have to search that long. Designer Rachel Roy took the opportunity to claim the "Becky" title less than 24 hours after the album was released.

She captioned a now deleted image posted on Instagram with "Good hair don't care, but we will take good lighting, for selfies, or self truths, always".

The reason why Solange Knowles attacked Jay Z in that infamous elevator encounter back in 2014 has long been rumored to be that he was having an inappropriate relationship with Roy. Rachel's Instagram post was taken as proof of guilt by the beehives and led them to activate full-attack mode on all of Rachel's social media accounts. Examples of these attacks included insults sent to her and bombarding her feed with bee and lemonade emojis, which lead the designer to privatize her accounts after she claims she felt bullied by them.

Rachel has released a statement to Us Weekly magazine denying all the rumors, but it is a little too late for that now. She has become the beehives' number one enemy. Beyoncé has yet to make any public comment since the release of her sixth album and she isn't expected to, since she usually does not make any statements to the press.



DIY remedies for better skin

How annoying is it when you're getting ready for a huge occasion, let's say your friend's wedding, birthday dinner or whatever it is, and you get yourself the most beautiful gown and booked your appointment at the salon to get all dazzled up and a day or two before your event you notice a huge zit appearing on your face, or worse, on your nose or forehead, so obvious and out there that no makeup can hide that bump! I hate when that happens especially that you feel like you can't do much about it, when a matter of fact is that you actually can.

We tend to always go for the extreme measures whenever we want to solve a problem, especially when it's related to our skin and appearance. Most girls would usually start playing around with the pimple trying to either burst it, or cover it with makeup to a point where they're actually highlighting the area rather than covering it correctly, however, not a lot of girls nowadays would consider hitting the kitchen for that quick and organic remedy that might save them.

Many times we forget that all the chemicals we apply on our skin, whether it was makeup, moisturizers or skin-related products, harm our skin more than improving it, and by trying on all of these products we are actually neglecting our skin. I've also noticed that recently girls have been suffering from skin issues in a later stage in life, usually our skin acts out during our teenage years up until we hit our early 20's, but now girls have been suffering from the same issue but in a later phase, such as mid-late 20's, which shouldn't be the case but our lifestyles has changed drastically, were exposed to more sun, weather



changes, and different chemicals and products.

So I've decided to share with you some home remedies that you can do by yourself in the comfort of your own home and on the kitchen counter to kill that stubborn pimple or help your skin heal from any acne scars. Try them out, and you will start understanding what works better with your skin type but most importantly, make sure you're not allergic to any of those ingredients before applying them on your skin!

Apple Cider Vinegar

Apple Cider can be used for many things, some people use it on their scalp even, but when you apply it on your skin you're actually balancing the Ph level of your skin and almost completely killing the bacteria that are usually the ones that cause these break outs to happen. Apply a mixture of 1 part

vinegar and 3 parts water to your face using a cotton pad after you've washed your face.

Honey and Cinnamon

You might never have mixed those two together, let alone apply them both to your skin, but believe it or not cinnamon and honey combined will literally wipe all the bacteria out of your skin, as they're both antimicrobial. Apply the mixture as a mask for 15mins then rinse off with warm water.

Egg whites

Many have tried this homemade remedy and are crazy about it as it helps improve both your acne and acne scars to disappear due to the fact that they're fully stacked with proteins and vitamins that stop bacteria from piling up as well as renews your skin cells. Separate the white from the yolk of 2-3 eggs, let them sit for a few minutes then use your fingers to apply them on your face, apply around 3-4 layers on the areas which you want to focus on. Leave it on for around 20 minutes then wash off with warm water.

Always try looking for new remedies to try out for your skin, you'll be amazed by how healthy and helpful it is to use organic and natural face masks as we are always looking for the next "it-product" or the newest makeup brands and so forth, but all these chemicals will take a toll on your skin and your skin is literally what keeps you together, you take it as a package with you till you're older, and the more you take care of it the more your skin will be capable to go through what you put it through.



LOS ANGELES: Music producer Phil Spector and his wife Rachelle Spector, arrive at the Los Angeles County Superior Court for a discovery hearing on March 28, 2008. — AP

Lawyer for Phil Spector's wife calls divorce heartbreaking

An attorney for Phil Spector's wife called a divorce filing by the imprisoned music producer heartbreakingly bizarre and said she has provided the best possible care for him. Attorney Aaron Abramowitz wrote in a statement Tuesday that Rachelle Spector has been devoted to her husband and has been providing him support and the best possible care while he is incarcerated.

