

SUBSCRIPTION

Kuwait Times



THE FIRST DAILY IN THE ARABIAN GULF

SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 2016

THULQADA 3, 1437 AH

No: 16954

Cash-strapped thief wrecks ATM with axe

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Indonesia foils plot to fire rocket at Singapore

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Brazil booed off as Neymar flops in stalemate

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150 Fils

MOI ARRESTS FILIPINA WHO PLEDGED ALLEGIANCE TO IS

SUSPECT WAS READY TO CARRY OUT TERRORIST ATTACK



Min 35°
Max 49°



RIO DE JANEIRO: Olympic torchbearer Brazilian former volleyball player Maria Isabel Barroso Salgado holds up the torch of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games in front of the statue of Christ the Redeemer atop Corcovado Hill yesterday. (Inset) South Korean archer Kim Woo-jin poses for photographers after setting a world record during an individual ranking round yesterday. — AFP/AP (See Pages 44-48)

KUWAIT: Kuwaiti security forces captured a 32-year-old Filipina for pledging allegiance to the so-called Islamic State (IS), who confessed she intended to carry out a terrorist act once she got the opportunity, the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said yesterday. The ministry said in a statement that security authorities were monitoring an email account run by the Filipina, named as Livani Azvilo Pescaeda (born in 1984), who entered Kuwait in June as a housemaid.

In an email, the statement added, the suspect contacted IS in Libya and was using a fake name to evade monitoring. The ministry said she confessed she was ready to carry out any terrorist attack once the circumstances and means were right, in order to undermine security and stability in Kuwait, as well as ignite sedition. — KUNA



EGYPT EX-MUFTI ESCAPES ATTACK

CAIRO: Gunmen opened fire at former Egyptian mufti Ali Gomaa in a Cairo suburb yesterday, missing the pro-government cleric but wounding a bodyguard, the interior ministry said. Gomaa was on his way to a mosque near his house in the October 6 suburb when the assailants hiding in a park started shooting, the ministry said. His guards exchanged fire with the gunmen and forced them to flee, it said, adding that one of the guards was lightly wounded.



Ali Gomaa

Gomaa later told Egyptian state television of how he had taken shelter behind a mosque wall when the shooting started. After the attack, he "conducted the Friday prayers as a message to these people", the cleric said in a telephone interview. "This attempt is a message aimed at creating fear," he said. The private CBC Extra news channel showed footage of armed guards with pistols drawn escorting Gomaa out of the mosque after the shooting. In an interview with the channel, Gomaa said this was not the first attempt on his life and derided the assailants as "very stupid". "They blew up my house in Fayoum," he said, referring to a province southwest of Cairo. And assailants had also "tried before from the park" outside his Cairo home. — AFP

LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

ARCHER SETS RECORD • BOXER HELD OVER SEX ATTACKS

RIO DE JANEIRO: The Olympic flame wound its way around Rio de Janeiro's iconic landmarks yesterday as protesters unleashed a fresh blast of anger ahead of the opening ceremony of the troubled sporting spectacle. The carnival capital of the world was hoping yesterday's extravaganza at the Maracana Stadium would draw a line under a turbulent seven-year build-up dogged by recession, rising crime and doping scandals.

But as the clock ticked down to the start of the first South American Olympics in history, demonstrators took to the streets to vent their fury at Brazil's rulers and the multi-billion-dollar cost of the Games. Waving signs reading "No to the Olympics!", about 3,000 blocked gath-

ered outside the luxury Copacabana Palace Hotel where many Olympic athletes are staying. Brazil has spent more than \$10 billion on new infrastructure and preparing for the Games at a time of economic crisis. Further protests were expected near the Maracana later yesterday as the 78,600-seat venue hosted a parade of athletes from 207 teams and dozens of world leaders.

Meanwhile, South Korean archer Kim Woo-Jin grabbed the first world record of the Rio Olympics yesterday, before the Games had even officially begun. The world number one and a quadruple world champion was celebrating after scoring a world record 700 for 72 arrows in the men's individual ranking round at

the Sambodromo. Kim, 24, went just one point better than the previous record, set by compatriot Im Dong-Hyun in London four years ago.

Separately, Brazilian police arrested a Moroccan Olympic boxer yesterday for allegedly sexually assaulting two female cleaners in the athletes' village in Rio de Janeiro. Officers arrested Hassan Saada, 22, from Casablanca, on suspicion of committing the assault on Wednesday, said a police statement released hours ahead of the Games' opening ceremony. "According to investigations, on August 3 the athlete sexually assaulted two Brazilian room cleaners who were working in the athletes' village," it said. — Agencies



Photo shows the floating stations in Kuwait waters

KUWAIT EPA LAUNCHES PROJECT TO FLOAT ANTI-POLLUTION STATIONS

KUWAIT: The Environment Public Authority (EPA) has launched a project to build floating stations to stave off any forms of pollution in territorial waters and detect potential threats. Four stations have already been erected to ward off chemical and air pollutants, EPA Chairman Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad Al-Humoud Al-Sabah said, adding that a total of 15 stations will be configured shortly.

Moreover, the EPA Chairman added that once the stations are set up, they would transmit "online" status, signifying their surveillance under EPA apparatuses. These stations will produce alert signals in the event of an increase in pollution levels, he added. Meanwhile, Deputy General Manager of Environmental Inspection Affairs Dr Mohammad Al-Ahmad noted that as stipulated by the country's new environmental protection law, EPA is obligated to follow a comprehensive method to ensure maritime environment protection.

Furthermore, Al-Ahmad revealed that the total cost of the project was KD 2 million, as the stations are fully on par with international stan-

dards and will be linked to EPA databases. Speaking on the significance of the project, EPA official Hamza Karam told KUNA that the stations will be set up in all maritime areas nationwide, adding that these devices have been designed to function efficiently. He also added that the devices have been equipped with the latest technological breakthroughs to ensure maximal maritime environmental protection. — KUNA



EPA Chairman Sheikh Abdullah Ahmad Al-Humoud Al-Sabah visits the floating station. — KUNA photos



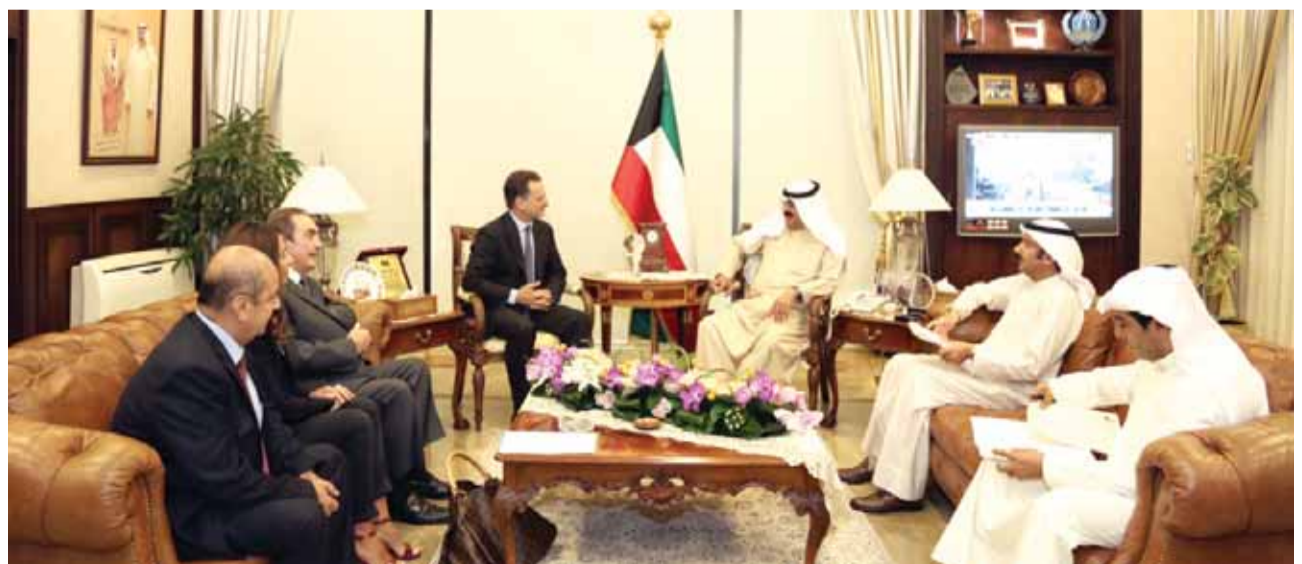
DEPUTY FM AND UNRWA OFFICIAL HOLD TALKS OVER PALESTINIANS

KUWAIT: Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Suleiman Al-Jarallah met with Pierre Krahenbuhl, Commissioner-General of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), currently on a visit to the country. The two sides discussed the issue of aid for Palestinian refugees. The UNRWA Chief Commissioner expressed his appreciation for Kuwait's aid to this segment of the Palestinian people. Kuwait has aided the Palestinians in diaspora for many years.

Israel's boycott

Meanwhile, Kuwait is among leading Arab States that abide by principles for boycotting Israel, said a visiting Kuwaiti official. In remarks to KUNA, Walid Al-Hammadi, the head of Israel's boycott bureau at Kuwait Finance Ministry's custom general directorate, stressed on necessity of maintaining support for the Arab boycott officers. Speaking on sidelines of the 90th conference for officers of the Arab boycott offices, Al-Hammadi said participants in the meeting discussed "status of some foreign companies that deal with Israel, or deal in products produced by the Israeli settlements." Israel is seeking to infiltrate Arab markets with disguise of foreign companies, the Kuwaiti official revealed.

The conference supports foreign and Arab groups that advocate boycotting Israel, namely the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Movement (BDS),



Deputy Foreign Minister Khaled Suleiman Al-Jarallah and Pierre Krahenbuhl Commissioner-General of the UN Relief hold talks in Kuwait City. — KUNA

which has played a key global role for encouraging the boycott. Kuwait acts to implement the boycott seriously through coordination with the main Arab League Israel Boycott Bureau in Damascus. "We in Kuwait do not allow

Israeli commodities enter the Kuwaiti market and the people of the country support the boycott," he affirmed, noting that concerned authorities often receive notifications about sneaking commodities. — Agencies



TIOGA: Photo shows an oil pump jack near Tioga, North Dakota. — AFP

WHY IS REBALANCING TAKING SO LONG IN THE OIL MARKET? CRUDE REVENUES SHRIVELED

LONDON: Rebalancing the oil market is proving a long and frustrating process because the oil-exporting countries hit hardest by the slump were the themselves some of the fastest growing oil consumers before prices tumbled. As oil revenues have shriveled, their economies have slowed or gone into recession, removing one of the most dynamic drivers of oil demand, and leaving the rest of the world economy to fill the gap. The slowdown in demand from oil-exporting countries has worsened the oversupply situation and prolonged the market rebalancing process.

Rebalancing has come to rely on production cuts, and stimulating additional demand from China and India, as well as the advanced economies which had showed little or negative growth prior to 2014. The first stage of the rebalancing process is therefore proving exceptionally difficult and slow because it is fighting the headwinds caused by the drop in oil prices. Once prices start rising significantly, however, the market is likely to tighten faster than many analysts expect because oil consumption in emerging markets is likely to accelerate again with the extra oil revenues.

New consumers

Oil-exporting countries accounted for more than one-third of the global increase in oil consumption outside the United States between 2004 and 2014, as rising oil revenues fuelled a boom in their domestic economies. Between 2004 and 2014, oil consumption outside the United States increased by 11.4 million barrels per day (bpd) ("Statistical Review of World Energy", BP, 2016). Fifteen oil-exporting countries identified separately in the BP Statistical Review accounted for 4.2 million bpd of extra demand (Canada, Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Norway, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Algeria, Iran, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates).

Consumption growth was especially rapid in Saudi Arabia (+1.7 million bpd), Russia (+0.6 million bpd), Iran (+0.5 million bpd) and the United Arab Emirates (+0.3 million bpd). But with the exception of Mexico, every one of the 15 oil exporting countries analyzed separately in the review reported increased domestic oil consumption during the decade to 2014. All the rest of global oil consumption growth was attributable to China (+4.4 million bpd), India (+1.3 million bpd) and Brazil (+1.2 million bpd).

Brazil experienced its own oil and agriculture-driven boom between 2004 and 2014. Brazil behaved like an oil-exporting economy even though the country continued to import refined fuels. Oil consumption surged by 1.2 million bpd between 2004 and 2014 while oil production rose by just 800,000 bpd. Brazil has subsequently been hit hard by the drop in oil and other commodity revenues. If Brazil is analyzed as an oil-exporting economy, then the group accounted for nearly half of all the growth in global oil consumption between 2004 and 2014.

Positive feedback

Commentators tend to divide the world into "net consuming" and "net exporting" countries but the 15 major exporters accounted for 17.3 million bpd of oil consumption in 2014, up from 13.1 million a decade earlier. Surging oil prices between 2004 and 2014 brought an enormous influx of revenue for exporters, stimulating their economies and resulting in a surge in internal demand for everything from vehicles to electricity and construction. Paradoxically, higher oil prices helped tighten the global oil market because they stimulated even more demand growth in oil-exporting economies.

The price-revenue-demand relationship is one of many positive feedback mechanisms operating in the oil market which have tended to amplify price swings and intensify the price cycle. Once oil prices slumped, however, the mechanism shifted into reverse. Falling revenues caused oil exporting economies to slow and forced cutbacks in government, business and household spending. Since the middle of 2014, domestic oil demand in the major oil exporting countries has leveled off or even started to fall.

Total oil consumption in the 15 major exporters actually declined by 90,000 bpd in 2015 and is likely to decline again in 2016. The slump in oil exporting economies is a major reason why global economic growth and trade have been so sluggish in the last two years. Lower oil prices have produced a negative shock for the global economy because the hit to investment and consumption in exporting countries is large and immediate while gains for consuming countries are smaller and take longer to materialize.

Slow adjustment

So far, the United States has been excluded from the analysis because it is both a larger oil producer and consumer, has been a limited exporter until recently, and has a large and diversified economy, unlike any other major oil exporter. US oil consumption declined by 1.6 million bpd between 2004 and 2014, mostly as a result of increased efficiency, while domestic production rose by around 4.5 million bpd, mostly thanks to shale. In many ways, the United States was responsible for the end of the oil boom by reducing its own oil demand while boosting supply, resulting in an enormous net shift in the global oil balance.

The country is slated to play an outsized role in rebalancing, with shale production already down sharply, and oil consumption increasing for the first time since 2005 (excluding the post-recession rebound in 2010). The other advanced economies in Europe and Asia account for a relatively small share of global consumption and are not dynamic enough to contribute much to rebalancing on either the demand or supply sides. So rebalancing will rely on China, India and the United States in the early stages, with oil-exporting countries likely to accelerate the rebalancing later in the cycle. — Reuters

KUWAIT FUNDS HOUSE FOR THE ELDERLY IN ARMENIA

KUWAIT: Armenia's Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Artem Asatryan has lauded Kuwait's noticeable humanitarian and philanthropic contributions and actions. The Armenian minister expressed the gratitude during a meeting with the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps in Armenia and Kuwait Ambassador Bassam Al-Qabandi who delivered donation from the Kuwaiti government for the elderly house in the country. Kuwait Embassy in Yerevan said in a statement that with the contribution, construction and furnishing the house have been completed at a cost estimated at \$1.5 million. The elderly house, named after the State of Kuwait, depicts the Kuwaiti humanitarian contributions and the warm relations between the two countries, Minister Asatryan said. — KUNA



Dean of the Diplomatic Corps in Armenia and Kuwait Ambassador Bassam Al-Qabandi seen during the signing ceremony. — KUNA

PAM'S COMPUTER SYSTEM IS BACK TO NORMAL AFTER GLITCH

KUWAIT: The Public Authority for Manpower (PAM) has affirmed return of computer systems inside all departments with full capacity after a partial suspension over the two days, indicating that the default has little impact on work. In a press statement yesterday, Aseel Al-Mazyad, spokesperson of PAM, said the technical teams have begun continuous work to fix the system's fault so as to avoid any delay in transactions.

She added that such faults take place regularly when there is a project to develop and modernize the system. The last three days witnessed the completion of more than 7,000 different transactions, including work permits, conversion factors, paying fees, registering labor contracts, adding or cancelling licenses and others, she noted. The work has continued regularly, she said, adding that the default has affected only 50 deals and work will resume its full capacity in the coming week after fulfilling the development and modernization processes. — KUNA



Photo

o f t h e d a y



KUWAIT: An aerial photo shows Kuwait City landscape. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Abdulaziz Al-Qarawi said that the temperature will reach 48-50 degrees Celsius with relative humidity especially in coastal areas, with light north easterly wind of varying in speeds. —Photo by Joseph Shagra



ATM DESTROYED

By Hanan Al-Saadoun

KUWAIT: Farwaniya detectives have arrested a citizen for destroying an ATM machine in Ardhiya. A call about a damaged ATM machine in an Ardhiya bank prompted detectives to launch an investigation. They later identified the suspect as a young Kuwaiti man in his 20s (Saud Mohammad). He was later arrested. The suspect confessed to damaging the ATM with an axe. He said he needed money that was why he destroyed the ATM machine. Security officials said he is also an ex-convict in drugs related cases.

Liquor factory busted

Relations and Security Information Department said Hawally security operatives discovered a liquor factory in Salwa. Police received tips about the factory housed in a flat. Detective raided the building and found 685 liquor bottles and 53 drums. Investigations are underway.

FAKE DETECTIVES ROB INDIAN

KUWAIT: Farwaniya detectives identified two persons who posed as detectives and stormed the house of an Indian and stole 30 kg of incense worth KD 30,000. The Indian, who trades in incense, was in his Farwaniya home when two persons burst in claiming to be detectives, and asked him for his ID and papers, so he obliged. They started searching the place for something they seemed to want, and focused on some bags next to a wall and began gathering them. When the Indian resisted, they threatened him with a weapon and fled with the incense.

The victim went to Farwaniya police, where Acting Director of Criminal Detectives Brig Mohammad Al-Sarhan ordered his men to work on the case. They started to collect information about those who have contacts with the victim and know his business and where he stores incense of such a high value, and identified an Indian expat named A H, who was found to be connected to the theft. Detectives obtained a warrant and raided his house. He confessed to posing as a detective and robbing his compatriot. He also told police about his partner, and they found the stolen incense in his Rumaithiya house. Both suspects

were detained and will be sent to concerned authorities.

Syrian man 'wanted'

A citizen in his 50s said a Syrian he knows convinced him to become partners in a barbershop that specializes in readying bridegrooms in Fahaheel. But the Syrian disappeared and switched off his phone after he received KD 7,000. When the citizen gave up on finding him, he lodged a swindling complaint at the police station. A travel ban was placed against the Syrian and detectives are working on the case.

'Missing girl' found

A girl reported missing was found under the influence of drugs with a citizen, and they had 37 illicit tablets with them. Mubarak Al-Kabeer police patrol stopped a car and found a man and a woman under the influence of drugs. The girl was also found reported missing by her family. Both were sent to the Drugs Control General Department.

Indian arrested

Salmiya police arrested an Indian who was popular among those who wanted to call their families at reduced prices. Police raided his

house and found four landlines he used in his thefts. He was arrested red-handed, and awaits legal action.

Kuwaiti beats manager

A citizen insulted and beat a domestic help office manager when she refused to take back his maid. The Ethiopian manager was surprised by the citizen who brought his maid to return her, but when she refused for legal reasons, he verbally insulted her before hitting her on the face and body. The Ethiopian was taken to Mubarak hospital, then went to Maidan Hawally police with a medical report and lodged a complaint.

Fleeing maid got stuck

An Indian maid's attempt to escape from her sponsor almost cost her life. The woman's presence on the roof of a Salmiya building made people think it was a suicide attempt, so they called police, who rushed there along with firemen. When they arrived, they found the maid stuck in the lift's engine room on the ninth floor, so they rescued her. She told police she was attempting to escape, so she went to the roof, only to find it was fenced, so she entered the engine room, where she got stuck. Investigations are underway. —Al-Rai



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SYRIAN REFUGEES IN NORTH LEBANON RECEIVE KRCS AID

BEIRUT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) has carried on with its campaign to support Syrians in Lebanon after they were forced to escape war at home, offering aid to scores of refugee families north of the country. Relief aid was presented to 250 Syrian families in the town of Al-Betroun, head of the KRCS field team Anwar Al-Attya said yesterday. He added

that the aid items, including food and detergents, were enough for a five-member family for a month. The team will offer more aid to Syrians in other parts of Lebanon over the coming days, Al-Attya said. The Kuwaiti relief society has been very much active in Lebanon, delivering aid to Syrians in need since the eruption of the Syria crisis in 2011. — KUNA



BEIRUT: Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS) hands out relief aid to 250 Syrian families in the town of Al-Betroun. — KUNA photos



CLINTON FOUNDATION A WEAPON FOR CRITICS

KUWAIT DONATED UP TO \$10 MILLION; QATAR, UAE \$5 MILLION

WASHINGTON: On paper, the Clinton Foundation looks unimpeachable: A charitable organization dedicated to improving millions of lives through education and health. However, it remains mired in suspicions about conflicts of interest involving the Democratic candidate for the White House. Three months before the US presidential election, Hillary Clinton's opponents accuse her almost daily of having used her influence as secretary of state in 2009-2013 for the benefit of the foundation her husband and former president, Bill, founded in 2001. "When will we see stories from CNN on Clinton Foundation corruption and Hillary's pay-for-play at State Department?" Clinton's Republican rival for the White House, Donald Trump, recently tweeted.

He had already called for the woman he taunts as "Crooked Hillary" to repay millions of dollars of Saudi donations to the foundation. In mid-July, more than 60 Republicans in Congress urged the FBI and the IRS to open an investigation into an organization they consider "lawless" and the subject of "significant issues of public corruption," according to their letter, obtained by AFP. Clinton has consistently dismissed the accusations. "There's absolutely no connection between anything that I did as a secretary of state and the Clinton foundation," she said on Fox News late last month.

Generous donors

Unsurprisingly, the attacks have focused on the financing of an organization whose resources have soared by almost 475 percent in a decade to exceed \$337 million, according to its internal audits. Its generous donor contributions - \$217 million in 2014 - have prompted controversy, especially those from foreign governments: Saudi Arabia (\$10 to \$25 million), Kuwait (up to \$10 million), Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (up to \$5 million), according to the foundation's figures. Multinational companies-Coca-Cola, Barclays, General Electric among them have also supported projects of the foundation which boasts having facilitated access to HIV treatment for 11.5 million people.

Although the donations-the dates of which are

unclear-involve no known illegal act, some argue they were granted in exchange for a sympathetic ear among the US authorities. In an article published in 2015, the New York Times suggested that the State Department, headed by Clinton at the time, approved-along with other departments of the US government-the Russian nuclear power agency's acquisition of a major Canadian company, Uranium One, some of whose shareholders were major donors to the Clinton Foundation. Clinton's supporters have dismissed the accusations as unfounded.

Opacity

But the case revealed an inconvenient fact: Some donations were not made public, contrary to commitments Clinton made before taking up her post at the State Department in early 2009 and leaving the foundation at the same time. A December 2008 memorandum obliged the foundation to reveal the name of new donors for approval by the State Department in order to avoid any potential conflicts of interest.

However, that rule was ignored for a contribution of \$500,000 by Algeria in 2010, The Washington Post reported in February 2015. The same year, the foundation admitted "mistakes" in its tax returns, prompting another volley of sometimes surreal suspicions. On Monday, Trump's campaign team accused the Clinton Foundation of having accepted a donation from a business with links to the Islamic State group-the French group Lafarge, which was active in territory controlled by the jihadists, Le Monde newspaper reported.

"People who don't like the Clinton will make up a reason to attack the Clinton Foundation," said Daniel Borochoff of Charity Watch, an independent group that observes humanitarian organizations, adding that donations from foreign countries are common. If Clinton is elected president in November, however, the foundation will have to make changes to head off the suspicions, her husband said in June. "You have to be careful to avoid actual or potential conflicts of interest," he said. The Clinton Foundation did not respond to numerous requests for comment from AFP. — AFP



State of Kuwait
Ministry of Commerce & Industry
Consumer Protection Affairs

LEXUS Recall



LEXUS IS / GX / ES (2007-2012)

PRODUCT	MODEL NAME MODEL YEAR	FRAME NUMBERS RANGE	
		FROM	TO
	Lexus IS / ES / GX (2007-2012)	JTHBG262XA5001135	JTHBG2626C5002754
NUMBER OF UNITS: 9175			
RECALL REASON	In certain conditions propellant wafers may cause Front Passenger Airbag to deploy abnormally in a crash. May risk of injury to the occupant.		
REMEDY	Customers will be contacted by Lexus Center.		
CONTACT	Mohamed Naser Al-Sayer & Sons Est. Co. W.L.L. Hotline: 1830030 www.lexus.com.kw Please book an appointment to serve you better		

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International

SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 2016

**Hezb sees partition
of Iraq and Syria**

8

**Turkey issues warrant
for Gulen over coup**

9

**14 killed in attack
on India market**

11



BATAM, Indonesia: Indonesian anti-terror police conduct a raid yesterday. —AFP

PLOT TO FIRE ROCKET AT S'PORE FOILED

SIX ARRESTED ON INDONESIAN ISLAND OF BATAM

JAKARTA: Indonesian police yesterday arrested six suspected militants over an Islamic State-linked plot to fire a rocket at an upmarket Singapore waterfront district from a nearby island. Singapore stepped up security after the elite anti-terror unit detained the men, aged between 19 and 46, on the Indonesian island of Batam, which lies just south of the affluent city-state.

The alleged leader of the group is accused of planning the attack with a leading Indonesian militant who is now believed to be fighting with the Islamic State (IS) group in Syria. It was the latest terror plot in the world's most populous Muslim-majority country, where there has been a surge in attacks and attempted attacks this year due to the growing influence of IS.

The pair "planned a terror attack in Singapore. They wanted to attack Singapore with a rocket from Batam," national police spokesman Agus Rianto told reporters. Police said the target was Marina Bay, a district that is home to Marina Bay Sands, a luxury complex that includes shopping malls, hotels and a casino. Rianto added police had "preliminary data" and were still investigating the plot, and named the alleged ringleader as 31-year-old Gigih Rahmat Dewa. Asked whether police had recovered any physical evidence of preparations for a rocket attack, Rianto said "not yet". In Singapore, an elite police unit patrolled the glittering downtown waterfront in vehicles and on foot yesterday afternoon. One officer said they were on routine patrol.

Analysts said it was unclear whether the militants had the

ability to carry out such a plan, which would involve firing a rocket over a distance of about 20 km. Singapore, a financial hub which is home to many expatriates and the Asian headquarters of numerous global companies, said it was stepping up security inland and at its borders after the plot was uncovered. "This does not come as a surprise," said Home Affairs Minister K Shanmugam. "I have spoken several times about plans being made in places just outside Singapore, to target Singapore. "Our small size increases these risks... Our people have to be extra alert."

Growing IS Support

Sidney Jones, director of Jakarta think-tank the Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict, told AFP it was necessary to wait for further information about the plot before drawing firm conclusions. But she added: "I think it highly unlikely that the plan had got very advanced." Police suspect Dewa, 31, received and distributed funds sent by Bahrin Naim, the militant fighting in Syria with whom he was believed to have plotted the rocket attack. Naim has been linked to several recent terror plots in Indonesia, including a suicide bomb attack on a police station in the city of Solo last month that left one police officer injured.

Batam is linked to Singapore by frequent ferries and its beach resorts and golf courses are a popular weekend getaway destination for Singaporeans, who are preparing to celebrate their National Day holiday on Tuesday. Jakarta-based security analyst Sidney Jones said it would be a departure for

Naim and his supporters if they were thinking of attacking targets outside Indonesia. "One thing I think is clear is Bahrin Naim has been able to establish a lot of communication with a lot of people through his social media network," Jones said.

Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said this week that the financial centre was a target for IS as they saw it as "a rational, open, cosmopolitan country", even though it was not involved in the US-led campaign against the group in the Middle East. "So do not think that by lying low, we are not going to be a target," Lee told reporters while on a visit to the United States, the Straits Times newspaper reported.

Indonesia has long struggled with Islamic militancy and has suffered a string of attacks in the past 15 years, including the 2002 Bali bombings that killed more than 200 people. A crackdown had weakened the most dangerous networks but IS has proved a potent new rallying cry for the country's radicals, and hundreds of Indonesians have headed to the Middle East to join the jihadists. In January IS-linked militants launched a deadly gun and bomb attack in Jakarta which left four attackers and four civilians dead.

There have also been signs of support for IS in Singapore. Singapore in recent weeks jailed four Bangladeshi workers accused of planning to join IS for raising money to fund attacks in their homeland, and also detained an Australia-based Singaporean who allegedly glorified the jihadists and backed the establishment of a caliphate in the city-state. — Agencies

HEZB SEES PARTITION OF IRAQ AND SYRIA

BEIRUT: Lebanon's Hezbollah said the partition of Iraq and Syria was a possible outcome of sectarian fighting across the region and there was no prospect of any end to the war in Syria until after November's US presidential election. Sheikh Naim Qassem, deputy leader of the Iran-backed group, whose forces are fighting alongside President Bashar Al-Assad against rebels supported by Western and regional powers, said Hezbollah, Iran and Russia would stand by Assad until the end.

In an interview with Reuters, he said recapturing Aleppo, Syria's second major city where a decisive battle is unfolding, remained an objective but was not an immediate goal. The US and its allies say that by waging war against his own people, Assad can have no future in Syria, while Russia and Iran, wholly opposed to regime change, maintain he is the legitimate president, albeit of a state shrunk by rebel gains. Both coalitions fear his sudden departure could destroy what is left of Syria after more than five years of civil war, bequeathing a shell state to the jihadists of Islamic State and Al-Qaeda. Qassem said both Syria and neighboring Iraq, where Islamic State has also seized territory, could split. "On the battlefield and in view of regional and international interventions I don't rule out that one of the ideas proposed is finding a state of partition in those two countries but will it succeed or not? So far the forces that want the unity of Iraq and Syria are able to prevent the idea of partition but we should remain worried about ... the possibility that some countries might push these two countries or one of them into partition."

Assad was the best protection against this, Qassem said. "With President Assad the solution can be logical and rational in finding political parameters that can give the opposition its share and the regime its share and there could be coordination which

allows for putting things back in order and reviving authority in Syria", the white-turbaned sheikh said.

Diehard Commitment

The intervention of Russia's air force since last September, after Iran, Hezbollah, and Iraqi Shi'ite militiamen had fought relentlessly to keep Assad in place, has confounded the designs of Washington and regional Sunni powers such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey, Qassem said, opening the way to a political solution. "Iranian and Russian relations with Syria helped achieve steadfastness on the ground because both support Assad staying in power and back a political solution," the Hezbollah number two told Reuters. The Syria war grew out of Arab spring-inspired protests in 2011 calling for democratic change. Before Iran, Hezbollah and Russia came to Assad's aid, his grip on power appeared to be failing. Their support was seen by diplomats and Middle East experts as key to Assad's survival. Syria's civil war, now in its sixth year, has killed more than 250,000 people, displaced more than 6.6 million inside the country and forced another 4.8 million to flee, creating a huge influx into neighboring countries and Europe. Qassem said the months-long push on rebel-held Aleppo by Assad's government forces was aimed less at recovering Syria's major city than at separating the rebels from Idlib, their stronghold in the north-west, and choking their supply lines from Turkey. Aleppo, with a population of more than 2 million people now, has been divided for years into rebel and government areas. "The main objective of the Syrian state and allies was to cut the road between the city of Aleppo and Idlib. As for liberating Aleppo that's a different goal that may not be undertaken quickly..." "Regaining Aleppo will remain one of the goals of the Syrian state and its allies but we're not tied to a timeframe", said the Hezbollah leader.

Fighting Global Threat

The Lebanese group, a Shiite Islamist party with a powerful armed wing, describes its role as part of a struggle against the growing regional threat presented by Sunni Muslim jihadists, who it labels takfiris for their radical ideology, violent and uncompromising stance. The conflict in Syria has further fuelled an old regional rivalry between the Shi'ite Islamist government of Iran and the conservative Sunni Muslim kingdom of Saudi Arabia, one of the main sponsors of the insurgency against Assad.

Qassem said the United States, one of the power brokers in finding a solution to the crisis, was distracted by its November presidential elections and not ready to commit to any action until a new president takes over next year. "The US administration is convinced that the period ahead of the presidential elections is a wasted time, that it can await until the new president assumes power. Then, the prospects of a solution or of a prolongation of the crisis will be clear." He said the sacrifices of Hezbollah, which has lost hundreds of fighters in Syria, were worthy, otherwise the ultra-hardline jihadists of Islamic State would have taken control in Syria and expanded into Lebanon. "We have prevented the expansion of the crisis into Lebanon and this is a major achievement, we prevented the takfiris from disrupting the resistance and laid the basis for the steadfastness of Syria. These great achievements deserve every sacrifice," he said. He said Islamic State, which is being targeted by coalition air strikes, will increase its attacks in Europe and beyond, adding that the group has an expansionist strategy and will use any means to achieve its goals. "European pains are big and will increase more and more," Qassem said, adding that Islamic State "will not leave an opportunity in all the countries of the world without exception to attack when it can and when is able to." — Reuters

ANC IN WORST ELECTION LOSSES SINCE APARTHEID

PARTY SET TO LOSE FULL CONTROL OF MAJOR CITIES

PRETORIA: South Africa's ANC was on track for its worst electoral performance since the end of apartheid yesterday as voters vented anger about high unemployment and corruption in municipal elections that herald a sea change in politics and society. The African National Congress has ruled virtually unopposed since it ended white-minority rule in 1994 with Nelson Mandela at its helm, but has lost support - particularly in cities - among voters who feel their lives have not improved and accuse President Jacob Zuma of mismanaging the economy. The ANC was still leading in the overall count in the nationwide municipal vote, with 95 percent of ballots counted. But it lost to the main opposition Democratic Alliance (DA) in the municipality of Nelson Mandela Bay, which includes the city of Port Elizabeth, and was trailing in Tshwane, home to the capital Pretoria. Since the end of apartheid, the ANC had enjoyed an iron electoral grip on these areas, as well as on the economic hub of Johannesburg - where it held just a narrow lead on Friday.

Now, no party looks likely to win a majority in these three urban centres, ushering in a new era of coalition politics as South Africa shifts from what has effectively been a one-party system in the period immediately post-apartheid. This shift



PRETORIA: Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa (seated) and African National Congress party members discuss municipal election results at the results center yesterday. — AP

reshapes the political landscape in South Africa ahead of the 2019 national election, and may also embolden Zuma's rivals within the ANC to challenge him. The DA has retained control of Cape Town, which it has held since 2006. The ANC chief whip, Jackson Mthembu, said the losses across the country were "a worrying trend" for the ruling party and would prompt soul-searching. "We need to have a serious introspection, and that is what we will do."

The election also represents a political renaissance for the DA, which last year elected its first black leader, Mmusi Maimane, as part of its efforts to shake off its image as a party that mainly serves white interests. "In the region named after Nelson Mandela, who promoted reconciliation, I think it is fitting that we have to cooperate with other political parties," said Athol Trollip, the DA's mayoral candidate in the bay area. Final results are due today. — Reuters

AIR RAIDS KILL 13 IN ALEPPO

BEIRUT: At least 13 people, including nine children, were killed in air strikes on the rebel-held east of Aleppo yesterday, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitor said. The Britain-based group said it was unclear if the raids on the Marjeh district were carried out by aircraft belonging to the Syrian government or its ally Russia. The latest civilian deaths come as rebels press an assault intended to break a government siege of opposition-held Aleppo that began on July 17 and has raised fears of a humanitarian crisis.

In an audio message released yesterday, Abu Mohamed Al-Jolani, the head of Al-Qaeda's former affiliate in Syria, pledged that the operation would soon succeed. The rebel assault started on Sunday and is targeting the Ramussa district that contains the main supply route to the government-held west of the city. After some initial rebel advances, government forces backed by Russian air strikes have pushed back opposition fighters who include jihadists from Jolani's faction, now known as the Fateh al-Sham Front.

Yesterday, rebels launched a new offensive targeting a military academy east of Ramussa. Despite fierce fighting, they made little progress against regime forces, said the Observatory's director Rami Abdul Rahman. Once Syria's economic powerhouse, Aleppo has been ravaged by the war that began in March 2011 with anti-government protests. According to the Observatory, at least 115 civilians, including 35 children, have been killed in Aleppo since the rebel assault began on Sunday.

The deaths include 65 people, among them 22 children, killed in rebel fire on government neighbourhoods, the Observatory said. Another 42 people, including 11 children, have been killed in strikes on eastern Aleppo, the monitor said. It reported five more deaths in rebel fire on the Kurdish-majority Sheikh Maqsud district of the city. In an audio message, Jolani said God had granted fighters "a glorious victory in the battle to break the siege of Aleppo". — AFP

FEARS EU-TURKEY MIGRANT DEAL COULD COLLAPSE

BRUSSELS: Fears are mounting in the European Union that its months-old pact with Turkey to curb migrant flows could collapse as a rift deepens over Ankara's crackdown following a failed coup. Turkey angrily rejects EU criticism that its post-coup purges might violate rights norms Ankara must meet under the agreement in return for visa-free travel for Turks and accelerated negotiations for bloc membership. "The risk is big. The success so far of the pact is fragile," European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker told Austrian daily Kurier last weekend. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has "already hinted several times that he wants to scrap it," Juncker said. If that happens, he added, "then we can expect migrants to start coming to Europe again."

If the pact collapses, cash-strapped EU member Greece would be the first to feel the heat as it was the main gateway for some one million asylum seekers entering Europe last year. "Clearly we are concerned," Greece's immigra-

tion minister Yannis Mouzalas said. "But for now the number of people arriving on the Greek islands does not indicate that the deal is not being respected," he said. Since the migrant deal was agreed in March to "break the business model" of smugglers, the numbers of Syrians, Iraqis and others fleeing war and turmoil via Turkey to Greece has slowed to a trickle. Under the plan, Turkey stops refugees' dangerous sea journeys and takes back illegal migrants from Greece. For each Syrian it accepts back, it can send one to the EU in a more orderly redistribution program. In return, Ankara was promised not only visa-free travel for its citizens and accelerated negotiations for membership but also \$3.0 billion (\$3.4 billion) to help the three million migrants on its territory. But Ankara accuses Brussels of failing to stick to its side of the bargain. Erdogan on Tuesday lashed out at the European Union for dragging its feet in releasing the promised funds and on visa-free travel. Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said

in an interview with the German daily Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung that Ankara could withdraw from the accord if Europe failed to allow visa-free travel for Turks by October.

The EU vows not to compromise on its human rights benchmarks, including requiring Ankara to amend its anti-terrorism laws to meet European standards, particularly by narrowing their scope. However, Turkey rejects the demands and has arrested dozens of journalists under anti-terror laws since the July 15 coup attempt. More than 60,000 people in military, judiciary, civil service and education sector have been dismissed, detained or are currently under investigation.

'Serious Foreign Policy Mistake'

Erdogan has also alarmed European leaders by suggesting Turkey might reinstate the death penalty to punish coup plotters. "Let me be very clear... no country can become an EU state if it introduces the death penalty," EU foreign affairs chief Federica Mogherini

said bluntly in response. Turkey abolished the death penalty in 2004 as part of its efforts to join the EU, which makes its removal a non-negotiable pre-condition for membership. EU enlargement commissioner Johannes Hahn warned Turkey last week that the bloc would freeze the country's accession talks if its post-coup crackdown violates EU rule of law norms.

Austrian Chancellor Christian Kern then called Thursday for the EU to discuss ending accession talks, saying "Turkey's democratic standards are far from sufficient to justify" membership. Turkey's EU Affairs Minister Omer Celik denounced Kern's comments as "extremely disturbing". Seeking to calm things down, Juncker swiftly rejected Kern's call and warned that ending the negotiations would be a "serious foreign policy mistake". He did not elaborate what the consequences would be but the EU not only needs Turkey's cooperation on migrants, it is also a bulwark against the Islamic State group in Syria and Iraq. — AFP



Turkey's Prime Minister Binali Yildirim (left) and the Turkey's Chief of Staff General Hulusi Akar sign a book before their meeting at the military headquarters in Ankara yesterday. (Inset) This handout picture released on Sept 24, 2013 shows exiled Turkish Muslim preacher Fethullah Gulen at his residence in Saylorsburg, Pennsylvania. — AP/AFP



TURKEY ISSUES WARRANT FOR GULEN OVER COUP

MOVE DISMISSED BY US CLERIC

ANKARA: Turkey's issuing of an arrest warrant for Fethullah Gulen on charges of ordering last month's bid to overthrow President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been dismissed by the US-based cleric who denies any involvement. In the warrant, which was issued on Thursday, Gulen stands accused of "ordering the July 15 coup", the Anadolu news agency reported. But the reclusive cleric, who strongly denies any involvement in the failed putsch, has denounced the warrant as meaningless, saying it was typical of a justice system which was not independent.

"The issuance of an arrest warrant from a Turkish court changes nothing about my status or my views," Gulen said in a statement late Thursday, noting his repeated condemnation of the attempted coup and denial of any knowledge of or involvement in it. "It is well-documented that the Turkish court system is without judicial independence, so this warrant is yet another example of President

Erdogan's drive for authoritarianism and away from democracy," he said.

In a separate, surprise development - which the US State Department declined to confirm - Erdogan said US Secretary of State John Kerry was planning to visit Turkey later this month. "I think their secretary of state is coming on the 21st," Erdogan told state-run TRT television. The warrant was issued as Washington reviews two sets of documents sent by Turkey allegedly detailing Gulen's involvement in the attempted putsch and requesting his extradition. Within the next two weeks, Turkey's foreign and justice ministers will travel to Washington to explain in person the Pennsylvania-based preacher's alleged role, Erdogan said.

'How Can You Hide Him?'

Just days after the coup, Kerry said Turkey must present "genuine evidence" and "not allegations" against the Muslim cleric for his

extradition. State Department spokesman Mark Toner said US officials were reviewing the documents to determine whether they constituted a formal extradition request. "We've received documents. We're studying those documents," he said. "It takes time to evaluate the evidence that is presented."

Earlier this week, Erdogan lashed out at the United States for dragging its heels over the extradition request, describing it as "a huge obstacle" to Turkey's fight against terror. "How can it be, when we are strategic partners... you keep on hiding and sheltering him?" Toner declined to comment on whether Kerry would visit Turkey later this month. Tension between the two NATO allies has soared since the attempted coup as Ankara has pressed a vast nationwide crackdown, prompting Western cries of alarm over rights abuses that have drawn a fierce response from Erdogan who has in turn accused them of supporting "terror". — AFP

UN SLAMS IRAN EXECUTIONS AS 'GRAVE INJUSTICE'

GENEVA: The hanging of up to 20 people in Iran this week followed serious doubts about the fairness of their trials and respect for due process, leading to a "grave injustice" being committed, the United Nations' top human rights official said yesterday. Iran executed up to 20 Kurdish Islamists on Tuesday who were suspected of attacks on security forces, drawing condemnation from rights groups which said the convictions may have been based on forced confessions.

They were convicted of killing two Sunni Muslim clerics, several police and wildlife guards, abducting a number of people and carrying out armed robbery and bombings in western Iran, state news agency IRNA said. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al-Hussein said the men had been executed for "purported terrorism-related offences" and that reports suggested most if not all were from a minority group - Sunnis from the Kurdish community.

"The application of overly broad and vague criminal charges, coupled with a disdain for the rights of the accused to due process and a fair trial have in these cases led to a grave injustice," Zeid said in a statement. Shahram Ahmadi, one of those hanged, was alleged to have been beaten and coerced into signing a blank piece of paper on which his false confession was recorded, Zeid said. Iran is one of the world's top executioners, international rights groups say. Human Rights Watch said this week that Iran had executed at least 230 people this year.

Hassan Afshar, a 19-year-old who was 17 when he was arrested and convicted of rape, was executed last month, Zeid said. "The execution of juvenile offenders is particularly abhorrent and I urge Iran to respect the strict prohibition under international human rights law against this practice," he said. — Reuters

REFUGEES IN GREECE FACE SEXUAL ASSAULT

ATHENS: When Warda left her hometown of Idlib in Syria, she knew she had a long, difficult journey ahead, but it never crossed her mind that she would face increased danger as a young woman. For the past four months, the 18-year-old has been living in a makeshift refugee camp by Pireaus harbor in Athens with her fiancé and six relatives, who also made the perilous journey to Greece via Turkey.

Forced to share a tent with her parents and use a mixed bathroom, the lack of privacy is stifling. The large numbers of young, single Syrian and Afghan men, many of whom sit in groups, commenting on the women they see, is also unnerving. "It's hard for everyone here, but particularly for women," said Warda, who like many asylum seekers declined to give her full

name. "The Afghan guys like to harass the young women here. They don't care that I'm engaged or Muslim," the teenager told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "But when they bother us, there's nowhere for us to go. It's really scary." Female asylum seekers are vulnerable to violence, exploitation and sexual harassment from the moment they leave Iraq and Syria to their arrival on European soil, Amnesty International says. In March, the European Union published guidelines to protect the rights of women asylum seekers and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people fleeing persecution. The EU recommended separate bathrooms and sleeping areas but these are non-existent in many refugee camps and reception centres in Greece, exposing female asylum seekers to sex-

ual violence, exploitation and harassment, human rights groups say.

Unable to Stop Crying

Ahmed Hammoud and his family were forced to sleep in a park while they attended interviews on their claims for refugee status at the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) in Athens. Although the family had requested accommodation during their visit, citing the ill-health of Hammoud's father who had suffered a stroke, none was made available. For two nights, they slept rough before going back to the island of Lesbos and Kara Tepe refugee camp which prioritizes families and vulnerable people.

"The first night was bad enough. My father was in a bad way but the second night was awful," Hammoud, 18,

recalled. "I woke up to my little sister screaming and crying. My first thought was that she'd been hurt but it was actually my mother." When Hammoud found his mother a few seconds later, four men were assaulting her. They ran off before he was able to identify them. "They were trying to rape her," he said, sadly. "But that wasn't enough for them. They also cut and burnt her. My mother hasn't stopped crying since." Hammoud said when he and his family asked EASO for help the following day, they were told that nothing could be done. Then the police were called to escort them off the premises. Women and children accounted for 55 percent of migrants passing through Greece in January, according to the latest UN figures, more than double the number last year. — Reuters



VLADIMIR, Russia: Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev addresses a youth forum on Aug 2, 2016. — AP

180,000 INK PETITION CALLING FOR RUSSIA PM'S RESIGNATION

MEDVEDEV'S COMMENTS SEEN AS UNCARING

MOSCOW: More than 180,000 Russians have signed an online petition to President Vladimir Putin calling for the resignation of Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev over his recent comments on teachers' pay. The petition first posted on the website Change.org on Thursday came after the premier advised a low-paid lecturer to go into business if he wanted to make money. Medvedev's comments - seen as out-of-touch and uncaring - unleashed a torrent of criticism in the press and on social media. "The cabinet should be led by a person who is competent, educated and cares about the country," wrote the petition's author, Alexander Li. "We are seeing the opposite right now." The Duma, the lower house of Russia's parliament, is obliged to debate any petition that gets 100,000 signatures. At a youth education forum on Tuesday, Medvedev was asked by a university lecturer from the impoverished Dagestan region why teachers receive only around 15,000 rubles (\$230) per month, while police are significantly better paid. "There's no need to compare,"

Medvedev said. "The issue is what you choose in life." Teaching, he said, "is a vocation. If you want to make money, there are a bunch of great places where you can do that quicker and better in business. And you didn't go into business." Medvedev - who served as president from 2008 to 2012 between Putin's presidential terms - added that a "modern energetic teacher" should be able to find ways to "earn something extra".

Medvedev, who lectured at the law faculty of Saint Petersburg State University in the 1990s, also cited himself as an example of a teacher who succeeded in making a living. "I just gave a lot of lectures, held seminars," he said. "Overall I was able to make ends meet." Official statistics show the average monthly salary in Russia is around 37,000 rubles (507 euros, \$566). Teachers make an average 32,000 rubles per month but the figure varies greatly depending on the region. In Dagestan, teachers earn a monthly average of 18,000 rubles, Kommersant daily reported.

'Hang in There'

"The prime minister's impressions are completely understandable," said a wry editorial in tabloid *Moskovsky Komsomolets*. "We all know very well of government officials who successfully manage to combine their main job with business, including big business." *Novaya Gazeta* lashed out at the premier over his remarks. "Cynicism cannot be at the foundation of the state's domestic policy. That usually ends badly for the state and the bureaucrats," it said. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov declined to comment on the petition. Other Russian officials have enraged teachers with insensitive comments about their low salaries. Last year a local lawmaker in the city of Yekaterinburg advised female teachers to find themselves wealthy husbands to ensure their livelihoods. In May, Medvedev once again sparked public ire after telling a group of pensioners: "There's no money, but hang in there." The phrase has since gone viral. Russia's energy-reliant economy is reeling from the fall in oil prices and Western sanctions over Moscow's meddling in Ukraine. — AFP

CAMERON ACCUSED OF CRONYISM OVER HONORS FOR ALLIES

LONDON: David Cameron was accused on Friday of cronyism that would "embarrass a medieval court" after he rewarded a long list of his political aides and allies with some of Britain's highest honors to mark his resignation as prime minister. Cameron stepped down last month after he failed to persuade voters to back staying in the European Union in a referendum, and many of those on his "Resignation Honours" list were prominent in the campaign to remain in the bloc. Outgoing prime ministers can put forward a list of people to receive honors, ranging from peerages and knighthoods to lesser honors such as membership of the Order of the British Empire. Among the most prominent names on the list are cabinet ministers Michael Fallon, Patrick McLoughlin and David Lidington, all of whom favored remaining in the EU.

George Osborne, who resigned as finance minister after the Brexit referendum, is made a Companion of Honor. Also honored is Isabel Spearman, a former fashion public relations executive who worked for Cameron's wife Samantha as a stylist and assistant, and Thea Rogers, an adviser credited with smartening up Osborne's public image. Cameron's former spin doctor, Craig Oliver, was given a knighthood. Three prominent donors to the Conservative Party were also either made lords or knights.

Cameron's list was attacked by opposition politicians and those who had successfully backed leaving the EU, who argued that he was rewarding the failed "Remain" campaign. Leave.EU, a group that backed Brexit, said Cameron had "used his final 'losers list' to lavish titles and social status on personal friends, party donors and failed Remain campaigners". Tom Watson, deputy leader of the opposition Labour Party said Theresa May, who succeeded Cameron as prime minister, should have vetoed the list. "The fact she has allowed this cronyism to go ahead shows that the Tories will always put their own interests first," Watson said.

Tim Farron, leader of the Liberal Democrats, said the list was "so full of cronies it would embarrass a medieval court". Cameron, who has been on holiday with his family in Corsica, has not commented. Media attention has focused instead on his striking swimming trunks, said to have cost 225 pounds (\$300). Downing Street declined to comment. The list also held some embarrassment for Labour, which appointed a prominent human rights lawyer, Shami Chakrabarti, as a peer in the House of Lords. Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn said last year he saw no reason to appoint people to the unelected upper house. He had also appointed Chakrabarti to head an inquiry into anti-Semitism in the party, prompting Jewish leaders to say the review could not be seen as independent. A Labour statement said: "Shami Chakrabarti shares Jeremy's ambition for reform of the House of Lords." — Reuters

MODI PICKS NEW LEADER TO STABILIZE HOME STATE

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has moved to shore up support in his home state of Gujarat by choosing as its next chief minister - a representative of a powerful clan that staged widespread protests last year. As expected, Modi named Nitin Patel to run the western state, that Modi led for more than a decade, after his own successor, Anandiben Patel, quit following protests over a lack of job opportunities and social discrimination.

The 65-year-old prime minister pitched his "Gujarat model" of rapid economic growth to voters in the 2014 general election and, if he is to secure a second term, can ill afford a setback when the state goes to the polls in late 2017. An aide to Modi said Nitin Patel, the state's health minister, would be confirmed after a meeting of leaders of his Bharatiya Janata Party. Patel, 60, is a member of the upper-caste Patel, or Patidar, community that rose up last year in Gujarat to demand "reservation", a guaranteed share of government jobs and college places usually reserved for disadvantaged groups.

Further protests in Gujarat last weekend by the low-caste Dalit community over attacks by militant Hindus who oppose cow slaughter led Anandiben Patel to tender her resignation on Monday. Nitin Patel told Indian news channels on Friday he was determined to start a dialogue with Dalit leaders and find ways to end the agitation. Dalits are planning more protests to express their outrage at the public beating of four men from their community by cow-protection vigilantes who accused them skinning a cow.

Death of low-caste man

In another development, fourteen police officers have been suspended in India after a low-caste man was allegedly tortured and killed in custody, police said yesterday. Kamal Valmiki, from India's lowest Dalit caste, was found hanging inside a cell on Wednesday a day after he was detained on suspicion of robbery in Kanpur in northern Uttar Pradesh state. His family accused one police officer of torturing him to death in custody and then hanging his body to make it look like suicide. "We have suspended 14 policemen including two officers for negligence," Kanpur police chief Shalabh Mathur said.

Valmiki's family has said he was pressured to confess and brutally beaten when he refused. Police are awaiting the results of the autopsy. Hundreds of demonstrators have blocked a local highway to protest at the man's death and police atrocities against the Dalit community. Custodial abuse is widespread in India and detainees are often tortured at police stations to extract confessions. Right groups say the government has failed to keep its pledge to end the abuse. National crime records bureau figures show more than 1,200 people were killed in police custody between 2000-2013. But a 2012 report by the National Human Rights Commission said more than 12,000 people were killed in police stations or prisons across India between 2001 and 2010.— Agencies

SONIA GANDHI HAS SHOULDER SURGERY

NEW DELHI: Sonia Gandhi, the leader of India's main opposition party, has undergone shoulder surgery at a New Delhi hospital after suffering a fall on a campaign stop this week, senior Congress party officials said yesterday. Gandhi, 69, dislocated her left shoulder when she fainted on Tuesday while launching the party's campaign for next year's Uttar Pradesh state election in the holy city of Varanasi, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's parliamentary constituency.

Gandhi suffered acute dehydration while travelling in an open vehicle for four hours through large crowds. "She had dislocated her shoulder after a fall and is now under observation for 48 hours," said a senior party official, who did not wish to be named as he was not authorised to speak to the media. The Italian-born politician, who led her party to two successive terms governing the world's largest democracy, has played a slightly reduced public role since being treated abroad for an unknown illness in 2011. Despite persistent speculation, she has yet to hand over the party leadership to Rahul Gandhi, her 46-year-old son and the great grandson of India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru. — Reuters



ASSAM: Smoke rises from the site of a militant attack at Balajan Tinali, in the Kokrajhar district of northeastern Assam state yesterday. Gunmen opened fire on a busy market in a restive area of northeast India, killing 14 people and wounding several others. —AFP

14 KILLED AS GUNMEN OPEN FIRE ON A CROWDED MARKET

VIOLENT CLASHES ERUPT IN KASHMIR

GAUHATI: At least 14 people were killed and 16 others injured yesterday after rebels opened fire in a crowded market in Assam state in India's remote northeast, officials said. Six rebels arrived in a motorized rickshaw and fired automatic weapons and lobbed grenades in the crowded market in Balajan, an area just outside the town of Kokrajhar in western Assam, said top local police official LR Bishnoi.

He said that one gunman was killed by security forces and troops were pursuing five others who fled. Several homes and shops were badly damaged in the attack. Police blamed a faction of the National Democratic Front of Bodoland for the attack. The group has been fighting for an independent homeland for the region's Bodo tribespeople for decades. The Bodos are an indigenous tribe in Assam, making up 10 percent of the state's 33 million people.

Yesterday's attack was the worst in the recent past, but the group was blamed for the shooting deaths of more than 60 Muslim settlers and Adivasi tribespeople in Assam in separate attacks in 2014. The rebels have been targeting communities they consider outsiders, including Adivasis, whose

ancestors migrated to Assam more than 100 years ago to work on tea plantations - as well as Muslims, accusing them and the federal government of exploiting the region's wealth while neglecting the locals.

Dozens of rebel groups have been fighting the government and sometimes each other for years in seven states in northeast India. They demand greater regional autonomy or independent homelands for the indigenous groups they represent. At least 10,000 people, most of them civilians, have been killed in Assam state alone in the last three decades.

Clashes in Kashmir

In another development, authorities in Indian-controlled Kashmir extended a curfew to most parts of the disputed Himalayan region yesterday in an attempt to prevent an anti-India protest march to a prominent shrine, but clashes erupted as thousands defied the restrictions. The mostly Muslim region, where resistance to rule by predominantly Hindu India is strong, has been under a rolling curfew and strikes for nearly a month after the killing of a popular rebel commander sparked massive anti-India demonstrations. At least 52

civilians and a policeman have been killed and thousands injured.

Separatists called Kashmiris to march to Hazratbal shrine in the city of Srinagar and stage protests after Friday prayers there. Police and paramilitary soldiers patrolled streets and laid razor wire and steel barricades to cut off neighborhoods in the city. Shops, businesses and schools remained closed for the 28th consecutive day. Thousands of Kashmiris defied the security lockdown and demonstrated at dozens of places in the region. They chanted slogans such as "Go India, go back" and "We want freedom."

Violence erupted in at least two dozen places after police and paramilitary soldiers intercepted the protesters and fired tear gas and shotgun pellets, police and witnesses said. At least 35 civilians and 12 policemen were reported injured. Troops continued firing shotguns to disperse angry crowds despite warnings from India's home ministry to minimize their use, and requests for a ban from local and international rights groups. The pellets have killed at least one man and left hundreds of civilians with serious eye injuries. Dozens of people have lost their vision because of pellet injuries. — Agencies

CHINA ACTIVIST TRIED FOR SUBVERSION, 4TH CASE IN 4 DAYS

BEIJING: A Chinese human rights activist was yesterday given a three year suspended prison sentence for subversion, a court said, in the fourth such case this week as authorities crack down on dissent. Christian activist Gou Hongguo had gone abroad to be trained in "subverting state power", the Second Intermediate People's Court in the northern city of Tianjin said on a verified social media account. He sought to turn public opinion against the government and attempted to overthrow the socialist system, among a litany of other offences, it said. Gou was given three years in prison, suspended for three years, the court statement said, adding he pleaded guilty and said he would not appeal.