"This whole situation is heartbreakingly bizarre," Abramowitz wrote. "It is regrettable that Mr. Spector has failed to recognize the efforts made by Rachelle in spending tens of thousands of dollars on his medical and dental costs while incarcerated." Court records in Stockton, California, show Spector filed for divorce on March 18. A copy of his filing, which was first reported by celebrity website TMZ, was not immediately available.

Spector, 75, is housed at a prison facility in Stockton that provides medical and mental health care to the state's sickest inmates, including those with chronic conditions. He is famous for revolutionizing rock music with his "Wall of Sound" that

merged beautiful vocal harmonies with lavish orchestral arrangements to produce such pop hits as "Da Doo Ron Ron," "Be My Baby," "He's a Rebel" and the Righteous Brothers' version of "You've Lost that Loving Feeling."

Abramowitz said Rachelle Spector obtained her pilots license to make it easier to visit her husband. The Spectors met at a Hollywood restaurant in 2003, shortly after he was arrested in the shooting death of Lana Clarkson. The producer was later convicted of killing Clarkson and is serving sentence of 19 years to life.

The pair married in 2006, and Rachelle Spector has been running her husband's businesses while he is imprisoned. She also obtained a private investigator license to assist with her husband's appeal of the conviction. Phil Spector's attorney, John H. McKinley, had no immediate comment on Abramowitz's statement Tuesday. — AP

Judge rejects Cosby's bid to dismiss underage sex abuse case

A sexual battery lawsuit filed by a woman who accuses Bill Cosby of sexually abusing her at the Playboy Mansion when she was underage will proceed, a judge has ruled. Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Craig Karlan's ruling allows most of Judy Huth's lawsuit against Cosby to proceed while dismissing a negligent infliction of emotional distress claim. Huth will still be able to argue that Cosby intentionally inflicted emotional distress on her. Huth sued Cosby in December 2014, saying that he forced her to perform a sex act on him in a bedroom of the Playboy Mansion around 1974 when she was 15 years old. Cosby's lawyers had challenged the case on various procedural grounds, including that Huth had waited too long to sue the comedian.

Cosby's lawyers had also argued that Huth's claims should be dismissed because her former attorney did not follow the proper procedure for filing a lawsuit alleging underage sexual abuse. "The court is not, at this time, willing to dismiss plaintiff's potentially meritorious claims against defendant based upon mistakes attributable to her former counsel," Karlan wrote.

"The decision is a vindication of our position that this lawsuit should be permitted to proceed to trial and should not be

dismissed," Huth's attorney Gloria Allred wrote in a statement. "We did not believe that there was a valid basis for denying Ms. Huth her day in court. We are very happy that the Court agreed and we will continue to vigorously fight for a just result for our client."

An email sent to Cosby's spokeswoman Monique Pressley was not immediately returned. Cosby's former attorney has accused Huth's former lawyer of attempting to extort Cosby for \$250,000 before filing her lawsuit. Cosby's attorneys will have other chances to seek the case's dismissal before trial. Karlan has ruled that Cosby and Huth do not have to give additional sworn testimony to give the comedian more time to resolve a sexual assault case filed in Pennsylvania.

Dozens of women have accused Cosby of sex abuse, but most of the claims are barred by the statute of limitations. Several women, including model Janice Dickinson, have sued Cosby for defamation over his lawyers' denials that he abused them. — AP



LOS ANGELES: Model Janice Dickinson, left, who is also suing Bill Cosby, and her attorney Lisa Bloom talk to reporters outside Los Angeles Superior Court after a judge ruled her defamation lawsuit against Bill Cosby should move forward on March 29, 2016. — AP



Bobbi Kristina Brown turned to drugs to help her cope with Whitney Houston's death

According to Nick Gordon, Bobbi was a "social" drug user before Whitney drowned in a bathtub in 2012 following a massive heart attack caused by years of cocaine abuse but things soon spiralled out of control. He told Dr Phil that Bobbi's "social" drug use became "really bad" and added: "It's unfortunate but at the time it's the only way we knew how to deal with what happened." Nick also hit out at those who have blamed him for the deaths of Whitney and Bobbi, who passed away in similar circumstances, three years apart. He said: "Regardless of what everybody thinks, I made Krissy and Whitney's last few years on earth as

happy as they would be. "I gave them somebody to trust to, to talk to, to be there, someone genuine." And he was especially scathing about Bobbi's father Bobby Brown, saying: "(Bobby) hurt his own daughter, not me. I was the one there for her while she was dealing with him not being there. He's not a reasonable person so I'm not planning on talking to him and I really don't want to."