The term is relatively light by the standards of dissident trials in China, where the courts are controlled by the ruling Communist Party. But it was not clear whether he would be released. Another of the defendants tried this week, Zhai Yanmin, was also given a suspended sentence, but campaign groups said he had yet to return home and his whereabouts remained unknown. Gou's wife Fan Lili, who gave birth to their son 16 months ago said: "I'm happy as long as he can come home, and my child can have a father to raise him."

Gou, who had protested against forced evictions,

was one of more than 200 activists and lawyers involved in cases the party considers sensitive who were detained in July last year in the so-called 709 crackdown-named for its main date. "The hardest thing was not knowing where my husband was and whether he was living or dead," said Fan. She was not allowed to attend the trial, having gone to the courthouse earlier this week to demand information about his fate, only to be bundled away by security personnel and returned to her home province of Shanxi. "I am very strictly monitored, and cannot accept interviews or meet with other family members," she said. "Otherwise there will be a lot of trouble."

'Showcase trials'

Gou's trial was the fourth at the Tianjin court this week, and followed that of high-profile rights lawyer Zhou Shifeng, whose Fengrui law firm-known for taking on cases of dissident scholars, victims of sexual abuse and members of banned religious groups-has been at the centre of the 709 crackdown. Zhou was on Thursday given seven years in prison for subversion. Hu Shigen, a Christian campaigner who was a member of the same underground church as Gou, was jailed for seven and a half years on Wednesday. That came a day after activist Zhai's three-year sus-

pending sentence. "Just because people are released doesn't necessarily mean that they will be completely free in China, where they can for example be released to a detention centre," Kit Chen, executive director of the China Human Rights Lawyer Concern Group said.

She cited the example of legal assistant Zhao Wei, detained in the 709 crackdown and released on bail last month according to police, but whose family have been unable to contact her. "All the trials were pre-arranged showcase trials," Chen said of the Tianjin proceedings, adding that each one had taken a matter of hours from opening to verdict and sentence. The court cited Gou as saying that he had "continuously reflected deeply upon my own crimes, and now believe that I was misled by so-called 'democratic' thinking from the West", adding he had been "used by foreign forces and people with ulterior motives".

The official Xinhua news agency quoted him saying: "I'm grateful to the government for saving me." Only court-appointed defense lawyers were present. Authorities insist the trials are open, with the court stating that about 40 people including politicians, legal scholars, and "civilian representatives from all walks of life", as well as mainland and foreign media

CHINA'S CRACKDOWN RAISES SPECTER OF FOREIGN FORCES

US IMPLIED AS RINGLEADER

BEIJING: In halting televised confessions and emotional courtroom testimony, Chinese lawyers and activists held in a government crackdown have voiced the same ominous message: Shadowy foreign forces are funding, directing and encouraging activities bent on destabilizing China's government and smearing its reputation. The familiar narrative of a country besieged by foreign enemies - with the United States implied as ringleader - is a key element of China's year-long campaign to stamp out the country's burgeoning legal activism movement. That effort drew new attention this week with the carefully scripted trials of a lawyer and three activists on subversion charges.

Though the tactic is far from new, political observers say the trials are a reminder of how the administration of President Xi Jinping has wielded the specter of foreign threats with far greater frequency and force, a reflection of the leadership's deeply seated belief that China is locked in a pitched, strategic and ideological battle against the West. The four facing trial this week were associated with the Fengrui Law Firm in Beijing, one of the country's best-known advocates for human rights. Its director, Zhou Shifeng, was sentenced Thursday to seven years in prison while two received suspended sentences and one a term of seven years, three months.

All were accused of organizing protests outside courthouses, hyping cases via social and foreign media, and receiving training and funding from foreign nonprofit organizations. Even if Fengrui's activist tactics crossed ethical or even legal lines, as some Chinese legal professionals believe, the government had scant evidence to level subversion charges, said Tong Zhiwei, a professor at East China University of Political Science and Law in Shanghai. Rather, the involvement of foreign actors served as



BEIJING: Tea hostesses prepare drinks ahead of the first China-US judicial dialogue at the Rui'an hotel in Beijing. US officials from the department of Justice and Commerce took part in the first US-China judicial dialogue to discuss court reforms, amongst other issues. — AFP

the legal and political fulcrum in the cases, Tong said.

"If there were no foreign elements, it would have completely changed the complexion of the cases," Tong said, pointing out that while the prosecutors pointed to conversations the defendants had in a restaurant about ending Communist Party rule, they offered little evidence of an actual plot to topple the government. "China has had legal education exchanges for decades with the West," Tong said. "Where do you draw the line of unacceptable interaction? Is being a visiting scholar at Harvard considered subversive?"

The crackdown on the legal profession, launched in July 2015 with a sweeping roundup of close to 300 activists and lawyers, is part of a far-reaching effort to stamp out suspected foreign influence

since Xi took power in 2012. Most have been released although more than a dozen remain in detention. Also in 2012, the Communist Party issued an internal communique, known as Document No 9, aimed at limiting the penetration of Western-style "universal values," such as multi-party democracy and media freedoms, into Chinese society, especially its classrooms. The government followed that up this year by passing a law to strictly regulate the work of thousands of international nonprofits working in China and place them under direct police supervision. In January, China detained and interrogated Peter Dahlin, a Swedish activist who had provided Fengrui lawyers training and support, for 23 days before releasing and deporting him - but only after he gave a confessional interview with the state broadcaster. — AP

OUSTED THAILAND PM DEFENDS RICE SUBSIDY AT CRIMINAL TRIAL

BANGKOK: Ousted former Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra defended her management of a rice subsidy scheme, which critics say hemorrhaged billions of dollars, and told a court yesterday it had not distorted global prices. Yingluck, Thailand's first female Prime Minister, was removed from office by a court days before the military took power in a May 2014 coup.

The rice scheme, a flagship election policy that helped sweep her to office in a landslide in 2011, was a catalyst for months of crippling street protests in 2014 that led to the military takeover. "We found that the rice policy could increase people's income and the price of rice for farmers," Yingluck told the Supreme Court north of the capital, Bangkok. "It did not distort the market," she said. "We saw that the benefits of the scheme outweighed the monetary losses."

Yingluck has been charged with criminal negligence over her management of the rice program, which was one of the populist policies engineered by her brother, former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. Thaksin was also toppled in a 2006 coup. Thaksin is central to a conflict that has divided Thais for more than a decade. He lives in exile abroad to avoid a jail term for abuse of power charges he says were politically motivated. The Shinawatras enjoy support in the mostly poorer north and northeast of Thailand while their opponents, including the royalist-military establishment that accuse the Shinawatras of corruption, mostly hail from Bangkok and the south.

Yingluck is accused of failing to stem losses from the multi-billion dollar subsidy scheme, which distorted global prices and saw Thailand lose its crown as the world's number one rice exporter to India. On Monday, the military government said it would also lodge a civil damages case against Yingluck and some of her former ministers. The rice scheme cost the state 286 billion baht (\$8.20 billion), it said. Yingluck has consistently denied any wrongdoing and has said the case against her is being rushed deliberately.

She told the court that she was in charge of formulating the policy, not the day-to-day running of the scheme. Supporters earlier handed her flowers as she arrived at the trial, while others held framed pictures of Yingluck and her brother Thaksin. Yingluck was banned from politics for five years in January 2015 after a military-appointed legislature found her guilty of mismanaging the rice scheme. The scheme left Thailand with around 18 million tons of rice in stockpiles. The military government has sold more than 5 million tons in a series of auctions since taking power. —Reuters

WILDFIRES THREATEN COMMUNITIES IN WESTERN US

CALIFORNIA: Officials say more than two dozen large wildfires are burning in the West on Thursday. Hot, windy weather and hard-to-access terrain have made conditions difficult for firefighters as the blazes destroy homes and force evacuations. Here's a look at some of the fires:

CALIFORNIA

A stubborn wildfire north of Big Sur near California's Central Coast has grown after burning for nearly two weeks in steep, forested ridges. It has scorched more than 79 square miles and is just partially contained. A total of 57 homes have been destroyed and another 2,000 structures are at risk. No arrests have been made since investigators determined that an unattended campfire started the blaze July 22. To the north, officials said Thursday that a grass fire in a popular recreational area north of San Francisco has charred more than 7 square miles in Napa, Yolo and Solano counties since igniting Tuesday. It prompted the evacuation of an RV and tent campground off a highway.

IDAHO

Firefighters have set up sprinkler systems on homes in a central Idaho town to stop a 78-square-mile wildfire from coming down a creek drainage that funnels into the small community. After the wind switched direction, officials set smaller fires to eradicate fuel for the bigger flames and protect the town of Lowman about 2 miles away. Nearly 1,500 firefighters are battling the blaze burning timber in rugged terrain. No evacuations have been ordered, but the sheriff has told residents to be alert. The fire has destroyed a \$60,000 state-operated backcountry yurt, a round, tent-like structure with a dome roof and plastic skin. Officials estimate the fire won't be contained until mid-September.

MONTANA

Cooler weather helped firefighters in

western Montana gain some ground on a blaze that has destroyed 14 homes and dozens of smaller buildings. Officials say the 12-square-mile fire in the Bitterroot National Forest is partially contained, but they don't expect to have it fully under control until the end of the month. Cooler temperatures and higher humidity helped firefighters make progress. However, hotter and drier weather with the possibility of thunderstorms is expected beginning Friday and through the weekend. Residents of more than 600 homes remain evacuated, with an additional 200 on alert.

NEVADA

Fire officials say they have contained most of two northern Nevada wildfires burning in canyons and rangeland near a lakeside town once under threat. The fires have charred more than 93 square miles of scrub brush in the Virginia Mountains, about 40 miles north of Reno. It's nearly 70 percent contained. Farther north, firefighters have almost controlled a 10-square-mile fire in a wilderness study area near where the Burning Man counterculture festival is held. A break in windy weather helped crews. Neither fire threatened buildings.

WYOMING

A new wildfire blew up in northwest Wyoming, destroying some buildings and forcing evacuations in a mostly rural area. The blaze has burned 15 square miles of federal, state and private land about 15 miles west of Cody since igniting Tuesday. Fire officials say some structures have been lost, but they are still working to determine how many and what type. Seasonal and permanent residences, several guest ranches and working ranches have been evacuated. Firefighters who deal with the most serious and complex fires have been mobilized to attack the fire. In western Wyoming, firefighters are trying to gain better control of several other large wildfires. — AP



CALIFORNIA: Cal Fire captain Gino DeGraffenreid monitors a firing operation with his crew of firefighters west of Cachagua, Calif. A wildfire north of Big Sur near California's Central Coast has grown again overnight after burning for nearly two weeks. — AP

GULF AIR FLIGHT LANDS SAFELY IN MANILA AFTER ENGINE FAILURE

MANILA: A Gulf Air flight carrying 219 people to Bahrain landed safely in the Philippine capital yesterday after turning back because of a heat-damaged engine, officials said. The Airbus 330-200 ignited a grass fire at the edge of the runway as it took off and smoke was seen inside the cabin after the plane was airborne, said Ma. Fe Malte, an airport traffic management officer. Gulf Air on Twitter said the flight "suffered from an engine failure" right after takeoff from Manila at 1:05 pm. It said the plane landed safely "and all passengers disembarked the aircraft." It said engineers were examining the aircraft now. Flight 155 had 207 passengers and 12 crew members, and no injuries were reported, Malte said.

Floramina Munzon, a passenger who was seated near the left wing, said she heard something like an explosion after the plane lifted from the ground. As the twin-engine jet landed safely, the airport's rescue team and firetrucks rushed to the plane. It dumped fuel before landing, but there were no flames and no need to use fire retardant, Malte said. She said the left engine was damaged by the intense heat. The airline canceled the flight and booked accommodation for affected passengers, the airport media office said. Gulf Air is Bahrain's state airline. In May, a flight on the same route diverted to Mumbai after encountering turbulence that injured some onboard. — AP

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US TO HIT OBAMA'S TARGET OF 10,000 SYRIAN REFUGEES

ISLAMIC STATE 'LIKELY TO CONTINUE' THREATENING US

WASHINGTON: After a slow start, it appears increasingly likely that the Obama administration will hit its goal of admitting 10,000 Syrian refugees into the United States before the end of September. State Department figures show that 2,340 Syrian refugees arrived last month in the United States. That's more than what occurred during the entire seven months after President Barack Obama directed his team to prepare for 10,000 admissions from the war-torn country.

Total admissions for the current budget year, which ends Sept 30, now come to about 7,900, and the vast majority of them are Sunni Muslims, records show. If the pace from June and July continues this month, the target should be reached with a couple weeks to spare before Obama heads to the United Nations to urge world leaders to admit more refugees and to increase funding for relief organizations. The UN General Assembly is holding a summit to address the large movements of refugees and migrants that stems primarily from conflicts in the Middle East and Africa.

Obama would have been hard-pressed to make the case for other countries to do more with the US failing to reach a goal that amounts to only about 2 percent of the 480,000 Syrian refugees in need of resettlement. Organizations that help relocate Syrian refugees said the White House and other administration officials have grown increasingly confident of hitting the target. "They put more resources on it, which is allowing more individual's to be processed and therefore able to travel," said Stacie Blake, a spokeswoman for the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, one of nine groups that help resettle Syrian refugees. Obama's call for 10,000 entries this year was criticized by most



WASHINGTON: US President Barack Obama speaks at a press conference at the Pentagon in Washington, DC. — AFP

Republican governors and the GOP presidential candidates, who argued that the government lacked an adequate screening system to prevent suspected terrorists from slipping into the US. Extremist attacks in Europe and the US have increased concerns about immigration. An Associated Press-GfK poll conducted in early July showed that 69 percent of Republicans say they favor the temporary ban on Muslim immigration. Overall, Americans opposed such a ban by a margin of 52 percent to 45 percent.

Rep Vern Buchanan, R-Fla, sent a letter to Obama on Thursday calling on him to stop accepting Syrian refugees as a matter of national security. "We are seeing a clear pattern in which a number of recent attacks have been carried out by ISIS terrorists with ties to Syria," Buchanan said, using one of the acronyms for the Islamic State group. He cited the killing of a

French priest, the murder of a German woman with a machete and a bombing at a German music festival as examples.

The White House has emphasized that the screening process for refugees takes 12 months to 18 months and includes in-person interviews and a review of biographical and biometric information. The administration also has said it is focused on bringing in refugees who are in the most desperate situations, such as families with children and those in need of medical care. In the year prior to Obama's new target, the US accepted about 1,680 Syrian refugees. Secretary of State John Kerry, speaking with reporters during a visit to Buenos Aires, Argentina, said the United States has developed "sufficient methods" of screening would-be refugees. "We are very comfortable that we are bringing people in who will be a great plus to our country," Kerry said. — AP

OBAMA DENIES \$400 MILLION 'RANSOM PAYMENT' TO IRAN

WASHINGTON: President Barack Obama vigorously denies that a \$400 million cash payment to Iran was ransom to secure the release of four Americans jailed in Tehran. He defended the transaction as evidence that the nuclear accord with Iran has allowed for progress on other matters. "This wasn't some nefarious deal," Obama said during a news conference Thursday at the Pentagon.

The money was delivered to the Iranian government in January, at the same time the nuclear deal was settled and the Americans were released. The payment was part of a decades-old dispute over a failed military equipment deal dating to the 1970s, before the Islamic revolution in 1979. Obama also answered political questions at the news conference, pushing back at Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump's suggestions that the November election might be rigged, calling the assertion "ridiculous."

He said his advice to Trump, a candidate he has declared "unfit" for the presidency, was to "go out there and try to win the election." The president's appearance before reporters followed an hours-long meeting with military leaders at the Pentagon on the fight against the Islamic State group. Obama said there have been gains in weakening IS in Iraq and Syria, but he conceded the extremist group

still poses a threat to the United States as it shifts its tactics to carrying out attacks elsewhere around the world.

While those attacks may result in less carnage, Obama said IS knows they still create "the kinds of fear and concern that elevates their profile." Asked whether he feels any personal disappointment about not being able to do more to stop the Islamic State, Obama said: "I haven't gotten numb to it. It bugs me." On Syria, the president criticized Russia's support of government attacks against opposition forces and its sieges of cities such as Aleppo.

He accused Russia of failing to take steps to reduce violence in Syria - where a civil war has raged for much of Obama's presidency - but said the U.S. would continue trying to push Moscow to focus on the fight against IS and other extremists. On Iran, Obama expressed surprise at criticism of his administration's cash payment to settle a long-standing legal claim, adamantly rejecting claims that it was a ransom paid for the release of the four Americans.

He pointed out that the payment, along with an additional \$1.3 billion in interest to be paid later, was announced by the administration when it was concluded in January, a day after the implementation of a landmark nuclear agreement with Iran. "It wasn't a secret. — AP

YOUNG AMERICANS SAY PARTIES DON'T REPRESENT THEM

WASHINGTON: Most young Americans say the Republican and Democratic parties don't represent them, a critical data point after a year of ferocious presidential primaries that forced partisans on both sides to confront what - and whom - they stand for. That's according to a new GenForward poll that shows the disconnect holds true across racial and ethnic groups, with just 28 percent of young adults overall saying the two major parties do a good job of representing the American people.

The poll shows that despite this across-the-board feeling of disenchantment with the two-party system, the Democratic Party holds a clear advantage in appealing to young people of color. But among young whites, majorities feel left out by both parties. More than two-thirds of young adults, including vast majorities of young Asian-Americans, Hispanics and blacks, say the Republican Party does not care about people like them.

Democrats fare a bit better among young people overall, with a small majority - 53 percent - saying the party cares about people like them. Among young African-Americans, Hispanics and Asian-Americans, most believe the party does care about people like them. But among young whites, majorities say both parties don't care much about them, including 58 percent who say that of the Republican Party and 52 percent who say it about the Democratic Party.

GenForward is a survey by the Black Youth Project at the University of Chicago with the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. The first-of-its-kind poll pays special attention to the voices of young adults of color, highlighting how race and ethnicity shape the opinions of a new generation. The results of the survey of Americans age 18-30 reflect something of an identity crisis for both parties heading into the future, driven in part by deep antipathy toward the presidential candidates they nominated.

Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Hillary Clinton, the two least-popular presidential nominees in the history of modern polling, were opposed by large and bitter swaths of their parties. Young people aren't certain to fall in line behind the nominees, the survey found. Three-quarters of young adults say the billionaire real estate magnate is unqualified to be president even after he vanquished 16 GOP rivals. Half say the same of Clinton, a former senator and secretary of state, after unlikely rival Bernie Sanders forced her to fight for the nomination for a year.

Emiliano Vera, 22, of Bushnell, Illinois, says he isn't coming back to the Democratic Party that attracted him with Barack Obama's nomination in 2008. Ideology this year drew him to Sanders. But disenchantment with what seemed like an obviously rigged nomination process in Clinton's favor, he says, is what's pushing him to the Green Party. Leaked Democratic National Committee emails confirmed for him that the party had their thumb on the scale for Clinton, Vera said.

"This is the last straw for me," said Vera, part of the majority of young Sanders supporters on whom Clinton cannot depend for votes, the survey found. This year, he says, his friends agree that the Democratic Party generally is the "lesser evil" to the GOP's Trump. But the future, he says, is a different picture. But for all the disenchantment, young adults across racial and ethnic groups are mostly unfamiliar with their alternatives. Seven in 10 say they don't know enough about Libertarian presidential candidate Gary Johnson to have an opinion about him, and nearly 8 in 10 say the same about Green Party candidate Jill Stein.

The 18-30 age group tends not to be a conservative constituency, so the survey contains critical data particularly for Democrats and Clinton, who has said she knows she has "work to do" to appeal to the young people who flocked to Sanders during the primary. Rachel Mace, 20, is an example of the challenge faced by Democrats and Clinton in particular. The Farmington, Michigan, resident supported Sanders and says she wants to see one party make "a meaningful commitment" to public financing of campaigns. She doubts she'll ever see a party, or a candidate, seek that reform voluntarily. — AP

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The Thai village using
poop to power homes

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CHENNAI: Regional sales manager, Asia Pacific, Rolls-Royce, Sven J Ritter and Director of Kun Group of Companies Vasanthi Bhupathi pose during the launch of the Rolls-Royce 'DAWN' yesterday. — AFP

PHILIPPINE BANK HANDED RECORD FINE

BANGLADESH SAYS DUTERTE COMMITS TO RETURN HEIST MONEY

MANILA: The Philippines Central Bank yesterday handed a local bank a record \$21 million fine after it was used by hackers to channel millions of dollars stolen from Bangladesh into local casinos. In February, unidentified cyber criminals shifted \$81 million from the Bangladesh central bank's account with the US Federal Reserve to a Manila branch of the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp (RCBC), from where it was funnelled into local casinos.

The central bank said in a statement it had approved the record one billion pesos (\$21 million) fine after a "special examination" of the bank and its role in the audacious cyber heist. The fine was part of its "supervisory enforcement action on RCBC", the central bank said in a statement. The move shows the central bank's "strong commitment to ensure the stability of the country's financial system through strong and effective regulation," it added.

RCBC said separately that it had made provisions for the fine and would pay it in two instalments over a one-year period. The total was equivalent to more than 38 percent of the 2.6 billion pesos it earned in net profits during the first half of 2016. But it added: "The payment of the amount will not affect the operations of RCBC,

and capital ratios will continue to be strong."

Meanwhile, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte has given a commitment that the \$81 million would be returned, the Bangladesh ambassador to the Philippines said yesterday.

A Bangladesh central bank team visiting Manila to recover the money said earlier yesterday that it was close to getting back \$15 million of the loot frozen by the Philippines. The Philippines' Department of Justice (DoJ) has asked the Bangladesh Bank delegation to file a legal document staking its claim to \$15 million of that, but the casino money will have to be pursued separately, said two sources close to the visiting team.

"We are very hopeful that we will get the total \$81 million," said Ambassador John Gomes, who is helping the bank representatives on a four-day visit to Manila ending yesterday. "The reason is I got a commitment from the president himself," he said. He added Bangladesh's finance minister might come to the Philippines to meet Duterte to help in the recovery of the money. Gomes said the bank felt RCBC should be held responsible because it did not follow a stop-payment request from Bangladesh Bank, and its lawyer Ajmal Hossain said it would sue RCBC if it was not able

to recover the entire \$81 million.

In March, RCBC's then president Lorenzo Tan acknowledged at a Philippines senate hearing there had been "some judgment error from the people on the ground". RCBC said earlier yesterday that the transfers were made based on authenticated instructions over payments network SWIFT, and the hackers had used stolen Bangladesh Bank credentials. "Going to court instead of the media and various Philippine government agencies is the proper procedure," it added.

Prove It

Ricardo J Paras III, chief state counsel of the Philippines DoJ, told Reuters that it has already drafted court documents to begin recovery of the \$15 million, but it was important for Bangladesh to prove it is their money. The Bangladeshi delegation has prepared an affidavit citing a letter by the New York Fed to the Philippines' central bank, in which the Fed said the money was stolen from Bangladesh Bank's account. The affidavit will be given to the DoJ, the sources said.

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR), a government body that

regulates casinos in the country, has promised to cooperate with Bangladesh Bank to help it recover the \$2.7 million it has frozen, Gomes said. "The money is with Solaire (Resort and Casino)," PAGCOR President Alfredo Lim told Reuters. "It will put us in a bad light if the money is not immediately released to them." Solaire, operated by Bloomberry Resorts Corp, has said about \$29 million of the funds came to the casino and most was transferred to the accounts of two junket operators. Solaire declined to comment yesterday.

Bangladesh Bank is relying on internal RCBC documents to buttress its assertion that the bank's Jupiter Street branch in Manila ignored suspicions raised by some RCBC officials when the money was first remitted to the accounts on Feb 5, and then delayed acting on requests from RCBC's head office to freeze the funds on Feb 9. Gomes said Bangladesh Bank would also sue Philrem Service Corp, a remittance company that anti-money laundering investigators said was used to transfer some of the \$81 million. "They have the responsibility to return the money or face the consequences," he said. A lawyer for Philrem, who speaks on behalf of the company, was not immediately available for comment. — Agencies

OIL ENTERS BEAR MARKET, MAULED BY GLUT

LONDON: Chronic oversupply sent oil prices slumping this week into a so-called bear market, losing 20 percent from recent June peaks above \$50. In tumultuous trade on Wednesday, US benchmark West Texas Intermediate (WTI) struck \$39.19 - which was the lowest level since April 18. And on Tuesday, Europe's main contract Brent North Sea crude slid to \$41.51 - which was also a trough last reached on that same day.

Oil prices dipped yesterday, ending a two-day rally, as a glut of crude and refined products weighed on markets and investors eyed a possible stutter in China's imports. US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures fetched \$41.83 per barrel at 1211 GMT, down 10 cents from their last close, after trading as low as \$41.44. They were on track roughly to break even on the week. Brent crude futures were trading at \$44.15 per barrel, down 14 cents but set for a weekly gain of more than 3.5 percent.

Oil industry experts argue that the market got caught up in forecasts that supply and demand would shift into balance in 2016. The International Energy Agency had forecast in April that oil was expected to almost balance out in the second half of the year. "Crude prices have re-entered bear market territory,"

said analysts at London-based consultancy Energy Aspects in a research note.

'Many Disappointed'

"The problem has been that the market priced in a full rebalancing too quickly and discounted the scale of the inventory overhang, which has left many disappointed". The market had nosedived from above \$100 in mid-2014 to 13-year lows of around \$27 in February, plagued by the supply glut, but have since rebounded somewhat. That collapse was triggered by a glut that was worsened by rising unconventional oil production, mainly from booming US shale crude, alongside the OPEC cartel's reluctance to cut output.

This week, meanwhile, the US government's Department of Energy (DoE) revealed that crude reserves rebounded by 1.41 million barrels in the week ended July 29. That confounded analysts' forecasts for a drop of 1.75 million barrels, and left total stockpiles at 522.5 million. That was 14.8 percent more than was recorded at the same point last year and marked the highest seasonal level in decades.

Data showing an increase in inventories tends to heighten worries about oversupply and push the mar-

ket lower. However, prices rose over Wednesday and Thursday on signs of rebounding demand for motor fuel amid the peak-demand driving season, when many Americans hit the road for vacations. "The DoE inventory data (provided) further evidence of a supply overhang returning to the market," XTB analyst David Cheetham told AFP, adding gasoline demand was nevertheless weak. "Supply disruptions from the Canadian wildfires and the geopolitical situation in Libya have failed to manifest themselves to the degree that they were feared. "When taken alongside disappointing demand from the US for gasoline in the driving season, this demonstrates an altogether less supportive fundamental outlook for oil than just a few months ago."

Average US daily domestic crude production was meanwhile down 55,000 barrels at 8.5 million. Later Friday, investors will be watching the release of US July jobs data, which will give a fresh look at the world's top economy and oil consumer. In trading yesterday at 1045 GMT, WTI for September delivery was down 42 cents at \$41.51 a barrel compared with the close on Thursday. Brent for October delivery shed 43 cents to \$43.86 per barrel. — AFP

GOLD HITS LOW

LONDON: Gold fell as much as 1.2 percent yesterday, as the dollar rose after US data showed employment increased more than expected in July, raising the probability of an interest rate hike from the Federal Reserve this year. Nonfarm payrolls increased by 255,000 jobs last month as hiring rose broadly after an upwardly revised 292,000 surge in June, the Labor Department said yesterday. Spot gold, steadier initially, fell to one-week low of \$1,344.85 an ounce and was down 1.1 percent at \$1,345.51 by 1326 GMT. Deutsche Bank analyst Michael Hsueh said that investors will now monitor movements on 10-year real yields, relative to which gold looks overpriced. Deutsche Bank expects a single US rate hike this year. The benchmark 10-year US Treasury yield hit session highs of 1.549 percent after the data. Gold is highly sensitive to rising U.S. interest rates, as the opportunity cost of holding the non-yielding asset increases while boosting the dollar, in which it is priced. The dollar rose 0.5 percent against a basket of six major currencies and global stock markets gained after the data.

Economists polled by Reuters had forecast payrolls increasing 180,000 in July and the unemployment rate dipping one-tenth of a percentage point to 4.8 percent. Gold had benefited after the Bank of England cut interest rates to next to nothing on Thursday and unleashed billions of pounds of stimulus to cushion the economic shock from Britain's vote to leave the European Union. The metal reached a more than two-year highs on July 6, as investment demand rose.— Reuters



TOKYO: A woman walks by an electronic stock board of a securities firm in Tokyo Friday, Aug. 5, 2016. Asian stocks were mixed Friday following a British interest rate cut as investors looked ahead to US data that are expected to show faster job growth in July.—AP

GLOBAL MARKETS GET BOOST FROM US JOBS

DOLLAR RALLIES

NEW YORK: The dollar rallied across the board yesterday after data showed US employment increased more than expected in July and wages picked up, raising the probability of an interest rate hike from the Federal Reserve this year. The dollar hit one-week peaks against the euro and the Swiss franc, and turned positive versus the yen after the jobs data. US non-farm payrolls increased by 255,000 jobs last month, after an upwardly revised 292,000 surge in June. Economists polled by Reuters forecast an increase of 180,000 in July.

"This represents more of a return to the form of the first six months of the year, and indicates Fed Chair Janet Yellen is presiding over a strong but not spectacular US economy," said Dennis De Jong, managing director at broker-dealer UFX.com in Limassol, Cyprus. "The unemployment rate has ticked down further to pre-2008 crash levels, and wages rising in kind will be music to the ears of those observers hoping for a rate hike."

After the US employment report, Fed fund futures priced in an 18 percent chance the Fed will hike rates at its policy meeting next month, from 9 percent late Thursday, according to the CME's FedWatch tool. For the December meeting, futures showed a roughly 47 percent probability of a hike, compared with about 32 percent late Wednesday.— Reuters

LONDON: World stocks received a boost yesterday from strong US jobs data, a sign that the world's biggest economy is in rude health, dealers said. New York stocks opened higher in response and European stock markets built on earlier gains seen after the Bank of England announcing a post-Brexit interest rate cut and surprise stimulus. The US economy generated 255,000 new jobs in July, largely surpassing analyst expectations. "The US jobs market is having a nice summer," commented Harm Bandholz, an economist at UniCredit.

Markets had been looking for reassurance on the state of the American economy after June's reading was a blockbuster that fanned talk of a rate hike this year, but the release of below-forecast second-quarter economic growth figures threw cold water on the idea. Wall Street rose by nearly one percent in response to the jobs data, inspiring gains in European markets. The dollar strengthened amid expectations that the US central bank, the Fed, will increase rates this year.

'Rate Hike in Play'

"Rising labor costs and further improvements in the labor mar-

ket unequivocally suggest that a December rate hike remains in play," said Bandholz at UniCredit. Asian investors earlier pressed on with Thursday's rally after the Bank of England met expectations by cutting borrowing costs for the first time in seven years, to 0.25 percent. Policymakers also unveiled an emergency package worth up to £170 billion (\$223 billion), including £60 billion for more bond-buying, or quantitative easing (QE).

The BoE measures came as relief to global markets after a string of recent disappointing announcements by world central banks from Tokyo to Europe that fell well short of expectations and dampened buying sentiment. The British central bank also expects to trim rates again later this year to just above zero and it could also expand the stimulus. The news sent sterling plunging, but stocks rallied, and the positive sentiment flowed through to Asia, where Hong Kong closed up 1.4 percent, while Sydney added 0.4 percent and Seoul gained 0.9 percent, Wellington put on 0.1 percent and Taipei 0.8 percent. Tokyo stocks pared early gains to end flat as an initial rally in the dollar against the yen ran out of steam, while Shanghai retreated 0.2 percent in value. — AFP

FEAR CAN MEAN PROFIT, BUT KNOW THE RISKS

NEW YORK: For some investments, the sound of crashing stock prices and panic in the market is actually the sweetest melody. These investments tie themselves to the VIX index, a measure that traders call the stock market's "fear gauge," and they've been in higher demand as markets have become bumpier. Investors poured more than \$2 billion into volatility funds during the first half of the year, triple the amount they did 12 months earlier, according to Morningstar. But before joining the tide, it's important to know that these kinds of funds aren't for everyone, and they're certainly not leave-it-alone, long-term holdings.

"Unfortunately, most of those are not well suited to retail traders," says Randy Frederick, managing director of trading and derivatives at Charles Schwab. "I see a lot of people wasting their money buying volatility-related products to try to catch that next big spike in volatility." Frederick says many investors enter these kinds of funds with the wrong expectations, and the wrong idea about how to use them. For one, don't expect a VIX fund to move just like the

VIX. And don't expect to be rewarded for buying one and patiently holding it.

The VIX is called the "fear index" because it shows how much traders are worrying about big swings hitting the S&P 500 in the next month. It does that by looking at how much traders are paying for options on the S&P 500, which they use to shield themselves if they're anticipating more volatility. The VIX tends to surge when stocks drop sharply, something that's been occurring more frequently due to the weak global economy and a long list of other concerns. The S&P 500 has dropped 2 percent in a day nine times over the last 12 months. It had just two such days in the 12 months before that.

On June 24, for example, the VIX spiked nearly 50 percent after stocks tumbled on the United Kingdom's vote to leave the European Union. So, wouldn't it be great to own something that rises with the VIX, if not to profit from *schadenfreude* then to help offset losses in the stock portion of a portfolio? But volatility funds don't track the VIX, which is not an investable index. Instead, they're often investing

in the VIX futures market, where traders bet on where the VIX will be in coming months.

That means volatility funds often don't move as much as the VIX itself. The ProShares VIX Short-Term Futures exchange-traded fund, for example, rose on June 24, but by only about half as much as the VIX. To get closer to the VIX's performance, some funds use leverage to boost their returns. ProShares' Ultra VIX Short-Term Futures ETF, for example, tries to give double the daily change of its underlying index, and it jumped 44 percent on June 24. It's these kinds of short-term pops that investors should be looking for. Investors in the fund, which trades under the symbol UVXY, are holding it for a week or less, on average, says Joanne Hill, head of institutional investment strategy at ProShares. They aren't planning to hold UVXY for the long term: The fund is down 99.999 percent over the last five years. "When people decide to use these, they're not looking at this five-year chart of how they've performed," Hill says. "They're looking at the fact that last August, when the VIX moved up 135 percent, UVXY moved up" 159 percent. — AP

CANADA SHEDS JOBS; TRADE GAP HITS RECORD

OTTAWA: Canada unexpectedly shed jobs last month, sending the unemployment rate higher even as fewer people were looking for work, and a lackluster gain in exports in June raised questions of whether the central bank's outlook was too sunny. The nation lost 31,200 jobs in July, Statistics Canada said on Friday, frustrating economists' expectations for a gain of 10,000. The decline was driven by a 71,400 drop in full-time positions, while the goods-producing and service sectors of the economy fared poorly.

The jobs report "obviously reinforces the point that the Canadian economy is struggling to make any headway," said Doug Porter, chief economist at BMO Capital Markets. "We're seeing next to no job growth on a year-over-year basis." The unemployment rate edged up to 6.9 percent, while the participation rate slipped to 65.4 percent. The Canadian dollar weakened sharply against the greenback as the data contrasted with stronger-than-expected US job growth.

While Canada's employment figures can be volatile month-to-month, Friday's report was compounded by the disappointing trade figures, Porter said. Canada's trade gap unexpectedly widened to a record deficit of C\$3.63 billion (\$2.79 billion) in June as imports of motor vehicles and parts jumped. Although exports rose 0.6 percent, that was largely due to a jump in prices, with volumes down 1.4 percent. Exports fared worse in the second quarter overall, tumbling 4.7 percent in the largest decline in seven years. — Reuters

IMF TO RELEASE FINAL INSTALMENT OF \$6.6BN LOAN TO PAKISTAN

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has announced it will release the last instalment of a \$6.6 billion economic bailout package to Pakistan, as Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif hailed an end to the country's reliance on the lender. The decision to release the final tranche worth \$102 million of the three-year program came after a review of the country's economic performance that found it was meeting most reform indicators but still needed to broaden the tax net.

IMF delegation head Harald Finger said growth was projected to reach five percent supported by a construction boom linked to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor, an ambitious infrastructure upgrade project intended to link China's western Xinjiang region to Gwadar port on the Arabian Sea. "All indicative targets and structural benchmarks (SB) were met, except for the delayed notification of multi-year tariffs for three power distribution companies," Finger said Thursday in Dubai, referring to measures intended to reduce major fluctuations in electricity costs. — AFP

STRONG US EMPLOYMENT REPORT BRIGHTENS OUTLOOK

255,000 JOBS ADDED, SURPASSING EXPECTATIONS

WASHINGTON: The US economy saw robust job creation in July, largely surpassing analyst expectations, while the unemployment rate remained stable at 4.9 percent, the Labor Department reported yesterday. The new numbers were also accompanied by upward revisions for the months of May and June in a sign that the job market in the world's largest economy is healthier than previously thought. The strong figures also

jobs in June, not the 287,000 first reported, and 24,000 jobs in May, not the very low, downward-revised figure of 11,000. "This month's report confirms that the Great Recession is indeed in the nation's rearview mirror - the economy has added jobs for 70 consecutive months, the longest streak on record," Labor Secretary Thomas Perez said.

The closely watched figures help fill out a complex economic picture for

economic activity had grown by a paltry 1.2 percent in the second quarter - data at odds with yesterday's rosier jobs report.

Pay on the Rise

"Employment rose in all sectors of the economy, helping to keep the rate of unemployment at 4.9 percent amid an increase in the number of people entering the labor market looking for work," said Chris Williamson of IHS Markit. "Adding to the good news was an improvement in pay growth. Average hourly earnings rose 0.3 percent against expectations of a mere 0.2 percent rise," said Williamson, noting that pay growth was still below pre-crisis rates.

Gains were strongest in professional and business services, with 70,000 new jobs added, and in health care, where 43,000 new jobs added. Together, both sectors have added nearly a million jobs in the last 12 months, according to the Labor Department. Employment in mining continued to fall, losing 6,000 positions from the prior month and putting the industry down 220,000 jobs since a peak hit in September 2014.

The average workweek rose 0.1 hours to 34.5 hours while average hourly earnings inched upwards by 8 cents to \$25.69, up 2.6 percent since the start of the year. Equities markets reacted favorably to the news in early trading, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average up 0.8 percent at 18,498.02 and the tech-heavy Nasdaq up 0.92 percent at 5,214.03. The broader S&P 500 was up 0.68 percent at a record intraday high of 2,178.89.

"We believe the trend remains more than strong enough to keep the unemployment rate declining over time," said Jim O'Sullivan of High Frequency Economics. "Today's report helps the case for more Fed tightening before too long - if strength is sustained - although officials are being ultra cautious/dovish as they worry about downside risks," he added. — AFP



MIAMI LAKES, Florida: In this July 19, 2016 photo, Reina Borges stands in line to apply for a job with Aldi at a job fair. — AP

come in the middle of the heated US presidential campaign, and run contrary to Republican nominee Donald Trump's dire portrait of an economy in ruins.

Non-farm payrolls rose by 255,000 positions in July - far exceeding analyst forecasts for a far more modest increase of 185,000 jobs. Private businesses and government employers added 292,000

market observers eager for signs of whether the US Federal Reserve will raise interest rates later this year. Monetary policy makers earlier this year veered off a course of planned, successive rate hikes as signs grew that the American economy might not be on sure footing. The Commerce Department said last month that eco-

LATAM CLAMPDOWN THREAT TO SWISS BANKS

LONDON: Switzerland's private bankers fear cash-strapped Latin American countries pursuing billions of dollars in unpaid taxes will push the region's wealthy to pull cash from their Swiss bank accounts. For these banks, still recovering from European and US clients withdrawing tens of billions of dollars following a post-financial crisis clampdown on tax dodging, the outflows come as Switzerland grapples with weaker bank secrecy. These Swiss rules helped the world's super-rich keep cash hidden from the taxman for decades. That has all changed in recent years as US and European agencies offered them a chance to declare offshore accounts, pay penalties and settle back taxes.

Now governments in some of the emerging markets on which Swiss banks are pinning growth hopes are also chasing unpaid dues. Brazil, Argentina and Mexico see such "regularization" programs, which do not focus only on assets held with Swiss banks, bringing in much-needed revenues. "After a few years of gross out-

flows from Europe, now when it ends we have the next issue which will go on probably not only for a few months but again for the next one or two years," said Andreas Brun, a banking analyst at Mirabaud.

Clients take money out of their accounts to pay taxes and penalties, while those who decline to participate in amnesty programs move their accounts. Withdrawals will make it harder for Swiss wealth managers to grow their pool of managed assets and are yet another challenge for banks facing record-low interest rates, turbulent financial markets, low commodity prices and cautious client activity. Latin American withdrawals are expected to be smaller than outflows from Europe, which has always been a bigger market for Swiss banks.

However, Latin America has been growing for them and Boston Consulting Group estimates that by 2020, 14 percent of the offshore wealth booked in Switzerland will be from the region, compared to 33 percent from western Europe. The assets, since they

are managed offshore as opposed to in the client's home market, can be more lucrative. "Offshore assets tend to be more complex in their structure which derives a higher fee," said Seb Dovey, managing partner at wealth management researcher Scorpio Partnership.

Despite the threat of South American withdrawals, Switzerland's three biggest private banks - UBS, Credit Suisse and Julius Baer - aim to take in more assets globally this year than they lose. Nevertheless, all three flagged outflows from regularization programs in their most recent results, with Julius Baer Chief Executive Boris Collardi describing Latin America as a "second Europe" in terms of tax-related withdrawals. Credit Suisse expects around 5 billion Swiss francs (\$5.1 billion) in such outflows this year, though it does not give a precise breakdown of where these are likely to be from.

In Brazil, the government had hoped to raise as much as 21 billion Brazilian real (\$6.5 billion) and senior officials with the country's economic team have told Reuters they expect the final tally

to be much higher as wealthy individuals rush to join the program that ends in late October.

Legacy Issues

Strict Swiss bank secrecy laws, which made it illegal for banks to share information on clients, helped Switzerland become the global capital for foreign wealth, a title it still holds with \$2.3 trillion in its vaults in 2015, according to BCG. However, BCG forecasts strong growth in emerging wealth centres like Singapore and Hong Kong. Switzerland has been working to rebuild its tarnished reputation, possibly making the short-term pain of the asset-clean up a price worth paying. "If you look at this from a financial perspective, (the regularization process) is a negative," said Philipp Zuend, a tax expert at KPMG in Switzerland. "But if you also look at things like reputation risk, it could be a good thing." Many rich people are keen to take part in the program before the introduction of a global tax sharing initiative orchestrated by the OECD club of wealthy countries. — Reuters

THE THAI VILLAGE USING POOP TO POWER HOMES

NEARLY 100 FAMILIES REAP BENEFITS

PA DENG, Thailand: Nestled in a deep pocket of forest that lies off Thailand's electrical grid, villagers in Pa Deng have become early adopters and evangelists for an unusual alternative energy source: Poop. After successfully lighting up their homes with solar panels and stoves fueled by cow dung, the villagers are now clean energy crusaders in a gas-guzzling country that overwhelmingly relies on fossil fuels. It was a friend from Myanmar who first told 44-year-old Wisut Janprapai that faeces could be used to power a cooking stove.

"At first we didn't believe it," he told AFP from outside his wooden home, which is surrounded by fruit trees and under the shadow of a mountain range that lines Thailand's western border with Myanmar. But with no access to state power lines and plenty of cow manure to go around, Wisut and his neighbors reasoned it was worth a try.

Now nearly 100 families in the rural network have small stoves running on blue bio-gas balloons they crafted after years of experimenting. The balloons are hulking polyester sacks that fill up with methane gas after microbes break down the animal manure and other organic waste packed inside. The fuel source is healthier and more sustainable than burning wood, and also saves villagers from having to venture into the forest for kindling. "It's nothing complicated, just put the food and waste in," explained Kosol Saengthong, the leader of the network. "And then the gas will come".

Land of Energy

While Pa Deng is powered solely by green energy sources, the rest of Thailand runs chiefly on oil, coal and natural gas - much of it imported. Successive govern-



PA DENG, Thailand: This photo taken on May 13, 2016 shows Wisut Janprapai tending to this biogas balloon outside his home in this village near the Thai-Myanmar border. — AFP

ments, including the current junta, have warned that the country faces an energy crisis on current consumption trends unless new power sources are embraced. The kingdom is the second largest consumer of energy in Southeast Asia after Indonesia, according to US government data from 2013, and the 22nd biggest user in the world. Consumption is also heavily skewed. Most of the power is funnelled to sprawling Bangkok, where some of the capital's luxury malls suck up more energy than entire provinces. But compared to its impoverished neighbors, Thailand is a leading investor in renewables and plans to increase its reliance on clean-burning fuels from 12 percent to 25 percent in the next five years. Groups like World Wildlife Fund say it could be set-

ting its sights much higher, with a recent report laying out a future that would have the country operating on 100 percent renewables by 2050. Phirat Inphanich, a policy analyst at Thailand's Energy Ministry, agrees the kingdom could be making better use of its resources. "Thailand is the land of renewable energy," he told AFP. "You can walk anywhere, especially in rural areas, and you will see things that can be turned into energy".

But changing mindsets is difficult, said the 38-year-old, who travels around the country urging communities to generate more of their own power in the footsteps of Pa Deng. These small-scale efforts will not overhaul the sector but they can make a dent, plus help villagers cut down on energy costs. — AFP

INDONESIA GROWTH RAISES HOPES OF TURNAROUND

JAKARTA: Indonesia's economy grew more than expected in April-June, official data showed Friday, thanks to a boost in consumer spending during Ramadan and surging state spending. While the result is below the government annual target, analysts said it could indicate that Southeast Asia's biggest economy may finally be pulling out of a long slowdown. The 5.18 percent on-year expansion beat forecasts of around five percent and was also up on the previous quarter's 4.92 percent.

Fuelling the jump was a pick-up in manufacturing activity and a surge in consumer demand during the Islamic holy month, which fell mostly in June, the National Statistics Agency said. Consumers in the world's most populous Muslim-majority country typically splash out on expensive foods and clothes during the Ramadan festival. President Joko Widodo, known as Jokowi, was elected two years ago on a pledge to boost the economy and has taken a series of steps to help the ailing G20 nation.

April-June saw a 36 percent jump in government spending from the previous quarter, while he has also pushed a major infrastructure program and launched a tax amnesty aimed at luring back to the country billions of dollars of undeclared income. The central bank in June cut interest rates for a fourth time this year in a bid to stimulate growth.

"The outlook for Indonesia's economy has improved in recent months, raising hopes that the economy could be on the cusp of a sustained recovery," said Gareth Leather of Capital Economics. Growth in the resource-rich nation has been slipping in recent years due mainly to a slowdown in demand for its key commodity exports - such as coal and precious metals - particularly from Asian powerhouse China. Last week Jokowi appointed leading reformist Sri Mulyani Indrawati, who had until recently been a World Bank managing director, as finance minister in a cabinet reshuffle. However growth is still well below Jokowi's annual target of seven percent and Leather urged more action to build on recent measures aimed at attracting more overseas investment. "Although recent steps to open up the economy to foreign competition are welcome, Indonesia still has a long way to go if it is to turn around one of the most protectionist business environments in the region," he said. Capital Economics forecast Indonesia's economy would grow around five percent this year and next. — AFP

SYRIA KURDS IN ECONOMIC DIRE STRAITS

QAMISHLI, Syria: Syria's Kurds dreamt of an economic success story when they declared an autonomous region in the country's north, an area rich in oil resources and known as a breadbasket. But instead their proto-state has become an island, squeezed economically on all sides and dependent on aid to make up for shortfalls in basic goods including food and medicine. In his pharmacy in Qamishli, Mustafa Ebdil examined his dwindling stock. "Most medication is missing," he told AFP, as a crowd of customers picked desperately through his sparse shelves. "Our pharmacies are empty. We cannot find general anaesthetics or other medication used in surgery, as well as medication for diabetes," he added.

Location is largely to blame. "The economic situation is bad because the Kurdish areas are surrounded - to the



QAMISHLI, Syria: A Syrian man sorts mint at a street market in this northeastern city on July 17, 2016. — AFP

south there is the Islamic State group, to the north Turkey," said analyst Fabrice Balanche. To the east lies the fickle Simalka border crossing with the Kurdistan region of Iraq, whose leaders "close the border whenever (they) want", Balanche added.

Despite sharing a nominally common cause, Iraqi Kurdistan has tense relations with the ruling Democratic Union Party (PYD) in Syria's Kurdish regions. It has close ties with Turkey, which considers the PYD to be the Syrian branch of Turkey's Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), designated a "terrorist" group by Ankara. As a result, the sole official trade route in or out for the northeastern portion of the autonomous Kurdish region is frequently closed, often without warning.

And the result for residents of the area is shortages and economic hardship. — AFP

EGYPT'S SOLAR POWER UPSET CLOUDS INVESTOR OUTLOOK

SOME FOREIGN FIRMS TO SHELVE PROJECTS

CAIRO: When Egypt announced plans to develop renewable power in 2014, investors piled in, drawn by year-round sunshine and chronic electricity shortages. Two years on, many projects have stalled, hitting confidence among foreign investors Egypt sorely needs. Developers who prequalified for solar and wind projects under attractive feed-in-tariff (FiT) schemes say they face delays and currency risks while wrangling with the government over contract terms has complicated efforts to secure financing.

Some foreign firms now say they will shelve projects at a time when Egypt is seeking to boost foreign investment to ease a hard currency shortage that is choking the economy and to diversify after gas shortages caused blackouts in 2013 and 2014. One such company is Italy's Enel Green Power, which prequalified in 2015 for one solar and two wind projects under Egypt's FiT schemes and entered a build-own-operate tender for a 250 megawatt wind project.

"Continuous uncertainty from the local authority in managing the process as well as delays in assigning contracts, have lead EGP to freeze its business development operations in the country," an Enel spokeswoman said. A source from another consortium of foreign investors that prequalified for a solar FiT project said Egypt's insistence on domestic arbitration in any dispute had prompted a multilateral lender that was co-financing the project to withdraw. "I can't believe they would do this to foreign investors and big lenders when Egypt needs them," said the source. "The feed-in-tariffs were high, but the whole thing has turned into an Egyptian soap opera. No one knows what's going on and they don't seem to care." Egypt's New and Renewable Energy Authority did not respond to Reuters requests for comment. Its chairman Salah El-Sobky was quoted in Al Shorouk newspaper this week as saying the Electricity Ministry was taking the developers' concerns into consideration

but was not responsible for their funding. Egypt announced in 2014 ambitious plans to develop renewable energy, originally targeting 4.3 gigawatts of wind and solar projects to be installed over three years.

The International Finance Corporation, an arm of the World Bank, said last year Egypt's renewable energy projects could require \$8 billion in capital investment over the next four years, a significant opportunity for investors and lenders. Egypt had aimed to meet 20 percent of its energy needs from renewable sources by 2020, but has pushed that back to 2022.

Feed-In Flap

Government plans included a 1.8 gigawatt solar park in Benban, Upper Egypt, to be developed for \$3 billion and operated under a FiT arrangement. In 2014, Egypt said it would pay \$0.13 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) to plants with 500 kilowatts to 20 megawatts capacity and \$0.14/kWh to those with 20 to 50 MW capacity during phase one. The competitive rates piqued investor interest. The scheme was hailed as an investment bright-spot for Egypt, which has suffered a shortfall in foreign currency since the 2011 uprising which ousted Hosni Mubarak but scared off foreign investors and tourists, sources of hard currency it needs to finance imports.

But the euphoria faded as capital controls imposed in early 2015 made it harder for foreign firms - which would invest in dollars but be paid in Egyptian pounds - to repatriate profit. Developers said they were willing to accept currency risks as Egypt's FiT was higher than others in the region. A dispute over the seat of arbitration has proven harder to overcome. International arbitration is a standard requirement for many international lenders and has caused some to freeze funding for phase one, sources at four such institutions said. — Reuters



CAR COCKTAIL: FORD, CUERVO MIX FOR PARTS

MEXICO CITY: Booze and driving are a bad combination, but US auto company Ford and Mexico's tequila maker Jose Cuervo have found a way to mix together. The two companies have joined forces to explore the possibility of transforming fibers from agave, the plant used to make tequila, to create bioplastic that could replace fiberglass or caulk. Researchers are testing the material's durability and resistance to heat to see if it can be used in components such as wiring harnesses, air conditioning units and storage bins.

The bioplastic could help reduce the weight of a vehicle and cut energy consumption, while slashing pollution by using less petrochemicals. "Agave is a good replacement and it's lighter in weight," Debbie Mielewski, the senior technical leader at Ford's sustainability research department, told AFP.

Lighter Cars

Mielewski has worked on finding renewable materials for vehicle components since the 1990s, helping Ford find alternatives to petrol-based products, whose costs are affected by global oil prices. In 2001, she and her team designed soy-based foam, which is used to make car seats that made their debut seven years later in the legendary Ford Mustang. Now the seats of all Ford vehicles produced in North America are made of biomaterials. "The average vehicle contains about 400 pounds (180 kg) of plastic and our goal is to replace as much as possible with sustainable biomaterials, further reducing our use of petroleum-based plastic," Mielewski said.

The company uses materials found in the regions where vehicles are manufactured. In Asia, Ford uses kenaf, a tropical plant. In the United States, it's cotton fiber. And in Canada, wheat straw. Mielewski realized that agave could be used at Ford's factory in Hermosillo, in the northwestern state of Sonora. She thought of the first tequila company that came to mind, Jose Cuervo. "I think it will be a revenue stream for them and agave farmers," she said. — AFP



SUEZ: An Egyptian holidaymaker wades in the sea as a ship crosses the Gulf of Suez towards the Red Sea on Aug 2, 2016. — AP



NEW DELHI: An Indian craftsman works on making a wooden chair at a workshop on Thursday. Lawmakers have voted in favor of scrapping India's jumble of federal and state taxes and introducing a single goods-and-services tax (GST), creating a common market for the first time. —AFP

BUSINESS HOPEFUL AS INDIA OVERHAULS COMPLEX TAXES

GST CREATES COMMON MARKET FOR FIRST TIME

NEW DELHI: When trader Vivek Mehra buys artwork from the remote corners of India, he braces himself for a world of pain as he navigates the country's notoriously complex tax system. But Mehra, who makes and sells furniture, is among throngs of business owners hopeful Prime Minister Narendra Modi's moves this week for a new, single national sales tax will make life much easier. At the moment, Mehra has to pay different rates of sales tax in different states, a policy that means endless hold-ups when crossing interstate borders.

"You can be stranded behind 300 trucks at the border and even one single piece of paper missing can mean your load is confiscated," he told AFP in his New Delhi workshop. Lawmakers have voted in favor of scrapping India's jumble of federal and state taxes and introducing a single goods-and-services tax (GST), creating a common market for the first time. The government said the move, hailed as India's most significant economic reform in decades, would reduce double taxation, cut red tape and make the system more efficient.

Experts said the tax could eventually help boost India's already strong economic growth by up to two percentage points. "Consumption will go up, production will go up, investments will go up, investment into production will go up, so this is a great development," said Adi Godrej, chairman of consumer goods giant the Godrej Group. "To my mind it is the biggest economic reform after the liberalisation of 1991," he said,

referring to historic moves to open up India to international trade.

'Stiff Targets'

Modi has battled fiercely to introduce the tax after facing criticism for being too slow to introduce much-needed reforms after storming to power in 2014. The main opposition Congress party, which first proposed a GST a decade ago, blocked the current one in parliament for 12 months before finally agreeing to an amended version. But experts say the changes needed to win political support may have blunted the overall boost to the economy.

States will still be allowed, for example, to separately tax alcohol, petrol and other products that are likely to be excluded from the GST. The government also faces a race against time to introduce the tax by its deadline of next April, when the new financial year starts. Half of India's states have to now ratify the move in their parliaments before it can be enshrined in law. Thousands of tax officials must also be trained in the new regime, government IT systems overhauled and companies themselves briefed on complying with the changes.

"It is always good to set stiff targets and try meet them, rather than have no targets at all," Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said of the deadline, which many experts believe is optimistic. The main rate of the GST must also still be thrashed out by a council of state and central officials. Congress says it wants the rate capped at 18 percent of any purchase of goods or service to avoid what it calls "creeping taxation".

'Just One Tax'

States with lots of manufacturers may battle to push the rate higher. They stand to lose revenues because the money collected would now go to the state where the product is consumed, although New Delhi has pledged to reimburse them for the first five years. "We need to wait for details and tax rates to come out before speculating about the GST's effectiveness," warned Sujana Hajra, chief economist at Anand Rathi Securities. But Prakash Tulsiani, chief operating officer with Allcargo Logistics based in Mumbai, is confident the move means increased productivity, with less paperwork and faster delivery of goods. "Now, we don't have to worry about multi-level taxation levied by different states," said Tulsiani.

About 150 countries worldwide have some form of GST or VAT (Value Added Tax), according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Mehra, who employs around 200 artisans and others at his workshops and showrooms in Delhi and neighboring Rajasthan state, hopes the changes will also mean fewer headaches. "Hopefully there's only one department that we now have to answer to, we don't have to go to excise, we don't have to go to VAT and various other departments. We just pay one tax and that's it," he said. "That's what we hope is going to happen. But let's see what the fine print says." —AFP

GULF BANK ANNOUNCES DANAH DRAW WINNERS

KUWAIT: Gulf Bank held its Al Danah daily draws on July 31, 2016 announcing the names of its winners for the week of July 24-28, 2016. The Al Danah daily draws include draws each and every working day for two prizes of KD 1,000 per winner.

The winners are:

(Sunday 24/7): Feras Helmi Marshad Abu Ghazi, Hamad Mohsen Marzouq Al-Mutairi

(Monday 25/7): Dalila Charikhi Ferroukhi, Hamed Nasser Ali Al-Sayegh

(Tuesday 26/7):

M o h a m m e d

Mobdeh Ghadfan

Al-Dandashi, Fawaz

Faisal Bader Al-

Qinaei

(Wednesday 27/7): Zakiya Mohammed Yaseen, Poonam Gogia Mohammed Gogia

(Thursday 28/7): Paulvanna Nayaki Marimuthu, Elias Nicolas El-Hani

Gulf Bank's Al Danah 2016 draw lineup includes daily draws (two winners per working day each receive KD 1,000). Al Danah's 3rd Quarterly Draw for the prize of KD 500,000 will be held on September 29th. The final Al Danah draw for one million Kuwaiti Dinars will be held on Jan 5, 2017 whereby the Al Danah Millionaire will be announced. Open an Al Danah account now or deposit more to increase your chances of winning the Millionaire Draw!