Alicia Keys is to perform at the UEFA Champions League final in Milan

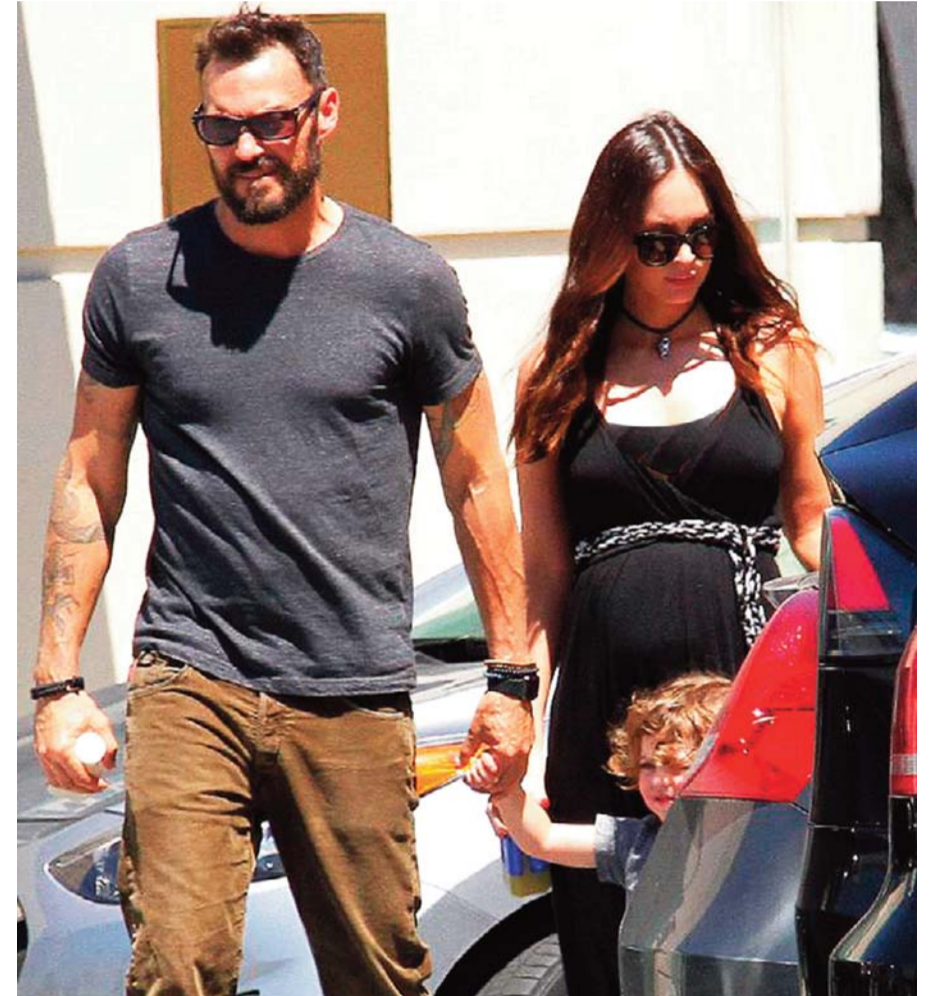
The New York-born singer will form a central part of the revamped pre-game ceremony on May 28, and has revealed she will be debuting music from her brand new album at the Stadio Giuseppe Meazza in Italy prior to the start of the showpiece soccer match. Alicia said: "I'm extremely excited to share my new music at the UEFA Champions League final, an event that is celebrated in every corner of the world. "This is going to be a powerful moment in history and one that represents the spirit of all the similarities we share no matter where we live and who we are. I'm honoured to be a special part of such a beloved experience." The Champions League final is the most-watched annual sporting event in the world, and Guy-Laurent Epstein, UEFA's marketing director, said Alicia's participation will "further the appeal of the match and consequently will reach a broader audience demographic". The soccer match will be broadcast in more than 220 countries and will reach a TV audience of more than 180 million viewers.