Five reasons why the Al Danah account is the Best:

- 1) Kuwait's single biggest yearly cash prize of KD 1 million
- 2) Kuwait's biggest quarterly cash prizes, up to KD 500,000
- 3) Two winners of KD 1,000 every working day
- 4) The most chances to win
- 5) Only bank that transfers your chances to win from year to year

Only Al Danah Makes Millionaires

Al Danah also offers a number of unique services including: the Al Danah Deposit Only ATM card which helps account holders deposit their money at their convenience; as well as the Al Danah calculator to help customers calculate their chances of becoming an Al Danah winner. Gulf Bank's Al Danah account is open to Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti residents of Kuwait. customers who open an account and/ or deposit more will enter the draw within two days.

ABK ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 14TH 'DOUBLE YOUR SALARY' WEEKLY DRAWS

KUWAIT: Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) held its 14th 'Double Your Salary' weekly draw on Aug 2, 2016 at the Bank's Head Office in the presence of a representative from the Ministry of



Commerce, announcing the names of the winners for this week. The promotion includes weekly draws, with two winners per draw and is running until Sept 30, 2016.

The winners this week were:

- 1) Mohammad Ali Hussain Hussain, Salmiya Branch
- 2) Chandrasekaran Venkatasamy Venkatasamy, Fahaheel Branch

New customers who transfer their salary to ABK receive KD 100 and will automatically be entered into the weekly draws to double their salaries. Existing customers who are already transferring their salary to ABK are entered into a separate draw.

The next 'Double Your Salary' draw will be held on Aug 9, 2016 where two new lucky winners will be announced. All winners will be contacted personally and a weekly announcement will be made through the media with the winners' names.

Kuwait Times Weekender

SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 2016

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**Moscow's \$2 billion
makeover leaves
some residents cold**

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RIO DE JANEIRO: Olympic torch bearer Brazilian former volleyball player Maria Isabel Barroso Salgado holds up the torch of Rio 2016 Olympic games in front of the statue of Cristo the Redeemer atop Corcovado Hill on August 5, 2016. — AFP

Margot Robbie and Prince Harry text each other a lot



The 'Suicide Squad' star - who met the 31-year-old royal through her co-star Cara Delevingne - has revealed she is in contact with Harry and he's always "quick" at getting in touch. Speaking on American TV show 'Extra', she said: "He [Prince Harry] is pretty quick on text, actually. Unlike me. I write back four days later, weeks later sometimes." The 25-year-old actress also recently admitted that she once mistook Harry for flame-haired pop star Ed Sheeran. The Australian actress ended up in a photo-booth with the also ginger-haired royal and her showbiz pals Sienna Miller, Cara Delevingne and Suki Waterhouse - but at the time, Margot was unaware of who he was. She said: "Everyone now thinks if they come on a night out with me in London they'll bump into Prince Harry." "But I didn't even know who it was. I'd had a drink or drinks. I thought I was hanging out with Ed Sheeran. I was thinking 'Ed's a really cool guy'. I'm going to take some pictures with him." Asked if Prince Harry took the mix-up well, she admitted: "Nope." And that's not all, the blonde beauty recently pranked poor Harry with Cara by texting him to tell him they both had a dream about him. Cara was being interviewed for LOVE magazine by her 'Suicide Squad' co-star Margot Robbie and revealed their trick on Harry, however, he soon sussed that the pair were together. He texted back: "You two are obviously together. But I'm extremely glad I was in your dreams."

Simon Cowell is to return as a judge on 'America's Got Talent'

The 56-year-old music mogul - who created 'Got Talent' in the UK - will be joined by original judges Mel B, Heidi Klum and Howie Mandel with Nick Cannon returning as a host for the 12th season of the show. The President of Alternative and Reality Group at NBC Entertainment, Paul Telegdy commented: "With the addition of Simon [Cowell] the chemistry between our judges has grown even stronger and it's easy to see how much enthusiasm they bring to the show night after night." And on having Nick back, he added: "Nick adds a boundless energy as host that ties everything together. "We're thrilled to have such a strong team returning for season 12." While the hit show is co-owned and produced by Cowell and his record label Syco he only became a judge on season 11. Talking about taking his spot on the

panel in 2015, when it was announced, he said: "I kind of always wanted to be on it ... I also enjoyed producing it. "When this opened up and they asked me, I went, 'A hundred percent, yeah.' Why wouldn't you?" Meanwhile, Cowell - who has two-year-old son Eric with his girlfriend Laura Silverman - claims being a parent has made him more compassionate and admits he goes easier on hopefuls because he feels "different" now. He said: "Lauren is great. And there's no question when you actually have a kid, it does make you feel different because you understand how you would feel if it was your son up there. "I'm very conscious that the kids who audition for AGT want to be there, they're not being pushed into it, and that they're having a great day out, otherwise we wouldn't see them."



Ashley Graham hasn't 'lost a pound' this year

The 28-year-old plus-size model has hit back at body shamers who slammed her for losing weight and admitted she found people's negative comments "tougher" to deal with than usual. Ashley, who has penned an essay for Lena Dunham's Lenny Letter, wrote: "I am more than my measurements. I'm not Ashley Graham just because I'm curvy. "For the past sixteen years, my body has been picked apart, manipulated, and controlled by others who don't understand it. But now my career has given me a platform to use my voice to make a difference." "I know the comments won't all be positive. I'm a confident woman with thick skin, and as a model in the public eye, I'm conditioned to accept criticism. But last week, I admit that I had a tougher time brushing off the haters." "The reality is I haven't lost a pound this year. In fact, I'm actually heavier than I was three years ago, but I accept my body as it is today. I work out not to lose weight but to maintain my good health." The brunette beauty - who became the first plus-size model to star in the Sports Illustrated calendar - has decided to take a stand and not let other "dictate" how she lives because it's her body and she can "call the shots". She added: "I refuse to let others dictate how I live my life and what my body should look like for their own comfort. And neither should you. Let's worry about our own bodies. My body is MY body. I'll call the shots." However, the stunning lingerie model

recently said she can see that the public's attitude towards bigger women is starting to change. She explained: "I really do hope that the people at Miss USA are considering it and talking about it, but I think clearly they are by having me host."



Emeli Sande is dating British rapper and producer Hypo

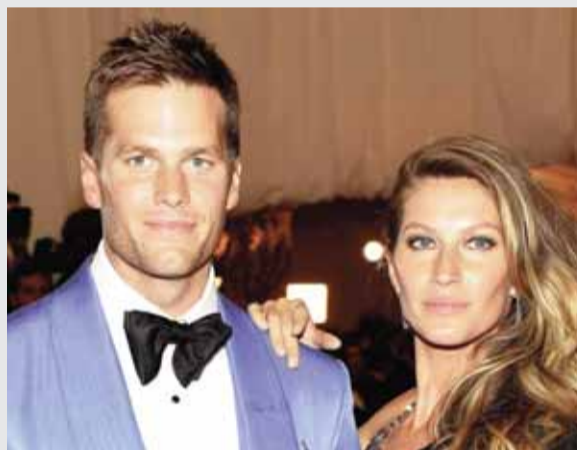
The 29-year-old musician - who split from husband Adam Gouraguine in 2013 after one year of marriage - reportedly started dating Hypo, also known as Bigg Hypes, earlier this year and couldn't be happier. A source told The Sun: "Emeli was in a bad place when she split from Adam but time is a healer and she really likes Hypo. "They started dating earlier this year after being introduced by mutual friends. It's only her second relationship so she's been cautious. "But Emeli has really clicked with him and they even travelled to Jamaica together in March. Things have flourished between them." And Emeli's upcoming album has been delayed because she has been working on new music inspired by her relationship with the rapper. When asked by fans on Instagram when the new record will be released, she said: "This

year!! Sorry it's taken so long...wanted it to be worth the wait x (sic)." Although they initially kept their romance private, the pair have recently started to post pictures of each other on social media. Last week Emeli shared a picture of them smiling together and wrote: "Sunshine through my window (sic)." Emeli previously admitted she came close to a breakdown following her split from Adam, who she started dating when she was just 17. She said: "Everyone thought I'd gone mad. 'What do you mean a divorce? We were all at your wedding a few months ago!' But there was just something inside me that said, "This isn't the life. You're pretending to be someone else. "I don't want to call it a breakdown, but it felt like that."



Legal bills for sorting out Prince's estate have already hit almost \$2 million

The special administrator overseeing the affairs of the late singer - who died from an accidental overdose in April without leaving a will - is seeking permission from the courts to pay several law firms for work, including a huge \$1.9 million for just one company, the Stinson Leonard Street firm. And smaller amounts to various other lawyers add up to almost \$100,000, with the figures submitted correct up until June 30. The administrators, Bremer Trust, have also asked the court to approve their own fees, but those amounts were filed under seal, meaning they are not made available publicly. Meanwhile, a judge has dismissed the claims of 29 people who said they were related to the 'Gold' hitmaker and as such entitled to a share of his estate. Carver County Judge Kevin Eide has also ordered six people to undergo genetic testing, his four siblings or half-siblings, Tyka Nelson, Sharon Nelson, Norrine Nelson and John Nelson-plus a supposed niece and grand-niece, Brianna Nelson and Victoria Nelson. The judge's ruling has dismissed several unnamed people who had alleged the '1999' singer was their biological father, as well as people who claimed Prince's own father was someone other than the man listed in court records. As well as the documents relating to legal costs, the administrators also submitted paperwork seeking to sell some of Prince's homes this week. The 'Purple Rain' hitmaker owned property in Beverly Hills, New York, his home state of Minnesota and possibly other areas before his death, and documents submitted to court state the estate will only accept offers for the properties that are at least 90% of fair market value. The court has sealed the part of the request which states which properties they are hoping to sell. Prince's Minnesota estate alone is worth an estimated £30 million.



Tom Brady and Gisele pay \$20 million for an apartment in New York

The loved-up couple already own a sprawling estate in the Big Apple overlooking Madison Square garden but have decided to up sticks and move across town to Hudson River. Although they're yet to seal the deal by signing the contracts, it's believed the pair's new home, which is in the Tribeca Building - home to residents including Taylor Swift, Bradley Cooper and Jennifer Lawrence - is complete with five bathrooms, according to the New York Post's Page Six column. But not only does it have breath-taking views over the river to help the pair unwind after a stressful day in the city, the 14-storey building also comes with a sauna and a steam room. The complex also has plenty on offer on the activity front as well, as it comes with a 82-foot lap pool, plush studios for cycling, yoga and pilates classes, and a beautiful squash court. Tom and Gisele - who got married in 2009 - were reportedly drawn to the popular building because of the tight security. A source said: "Residents can enter by driving into a covered porte-cochere entrance." Meanwhile, the couple - who have children Benjamin, six, and Vivienne, three, together - have been through "a lot of ups and downs" throughout their seven-year marriage but believe the tough times have made them stronger. The 38-year-old sports star said recently: "I'm blessed to find this life partner that we all kind of seek at different times in our life. We found each other at the right time. We've been through a lot of ups and downs together, and in so many ways, that's kind of built our relationship so strong."

Will Smith doesn't 'ever' want to revive 'Fresh Prince of Bel-Air'

The 47-year-old actor, who portrayed a fictionalized version of himself in the classic 1990s sit-com, insists speculation the show is to return with him at the helm and as co-producer is untrue as he'll only go back to the show when "hell freezes over". Speaking to E! news about a possible comeback, he said: "I don't think ever, like pretty close to when hell freezes over. "Like we're going to leave that one alone." Will's latest movie, 'Suicide Squad', sees him reunite with his 'Focus' co-star Margot Robbie and he recalled being unimpressed by the 26-year-old beauty when they first met - while she was annoyed by his tardiness. Interviewing one another for E! News, Margot said: "When I first met you it was for the audition for 'Focus' and you were late. I'd come from Croatia and I remember being like 'Why is he late? I should be late.'" Will retorted: "At least I was dressed for the interview. She walked into the audition and she had shoes like she'd walked through mud, shorts on, her hair wasn't done, I was like 'She doesn't want this at all.'" But Margot insisted she had a good explanation for her unkempt appearance. She said: "I'd lost my luggage. I'd been backpacking." Margot also criticized her 47-year-old co-star - who has son Trey, 23, from a previous marriage, and Jaden 18, and Willow, 15, with wife Jada Pinkett Smith - for his lack of manners. She said: "I hate it when you say 'huh?' It's rude.... Maybe I shouldn't be scolding a man that's twice my age." Will added: "Somewhere as a child, Margot wasn't allowed to say 'Huh?', she had to say 'Pardon?'. It's a habit. She [shouts] 'It's pardon!' " And Will is amused by his friend's daredevil attitude to life. He said: "She is a wild explorer, Margot will try anything. There is nothing that someone can suggest, 'Hey what if we...' 'Yeah yeah'. 'Margot, maybe you should find out what it is first.' "





MOSCOW: People walk past construction works in central Moscow on July 11, 2016. — AFP

Moscow's \$2 billion makeover leaves some residents cold

An ambitious project to make central Moscow more pedestrian friendly has drawn mixed reactions from the city's residents: some love the upgrade, others worry the soul is being ripped out of historic neighborhoods.

Bulldozers and drills are humming away around the centre as more than 50 roads are being torn up, a quarter of the total

number chosen for a revamp under the "My Street" scheme. City authorities say the three-year project—which will cost a total 126 billion rubles (\$1.96 billion) — is the largest redevelopment in the history of modern Moscow.

In many streets, piles of paving stones, mountains of sand and fenced-off construction sites make awkward obstacle

courses for Muscovites—who spend half the year blanketed in snow and are keen to make the most of the summer with a stroll. "It does hinder traffic quite significantly but maybe it's actually good because afterwards it will flow faster," said 19-year-old Muscovite Vladimir Molchanov. "The city is transforming itself, becoming more and more beautiful," he said. "I think that the construction is a good thing because the streets that are already finished look amazing," said 28-year-old computer programmer Maxim Lagvinenko.

"Even as a car owner, I understand that the city centre should be for pedestrians and cyclists," he said. According to Alexei Muratov, a partner at KB Strelka, an architecture and urban design consultancy which is playing a key role in the project, "There hasn't been any urban redevelopment since the Moscow Olympics in 1980."

"There is a lot to be done," he said. Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyenin won a second term in office in 2013 vowing to raise the quality of life in the wealthy but notoriously congested, polluted and often uninviting metropolis, home to 15 million people.

Since then he has pushed through massive investment in the road network and improved public transport, building a 50-kilometre (30-mile) circular railway line due to open in the autumn.

Critical voices

The mayor's critics, including Alexei Navalny, a prominent opposition leader and runner-up in the 2013 mayoral race, allege that the massive construction projects are rife with corruption.

There are also complaints that the rich and diverse cultural life on some of the newly pedestrianised streets has been replaced by bland government-sponsored events and tacky decorations. "They built all these new pedestrian streets (but



MOSCOW: Municipal workers set up a new pavement in central Moscow on July 11, 2016. — AFP photos

the streets are empty and there are sad people walking along them," said Sergei Sadov, a veteran busker.

Speaking to AFP on Arbat, one of the central Moscow streets under redevelopment, Sadov said police detained him last year as he was playing his guitar and charged him with organizing the "mass presence or movement of people leading to public disturbance". Since then, most of the street musicians have been charged with similar offences, he said.

Undeterred, Sadov, who heads an association of street musicians, continues to busk here as he has done for the last 30 years. Lately police have started confiscating musicians' instruments, he said. "The prefecture's offices are stuffed with musical instruments and portraits" confiscated from musicians and artists, he said.

While he approves the recent creation of designated busking spots on Moscow's metro, he lamented that only five had been designated for the thousands of musicians who had applied to play on the network.

'This is our street'

Street artist Yakov Pulnov said it had taken months of negotiation by 130 artists to persuade officials to allocate 15 spots for them along the kilometre-long Arbat. "Why should we leave? This is our street," said Vladimir Dotsoyev, who has sketched portraits on Arbat for 30 years. He accused new city bureaucrats of excessive zeal and extortion. "They say 'Don't set up here' or 'set up there.' They find fault with our parasols and they think we're millionaires," he fumed.

Artists said that all street entertainment now has to fall under the umbrella of city-organised events, such as the recent "Moscow Jam" and "Moscow Ice Cream" festivals. During such events the city's streets and squares fill up with identical music stages and stalls all selling the same range of goods, while dubious street decorations include giant plastic topiary and replica prehistoric skulls.

Meanwhile, independent events struggle to find venues. Two annual alternative music festivals were cancelled this month just hours before they were due to begin. Police barricaded the venues while city trucks sprayed water at the arriving public.

Kiosks demolished

Some critics deride the expensive project as a cosmetic makeover. "It's replacing genuine public life with extraneous attributes," renowned architect Eugene Asse said in a recent interview on Open Russia website. The overall concept for My Street includes the dismantling of illegally-built structures, such as stalls selling everything from bread to ice cream. Architect Muratov said it was unfair to criticize him for this aspect since it fell outside his firm's remit. "The destruction of the kiosks was a strange decision, since a public space cannot be active without street retail," Muratov said. Muratov said polls indicate that 70 to 75 percent of Muscovites support the redevelopment as a whole. — AFP



MOSCOW: Municipal workers set up a new pavement in central Moscow on July 10, 2016.



MOSCOW: A man walks along a street under construction in central Moscow on July 10, 2016.



MOSCOW: Municipal workers carry a kerb stone in central Moscow on July 11, 2016.



MOSCOW: People walk past construction works in central Moscow on July 11, 2016.



RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL: An Olympic volunteer stands on the Olympic rings as she poses for a picture prior to the Summer Olympics on Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2016. — AP photos

FEARS ABOUT RIO GAMES? DON'T FORGET BRAZILIAN PARTY SKILLS

'NO ONE THROWS PARTIES LIKE BRAZIL'

For months, fears about the Rio de Janeiro Olympics have been hogging the spotlight. There are concerns about safety amid a surge of murders in Rio and extremist attacks in Europe and the United States. Polluted beaches and other waterways could make athletes and visitors ill, and the Zika virus has scared some competitors away.

If all that wasn't enough, the state of Rio is so broke that months ago it stopped paying thousands of public employees; angry police have periodically been greeting tourists in the international airport with signs that say, "Welcome to hell!"

If history is a guide, however, a focus on the problems is all part of the script in the run up to the games. Once the competitions start, most if not all of the problems fade into the background - at least for the athletes, tourists and millions watching around the world.

Such negative coverage has a "very simple explanation," says Michael Heine, director of the Center for Olympic Studies at Western University. "The event is about sports, but you can't find sporting material because the whistle hasn't gone yet," said Heine. "So what else do you write about?"



RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL: A dancer performs at a welcoming ceremony for athletes at the 2016 Summer Olympics on Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2016.



RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL: A dancer performs at a welcoming ceremony for athletes at the 2016 Summer Olympics on Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2016.

Coverage ahead of the 2012 Olympics in London included stories about terrorism fears and concerns about civil liberties in light of increased military and police presence. The run up to 2008 Games in Beijing put a spotlight on authoritarianism and extreme air pollution in China. In Athens 2004, there were myriad questions about whether the venues would be ready in time.

Brazilians frustrated

Many Brazilians feel frustrated that the expectations are overwhelmingly negative, especially when the country has pulled off big events like the 2014 World Cup. They argue that such accounts don't take into account Brazilian "jeito," or way of doing things, which includes an easy-going nature and a penchant for successfully pulling things off at the last moment. And the doomsday scenarios all but ignore samba dancing and capoeira martial arts, beautiful coastlines contrasted by mountains covered with lush jungle, stunning sunrises and sunsets, caipirinha cocktails and culinary options that range from meat-eaters' delights to exotic fish plucked from the Amazon River.

"No one throws parties like Brazil," said Denis Eduardo, a 34-year-old travel agent from Sao Paulo traveling to Rio for the games. "People might be bashing Brazil now, as if all previous Olympics had been perfect, but it won't be long until they are all enjoying it here."

Brazil's problems, however, go beyond what other recent countries hosting the Olympics have faced. Latin America's largest economy and most populous nation is suffering its worst recession in decades. A political crisis has paralyzed the country and brought out deep polarization - which could very well translate into large protests during the competitions.

The opening ceremony will highlight the cloud hanging over the country: Interim President Michel Temer will ring in the games while impeached President Dilma Rousseff, suspended for alleged fiscal irregularities in her managing of the budget, stays home.

Infrastructure is poor

Even in normal times, Brazil's infrastructure is poor. Building collapses are frequent, clogged and pot-holed plagued streets turn traffic into parking lots and electricity and running water are not always a given, even in rich areas.

When the Australian delegation complained last week about dangling wires, bursting toilets and gas smells in the Olympic Village apartments, they were experiencing things that are common for Brazilians.

The April collapse of a coastal bike lane, an Olympics legacy project inaugurated with much fanfare just a few months before, underscored how dangerous shoddy construction can be. Two men plunged to their death when a big wave turned a large chunk of the path into a mountain of concrete and metal.

The lane has been shut down while authorities investigate. However, there is little doubt that the engineering was deficient or the construction was faulty, or a combination of both. David Wallechinsky, president of the International Society of Olympic Historians who will be attending the games, says the last-minute completion of major projects reminds him of an episode in Athens.



RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL: A group of Olympic workers pose for their friends to take their photograph standing in the Olympic rings, in the late afternoon at the 2016 Summer Olympics on Thursday, Aug. 4, 2016.

On the way back from watching a beach volleyball game, his wife and son got stuck in a newly-built metro train. It was over 90 degrees and the doors were not working, so several men pried them open. When Wallechinsky looked into it he was told: "We just inaugurated it yesterday." In Brazil, "are they doing this for the metro system, the venues? Has everything been checked out?" he asked.

Arguably the biggest fear is security. The recession has exacerbated the already precarious situation of millions who live in the city's hundreds of slums; Armed men sometimes descend from the hills to rob unsuspecting tourists and more well-to-do locals.

After recent attacks in Orlando, Florida, and Nice, France, Brazilian authorities have gone on the offensive in recent weeks, arresting more than a dozen men who had expressed allegiance to the Islamic State group - but had done almost nothing to actually plan an attack. Soldiers wearing bullet proof vests and carrying automatic weapons have been blanketing the airports, malls and tourist areas in recent weeks. Authorities say 85,000 soldiers and police will be on hand during the games, roughly twice the number on hand in London. "I understand that people are concerned about security," said Alexandre Braga, chief of the city's tourist police unit. "But I don't think there will be any major problems in Rio." — AP



RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL: Christ the Redeemer statue is illuminated in green and yellow, the colors of the Brazil's flag, to celebrate the Summer Olympic Games on Thursday, Aug. 4, 2016.



RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL: An athlete from Ghana dances with Brazilian performers at a welcoming ceremony at the 2016 Summer Olympics on Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2016.



RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL: Copacabana beach, left, stands in the background as visitors take photos from atop Sugarloaf Mountain ahead of the 2016 Summer Olympics on Thursday, Aug. 4, 2016.



YUSHU, CHINA: In this picture taken on July 26, 2016 nomad horsemen participate in a horse race on the Tibetan Plateau in Yushu County.— AFP

Tradition faces modernity at Tibetan horse festival on Himalayan plateau

As Tibetan riders waved rifles and dug cowboy-booted feet into their horses' flanks, hanging sideways from their mounts, tourists and locals cheered and snapped pictures on digital cameras and smartphones.

Set between emerald hills on the Himalayan plateau, some 3,700 meters above sea level, Yushu's annual equine festival is billed as a showcase of Chinese government support for Tibetan culture. Women were draped in their finest jewelry, wearing beads of turquoise, yellow amber and red coral over flower-pat-

terned traditional dresses known as chuba. Monks in crimson robes flitted through the crowds.

But beyond the imagery, the festival also displayed the impact of both modernization and Beijing's rule on the region, which Chinese forces occupied in 1951. Beneath grassy hills spiderwebbed with white prayer flags, Sonam Dolma set up a tent stall selling bottled mineral water, Coca-Cola and Red Bull.

Now 51, she recalled helping tame wild horses as a teenager on the plateau where her nomad family raised yaks, and was

unimpressed by this year's athletics. "When I was young there would be a horse festival each year," she said. "The skill was very high. The horses were big and strong." Now, she added, the animals were smaller and slower. "A lot of the best horses have been sold because people turn to technology."

Many Tibetans have traded nomadism for life in the cities as part of an urbanization drive pushed by Beijing, sometimes by force, and many who remain on the land prefer motorbikes for road transport. "I'm just not that good at riding anymore," 31-



YUSHU, CHINA: In this picture taken on July 26, 2016 two Tibetan nomad horsemen race their horses on the Tibetan Plateau in Yushu County.



YUSHU, CHINA: In this picture taken on July 26, 2016 Tibetan nomad horsemen load their horses on the back of a truck as they will travel to participate to a race course nearby on the the Tibetan Plateau in Yushu County.

year-old nomad Jargaringqin told AFP, chewing on yak jerky as dried dung burned in his stove.

'Controlling Tibetans'

Yushu-known as Jyekundo in Tibetan and now in the northwestern Chinese province of Qinghai-is home to the Khampa, a traditionally martial people whose dialect is impenetrable to most Tibetans.

In the late 1950s the Khampa-sometimes aided by CIA training and weapons staged the fiercest Tibetan resistance to Chinese rule, killing 800 Communist soldiers in one raid. Their forces were crushed after the Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama fled to India in 1959. Herders had their guns confiscated, but the weapons made a comeback in tourist displays at the five-day event, which saw male riders competing in speed races and trotting competitions.

The festival was suspended for several years following a major earthquake which ravaged Yushu in 2008, killing some 2,700 people. As part of reconstruction, authorities built a horse-racing stadium with concrete stands and plastic seating to host the festival's opening ceremony.

Local Communist officials control the event, determining who races, sponsoring travel costs for riders and archers from rural counties, and handing out cash prizes to winners. "I am deciding who competes," explained a woman from China's Han ethnic majority, who works for Yushu's official sports bureau. "It's my third year, we organise a lot of activities."

There are still sporadic outbursts against Chinese rule in Yushu, with five locals setting themselves on fire since 2012, according to rights groups, among more than 140 such protests by Tibetans, most of them fatal.

Dozens of paramilitary policemen guarded the festival, while a group of orange-suited fire-fighters patrolled with foam extinguishers. "In recent years the government has been controlling Tibetans more tightly. For example, we are limited in gathering together for activities," said one young Tibetan sipping beer on the festival sidelines, asking not to be named. "This is a government event," he added. "They are organising it so it's considered safe."

Flowing hair

Local authorities tout the festival as a source of tourist revenue for the area, which has few other sources of growth. Many Han Chinese see Kham as a mysterious and romantic region. "Its pretty and the horse riding skills are great," said Han Chinese tour guide Zhao Xu. "Khampa men are known for their good

looks and flowing hair," he added. But attendance at the event last week was sparse, raising questions over how well modernization fits with tradition. Qinghai's urbanization rate has increased from 40 percent to nearly 50 percent in the past decade, but one Tibetan member of a local Communist party committee told AFP that the process was happening "too fast".

"Its fine to move people to cities, but where are the jobs?" asked the man, whose first name was Dorje. "Herding life was certainly better." But spectator Meiduo Lasang-stallholder Sonam's daughter-dreams of becoming a photographer or fashion designer.

A university student in the provincial capital, she sheepishly accepted a herder's invitation to clamber on top of his steed, laughing and posing for smartphone photos before quickly jumping off. "We don't own horses these days," she said. "Everyone used to, when transport was more backwards. Now we have vehicles there is no need for horses." — AFP



YUSHU, CHINA: In this picture taken on July 26, 2016 Tibetans watch a horse race on the Tibetan Plateau in Yushu County.



YUSHU, CHINA: In this picture taken on July 26, 2016 Tibetan nomad horseman walks with his horse on the Tibetan Plateau in Yushu County.



YUSHU, CHINA: In this picture taken on July 26, 2016 Tibetan nomad horseman throw paper leaves with prayers written on them as high as they can next to their horse for good luck ahead of a horse race on the Tibetan Plateau in Yushu County.



YUSHU, CHINA: In this picture taken on July 26, 2016 Tibetans watch a horse race on the Tibetan Plateau in Yushu County. — AFP photos

GLOBAL CLIMATE DEAL LIKELY TO ENTER INTO FORCE IN 2016

OSLO: A global agreement on climate change looks likely to enter into force this year, a study showed yesterday, making it harder for Republican Donald Trump to pull out if he wins the US presidency. Countries accounting for 54 percent of greenhouse gas emissions have signaled intent to ratify this year, according to the tally of national pledges by the Marshall Islands which is a strong backer of the plan agreed in Paris in December.

That is just a fraction short of the required 55 percent of emissions, and support from at least 55 nations, the Pacific island nation said. The deal formally enters into force 30 days after the twin threshold is crossed. "What we agreed in Paris at the end of last year will likely now have the force of the law by the end of this year," Marshall Islands President Hilda Heine wrote in a report compiled by her foreign ministry. "This is a big recognition of the urgency with which we must now get on with the job." The Paris Agreement aims for a massive shift in global energy use to phase out greenhouse gas emissions, mainly from burning fossil fuels, in the second half of the century in favor of cleaner energies such as solar and wind power.

So far, an official UN count shows that 22 states accounting for just 1.08 percent of emissions have formally ratified the deal, part of efforts to limit rising temperatures and more floods, droughts and rising seas. China and the United States, the top emitters accounting together for 38 percent, have promised to join this year. Other big emitters including Australia, Canada, Mexico and Indonesia also plan to sign up in 2016, the Marshall Islands study said.