Prince was 'paranoid' to make a will

The 'Purple Rain' hit maker died at the age of 57 last week and didn't leave instructions as to how his assets should be divided, and insiders say that his advisors had found it "virtually impossible" to get him to sign any legal documents in the last five years. Sources told TMZ the reclusive star felt "screwed over" by people who had made him sign various deals when he was younger, and as a result he was "paranoid" about putting his signature to any legally-binding paperwork. Such was Prince's distrust, he changed lawyers almost every year, sometimes more often. One professional who once worked with the singer received a call out of the blue from him to engage his services, prompting him to ask Prince for his business files. The singer replied: "I don't know, they're out there somewhere." The professional never received the documents. Though the 'Diamonds and Pearls' hit maker frequently

switched teams of business professionals, he did have a group of trusted advisers. However, they are described as "beautiful, 20-something women, all models with no experience in anything." Prince's sister Tyka Nelson filed legal documents stating her brother didn't leave a will. She has requested to open a probate case and ask a judge to appoint a "special administrator" - someone who is appointed when there is no executor named in a will - to oversee her brother's affairs. She stated in her documents: "I do not know of the existence of a will and have no reason to believe that the decedent executed testamentary documents in any form." Tyka has requested Bremer Trust, National Association, to serve as the official administrator because they provided financial services to Prince for several years.



Megan Fox is considering calling off her divorce

The 'Transformers' actress is currently expecting her third child with estranged husband Brian Austin Green who she split from last year and Megan is reportedly thinking about getting back together with her ex following a recent Hawaiian vacation. A source told Us Weekly: "Megan was the one that wanted the divorce and Brian has done everything to try to convince her otherwise. He planned this trip back to Hualalai, where they got married. "It was great and Megan is coming around. She hasn't called off the

divorce just yet, but it's heading in that direction. They are both very excited about a new baby and having it together." Megan, 29, and 42-year-old Brian tied the knot in Hawaii in 2010 and already have sons Noah, three and Bodhi, two, together. She filed for divorce last August, six months after they split but the impending arrival has brought them back together. They are currently renting a home together in Bel Air.

Kendall Jenner wants to be married with children within the next 10 years

The 20-year-old model admires the "chill but extremely fortunate" lives of Cindy Crawford and Gisele Bundchen and hopes to find herself in a similar happy position in the coming years. She wrote in a post on her website: "Hearing Kylie mention what she sees her life like at 30 - on a farm with kids - got me thinking about my own life in 10 years, which weirdly gave me a strong urge to play 'The Sims'. "If I were building my perfect world on the game, this is how it would look: I'd have a beautiful, secluded house in Malibu with a gorgeous husband and a couple of kids. "Seeing models like Cindy Crawford and Gisele live chill but extreme-

ly fortunate and blessed lives seems like exactly what I would want." And as well as wanting to have "a couple" of children, Kendall - who is believed to be dating Los Angeles Lakers player Jordan Clarkson - is also keen to have pets in her household. She continued: "Even though I love dogs, I don't want to be overwhelmed so I'd probably just have one. "I'd definitely want a horse, too, so I could ride whenever I wanted." The 'Keeping Up With the Kardashians' star is currently kept busy with her modeling commitments and family TV show, but plans to slow down as she gets older. She said: "I envision the decades ahead as super nice and relaxing."



Melissa McCarthy believes in ghosts

The 45-year-old actress, who stars alongside Kristen Wiig and Kate McKinnon in the new female-led 'Ghostbusters' movie, has claimed she has "felt" paranormal activity in her everyday life. Melissa shared: "I think they do exist. I don't know in what form. "But I think there are things out there. I think we've all felt a presence or an energy where for no reason something just feels different in a place we're familiar with." The Hollywood star also thinks her spirit will linger after she dies and claimed still she talks to her deceased grandparents. Speaking at the TIME 100 Most Influential gala at New York City's Lincoln Center, Melissa told TIME magazine: "I also don't think when we're done we just float away. I think we're still around. I still talk to my grandparents all the time. I don't think of them as ghosts, but I do talk to them a lot in my car. I don't know if that makes me crazy." Asked why she experiences paranormal activity in her car, the actress added: "I guess that's when I'm alone. We have really in-depth conversations." Melissa was joined at the star-studded event in New York by a number of her fellow TIME100 Most Influential honorees, including Caitlyn Jenner, Trevor Noah, Ricardo Tisci, Lewis Hamilton and Julia Louis-Dreyfus. Honorees Nicki Minaj and Ariana Grande performed for the audience.