Once the pact enters into force, the agreement sets a formal four-year process for withdrawal. Diplomats say that will make it harder for Trump to carry out a threat to renegotiate Paris if he beats Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton. Trump doubts mainstream scientific findings that human activity causes global warming.

Still, the Paris Agreement has no penalties for non-compliance, meaning that Trump could ignore President Barack Obama's plan to cut US emissions, if he becomes president from Jan. 20, 2017. Other recent analyses by groups including the World Resources Institute think-tank and the U.S. National Resources Defense Council have also indicated that backing for Paris is approaching the threshold. — Reuters



INSTAGRAM ADDS EVERYDAY 'STORIES' IN SNAPCHAT SPIN RIP OFF OR NOT?

SAN FRANCISCO: Instagram on Tuesday put its own spin on a key Snapchat feature by letting users post "Stories" that eventually vanish from the Facebook-owned photo- and video-sharing application.

Instagram Stories encourages people to share ephemeral collages of everyday moments with friends at a service that has built a reputation as a social network where people post highlights from their lives or artistic works. "You can share as much as you want throughout the day-with as much creativity as you want," Instagram said in a blog post.

"The photos and videos will disappear after 24 hours and won't appear on your profile grid or in feed." The move ramps up competition with Snapchat, which became a hit with messages that disappear shortly after being viewed.

The Snapchat-like feature also lets people playfully drawn on or add text to images, which are presented in a slide-show style once posted. Instagram account settings allow users to dictate whether stories should be viewable only by followers, and opt to conceal them from some.

Instagram Stories will be rolled out in coming weeks to versions of the application tailored for smartphones powered by Android or Apple iOS software. Instagram on Monday said separately that is adding a new weapon for fighting harass-

ment at the popular mobile app. The social network began letting some accounts that attract torrents of feedback filter those comments by keywords or even turn off the option to comment on particular posts. If the test goes well, the anti-harassment feature could begin to spread across Instagram in coming weeks.

Instagram in June said that its user base has surged to half a billion, adding its latest 100 million in less than a year. More than 80 percent of Instagram users are outside the United States. Instagram, which was acquired by Facebook in 2012, is now seen as a growth engine for Facebook, which has some 1.6 billion users around the world.

Meanwhile, vanishing message app Snapchat last month began giving users the option of storing images as "Memories" they can look back on or share anew. Snapchat described the new feature as a "big change" at the service that made its mark with posts that don't stick around.

The new Memories feature was designed to let people only save images, referred to as Snaps, that they send. Snapchat estimates it has more than 100 million users globally of the service for sending videos, images and text messages which vanish after being viewed. Some reports say it generates 10 billion video views per day. — AFP

AMAZON UNVEILS CARGO PLANE AS IT EXPANDS DELIVERY NETWORK

SEATTLE: Seattle-based Amazon is unveiling its first branded cargo plane, one of 40 jetliners that will make up the e-commerce giant's own air transportation network as it takes more control of its delivery process.

The latest push to speed delivery of its products comes as the company ships an increasing number of packages worldwide. Amazon's parcel volume was an estimated 1 billion packages in 2015 - the same number that FedEx delivered three years earlier for hundreds of thousands of customers.

Amazon has had issues with the reliability of air freight services. In 2013, it offered refunds to customers who got their Christmas orders late after bad weather and a jump in online shopping caused delays for UPS and FedEx.

Analysts say it makes sense for Amazon to use an air fleet it controls as another way to get its products to online shoppers drawn to fast, no-extra-cost delivery. "They're such a big online retailer," said Satish Jindal, president of shipping consultant ShipMatrix. "There's so much volume that if you have to add transportation for yourself, why would you pay a retail price when you can get wholesale? It makes sense."

Amazon will reveal its first branded "Prime Air" cargo plane, designated Amazon One, on Friday at the annual Seafair Air Show. The plane

will buzz over Seattle's Lake Washington just before the Navy's Blue Angels take to the skies, a company official said.

40 Boeing jets

Amazon leased 40 Boeing jets from Atlas Air Worldwide Holdings and Air Transport Services Group Inc., which will operate the air cargo network. Eleven of the planes already are delivering packages for Amazon's annual Prime loyalty program, which offers free two-day shipping and other perks. The remaining freighters will be rolled out in the next couple of years.

Aircraft like Amazon One allow the company to "continue to maintain our fast delivery speeds and lower our costs as our Prime base and our Prime member growth continue to soar," said Dave Clark, Amazon's senior vice president of worldwide operations.

Despite its growing fleet of aircraft, Amazon said it plans to continue to use FedEx, UPS and other transportation partners. "Because of our growth and the sheer amount of packages, we are supplementing our transportation needs," Clark said.

The company has been furiously building out distribution centers, where workers and robots pull products off shelves and package them for delivery, as well as smaller sorting plants, which

arrange packages by ZIP code for faster delivery. It has a network of more than 125 fulfillment centers worldwide.

Amazon recently reported a second-quarter profit of \$857 million on \$30 billion in revenue. The company doesn't yet have plans to carry packages for others but says it's constantly eval-

uating its situation. Amazon has not been shy about competing in businesses areas far-flung from its e-commerce roots. "Once you have those planes, it certainly creates the opportunity for new products for customers," Clark said, adding: "Stay tuned and we'll see what happens in the future." — AP



SEATTLE: The Amazon.com "smile" logo is shown on the tail of a Boeing 767 "Prime Air" cargo plane parked on display Thursday, Aug. 4, 2016, in a Boeing hangar. — AP

GUESS WHAT HAPPENED NEXT: FACEBOOK BATTLES 'CLICKBAIT'

NEW YORK: Facebook is taking another stab at ridding users' news feeds of "clickbait," the links and headlines that ask readers to "guess what happened next" but don't provide any useful information, tempting people to click if they want to find out anything.

The world's largest social media company last tried this in 2014, when it announced that it was improving users' news feed to help them find what was "interesting and relevant" and weed out "spammy" stories.

It looks like that didn't work as well as it should have. Facebook Inc. said on Thursday it is now using a system that identifies phrases commonly used in

"clickbait" headlines. These range from "... and his reaction was priceless!" to "... What happens next is hard to believe." It will also consider items "clickbait" if a headline exaggerates information or is misleading. For example, Facebook notes that the headline "Apples Are Actually Bad For You?!" is misleading because apples are only bad if you eat too many of them every day.

From there, Facebook built a system that determines what phrases are commonly used in clickbait headlines that are not used in other headlines. "This is similar to how many email spam filters work," wrote

Alex Peysakhovich, research scientist, and Kristin Hendrix, user experience researcher, in a blog post. Links from websites and Facebook pages that are consistently posting clickbait will appear lower in users' news feeds, so they are less likely to be seen. If a site stops posting such headlines, though, Facebook's software will learn this, too, and the links will appear higher up. Will this new system work? It's possible, though just as some spammers continue to evade spam filters, some clickbait factories are likely to continue getting around Facebook's anti-clickbait formulas. — AP

GEEKS WIN MILLIONS FOR TEACHING COMPUTERS TO BATTLE EACH OTHER

LAS VEGAS: A software program dubbed "Mayhem" was poised to win the final round of a three-year contest to teach computers to launch and defend against cyber attacks, earning a \$2 million prize for the team that wrote the winning code.

The event, known as the Cyber Grand Challenge, concluded Thursday evening in a Las Vegas convention center ballroom after a digital battle among software programs running on seven supercomputers on a stage in a Las Vegas ballroom.

Thousands of geeks watched as announcers presented a play-by-play account of the competition. It took place ahead of Friday's start of Def Con, a hacking convention expected to draw more than 20,000 people to two sprawling Las Vegas convention centers.

Sponsored by DARPA

The hacking competition was sponsored by DARPA, or the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, the US military laboratory credited with creating the Internet. DARPA dubbed it the world's first "capture the flag" hacking contest played solely by computers. Its goal was to stimulate development of technologies for automating the process of protecting computer networks against cyber attacks.

Previous DARPA contests include one for self-driving vehicles that is widely credited with kick-starting the now robust autonomous-vehicle industry. The hacking challenge included 96 rounds in which computers were charged with examining software programs, identifying bugs, patching them and finding ways to attack rival machines.

DARPA said it hoped the contest would speed the slow process of identifying and patching real-world bugs. It can take more than a year from the time a vulnerability is uncovered until a vendor releases a software patch, according to DARPA.

That delay gives hackers time to attack unprotected systems, one factor that security experts say has contributed to the surge in cyber attacks. "Mayhem" was provisionally named winner of the competition. Organizers said they would review the results overnight and confirm the results on Friday.

The winning program was created by a team of eight computer experts from San Francisco and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, who are affiliated with Carnegie Mellon University. Mayhem will compete with teams of humans in the Def Con capture the flag contest, which starts on Friday. It is the first time the elite competition has included a computer.

Second place went to a program dubbed Xandra, created by security experts from the University of Virginia and GrammaTech Inc, earning them a \$1 million prize. A program known as Mech Phish, which was born at the University of California, placed third, earning its creators \$750,000. — Reuters

JEEP HACKERS BACK AT BLACK HAT WITH NEW AND SCARIER METHOD COMPANY ADMIRES THE PAIR'S CREATIVITY

LAS VEGAS: A pair of well-known hackers has found another way to take control of a Jeep Cherokee - this time while it's moving at high speed.

Charlie Miller and Chris Valasek grabbed headlines last year by showing how they could kill a Jeep Cherokee's engine while it was traveling down a highway. The news prompted an embarrassing recall of 1.4 million Jeeps and other vehicles by parent company Fiat Chrysler.

In front of a packed lecture hall at the Black Hat hacker conference on Thursday in Las Vegas, the pair demonstrated how they could again take control of the same 2014 Jeep Cherokee they hacked the year before. This time they sent false messages to its internal network, overriding the correct ones.

That allowed them to do new - and scarier - things, such as making the vehicle turn sharply while it was speeding down a country road. They also were able to make the vehicle unintentionally speed up, or remotely slam on its brakes. "If you can steer a car at any speed, that's pretty dangerous," Miller said, as video showed the Jeep turning so hard and fast it left skid marks. Another turn sent it into a ditch alongside a Midwestern cornfield.

The pair's previous hack only allowed them to do similar things if the Jeep was moving slower than 5 mph, making for a much less dangerous scenario. This time, it was more about

reverse engineering than actual hacking. They dissected why the vehicle's safety systems prevented remote attempts to yank the car's steering wheel or slam on its brakes if it was moving at more than 5 mph, but not at lower speeds, then looked for a way around that.

Admired the creativity

Fiat Chrysler said that while the company admired the pair's creativity, Thursday's presentation didn't show any new ways to breach the Jeep remotely. It also argued that the attack couldn't have been carried out remotely because of fixes made after the previous hack, which is something Miller and Valasek dispute.

The automaker added that the methods Miller and Valasek used were costly, time consuming and required extensive technical expertise. The pair acknowledged that they did put quite a bit of time and effort into their hack and that it's not something the average person needs to worry about falling victim to.

For their part, Miller and Valasek, who now work for the ride-hailing service Uber, said that after four years of hacking cars together, they've decided to move on. They encouraged other hackers to pick up where they left off. "There's no reason to think that this car company, or just American cars, is the only one that could be hacked," Miller said. — AP

X-RAY UNCOVERS HIDDEN PORTRAIT BENEATH FAMED DEGAS PAINTING

SYDNEY: A powerful X-ray technique has unveiled a hidden portrait beneath a painting by French impressionist painter Edward Degas. An article published this week in the online journal Scientific Reports reveals an image concealed behind Degas "Portrait of a Woman" is, in fact, a portrait of another woman. Australian researchers believe she is Emma Dobigny, one of the painter's favorite models.

Experts have long known that Degas painted the famed portrait over another image. As the painting aged, the faint outline of what appeared to be another woman began leaking through the top layers of paint.

Staff at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne asked scientists from Australian Synchrotron to scan the painting with a high-definition X-ray beam produced by a particle accelerator called a synchrotron to unveil the image. — AP

SYDNEY: This undated photo provided by Australian Synchrotron and the National Gallery of Victoria shows an image appears, with X-ray fluorescence microscopy, beneath Edgar Degas' Portrait of a Woman. — AP





03:30 Ideal
04:00 I Want My Wife Back
04:35 Father Brown
05:30 Doctors
09:00 Eastenders
11:05 Doctor Who
13:35 Casualty
14:30 Doctors
15:30 Father Brown
18:00 Doctors
18:30 Eastenders
19:05 Holby City
20:05 New Tricks
22:00 New Tricks
22:55 Undercover
23:55 Doctors
00:30 Eastenders
01:00 New Tricks

11:00 Impractical Jokers
11:25 Hungry Investors
12:15 Hungry Investors
13:05 Tosh.0
13:30 Tosh.0
13:55 Tosh.0
14:20 Impractical Jokers
14:45 Lip Sync Battle
15:10 Key And Peele
15:35 Workaholics
16:00 Workaholics
16:30 Workaholics
16:55 Key And Peele
17:20 Key And Peele
17:50 Key And Peele
18:15 Key And Peele
18:39 Key And Peele
19:03 Tattoo Disasters
19:26 Tattoo Disasters
19:50 Lip Sync Battle
20:37 I Live With Models
21:00 The Daily Show - Global Edition
21:30 South Park
21:54 Another Period
22:18 Tosh.0
22:42 Tosh.0
23:05 Inside Amy Schumer
23:30 The Daily Show - Global Edition
00:00 Kyle Kinane: I Liked His Old Stuff
Better
00:50 South Park
01:15 Another Period
01:40 The Daily Show - Global Edition
02:05 Tosh.0
02:30 Another Period



03:00 Key And Peele
03:25 Tosh.0
03:50 Tosh.0
04:15 Disorderly Conduct: Video On
Patrol
05:05 Gym Rescue
05:55 Impractical Jokers
06:20 Key And Peele
06:50 Tosh.0
07:15 Tosh.0
07:40 Disorderly Conduct: Video On
Patrol
08:30 Gym Rescue
09:20 Key And Peele
09:45 Tosh.0
10:10 Tosh.0
10:35 Tosh.0

03:40 How Do They Do It?
06:00 Fat N' Furious: Rolling Thunder
06:50 Fat N' Furious: Rolling Thunder
07:40 Fast N' Loud
10:10 Gold Divers
11:00 Yukon Men



11:50 Outback Truckers
12:40 Auction Hunters
14:45 Dallas Car Sharks
16:50 Alaskan Bush People
17:40 The Last Alaskans Look Back
19:20 World's Top 5
20:10 Incredible Engineering Blunders:
Fixed
21:00 Alaskan Bush People
21:50 Railroad Alaska
22:40 Siberian Cut
23:30 Worst-Case Scenario
00:45 Impossible Engineering



Discovery Science HD
03:00 Mega Builders
03:48 Smash Lab
04:36 How It's Made
05:24 How The Universe Works
06:12 How Do They Do It?
06:36 Food Factory
07:00 How Do They Do It?
07:26 Food Factory
09:26 Mythbusters
13:26 How Do They Do It?
15:26 Extreme Engineering
16:14 Mega World
17:02 Mega Builders
17:50 Industrial Junkie
18:15 Industrial Junkie
18:40 Mega Engineering
19:30 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
20:20 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
21:10 Through The Wormhole With Morgan Freeman
22:00 How The Universe Works
22:50 How The Universe Works
23:40 Extreme Engineering
00:30 Mega World
01:20 Mega Builders
02:10 Industrial Junkie

02:35 Industrial Junkie



03:00 Vanity Fair Confidential
03:48 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
04:36 True Crime With Aphrodite
10:20 Web Of Lies
11:10 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
12:00 The Perfect Murder
15:20 True Crime With Aphrodite Jones
17:00 California Investigator
17:50 Heartbreakers
18:40 Murder Comes To Town
19:30 A Crime To Remember
20:20 Deadline: Crime With Tamron Hall
21:10 Web Of Lies
22:00 House Of Horrors: Kidnapped
22:50 A Haunting
23:40 The Haunted
00:30 Scored: Crimes Of Passion



03:15 The Hive
03:20 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 Hank Zipzer
06:25 Jessie
06:50 Disney Mickey Mouse
06:55 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
07:20 Dog With A Blog
07:45 Bunk'd
08:10 Austin & Ally
08:35 Backstage
09:00 Alex & Co.
09:25 Girl Meets World
09:50 Liv And Maddie
10:15 Binny And The Ghost
10:40 Cars
12:40 Descendants Wicked World
12:45 Austin & Ally
14:25 Jessie
14:50 Jessie
15:15 Girl Meets World
15:40 Girl Meets World
16:05 Descendants Wicked World
16:10 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
16:35 Miraculous Tales Of Ladybug And Cat Noir
17:00 Gravity Falls
17:25 Pixel Perfect
18:55 The 7D
19:05 Austin & Ally
19:30 Jessie
19:55 Liv And Maddie
20:20 Mako Mermaids
20:45 Good Luck Charlie
21:10 H2O: Just Add Water
22:00 Binny And The Ghost
22:25 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
23:10 Hank Zipzer
23:35 Binny And The Ghost
00:00 Violetta
00:45 The Hive
00:50 Sabrina Secrets Of A Teenage Witch
01:40 Hank Zipzer
02:05 Binny And The Ghost
02:30 Violetta



003:10 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 Jungle Cubs
08:05 Sofia The First

08:30 Miles From Tomorrow
08:40 PJ Masks
09:10 Doc McStuffins
09:40 Doc McStuffins
09:55 Minnie's Bow-Toons
10:00 Sofia The First
11:00 The Lion Guard
11:30 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
12:30 Gummi Bears
13:00 Miles From Tomorrow
16:00 Doc McStuffins
16:25 Doc McStuffins
16:55 Sofia The First
17:25 Sofia The First
17:50 The Lion Guard
18:15 Jake And The Never Land Pirates
19:00 PJ Masks
19:30 Mickey Mouse Clubhouse
20:00 Doc McStuffins
20:30 Sofia The First
21:00 PJ Masks
21:30 Aladdin
22:00 Jungle Cubs
22:25 Gummi Bears
22:50 Zou
23:05 Henry Hugglemonster
23:20 Calimero
23:35 Zou
23:50 Loopdidoo
00:05 Art Attack
00:30 Henry Hugglemonster
00:45 Calimero
01:00 Zou
01:15 Loopdidoo
01:30 Art Attack
02:00 Calimero
02:15 Zou
02:30 Loopdidoo
02:45 Art Attack



06:00 Booster
06:10 Super Matrak
06:35 Super Matrak
07:00 Pokemon Bw: Adventures In Unova
07:25 K.C. Undercover
07:50 Guardians Of The Galaxy
08:15 Supa Strikas
08:40 Kirby Buckets
09:10 Mighty Med
09:35 Lab Rats
10:00 Lab Rats
10:25 K.C. Undercover
11:20 Supa Strikas
11:45 Supa Strikas
12:10 Gamer's Guide To Pretty...
13:00 Bug's Life, A
14:40 Toy Story Toons
14:45 Supa Strikas
15:10 Disney Mickey Mouse
15:15 Gamer's Guide To Pretty...
17:25 K.C. Undercover
17:50 Annedroids
18:15 Gamer's Guide To Pretty...
18:40 K.C. Undercover
19:05 Disney Mickey Mouse
19:10 Gravity Falls
19:35 Pickle And Peanut
20:00 Lab Rats
20:25 Supa Strikas
20:55 K.C. Undercover
21:20 Gamer's Guide To Pretty...
21:45 Guardians Of The Galaxy
22:10 Marvel Avengers Assemble
22:40 Disney Mickey Mouse



03:00 Man Fire Food
03:30 Man Fire Food
04:00 Chopped
05:00 Guy's Grocery Games
06:00 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
06:30 Roadtrip With G. Garvin
07:00 Chopped
08:00 Amazing Wedding Cakes
09:00 The Kitchen
10:00 Siba's Table: Fast Feasts
11:00 The Pioneer Woman
12:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
14:00 Chopped
15:00 Man Fire Food
16:30 Guy's Big Bite
17:00 Siba's Table
18:00 Ace Of Cakes
19:00 Chopped
20:00 Kitchen Inferno
21:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives
22:00 Ace Of Cakes
23:00 Chopped
00:00 Kitchen Inferno
01:00 Diners, Drive-Ins And Dives

02:00 Ace Of Cakes



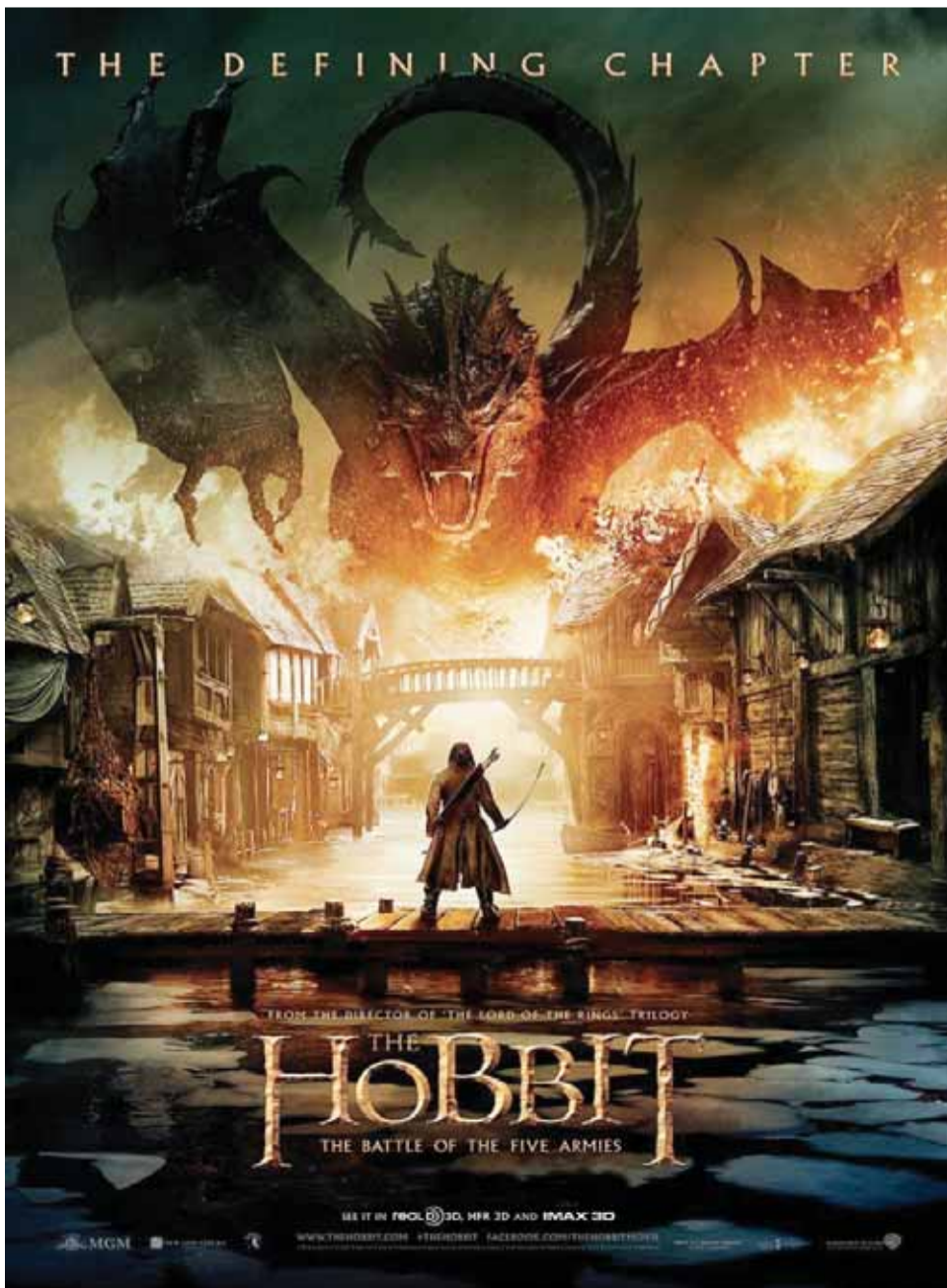
3:15 Just Jillian
04:10 E! NYC
05:05 E! NYC
06:00 Fashion Bloggers
06:25 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
08:20 E! News
09:15 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
13:05 E! News
14:05 Just Jillian
15:00 Botched
16:00 Botched
17:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
19:00 E! News
20:00 #RichKids Of Beverly Hills
21:00 E! NYC
22:00 Just Jillian
23:00 E! News
00:00 Keeping Up With The Kardashians
01:50 New Money
02:20 E! News



03:40 Swamp People
04:30 American Restoration
05:00 Sean Bean On Waterloo
06:00 Ice Road Truckers
07:40 Pawn Stars South Africa
08:30 Car Hunters
08:55 Ax Men
09:45 American Restoration
10:35 Leupu And Pitbull
11:25 Fifth Gear
12:15 The Curse Of Oak Island
13:05 American Pickers
13:55 Pawn Stars South Africa
14:20 Pawn Stars South Africa
14:45 Time Team
15:35 American Restoration
16:00 Fifth Gear
16:50 American Restoration
17:40 Shipping Wars
18:05 Shipping Wars
18:30 Pawn Stars
18:55 Storage Wars
19:20 American Restoration
20:10 The Curse Of Oak Island
21:00 Outlaw Chronicles: Hells Angels
21:50 Britain's Bloody Crown: War Of The Roses
22:40 Time Team
23:30 The Curse Of Oak Island
00:20 Mankind The Story Of All Of Us
01:10 Outlaw Chronicles: Hells Angels
02:00 Fifth Gear
02:50 American Restoration



OSN First Comedy HD
03:00 Cooper Barrett's Guide To Surviving
03:30 Cooper Barrett's Guide To Surviving
04:00 The Goldbergs
04:30 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
05:30 Community
06:00 George Lopez
06:30 Breaking In
07:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
08:00 The Goldbergs
08:30 Community
09:00 Cooper Barrett's Guide To Surviving
09:30 2 Broke Girls
10:00 New Girl
10:30 Breaking In
11:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
12:00 George Lopez
12:30 The Goldbergs
13:00 Community
13:30 Breaking In
14:00 Cooper Barrett's Guide To Surviving
14:30 2 Broke Girls
15:00 New Girl
15:30 Galavant
16:00 Last Man Standing
16:30 George Lopez
17:00 Late Night With Seth Meyers
18:00 The Simpsons
18:30 Uncle Buck
19:00 Baby Daddy
19:30 Crowded
20:00 The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon
21:00 Galavant



THE HOBBIT- THE BATTLE OF THE FIVE ARMIES ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 2016

- 21:30 Last Man Standing
- 22:00 Saturday Night Live
- 23:00 The Brink
- 23:30 Late Night With Seth Meyers
- 00:30 Galavant
- 01:00 Last Man Standing
- 01:30 Saturday Night Live
- 02:30 The Brink



- 03:00 Vinyl
- 04:00 Tell Me You Love Me
- 05:00 Recount
- 07:00 Empire Falls: Part I
- 09:00 Empire Falls: Part II
- 11:00 If These Walls Could Talk
- 13:00 Yesterday
- 15:00 Hello Ladies: The Movie
- 17:00 If These Walls Could Talk
- 19:00 Legends
- 20:00 Six Feet Under
- 21:00 The Bastard Executioner
- 22:00 Ja'mie: Private School Girl
- 22:30 The Brink
- 23:00 HBO Comedy Half-Hour
- 23:30 Def Poetry Jam
- 00:00 Legends
- 01:00 Six Feet Under
- 02:00 The Bastard Executioner



- 03:00 Outlander
- 04:00 Good Morning America
- 06:00 Shark Tank
- 07:00 Castle
- 08:00 Quantico
- 09:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 10:00 Suits
- 11:00 Castle
- 12:00 Quantico
- 13:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 14:00 Shark Tank
- 15:00 Live Good Morning America
- 16:00 Shark Tank
- 17:00 The Ellen DeGeneres Show
- 18:00 Quantico
- 19:00 The Night Shift
- 20:00 Shark Tank
- 21:00 Suits
- 22:00 Graceland
- 23:00 Mad Dogs
- 00:00 Castle
- 01:00 Suits
- 02:00 Graceland



- 04:00 Reclaim
- 06:00 Hidalgo
- 08:30 Into The Storm
- 10:30 Legendary: Tomb Of The Dragon
- 12:30 The Hobbit: The Battle Of The Five Armies
- 15:15 Hidalgo
- 17:45 Into The Storm
- 19:45 The Taking Of Pelham 123
- 22:00 Godzilla
- 00:15 Wrong Turn 6: Last Resort
- 02:00 Mine Games



- 04:00 The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy
- 06:00 Bubble Boy
- 08:00 Bringing Down The House
- 10:00 The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy
- 12:00 Spy Hard
- 13:45 The Hundred-Foot Journey
- 16:00 Bringing Down The House
- 18:00 Indian Summer
- 20:00 St. Vincent
- 22:00 A Million Ways To Die In The West
- 00:00 Hostile Hostages
- 02:00 Indian Summer



- OSN Movies Drama HD
- 03:00 Streetdance: All Stars
- 05:00 Draft Day
- 07:00 Escape (2012)
- 09:00 Experimenter
- 11:00 1911
- 13:00 Draft Day



RECLAIM ON OSN MOVIES ACTION HD

- 15:00 The Fold
- 17:00 Experimenter
- 19:00 Very Good Girls
- 21:00 Two Night Stand
- 23:00 Maps To The Stars
- 01:00 Jamie Marks Is Dead