Channing Tatum received the 'best birthday gift ever' from his wife

The star turned 36 on Tuesday and couldn't contain his delight at receiving the majestic brown animal as a present from his spouse, actress Jenna Dewan with whom he has two-year-old daughter Everly. Taking to his Instagram account to share a series of photographs of the new addition to their family, whom he has named Cajun, the star captioned a picture of the horse saddled up and grazing beside their trailer: "Best birthday gift ever from my wifey." And alongside a sweet video in which the actor's face was covered in bright paint, he wrote: "Braveheart paint by Evie, new rescue horse named Cajun on

a sunset ride. (sic)" Meanwhile, Jenna wished her spouse a happy birthday on her own Instagram page with a loving message. The 35-year-old beauty described the 'Magic Mike' star - who she married in 2009 - as her "lifer" and quoted an ancient Chinese philosopher, Lao Tzu, to describe how "deeply" in love she is with her husband. She gushed: "To love someone deeply gives you strength. Being loved by someone deeply gives you courage." - Lao Tzu. HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO MY LIFER.(sic)"



STRASBOURG, FRANCE: Entertainment workers, known in French as "intermittents du spectacle", prepare banners as they occupy the Theatre National de Strasbourg (TNS) yesterday. — AFP

Six French theatres occupied as pay protest spreads

Entertainment workers were occupying six theatres across France yesterday as protests grew against a bid to cut their pay. Protesting actors and technicians took over part of the Comedie Francaise in Paris Tuesday, forcing the management to cancel performances on France's most hallowed stage.

And the curtain also stayed down on the hit production of "Phaedra" starring Isabelle Huppert at the Odeon theatre in the city's Left Bank, which has been occupied since the weekend. The latest flare-up in the long-running row was sparked by riot police clearing hundreds of demonstrators from the square in front of the Odeon on Monday.

But several dozen remain inside the building, a hugely symbolic venue which was also occupied by students during France's May 1968 protests. Protesters have also taken over parts of major regional theatres in Lille, Bordeaux, Montpellier and Caen, and briefly staged a symbolic protest on Tuesday night in

Strasbourg without disrupting performances.

There were a series of similar short-lived occupations last week across France by "intermittents"—artists and culture workers who benefit from a generous unemployment system to compensate for their erratic incomes. Employers last month agreed cuts of 185 million euros (\$208 million) to a national pay fund with three of the smaller unions in the sector, but most "intermittents" are fiercely resisting the change. But with long-running talks over their pay and status in deadlock, protests have grown more radical. — AFP

PARIS: Entertainment workers, known in French as "intermittents du spectacle", occupy la Comedie Francaise on Tuesday. — AFP



Michael Strahan's 'Live' Exit Just the Latest in Morning Anchor Drama

The network morning shows are in the midst of a musical-chairs moment that is as much about positioning for the future as it is about the day-to-day battle for ratings and bragging rights.

ABC set off a shuffle-and a kerfuffle-with news last week that "Live With Kelly and Michael" co-host Michael Strahan would move to "Good Morning America" full-time in the fall. Meanwhile, NBC's "Today" is mulling shifts in its 9 a.m. anchor team as it looks to see who clicks with whom.



NEW YORK: Anchors Kelly Ripa and Michael Strahan appear to have made up on Tuesday while co-hosting 'Live' again together after the drama they went through last week.

The moves are all part of the ongoing nuclear war in the a.m. between the networks, each eager to conquer the early- and mid-morning crowd. Willie Geist, who co-anchors the 9 a.m. hour of "Today," was dispatched earlier this month to host a revamped Sunday edition of the program. Even CBS stalwart "Sunday Morning" is facing a generational shift as the network tries to set up a successor to Charles Osgood, who has anchored the program since 2004 and is said to be negotiating his exit. In the process, the TV news units will try to figure out which of their members will, over time, make for successors to mainstays like Matt Lauer and Robin Roberts.

At stake is a growing pot bubbling with advertising dollars. Sponsors spent more than \$1.24 billion on network morning talk shows last year, according to Kantar Media—an increase of 10.7% over the \$1.12 billion spent in the category in 2014. "Most advertisers buy all three morning-news telecasts, but being ahead of your competition is always the best vantage point and usually translates into a bigger piece of the ad-dollar pie," said Billie

Gold, VP and director of programming research for Amplifi U.S., a media-buying entity that is part of Japan's Dentsu.

ABC's strategy

ABC's surprise move with Strahan is clearly aimed at shoring up "GMA" as it brawls with "Today" to remain No. 1 in the 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. slot—a crown "GMA" won in 2012 after "Today" had enjoyed an unprecedented 16-year winning streak. This season, "Today" has beaten "GMA" in the demo most coveted by advertisers—viewers aged 25 to 54—for eight months running. For the season to April 15, overall viewership of "GMA" dipped 8% compared with the year-earlier period, while its 25-to-54 crowd fell 13%. (Meanwhile, "CBS This Morning" has gained ground over the past two years with a focus on hard news, though it continues to lag behind its broadcast rivals.)

Sky-High Stakes The morning TV sector is healthy, with overall ad spending growing \$1.24b Ad dollars spent on network morning talk shows in 2015. 10.7% Increase over 2014 ad spend 13%. "Good Morning America" drop in 25-54 viewership over same period last year. 8% "Good Morning America" drop in overall viewership over same period last year ABC no doubt hopes Strahan will help tackle "Today," which could gain fresh momentum in weeks to come: NBCUniversal's coverage of the Olympics this summer is sure to draw millions of viewers, and could lend the NBC morning stalwart a big boost. "The Olympics have always been a boon to ratings," said a person familiar with the show. "Today" won't be shy about trumpeting its connection to the event. On April 27, the "Today" crew will start a countdown, taking to the plaza outside its studio to note that the opening ceremony is just 100 days away.

Perhaps Strahan will slow that Olympics charge. "We got a chance to have Michael a couple of days a week, and now we are looking forward to having him on the team full time," said Tom Cibrowski, senior VP of ABC News Programs, News Gathering and Special Events, in an interview. Morning-show battles aren't going away, he added. The programs "bring in a lot of viewers and a lot of eyeballs, and they start the day on the television networks. It's a very important time period, and for our purposes, we always want to field the strongest team." If executives have devised a plan to weave Strahan in and out of the show's usual flow, Cibrowski wasn't willing to spill the details. Could there be more moves in the offing? In TV news circles, there are perennial rumors about whether each side's team will remain intact.

Melissa Etheridge, Priscilla Renea share songwriting secrets

Melissa Etheridge and songwriter Priscilla Renea had never met before sitting down to discuss their craft, and within an hour, they were spontaneously harmonizing together. Etheridge plucked a guitar from the wall of electrics and acoustics hanging in the front room of her suburban home. As she strummed a bluesy rhythm, Renea sat beside her and began to sing. "Just want to write a song," they suddenly sang together, laughing underneath. "All of my problems will be solved when I write a hit song."

Though Etheridge released her first album the year that Renea was born (1988), each has penned her share of hits. They're set to perform and share stories about their experiences in the music industry at the ASCAP "I Create Music" songwriting expo in Los Angeles on Thursday. Renea plans to sing "Purple Rain" in tribute to Prince. The three-day conference also promises appearances by Timbaland, Pat Benatar, singer Andrea Day and Matchbox Twenty front man Rob Thomas.

But on this sunny afternoon at Etheridge's home in a quiet, gated community in the San Fernando Valley, she and Renea are casually chatting about their creative approaches when it becomes clear that despite their differences in age, experience and use of technology, they speak the same language of songwriting.

The secret, they said, is being open to inspiration and fearless in its expression. "I think our job as songwriters is to catch the inspiration when it comes," Etheridge said. "If you exercise your right brain, you can find that and you can bring it back

into this reality and create a rhythm and a tone that makes the whole tribe dance. There's just nothing like it. It's magic."

Etheridge has won two Grammys and an Academy Award for her music. Renea recently wrote a song that earned a Grammy nod: Carrie Underwood and Miranda Lambert's 2014 hit duet, "Somethin' Bad." Renea's other credits include the Pitbull and Kesha hit "Timber," Rihanna's "California King Bed" and tracks for Madonna, Demi Lovato and Mariah Carey.

She sheepishly confessed to singing Etheridge's "Come to My Window" over and over again since learning about her meeting with Etheridge for this interview. Etheridge said she researched Renea's work and admired her "beautiful songwriting" on "California King."

"It's one of those things like: god, I wish I'd written that," Etheridge said. Inspiration often strikes in the shower, Renea said. Etheridge agreed it usually happens whenever she doesn't have a pen or a guitar. When it comes to actually writing music, Etheridge is old-school and Renea is high-tech. "I got discovered on YouTube," the 27-year-old said.

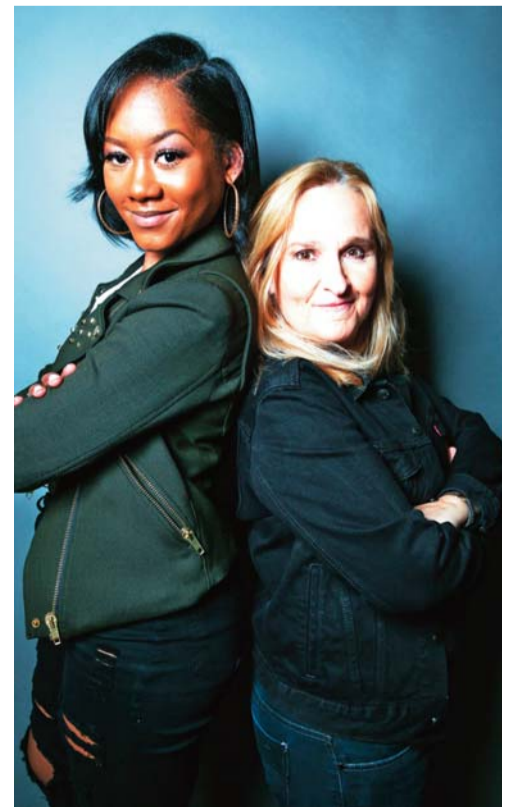
She composes music and lyrics on her computer or iPad with an app called MasterWriter where "you can flip back and forth between screens and do voice notes and sing your melodies." Renea also keeps a running file of song ideas to plumb when she's feeling inspired.