- 14:45 The Best Of Me
- 16:45 Ant-Man
- 18:45 Tomorrowland
- 21:00 How To Make Love Like An Englishman
- 23:00 Child 44
- 01:15 Burying The Ex

- 06:10 Ancient Discoveries
- 07:00 World War II: Lost Films
- 08:00 Ancient Discoveries
- 09:00 The Universe
- 10:00 Ancient Impossible
- 11:00 Decoding The Past
- 12:00 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
- 13:00 World War II: Lost Films
- 14:00 Ancient Discoveries
- 15:00 The Universe
- 16:00 Ancient Impossible
- 17:00 Decoding The Past
- 18:00 Hangar 1: The UFO Files
- 19:00 Ancient Impossible

- 09:15 Kingdom Of The Apes
- 10:10 Strangest Bird Alive
- 11:05 Fish Tank Kings
- 12:00 Manta Mystery
- 12:55 Extreme Animal Babies
- 13:50 Natural Born Monsters
- 14:45 Queen Of The Baboons
- 15:40 Man V. Monster
- 16:35 World's Deadliest Animal

- 00:10 Mega Factories
- 01:00 Science Of Stupid
- 01:30 Science Of Stupid
- 02:00 Richard Hammond's Wildest Weather
- 02:55 Wicked Tuna



- 03:00 Pirates Of The Caribbean: Curse Of The Black Pearl
- 05:30 Big Hero 6
- 07:15 Freaky Friday
- 09:00 Wall-E
- 11:00 The Incredibles
- 13:00 The Princess And The Frog
- 15:00 Tangled
- 17:00 Charlie And The Chocolate Factory
- 19:00 Underdog
- 21:00 The Country Bears
- 23:00 Tangled
- 01:00 Underdog



- 03:45 Charlie And The Chocolate Factory
- 06:00 Hook
- 08:30 Moomins And The Comet Chase
- 10:00 The Unbeatables
- 11:45 Gladiators Of Rome
- 13:30 Charlie And The Chocolate Factory
- 15:30 Bams And The City Of Thieves
- 17:00 Blue Elephant 2
- 18:45 The Unbeatables
- 20:30 When Marnie Was There
- 22:15 Bams And The City Of Thieves
- 23:45 Blue Elephant 2
- 01:30 Moomins And The Comet Chase
- 02:45 When Marnie Was There



- 03:05 Emmerdale
- 03:55 Coronation Street
- 06:00 Tracey Ullman's Show
- 06:30 Don't Tell The Bride
- 08:30 Chopping Block
- 11:50 Grantchester
- 12:40 Midsomer Murders
- 14:20 The Syndicate
- 15:15 It's Not Rocket Science
- 16:05 Together
- 16:35 Tracey Ullman's Show
- 17:05 Don't Tell The Bride
- 19:00 The Syndicate
- 19:55 Together
- 20:25 Tracey Ullman's Show
- 20:50 It's Not Rocket Science
- 21:45 Grantchester
- 22:40 Coronation Street
- 01:00 Don't Tell The Bride
- 02:00 Coronation Street



- 04:15 The Love Punch
- 06:00 Manny
- 08:00 Cuban Fury
- 09:45 Next Goal Wins
- 11:30 For Greater Glory
- 14:00 Until She Came Along
- 16:00 Cuban Fury
- 18:00 The Giver
- 20:00 Blackhat
- 22:15 The Drop
- 00:15 Wild
- 02:15 The Giver



- 00:50 Explorer
- 04:45 Shark Men
- 05:40 Wicked Tuna
- 06:35 The Great Human Race
- 07:30 Kingdom Of The Oceans
- 08:25 Cesar To The Rescue
- 09:20 Cesar To The Rescue
- 10:15 Beast Hunter
- 11:10 Hasselhoff vs. The Berlin Wall
- 12:05 Surrender
- 13:00 Stalking Hitler's Generals
- 14:00 X-Ray Earth
- 15:00 Science Of Stupid
- 15:30 Science Of Stupid
- 16:00 Engineering Connections
- 17:00 Mega Factories
- 18:00 Locked Up Abroad
- 19:00 Breakout
- 20:00 Engineering Connections
- 20:50 Mega Factories
- 21:40 Locked Up Abroad
- 22:30 Breakout
- 23:20 Engineering Connections



- 03:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 03:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 03:48 Henry Danger
- 04:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 04:36 The Haunted Hathaways
- 05:00 Max & Shred
- 05:24 Henry Danger
- 05:48 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 06:12 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 06:36 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 07:00 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 07:24 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 07:48 Winx Club
- 08:12 Harvey Beaks
- 08:36 Breadwinners
- 09:00 Get Blake
- 09:24 Rabbids Invasion
- 09:48 Henry Danger
- 10:12 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 10:36 The Haunted Hathaways
- 11:00 Winx Club
- 11:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 11:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 12:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 12:36 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 13:00 Breadwinners
- 13:24 The Loud House
- 13:48 Harvey Beaks
- 14:12 Rabbids Invasion
- 14:36 Henry Danger
- 15:00 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 15:24 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 15:48 SpongeBob SquarePants
- 16:12 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 16:36 The Loud House
- 17:00 Sanjay And Craig
- 17:24 Locked Up Abroad
- 17:48 Breadwinners
- 18:12 Henry Danger
- 18:36 Nicky, Ricky, Dicky & Dawn
- 19:00 100 Things To Do Before High School
- 19:24 Game Shakers



- 03:00 Hot Pursuit
- 05:00 The Maze Runner
- 07:00 Barely Lethal
- 09:00 Hot Pursuit
- 10:45 Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes
- 13:00 Believe



- 03:40 Ancient Impossible
- 04:30 Decoding The Past
- 05:20 Hangar 1: The UFO Files



- 03:45 Strangest Bird Alive
- 04:40 Man V. Monster
- 05:35 Monkey Thieves
- 06:00 Monkey Thieves
- 06:30 Monster Fish
- 07:25 Monster Fish
- 08:20 Dr. K's Exotic Animal



Pastis creme puts lobster in a new light

By Elizabeth Karme

Fabulous Food - the kind that deserves upper-case F's - doesn't have to be complicated. One example: Grilled lobster with Pastis creme, a dish that's simple to prepare yet delivers big in the flavor department.

I created this recipe one summer when I was vacationing in Maine. I was eating lobster every night. I drink Pastis, an aperitif made with herbs and spices, so it was on hand. The Pastis, with a flavor similar to tarragon and licorice, makes a perfect cooking partner - especially with shellfish and green vegetables. (If you can't find Ricard Pastis, readily available Pernod has similar taste qualities.) Looking for a change of pace from lobster with drawn butter, I mixed my

Pastis with creme fraiche and basted the lobster. The result was so light and delicious that I made it again and again, and it is now my official summer recipe for grilled lobster.

The key to this recipe is cutting the hard cartilage from the belly of the lobster and cooking the lobster shell-side down the entire time. This will expose the meat for basting with the Pastis creme and prevent it from getting scorched by the grill. The easiest way to cut the cartilage out is to use sharp kitchen scissors and cut both the sides and at the end of the tail to remove the rectangular-shaped piece of cartilage. If you are looking for a pair of good all-purpose kitchen scissors, my favorite are made by Joyce Chen and Messermeister.

A note to remember: If you want to pre-

vent the lobster tails from curling up, insert a metal skewer through the tail and grill. Remove the skewer just before serving. This will keep the lobster tails straight and make them easier to baste.

Lobster Tail with Pastis Creme Ingredients

Start to finish: 20 minutes
Serves 4
Lobster:
4 lobster tails, 5-7 oz. each, defrosted if frozen
Olive oil
Salt
1 cup creme fraiche (homemade or purchased)
1/4 cup Ricard Pastis (or substitute Pernod)

4 sprigs fresh or 1 teaspoon dried tarragon

Preparation

Using kitchen scissors, cut the hard cartilage off the belly of the lobster. Cut on each side and across the tail to remove the long rectangular-shaped piece. Brush tails with oil, season lightly with kosher salt. Set aside. Meanwhile, make the Pastis creme by combining the creme fraiche and Pastis. Place the lobster on the cooking grate, shell side down, and grill until the shells begin to turn bright red, about 2 minutes. Spoon the Pastis creme generously into the belly of the tails. Continue grilling until the flesh is just cooked through, 5-6 minutes more. Remove from grill and garnish with a tablespoon of creme fraiche, top with fresh tarragon and serve at once. —AP

ABK SPONSORS KUWAIT BLIND ASSOCIATION'S SUMMER SPORTS

Al Ahli Bank of Kuwait (ABK) has joined hands with the Kuwait Blind Association to organize a series of summer sport activities for the visually impaired. The event will take place at the Association's premises on Sunday 7th August and will host a week-long sporting championship with a wide variety of activities and prizes for participants to enjoy.

Mr Fawzy Al Thunayan- GM Board Affairs at ABK said: "It is our pleasure to sponsor the Kuwait Blind Association sports initiative, as it falls in line with our Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) focus for 2016, which aims to support individuals with special needs, to raise awareness of the challenges they face and encourage social equality across the society". The Summer Championship for the Visually Impaired will offer swimming for men and women, goal ball for men and a table tennis tournament with categories for male and female players. Winners in each category will receive cash prizes, as well as medals and trophies.



DR ALI AL-JAAFAR ATTENDS HIROSHIMA PEACE MEMORIAL CEREMONY

Dr Ali Al-Jaafar from Kuwait University attended Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony on August 4th, 2016 with the cooperation of Mr Bantani, the Cultural Attache' at the Embassy of Japan to the state of Kuwait. During his courtesy visit from 4th to 6th August, Dr Ali donated his book "Children's literature and politics" to the Mayor of Hiroshima and Manager of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum with Mr Bantani. In his book, Dr Ali wrote about his experience of his last visit to Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony in 2000 and the strange relation between Hiroshima atomic bomb incident and the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.



ANNOUNCEMENT FROM INDIAN EMBASSY OF KUWAIT

Frequent visitors from Kuwait to India are strongly advised to avail 5-year or 1-year, multiple entry Business visa facilities to India. Visas granted by Embassy have been increasing due to streamlining of visa procedures, with immediate grant of 5-year and 1-year business visas (multiple entry) and 6-month tourist visas (multiple entry) to Kuwaiti nationals (as well as foreign nationals resident in Kuwait). All visas are granted within 72 hours.

As the visa work of Embassy has been outsourced to M/s CKGS, Kuwait since August 2014, applicants are advised to visit Passport and Visa Centres of CKGS at (a) Indian Visa and Passport Application Centre, 17 Floor, Behbahani Building, Sharq, Kuwait : Tel. No. 22440392 (e-mail: indiavisa.kuwait@ckgs.com) or ; (b) Indian Visa and Passport Application Centre, Complex Kais Alghanim, 4 Floor, Mecca Street, in front of Annod Complex, Fahaheel, Kuwait: Tel. No. 22909229 (e-mail: indiavisa.kuwait@ckgs.com). (c) Jleeb Al Showaikh (Abbasiya) 2nd Floor, Jleeb Al Shuyoukh Block 1, Street 1, Xcite building, Kuwait Tel. No. 24342428) (e-mail: indiavisa.kuwait@ckgs.com). The website of CKGS, Kuwait is <http://www.kw.ckgs.in>

The Indian Passport & Visa Service Provider, M/s Cox & Kings Services (CKGS), Kuwait has been providing visa services to Kuwaiti nationals and expatriates through their three centers - Sharq (City), Fahaheel and Abbasiya (Jleeb Al-Showaikh) as well as passport services to Indian community. The above centre functions from 8 AM - 12 noon and, thereafter, from 4 PM - 8PM on all working days. However, on closed holidays on Fridays and Saturday, the working hours are from 4 PM-8PM only. Attestation services are provided at Embassy premises only.

In emergency cases, Embassy will accept visa applications at its Visa Wing from applicants seeking urgent service. Embassy's Visa Officer may be contacted at Tel. No. 22550600 Extn. 279 and for passport related queries applicants may call First Secretary (Consular) at Mobile No. 97229948.



KINSHASA, CONGO: Residents of the Kisenso district line up to receive yellow fever vaccines on Thursday, July 21, 2016. —AP

UN BUNGLES RESPONSE TO YELLOW FEVER OUTBREAK IN AFRICA

1 MILLION VACCINES DISAPPEARED

KINSHASA, CONGO: As a yellow fever outbreak in central Africa exploded, 1 million vaccines disappeared in Angola. Thousands more vaccinations were delayed when accompanying syringes got waylaid. Ice packs to keep the shots potent went missing. And while the epidemic of the hemorrhagic fever spilled across international borders, a senior outbreak expert at the World Health Organization acknowledged their response had "lagged" for months.

Much like its fumbled response to the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa, the UN agency's efforts to stop yellow fever have been undermined by chronic mismanagement, according to internal UN emails and documents obtained by The Associated Press.

Some health officials now estimate they will be short about 22 million vaccines amid the worst yellow fever outbreak in decades. From Angola, the virus has since spread to Congo, with a total of 5,000 suspect cases and more than 450 deaths. The potential for the outbreak to be exported elsewhere remains high, since the disease is spreading largely unchecked in the Congolese capital of Kinshasa, a city of more than 10 million with strong international links. "We could have prevented this from happening," said Amanda McClelland, a senior emergency official at the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, also known as the IFRC. Unlike Ebola, there is a vaccine to stop yellow fever from spiraling out of control, and global agencies should have reacted faster, McClelland said. The vaccine takes effect about 10 days after it is administered.

The mostly mosquito-spread virus was largely wiped out from the West following the development of two vaccines in the 1930s, but still sparks epi-

demics in Africa and Latin America. On February 12, WHO announced an outbreak of yellow fever in the Angolan capital of Luanda. In a bid to snuff out the disease, WHO and partners quickly dispatched more than 6 million doses - the equivalent of the entire global emergency supply.

Detailed explanation

To ensure the vaccines reached those who needed them, WHO and partners requested a detailed explanation of their use. But Angola failed to account for more than 1 million doses, internal emails between WHO and its colleagues show. "How can this happen in a situation of (vaccine) shortage?" WHO's Sergio Yactayo wrote to his colleagues at UNICEF, Doctors Without Borders, IFRC and WHO. He speculated that the shots had probably been taken by local politicians, the military or resold on the private market.

In an emailed statement this week, WHO and partners said the million missing doses were "not unexpected" in such a mass vaccination campaign. But Angolan officials disputed that any vaccines were missing at all.

"There has been no diversion (of the vaccines) whatsoever," said Luis Gomes Sambo, the country's health minister. He said the government has careful accounting of where and when the shots were administered and nothing has disappeared.

As the disease tore through Angola and Congo in the spring, UN officials made a series of avoidable mistakes that stalled control efforts, including sending vaccines without syringes. "Sending the vaccines without the vaccination material is 'USELESS,'" WHO's Angola representative Hernando Agudelo complained to his colleagues in a May email.

Quite alarming

In Congo, WHO logistician Guillaume Queyras described a "quite alarming" situation where workers were unable to guarantee that vaccines were being kept at the right temperature to preserve their effectiveness.

With competing vaccine requests from worried countries, experts began to consider diluting the shot. "WE HAVE A MAJOR PROBLEM ON OUR HANDS," wrote UNICEF's Robert Kezaala in an all-caps email to colleagues at WHO and elsewhere. In Geneva, senior WHO staffer Pat Drury acknowledged to colleagues that the agency's response had "lagged behind the outbreak for months." About one month later, an internal memo to WHO Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan relayed more alarming news: Congo's only yellow fever laboratory in Kinshasa had halted operations two weeks earlier, leaving WHO unable to track where yellow fever was spreading in the country.

Facing pressure from Doctors Without Borders, Chan wrote directly to its International President, Dr. Joanne Liu. In a July 16 message, Chan listed five measures WHO had taken to restart the Kinshasa facility. But despite her reassurances, the yellow fever lab was still shuttered in late July.

Laboratory director Dr. Jean-Jacques Muyembe Tamfum, said Monday that there was a backlog of 300 untested samples, explaining that diagnostic materials shipped to the lab had been mistakenly returned.

With limited yellow fever vaccines in the emergency stockpile, WHO is now recommending doses be diluted, even though a draft document in May concluded that doing so "should be forgotten because of the programmatic and safety concerns." — AP

ZIKA VACCINES WORK IN MONKEYS, BOOSTING HOPE ON PEOPLE

NEW YORK: Three experimental Zika vaccines protected monkeys against infection from the virus, an encouraging sign as research moves into studies in people.

The success in monkeys, which involved a traditional vaccine and two more cutting-edge ones, "brings us one step closer to a safe and effective Zika vaccine," said Dr. Dan Barouch of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston. "But of course, there's a lot more work to do."

Barouch and others reported the results in a paper released Thursday by the journal *Science*. One of the vaccines is expected to enter preliminary human studies this year. At least two other vaccines have reached that point already. Inovio Pharmaceuticals announced last week that it had injected its first participant. The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases gave its first vaccine Tuesday. Both studies focus on assessing vaccine safety. Efforts to develop a vaccine began after a massive Zika outbreak last year in Brazil, which showed that infection of pregnant women can harm fetal brain development. In the monkey study, one vaccine followed the traditional approach, using a dead Zika virus to train the body for fighting off infection. It was injected into eight rhesus monkeys and followed by a booster shot a month later. A month after the booster, the monkeys got a dose of Zika virus.

No sign of virus

None showed any sign of the virus in their blood for the week they were followed. In contrast, eight other monkeys that had gotten a sham vaccine became infected. That vaccine, developed at the Walter Reade Army Institute of Research in Silver Spring, Maryland, is expected to begin human testing in October.

The other two vaccines, produced at Beth Israel and not yet scheduled for human studies, delivered only the DNA of a single virus gene. That spurred the monkeys' bodies to pump out a protein found in the Zika virus, which in turn gave their immune systems to attack on the full virus.

The two vaccines completely protected a total of eight monkeys against infection. The results "add some encouragement that this might work in humans," said Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the federal infectious disease institute, who was not involved in the study. The total protection is "good news," he said. Experts said it's impossible to know when a Zika vaccine will be approved for use. "It's not going to be this year, for sure," Barouch said. Fauci said it might be early 2018 if not later. —AP

CDC DIRECTOR: MIAMI MOSQUITOES SUCCUMBING TO AERIAL SPRAYS

DORAL, FLORIDA: The head of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says aerial spraying of the insecticide naled is killing many mosquitoes in a Miami neighborhood where the insects apparently transmitted Zika to 15 people.

Dr. Tom Frieden says aerial spraying that began Thursday quickly killed adult mosquitoes that pesticides on the ground couldn't reach.

Puerto Rico's governor wouldn't authorize naled's use because of environmental concerns, despite widespread Zika infections there. Frieden says minuscule amounts sprayed at dawn and dusk have no effect on people.

Frieden says Miami's infections were limited to a 500-square-foot area in the Wynwood neighborhood. He didn't give details about the nature of that small area. Gov. Rick Scott says a 10-block corner of the district has been cleared of active infections. Florida's Department of Health says there's no evidence of mosquitoes transmitting Zika elsewhere in Miami. —AP

PREGNANT WOMEN ARE FEARFUL LIVING IN MIAMI'S ZIKA HOT ZONE

'IT'S REALLY CRAZY'

MIAMI: Jessica Ardente waited 36 years to have her first baby. Her parents will visit in two weeks to watch their grandson's ultrasound. There are cribs and car seats to shop for, a nursery to decorate, and bottles, diapers and clothes to buy.

And now, on top of everything else, there is Zika to worry about.

Ardente lives in the one-square-mile section of Miami that health officials are urging pregnant women to avoid because of the mosquito-borne illness, which can cause severe birth defects, including stunted heads.

"You can take every step you can trying to take care of yourself with your diet and exercise and going to your prenatal appointments, but now I have to worry about mosquitoes and going outside," a four-months-pregnant Ardente said, petting her dog as she sat on the couch in her one-bedroom apartment. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has warned expectant mothers to steer clear of the city's Wynwood neighborhood, where at least 15 people are believed to have been infected with the Zika virus through mosquito bites in the first such cases on record in the mainland US

An inconvenience

Avoiding the neighborhood of trendy shops, galleries and restaurants might be just an inconvenience for pregnant women who live outside Wynwood. But Ardente said that it's a near-impossible request for her, and that she's staying put despite offers from friends to crash at their places. "What do you do when you live there? You can't stay out of that area," the single mother-to-be said. "It's scary, but I'm not going to not leave my house. I'm just trying to be careful." She smiles while showing off red-



MIAMI: In this Tuesday, Aug. 2, 2016 file photo, nurse practitioner Juliana Duque uses a fetal heart monitor on a patient who is in her first trimester of pregnancy at the Borinquen Medical Center. —AP

and-blue baby onesies adorned with colorful giraffes - a gift from a friend. For now, other than her belly, it's the only evidence in the apartment that she is pregnant.

Her doctor has told her to consider hiring a dog walker, but she insists on sticking to her routine while taking precautions. She puts on bug spray and wears long pants and long sleeves every morning and evening, despite the

sweltering summer heat, when she walks the dog. It also means more doctor visits plus frequent blood and urine tests. And she's working out indoors now instead of at a studio that keeps its bay doors open. US health authorities have said they don't expect major outbreaks in this country like those seen in Latin America and the Caribbean. But concerns mounted after experts admitted Tuesday that despite aggres-

sive spraying, they are having a difficult time eradicating the mosquitoes that spread the illness. The *Aedes aegypti* mosquito can breed in just a bottle cap of standing water.

Hospitals and clinics in the area have been swamped with calls and visits. "It's really crazy," said Dr. Christine Curry, an obstetrician-gynecologist at the University of Miami Health System who is treating a dozen patients with the virus, none of them infected locally. She said the staff "has been inundated with questions to the point that we are being doing education sessions for people who answer the phones about Zika so they can help the worried patients triage their concerns." Zika tests are in such demand that Gov.

Rick Scott ordered county health departments Wednesday to start offering them free to pregnant women statewide. Juliana Duque, a nurse practitioner, said the waiting room at the Wynwood-area community health center where she works is filled with nervous pregnant patients. Her clinic has tested hundreds of women, some with possible symptoms and some without, but so far nobody has tested positive. "We need to realize for how advanced we are and what great support we have, how vulnerable we can be. You are at risk. Things can happen. Even though you may not have the symptoms, you could be at risk and you need to be tested," Duque said.

Zika symptoms can include fever, rash, headaches, joint pain and inflamed eyes. Most adults report mild or no symptoms, and the illness is usually no big deal to those who are not pregnant or considering becoming pregnant. There is no vaccine. A fearful Gabriella Acevedo, who is eight months pregnant, said she is not planning to leave her Wynwood home. — AP

CLINIC
PAGE



Kuwait Times

248 33 199

Al-Jabriya - Block 1A - St. 1 - Mazaya Building - 15th Floor - Clinic B - Tel.: 22269369 - Fax: 22269368



KNCC PROGRAMME FROM THURSDAY TO WEDNESDAY (04/08/2016 TO 10/08/2016)

SHARQIA-1 MIN 30 SANA MIN 30 SANA MIN 30 SANA MIN 30 SANA THE CONJURING 2	12:30 PM 3:30 PM 6:30 PM 9:30 PM 12:30 AM
SHARQIA-2 SUICIDE SQUAD SUICIDE SQUAD -3D THE LEGEND OF TARZAN SUICIDE SQUAD SUICIDE SQUAD -3D SUICIDE SQUAD	12:00 PM 2:30 PM 5:00 PM 7:15 PM 9:45 PM 12:15 AM
SHARQIA-3 THE LEGEND OF TARZAN THE LEGEND OF TARZAN JASON BOURNE THE LEGEND OF TARZAN ABU SHANAB THE LEGEND OF TARZAN	1:00 PM 3:15 PM 5:30 PM 8:00 PM 10:15 PM 12:45 AM
MUHALAB-1 MIN 30 SANA MIN 30 SANA ABU SHANAB MIN 30 SANA MIN 30 SANA	1:00 PM 4:00 PM 7:00 PM 9:15 PM 12:15 AM
MUHALAB-2 THE LEGEND OF TARZAN ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS THE LEGEND OF TARZAN THE CONJURING 2 THE LEGEND OF TARZAN THE LEGEND OF TARZAN	12:30 PM 2:45 PM 5:00 PM 7:15 PM 10:00 PM 12:30 AM
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FANAR-2 ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS THE LEGEND OF TARZAN ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS THE LEGEND OF TARZAN THE LEGEND OF TARZAN THE LEGEND OF TARZAN	12:30 PM 3:00 PM 5:15 PM 7:30 PM 9:45 PM 12:05 AM
FANAR-3 NERVE FINDING DORY SULTAN- HINDI NERVE NERVE MIN 30 SANA	11:30 AM 1:30 PM 3:45 PM 7:00 PM 9:15 PM 11:30 PM
FANAR-4 SUICIDE SQUAD SUICIDE SQUAD SUICIDE SQUAD SUICIDE SQUAD SUICIDE SQUAD SUICIDE SQUAD	11:30 AM 2:00 PM 4:30 PM 7:00 PM 9:30 PM 12:15 AM
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360° 2 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: OUT OF THE SHADOWS 12:00 PM TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES: OUT OF THE SHADOWS 2:30 PM SULTAN- HINDI SULTAN- HINDI THE CONJURING 2	5:00 PM 8:15 PM 11:30 PM
360° 3 ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS FINDING DORY ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS FINDING DORY ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS ALICE THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS	12:45 PM 3:00 PM 5:15 PM 7:30 PM 9:45 PM 12:05 AM
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AL-KOUT.2 MIN 30 SANA MIN 30 SANA MIN 30 SANA MIN 30 SANA MIN 30 SANA	12:00 PM 3:15 PM 6:15 PM 9:15 PM 12:15 AM

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Linguntla Babu S/o Late Venkataiah, holder of Indian Passport No: K9653001, have changed my name to M.N. Reddaiah Naidu S/o Late Venkataiah. Address: Mudrapalle (Vi & Po), Penagalur (Mandal), Kadapa (Dist), AP. 5-8-2016

I, Mukil Arasan, holder of Indian Passport No. G9180281, resident at No: 19, R.O.B. main street, Hall Garden, Royepettai, Chennai - 14, India. Have changed my name from

Mukil Arasan in future, I will be known as Abdul Rahman. (C 5197)

I have changed my name as Uppalapati Subbarayudu Raju, instead of Uppalapati Subbarayudu. Any objections please contact below address: Uppalapati Subbarayudu Raju, S/o Uppalapati Chengalraju, D/No: 3/74, Passport No: G3449557, Gangarajapuram (VI), Raghavarajapuram (P.O), Rly Kodur (M), Kadapa (Dst), Andhra Pradesh, India. (C 5196) 2-8-2016

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr:	03:43	Asr:	15:30
Shorook	05:11	Maghrib:	18:37
Duhr:	11:54	Isha:	20:01

EMERGENCY 112

Automated enquiry about the Civil ID card is **1889988**

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



Flight Schedule

DIAL 161 FOR AIRPORT INFORMATION

In case you are not travelling, your proper cancellation of bookings will help other passengers use seats

Arrival Flights on Saturday 6/8/2016

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
MSC	415	Sohag	00:10
THY	772	Istanbul	00:10
JZR	239	Amman	00:20
CLX	267	Beirut	00:30
KLX	852	Luxembourg	00:35
KKK	718	Istanbul	00:35
FDB	069	Dubai	00:55
DLH	635	Doha	01:00
QTR	1086	Doha	01:15
JZR	539	Cairo	01:20
SAI	441	Lahore	01:30
KAC	1802	Cairo	01:30
PGT	858	Istanbul	01:40
RJA	642	Amman	01:45
ETH	620	Addis Ababa	01:45
THY	1416	Bursa	04:05
JZR	555	Alexandria	04:15
FEG	931	Alexandria	05:00
DHX	170	Bahrain	05:10
THY	770	Istanbul	05:15
SYR	341	Damascus	06:00
JZR	529	Asyut	06:00
PAL	668	Manila/Dubai	06:25
KAC	412	Manila/Bangkok	06:30
BAW	157	London	06:40
JZR	1541	Cairo	07:10
FDB	5061	Dubai	07:15
JZR	503	Luxor	07:25
KAC	382	Delhi	07:30
KAC	346	Ahmedabad	07:35
KAC	204	Lahore	07:40
KAC	206	Islamabad	07:40
SVA	512	Riyadh	07:50
FDB	053	Dubai	07:50
KAC	302	Mumbai	07:50
KAC	332	Trivandrum	08:15
KAC	344	Chennai	08:15
KAC	362	Colombo	08:20
KAC	352	Kochi	08:20
UAE	855	Dubai	08:25
ETD	301	Abu Dhabi	09:00
KAC	284	Dhaka	09:00
ABY	125	Sharjah	09:05
QTR	1070	Doha	09:20
RJA	648	Amman	09:30
FDB	055	Dubai	09:40
SAW	703	Damascus	09:45
CCE	345	Sohag	10:00
UAE	873	Dubai	10:40
GFA	213	Bahrain	10:40
IRM	1188	Mashhad	11:10
RBG	553	Alexandria	11:30
JZR	165R	Dubai	11:50
IAW	157	Al Najaf	11:55
FDB	075	Dubai	12:25
MSC	401	Alexandria	12:30
JZR	241	Amman	12:30
UAE	871	Dubai	12:45
FEG	933	Sohag	12:55
MSR	610	Cairo	13:00
RJD	132	Abu Dhabi	13:05
THY	766	Istanbul	13:10
KKK	712	ABD	13:50
BON	101	Sarajevo	13:55
KNE	231	Riyadh	14:00
KAC	672	Dubai	14:00
QTR	107	Doha	14:05
MSR	575	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:15
GFA	221	Bahrain	14:20
FDB	057	Dubai	14:20
JZR	779	Jeddah	14:25
KAC	512	Mashhad	14:30
MSC	507	HRG	14:45
KAC	540	Sharm el-Sheikh	14:50
KAC	788	Jeddah	15:00
KNE	529	Jeddah	15:05
KNE	683	Madinah	15:05
ETD	303	Abu Dhabi	15:10
OMA	645	Muscat	15:10
ABY	127	Sharjah	15:35
UAE	857	Dubai	15:45
NIA	251	Alexandria	15:50
RJA	640	Amman	16:00
FDB	051	Dubai	16:10
QTR	1072	Doha	16:15
JZR	535	Cairo	16:20
JZR	257	Beirut	16:25
KNE	531	Jeddah	16:35
JZR	787	Riyadh	16:45
KAC	562	Amman	16:55
KAC	680	Muscat	16:55
KAC	118	New York	17:00
SAW	705	Damascus	17:05
IRA	669	Mashhad	17:10
SVA	510	Riyadh	17:15
JZR	357	Mashhad	17:30
GFA	215	Bahrain	17:30
JZR	177	Dubai	17:45
KAC	792	Madinah	17:45
JZR	777	Jeddah	17:50
SVA	500	Jeddah	17:55
QTR	1080	Doha	17:55
KAC	176	Geneva/Frankfurt	18:20
MSR	620	Cairo	18:30
KAC	774	Riyadh	18:35