Etheridge, on the other hand, said she's "not a computer kind of person." The 54-year-old has

experienced technology's evolution throughout her career ("My first record was on vinyl and cassette"), but only recently embraced it. Etheridge collaborated with various artists at her home studios to make her most recent album, 2014's "This is M.E.," rather than taking her traditional route of writing an album's worth of songs before spending two straight weeks in a recording studio.

Digital recording advances mean "you can have these small studios and you can create right there," she said. But she still writes lyrics longhand. "I like to write it and then scratch it out," Etheridge said. "Because if I erase it, it's gone forever, and sometimes I want to go back to that idea."

As the two songwriters chat, their mutual admiration grows. After their mini jam session, they make plans to work together. Both said there's no way to know which songs will become hits, and because no manual exists for how to make it in the music business, artists just have to keep on creating. "You just never know, so you just have to do what you love," Etheridge said. "Do your best, do what you love and put it out there." — AP



HIDDEN HILLS, CALIFORNIA: Singers Melissa Etheridge, right, and Priscilla Renea pose for a portrait. — AP photos



ABU DHABI: Palestinian writer Rabai al-Madhoun (C) reacting upon receiving the international prize of Arabic fiction for his novel *Destinies: Concerto of the Holocaust and the Nakba*, on Tuesday. — AFP

French billionaire to create new art museum in Paris

The French billionaire and art collector Francois Pinault has announced the creation of a new contemporary art museum in central Paris.

Pinault described the project as "a dream come true" in a news conference yesterday with Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo.

The museum will open by the end of 2018 in the former Bourse du Commerce close to the Louvre museum and the newly-renovated Les Halles shopping complex. The elegant circular building from the 18th century, crowned by a dome, will be restored by renowned Japanese architect Tadao Ando.

Pinault, who made his fortune in the luxury goods industry, opened a museum in Venice's Palazzo Grassi a decade ago. He owns one of the world's largest private collections of contemporary art. — AP

Cannes: M-Appeal Boards Bruce LaBruce's Feminist Terrorists Movie 'The Misandrists'

Berlin-based M-Appeal has boarded Bruce LaBruce's "The Misandrists," a film about a cell of feminist terrorists, as a co-producer, and will be selling the project at the Cannes Film Festival. LaBruce, who is currently shooting the film in Berlin and the surrounding countryside, launched a Kickstarter campaign yesterday to finance production and post-production costs. It is the first time he's used crowd-funding to support one of his films.

The movie stars Susanne Sachsse, who has featured in several of LaBruce's films, including "Raspberry Reich," the prequel to "The Misandrists." The Misandrists refers to a secret cell of feminist terrorists that is planning to liberate women, overthrow the patriarchy, and usher in a new female world order. The group is led by Big Mother (Sachsse), who operates a school for wayward girls in the countryside as a front for her terrorist cell. When a young man, a radical leftist, who is running from the police, happens upon this remote female stronghold, one of the girls takes pity on him and hides him in the basement. His presence eventually disrupts the household and reveals a number of unexpected secrets, as the film moves towards its climax.

"The Misandrists," the director's 10th feature film, is produced by Jurgen Bruning Filmproduktion. M-Appeal chief Maren Kroymann said: "Bruce's new film promises to be a fun and important commentary on feminism, so it will be a great fit for our Raspberry & Cream label. We'll be co-producing one of his projects for the first time in addition to handling international distribution, and by having represented a number of his titles as sales agent in the past, we're looking forward to deepening our relationship with him and Jurgen Bruning, his long-time producer, with whom we frequently collaborate."

LaBruce's film "Gerontophilia" was in Venice Film Festival in 2013, and "Pierrot Lunaire" screened in Berlin Film Festival's Forum section last year. LaBruce was president of Cannes' Queer Palm jury in 2014. — Reuters

Daytime Emmys Preview: Soaps Keep Audiences With Long-Term Characters

It's debatable that there are any "new viewers" out there willing to commit to watching a network soap five days a week. However, the remaining four broadcast soaps have a strategy to maintain their existing audiences, and ward off the threat of cancellation, which has claimed their rivals in recent years: Shine a spotlight on beloved, long-term characters.

That strategy is evident in the episodes each of the four surviving soaps ("The Bold and the Beautiful," "Days of Our Lives," "General Hospital" and "The Young and the Restless") selected as submissions for the Daytime Emmys drama series prize.

Both "General Hospital" submissions are loaded with veteran players, but couldn't be more different in terms of content. An anniversary episode, featuring black and white segments, harkens back to the show's early days. The episode resolves the "Fluke" storyline, explaining Luke Spencer's bizarre behavior and how his parents died.

"The anniversary episode was a concept that (head writer) Ron Carlivati came up with," says exec producer Frank Valentini. "I was completely blown away by it. It was a fun episode to do and it made the past the present and the present the past. We loved it on paper, loved it when we shot it, and the fans loved it on-air."

The second "GH" episode involves high-stakes drama set against a charity gala backdrop and features a musical performance by India Arie. "There were a lot of great legacy characters in that episode," says Valentini.

"Days of Our Lives" also opted for an anniversary episode, which features a sentimental flashback using late original cast members Macdonald Carey and Frances Reid. "From the writing to the acting to the directing, these shows were captivating drama and we are very proud of them," says exec producer Ken Corday.

The "Days" submission also includes Susan Seaforth Hayes' character Julie advising step-granddaughter Ciara on the hazards of shoplifting—a poignant beat as Julie had been busted herself for trying to swipe a mink stole from a local department store in the show's 1965 premiere.

"That's the riches of this medium," says Seaforth Hayes. "I was delighted that someone remembered that Julie has a past and got to share that with Ciara. Our audience hasn't melted away. It's the stalwarts who remember us."

Half-hour sudser "The Bold and the Beautiful" exercised its option to submit two sets of back-to-back episodes instead of merely submitting two half-hour episodes. Executive producer/head writer Bradley Bell says the show's material-features the romance of transgender character Maya Avant and legacy character Rick Forrester—was worthy of the added time. "It really gives a sense of story, the arc," says Bell. "We thought we should go for it. Social issue stories have been a part of daytime since the beginning. You see that everyone is human, trying to navigate this thing called life."

Carol Shure, a two-time Emmy-winning producer of the departed soap "As the World Turns," applauds "Bold" for its social issues but notes that voters used to see more ground-breaking content in Emmy submissions. "Over the years, soaps went from being topical, daring and nerdy to being more cautious," Shure says. Why the shift? "Perhaps because of the way the country was moving, more towards conservatism."

"The Young and the Restless," daytime's top soap, has kept its core veteran cast intact for years, which is exemplified in its Emmy submissions. The back-to-back episodes highlight the reactions of the Newman and Abbott clans to the revelation that Adam Newman, the late Delia Abbott's hit-and-run driver, was alive.

"These episodes showcase an umbrella story

with outstanding writing, directing and performances and are an excellent representation of one of our most impactful stories from the past year," says exec producer Jill Farren Phelps.

Drawing new viewers continues to be a challenge as budgets for promotion, like resources for the soaps themselves, continue to be cut. However, Angelica McDaniel, CBS executive VP of daytime programs and syndicated program development, recently launched "Not Safe for Daytime," a series of digital videos promoting the daytime lineup.

"We're realistic to the evolution of how viewers consume TV, and how many distractions there are," says McDaniel. "We all live in a multi-screen world. 'Not Safe for Daytime' lets us thank our 28 million weekly viewers by giving them more content in a fresh, fun and irreverent way."

"It's very innovative of Angelica and the folks at CBS to come up with this," says Bell. Additionally, web serial nominees Martha Madison ("Winterthorne") and Lilly Melgar ("The Bay") reach out to soap fans on the TradioV.com show "SoapBox With Martha and Lilly." "We target younger soap fans and we have direct access to our guests' online social media following," says Madison. "When we had Kirsten Storms ("General Hospital") on we got almost four times our regular viewership. She has a huge social media presence."

There's a universal agreement as to the one thing, in addition to veteran characters, that will both hold audiences and also likely earn Emmy gold. "Good story drives tune-in," says Phelps. Corday echoes: "Great storytelling with layered characters that the fans root for are the hallmark of any successful soap." — Reuters