KAC	786	Jeddah	18:35
KAC	502	Beirut	18:35
IRM	1180	Mashhad	18:45
CLX	856	Luxembourg	18:50
KAC	742	Dammam	18:50
KAC	542	Cairo	18:55
KAC	618	Doha	18:55
KAC	104	London	19:00
GFA	217	Bahrain	19:05
UAE	875	Dubai	19:05
FDB	063	Dubai	19:10
KAC	614	Bahrain	19:10
ABY	123	Sharjah	19:15
JAV	621	Amman	19:25
JAI	572	Mumbai	19:35
KAC	674	Dubai	19:45
FDB	059	Dubai	19:50
DLH	634	Frankfurt	20:05
ABY	121	Sharjah	20:10
KNE	381	Taif	20:10
MEA	402	Beirut	20:15
OMA	647	Muscat	20:20
JZR	189R	Dubai	20:25
MSR	618	Alexandria	20:30
QTR	1088	Doha	20:35
FDB	5053	Dubai	20:55
KAC	174	Munich	20:55
ETD	307	Abu Dhabi	21:05
UAE	859	Dubai	21:15
ALK	229	Colombo	21:20
KLM	415	Amsterdam	21:25
THY	764	Istanbul	21:30
KAC	676	Dubai	21:35
FDB	8053	Dubai	21:40
QTR	1082	Doha	21:55
GFA	219	Bahrain	22:00
KAC	564	Amman	22:05
NIA	151	Cairo	22:10
ETD	309	Abu Dhabi	22:10
JZR	125	Bahrain	22:15
AIC	987	Chennai/Hyderabad	22:25
KNE	533	Jeddah	22:45
JZR	185R	Dubai	22:55
JAI	574	Mumbai	23:20
MSR	614	Cairo	23:30
JZR	513	Sharm el-Sheikh	23:30
FDB	071	Dubai	23:35
JAD	301	Amman	23:45

Departure Flights on Saturday 6/8/2016

Airlines	Flt	Route	Time
976	Goa/Chennai		00:05
BBC	044	Dhaka	00:10
JZR	1540	Cairo	00:20
JAI	573	Mumbai	00:25
MSR	615	Cairo	00:30
FDB	072	Dubai	00:30
PIA	240	Sialkot	00:40
KLM	413	Amsterdam	01:05
MSC	416	Sohag	01:05
JZR	502	Luxor	01:15
KKK	719	ADB	01:35
THY	773	Istanbul	01:40
DLH	635	Frankfurt	02:00
CLX	852	Sharjah	02:05
SAI	442	Lahore	02:30
ETH	621	Addis Ababa	02:45
THY	765	Istanbul	02:45
PGT	859	Istanbul	02:55
UAE	854	Dubai	03:45
THY	769	Istanbul	03:45
RJA	645	Amman	03:55
MSC	502	Alexandria	04:00
OMA	644	Muscat	04:05
FDB	068	Dubai	04:05
ETD	306	Abu Dhabi	04:10
MSR	613	Cairo	04:15
KKK	6505	Istanbul	04:20
PGT	861	Istanbul	04:30
QTR	1077	Doha	04:35
THY	1465	Istanbul	06:00
FEG	934	Sohag	06:00
RJA	643	Amman	06:25
QTR	1087	Doha	06:30
THY	771	Istanbul	06:45
GFA	212	Bahrain	06:50
JZR	240	Amman	06:55
SYR	342	Damascus	07:00
FDB	070	Dubai	07:05
JZR	164R	Dubai	07:15
FDB	5062	Dubai	07:55
BAW	156	London	08:25
FDB	054	Dubai	08:30
KAC	173	Munich	08:35
KAC	511	Mashhad	08:40
JZR	778	Jeddah	08:50
KAC	539	Sharm el-Sheikh	08:50
SVA	513	Riyadh	08:50
JZR	256	Beirut	09:05
KAC	671	Dubai	09:15
KAC	787	Jeddah	09:30
JZR	534	Cairo	09:30
ABY	126	Sharjah	09:45
UAE	856	Dubai	09:50
KAC	101	London/New York	10:00
ETD	302	Abu Dhabi	10:05
RJA	649	Amman	10:15

QTR	1071	Doha	10:35
FDB	056	Dubai	10:40
SAW	704	Damascus	10:45
KAC	501	Beirut	11:00
CCE	346	Sohag	11:10
KAC	561	Amman	11:20
KAC	165	Rome/Paris	11:25
KAC	679	Muscat	11:25
GFA	214	Bahrain	11:35
JZR	356	Mashhad	11:40
KAC	541	Cairo	12:05
UAE	874	Dubai	12:10
RBG	554	Alexandria	12:10
JZR	776	Jeddah	12:15
IRM	1189	Mashhad	12:20
IAW	158	Al Najaf	12:55
KAC	785	Jeddah	13:00
KAC	791	Madinah	13:00
JZR	176	Dubai	13:10
FDB	076	Dubai	13:10
JZR	786	Riyadh	13:20
MSC	402	Alexandria	13:30
RJD	133	Abu Dhabi	13:50
FEG	932	Alexandria	13:55
MSR	611	Cairo	14:00
THY	767	Istanbul	14:10
UAE	872	Dubai	14:15
PAL	669	Dubai/Manila	14:45
KKK	713	Bursa	14:50
KNE	382	Taif	14:55
KAC	773	Riyadh	15:00
MSR	576	Sharm el-Sheikh	15:00
KAC	673	Dubai	15:05
FDB	058	Dubai	15:05
GFA	222	Bahrain	15:05
KAC	617	Doha	15:15
QTR	1079	Doha	15:15
KAC	741	Dammam	15:30
MSC	508	HRG	15:45
JZR	188R	Dubai	15:50
KNE	530	Jeddah	15:55
KAC	613	Bahrain	16:00
KNE	684	Madinah	16:00
BON	102	Sarajevo	16:05
OMA	646	Muscat	16:10
ABY	128	Sharjah	16:15
ETD	304	Abu Dhabi	16:20
KAC	563	Amman	16:30
NIA	252	Alexandria	16:50
RJA	641	Amman	16:55
KAC	675	Dubai	17:00
FDB	052	Dubai	17:00
JZR	266	Beirut	17:10
JZR	512	Sharm el-Sheikh	17:15
QTR	1073	Doha	17:25
KNE	532	Jeddah	17:25
UAE	858	Dubai	17:40
IRA	666	Esfahan	18:10
SVA	511	Riyadh	18:15
SAW	706	Damascus	18:20
GFA	216	Bahrain	18:20
JZR	184R	Dubai	18:20
JZR	538	Cairo	18:30
KAC	1801	Cairo	18:55
QTR	1081	Doha	19:05
JZR	238	Amman	19:15
JZR	124	Bahrain	19:20
SVA	505	Jeddah	19:25
MSR	621	Cairo	19:30
KAC	285	Dhaka	19:40
GFA	218	Bahrain	19:50
FDB	064	Dubai	19:50
KAC	361	Colombo	19:55
ABY	124	Sharjah	19:55
IRM	1181	Mashhad	20:00
CLX	856	Hong Kong	20:20
JAV	622	Amman	20:25
FDB	060	Dubai	20:30
UAE	876	Dubai	20:35
JAI	571	Mumbai	20:35
KAC	331	Trivandrum	20:45
DLH	634	Doha	20:50
ABY	122	Sharjah	20:50
KAC	353	BLR	20:55
KAC	543	Cairo	21:00
KAC	351	Kochi	21:00
KNE	232	Riyadh	21:10
MEA	403	Beirut	21:15
OMA	648	Muscat	21:15
JZR	554	Alexandria	21:15
MSR	607	Luxor	21:30
QTR	1089	Doha	21:45
DHX	171	Bahrain	21:50
FDB	5054	Dubai	21:55
ETD	308	Abu Dhabi	21:55
ALK	230	Colombo	22:20
KAC	381	Delhi	22:25
UAE	860	Dubai	22:25
KLM	415	Dammam/Amsterdam	22:25
THY	1413	TZX	22:25
KAC	301	Mumbai	22:30
KAC	345	Ahmedabad	22:55
KAC	205	Islamabad	23:00
GFA	220	Bahrain	23:00
ETD	310	Abu Dhabi	23:05
NIA	152	Cairo	23:10
KAC	155	Istanbul	23:15

Word Search Puzzles

Hockey - Word Search

Find the words hidden in the grid of letters.

W V T G C P Z E C J P F U O Q K W
 K K C F Q E R O B S K T V E F Q R
 P F R P Z N T J F W K G P X X E S
 A C I L O A O R E F E R E E F Z F
 S E M A D L H X J H S E S F Q B W
 S R M Y O T S S N G S I O O Z Z K
 V O S E L Y P U E K N E D M E E Q
 K C I R T T A H O T C I G E M S P
 G S G G O A L I E A A G T I N E I
 T K B K T G S M F L L K T H R N P
 T C H E C K N R R O M R S I G U E
 C I N Z D R N I V I E E O I C I N
 V T S A D G W E C V N D T K V D F
 A S T S I S S A O I S K D K I N D

- | | | |
|-----------|----------|-----------|
| ASSIST | ICING | PUCK |
| CHECK | NET | REFEREE |
| FACE OFF | OFFSIDE | RINK |
| FIGHTING | OVERTIME | SCORE |
| GLOVES | PASS | SKATES |
| GOALIE | PENALTY | SLAP SHOT |
| HAT TRICK | PERIODS | STICK |
| HELMET | PLAYER | |

Yesterday's Solution

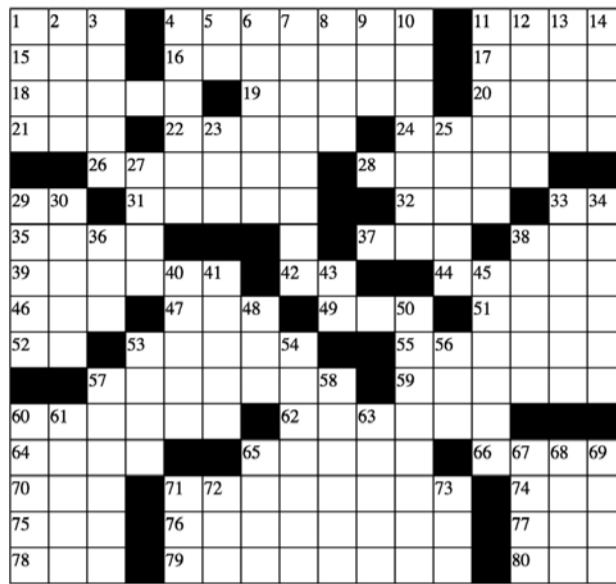
Large Print Word Search Puzzles

Baseball - Solution

C E B P S P L L A B E V R U C Z V
 U T K V U O D U G O U T Q G Y J T
 S L A I H T H C A O C R F L J M Y
 T E V Y R S L I D E O I R O H X L
 S N Y P I T C H E R E P C V Y L K
 V C U S A R S X T L E L Q E A P Z
 B G O B V O R F D V M E P B R H V
 A N H R M H A E I J Z P Y G H N M
 T I B W E S R R D L B L Q F I O E
 T N Y A T B D T Z N F A N U U P M
 E N M B S E O B H Y U Y T N F A O
 R I A L N E V A X Y B O D B G L H
 A L L I Y D X J R F G E R Y O Q M
 L K L E R I P M U D I W L G X Y V

- | | | |
|-----------|------------|-------------|
| BASE | FIELDER | PITCHER |
| BATBOY | FLYBALL | SCOREBOARD |
| BATTER | GLOVE | SHORTSTOP |
| BUNT | GRINDER | SLIDE |
| COACH | HOME | STRIKE |
| CURVEBALL | INNING | TRIPLE PLAY |
| DUGOUT | LINE DRIVE | UMPIRE |
| FASTBALL | MOUND | |

CROSSWORD 1334



ACROSS

- Inquire about.
- (used especially of vegetation) Having lost all moisture.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- A city in south central Mexico (southeast of Mexico City) on the edge of central Mexican plateau.
- A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
- A Chadic language spoken in Chad.
- (prosody) Of or consisting of spondees.
- A river in northern England that flows southeast through West Yorkshire.
- A conspicuous disparity or difference as between two figures.
- Sea otters.
- Punish with an arbitrary penalty.
- Elevated open grassland in southern Africa.
- A member of an Iroquoian people formerly living on the south shore of Lake Erie in northern Ohio and northwest Pennsylvania and western New York.
- Located in or toward the back or rear.
- Any of various trees of the genus *Ulmus*.
- Garlic mayonnaise.
- Voluntary contributions to aid the poor.
- Characterized by dignity and propriety.
- A position on a scale of intensity or amount or quality.
- Not subject to change or variation especially in behavior.
- An unabridged dictionary constructed on historical principles.
- Very thin especially from disease or hunger or cold.
- Make less active or intense.
- Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation.
- The eleventh month of the civil year.
- A percussion instrument consisting of a pair of hollow pieces of wood or bone (usually held between the thumb and fingers) that are made to click together (as by Spanish dancers) in rhythm with the dance.
- An adherent of any branch of Taoism.
- A frequently prescribed benzodiazepine (trade name Restoril).
- The capital and largest city of Yemen.
- Small genus of South American epiphytic or lithophytic cacti.
- A flat wing-shaped process or winglike part of an organism.
- Battle in 401 BC when the Persian King Artaxerxes II defeated his younger brother who tried to usurp the throne.
- A woman's fur shoulder cape with hanging ends.
- A switch made from the stems of the rattan palms.
- (in Indian English) The number that is represented as a one followed by 7 zeros.
- A capacity unit used for measuring fresh herring.
- A quantity that is added.
- Swift timid long-eared mammal larger than a rabbit having a divided upper lip and long hind legs.
- An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
- Of southern Europe.
- An accountant certified by the state.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

- Type genus of the Ranidae.
- Title for a civil or military leader (especially in Turkey).
- A reptile genus of Iguanidae.
- A river in north central Switzerland that runs northeast into the Rhine.
- A single-reed woodwind with a conical bore.
- A cut of pork ribs with much of the meat trimmed off.
- A self-funded retirement plan that allows you to contribute a limited yearly sum toward your retirement.
- (Irish) Mother of the ancient Irish gods.
- A long slender cigar.
- A long projecting or anterior elongation of an animal's head.

DOWN

- Type genus of the Alcidae comprising solely the razorbill.
- (used especially of vegetation) Having lost all moisture.
- Cubes of meat marinated and cooked on a skewer usually with vegetables.
- A city in south central Mexico (southeast of Mexico City) on the edge of central Mexican plateau.
- A highly unstable radioactive element (the heaviest of the halogen series).
- A Chadic language spoken in Chad.
- (prosody) Of or consisting of spondees.
- A river in northern England that flows southeast through West Yorkshire.
- A conspicuous disparity or difference as between two figures.
- Sea otters.
- Punish with an arbitrary penalty.
- Elevated open grassland in southern Africa.
- A member of an Iroquoian people formerly living on the south shore of Lake Erie in northern Ohio and northwest Pennsylvania and western New York.
- Located in or toward the back or rear.
- Any of various trees of the genus *Ulmus*.
- Garlic mayonnaise.
- Voluntary contributions to aid the poor.
- Characterized by dignity and propriety.
- A position on a scale of intensity or amount or quality.
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- A woman's fur shoulder cape with hanging ends.
- A switch made from the stems of the rattan palms.
- (in Indian English) The number that is represented as a one followed by 7 zeros.
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- A quantity that is added.
- Swift timid long-eared mammal larger than a rabbit having a divided upper lip and long hind legs.
- An Arabic speaking person who lives in Arabia or North Africa.
- Of southern Europe.
- An accountant certified by the state.
- A loose sleeveless outer garment made from aba cloth.

Daily SuDoku

			1	8	3			2
9	2							
	1		2			4	3	
4				1	2	3		
		7	3	6				9
	6	2			5			9
							2	5
8			9	2	4			

medium

Yesterday's Solution

4	1	5	7	2	9	3	8	6
2	7	9	8	6	3	4	5	1
8	3	6	4	1	5	7	2	9
5	8	7	1	9	6	2	3	4
1	9	3	2	4	7	8	6	5
6	2	4	5	3	8	1	9	7
7	6	1	3	5	2	9	4	8
3	5	8	9	7	4	6	1	2
9	4	2	6	8	1	5	7	3

hard

Yesterday's Solution

M	B	A		B	A	L	I	S	T	E	S		C	A	M	
A	R	K		A	N	A	P	H	A	S	E		A	R	E	
C	I	A		B	E	S	E	E	M			A	C	N	E	D
K	E	B	A	B		S	C	A	B				A	N	N	A
			A	F	L			A	R	A	B		T	A	A	L
F	M		E	E	C			C	I	C	A	D	A			
R	A	J	A		A	C		N		T	I	R	A	D	E	
A	D		R	A	D		A	G	E		A	R	M	I	N	
C	A	N	D	I	D	L	Y				A	M	H	A	R	A
A	K	U		L	I	A	R		G	D			T	A	T	
S	E	R	R	I	E	D			P	R	A	C	T	I	C	E
			S	E	N	Y			R	A	G	E	E			
M	A	L	A	G	A				E	N	E	R	V	A	T	E
A	R	I	L		H	A	I	F	A		T	E	R	A	S	
R	E	N	T		A	R	M	A	D	A		R	A	M	P	
C	A	G	Y		B	A	O	B	A	B		E	M	M	Y	

BRUCE'S 3-RUN HOMER LEADS METS OVER YANKEES

NEW YORK: Jay Bruce launched a three-run homer for his first hit since being traded, Bartolo Colon took a shutout into the seventh inning and the New York Mets beat the Yankees 4-1 on Thursday night for a split of the Subway Series. After each team won once at Citi Field earlier this week, the Mets took the wrapup of the two-game set at Yankee Stadium. Bruce had been 0 for 10 since being acquired from Cincinnati on Monday before his drive into the Yankees' bullpen in right-center field made it 4-0 in the fifth inning against Nathan Eovaldi (9-8). Kelly Johnson also led off with a homer in the inning. Bruce's 26th homer gave him the NL RBIs lead with 83, ended a 0-for-19 rut overall and made him 5-for-56 against the Yankees. He cracked a smile on the way back to the dugout, where Colon and his new teammates greeted him with hearty high-fives. Colon (10-6) gave up six hits in 6 2/3 innings in earning his 228th victory, most among active pitchers. The 43-year-old righty, who spent 2011 with the Yankees, became the first pitcher to win a Subway Series game for each New York team, the Elias Sports Bureau said. Jeurys Familia worked around a pair of one-out singles for his 38th save in 40 chances.

GIANTS 3, PHILLIES 2

Denard Span homered leading off the 10th inning, and San Francisco Philadelphia Phillies for just its fifth victory in 14 games since the All-Star break. Matt Moore made his first start for the NL West leader following his acquisition Monday from Tampa Bay. He allowed two runs and three hits in six innings and walked six - matching his career high. Span led off the 10th by sending a 95 mph fastball from Severino Gonzalez (0-2) just inside the right-field foul pole, his third hit of the game. San Francisco lost the first two games of the series. Sergio Romo (1-0) earned the win without getting an out. Cesar Hernandez was caught stealing for the final out of the ninth while Romo was facing his first batter. Romo became the first pitcher to record a win without officially facing a batter since 2009 when Alan Embree accomplished the feat for Colorado against Washington. Santiago Casilla pitched a 1-2-3 10th for his 25th save in 30 chances.

DODGERS 4, ROCKIES 2

Kenta Maeda allowed two runs over 5 2/3 innings, rookie Corey Seager tied a Dodgers record for shortstops with his 19th home run and Los Angeles beat Colorado to avoid a three-game sweep. Maeda (10-7) gave up four hits and struck out five for the Dodgers, who lead the NL wild-card race. Maeda, who walked none and hit two batters, has allowed three runs in 18 2/3 innings against the Rockies, with 22 strikeouts and two walks. Pedro Baez and Joe Blanton combined for 2-1/3 scoreless innings, and Kenley

Jansen threw a hitless ninth for his 32nd save in 37 chances. Tyler Chatwood (10-7) allowed four runs and nine hits in six innings for Colorado. David Dahl hit a two-run homer in the fourth and has hit safely in his first 10 games in the majors.

RED SOX 3, MARINERS 2

Brock Holt's RBI single in the 11th inning lifted Boston past Seattle. Travis Shaw, who had a solo homer in the second, opened the 11th against Cody Martin (1-2) with an opposite-field single to left against the shift. Sandy Leon sacrificed Shaw to second and Holt then bounced a single up the middle off the glove of diving shortstop Sean

won the season series 4-3 and would have home-field advantage in the postseason if the teams finish with the same regular-season record and meet in the playoffs. Mark Trumbo hit his major league-leading 31st homer for the Orioles. Pedro Alvarez and Hyun-Soo Kim also hit solo shots. Miley (7-9) gave up four runs and eight hits in five innings in his debut with the Orioles. The left-hander was acquired from Seattle on Sunday.

REDS 7, CARDINALS 0

Brandon Phillips had three hits and left-hander Brandon Finnegan limited St Louis to two hits in six innings, leading Cincinnati to a rare

outscored 35-16 by the last-place Twins in the first three games. Cleveland is 5-8 against Minnesota and 26-8 against the rest of the division. Santana homered in the third off Hector Santiago (10-5), who made his first start with the Twins since being acquired from the Angels on Monday. Lindor homered in a three-run seventh. Jason Kipins hit his career-high 18th homer, a solo shot in the first. Jose Ramirez had a solo homer in the eighth. Dan Otero (3-1) was the winner. Brian Dozier homered for Minnesota.

WHITE SOX 6, TIGERS 3

Jose Abreu and Avisail Garcia



NEW YORK: Jay Bruce #19 of the New York Mets hits a three run home run against the New York Yankees during the fifth inning of a game at Yankee Stadium. — AFP

O'Malley. Craig Kimbrel (2-3) retired all four batters he faced - including striking out the side in the 10th - for the victory. Brad Ziegler pitched the 11th for his third save, stranding the tying run at third.

RANGERS 5, ORIOLES 3

Jonathan Lucroy hit his first homer with Texas, Ian Desmond drove in two runs and the Rangers beat Wade Miley and Baltimore to avoid a three-game sweep. Texas received contributions from all three players it acquired before Monday's non-waiver trade deadline. Lucroy homered in the second inning, Carlos Beltran singled in a run in the fifth and Jeremy Jeffress pitched a scoreless seventh. Shin-Soo Choo came off the disabled list to get two hits and scored a run for the Rangers, who took back from Baltimore the distinction of owning the best record in the AL. Texas

series win over the Cardinals. Cincinnati took two of three, giving it its fifth series win in the last 23 between the NL Central clubs. The Reds have won six straight series after the All-Star break for the first time since 1999. Phillips had a single and a pair of doubles, scored three times and drove in a run against former teammate Mike Leake (8-9). Ramon Cabrera drove in three runs, and Eugenio Suarez knocked in a pair. Finnegan (7-8) allowed a pair of singles, and the bullpen gave up three more while closing out Cincinnati's fourth shutout.

INDIANS 9, TWINS 2

Carlos Santana hit a three-run homer, Francisco Lindor added a two-run shot and Cleveland salvaged the finale of a four-game series with Minnesota. The AL Central-leading Indians were

homed in a five-run second inning, and Chicago chased Jordan Zimmermann in his return from the disabled list, snapping Detroit's eight-game winning streak. Zimmermann (9-5) allowed six runs and six hits in 1-2/3 innings, failing to strike out a batter in his first outing since June 30. He had been out with a right neck strain. Jose Quintana (9-8) allowed three runs and eight hits in 7-1/3 innings. David Robertson pitched the ninth for his 26th save in 30 chances. Chicago won for only the second time in eight games. Miguel Cabrera and Ian Kinsler homered for Detroit. The Tigers fell three games behind AL Central-leading Cleveland.

ATHLETICS 8, ANGELS 6

Yonder Alonso hit a tiebreaking RBI double in the 10th inning and Oakland beat Los Angeles to avoid

a three-game sweep and snap a five-game losing streak. Mike Morin (2-2) got the first two outs of the 10th inning before the A's scored twice. Danny Valencia and Tyler Ladendorf singled, and Alonso's double to center scored Valencia with the go-ahead run. Marcus Semien followed with an RBI single. Ryan Dull pitched a scoreless 10th to get his second save. Jefry Marte and Jett Bandy hit back-to-back singles off John Axford to start the eighth and pinch-hitter Mike Trout drew a walk to load the bases. Johnny Giavotella sent a grounder to first base that Alonso bobbled, allowing Giavotella to reach safely and Marte to beat the throw home and tie it at 6. Ryan Madson (4-4) then came in for Axford and retired Yunel Escobar and Kole Calhoun.

BRAVES 5, PIRATES 2

Adonis Garcia scored from second on an improbable stolen base attempt in the seventh inning and Atlanta beat Pittsburgh despite Ryan Vogelsong's strong start. Vogelsong allowed only one run in six innings his first start in more than two months. He left with the game tied 1-1. Felipe Rivero (0-4) walked Garcia with one out in the seventh, and Garcia moved to second on Ender Inciarte's single. Garcia, who has only two steals this season, broke for third base as the left-handed Rivero held the ball on the mound. Rivero finally threw to third, but Jung Ho Kang dropped the throw for an error, allowing Garcia to score. Inciarte moved to second, and scored on Jeff Francoeur's pinch single. Hunter Cervenka (1-0) was the winner, and Jim Johnson pitched the ninth for his seventh save.

BLUE JAYS 4, ASTROS 1

JA Happ won his ninth consecutive decision, Edwin Encarnacion reached 30 home runs for the fifth straight season and Toronto beat Houston for its eighth victory in 11 games. Happ (15-3), who already has set his career high for wins, retired 12 of his first 13 batters and allowed one run and four hits in six innings. He's 9-0 with a 2.49 ERA in 10 starts since losing at Detroit on June 6. Roberto Osuna pitched the ninth for his 24th save. Mike Fiers (7-5) was the loser.

RAYS 3, ROYALS 2

Brad Miller hit a three-run homer in the eighth inning to help Tampa Bay beat Kansas City for a series split. Miller hit his 19th homer, connecting off Joakim Soria (4-5). Brad Boxberger (1-0) worked out of a bases-loaded, one-out jam in the eighth, and Alex Colome got his 26th save after giving up two hits during the ninth. Drew Smyly allowed two runs, five hits, one walk and struck out 10 in seven innings. Ian Kennedy gave up one hit, walked four and had nine strikeouts in six-plus innings for the Royals. Alex Gordon hit his eighth home run. — AP



GALLE: Sri Lankan cricketer Rangana Herath (L) celebrates with teammates after he dismissed unseen Australian batsman Peter Nevill as Mitchell Marsh (R) looks on during the second day of the second Test cricket match between Sri Lanka and Australia at The Galle International Cricket Stadium. —AFP

SRI LANKA NEAR SERIES WIN AFTER HERATH HAT-TRICK

GALLE: Sri Lanka took three late wickets as they tightened the screws on Australia in the second Test in Galle yesterday after setting the tourists a daunting target of 413 to save the series. At the end of an action-packed second day, which saw 21 wickets tumble and a hat-trick from Sri Lanka's Rangana Herath, Australia were 25 for three in their second innings—still 388 runs short of their target. David Warner was unbeaten on 22 while skipper Steve Smith will resume on Saturday on one as the tourists face an uphill struggle to avoid an embarrassing loss within three days at the Galle International Stadium.

Although Mitchell Starc took six wickets as Australia restricted Sri Lanka to 237 in their second innings, the tourists were effectively undone in the first session of the day when they were skittled out for 106. It was their lowest total in 28 Tests against Sri Lanka who are on a high after winning last week's first Test in Pallekele. Victory in Galle would ensure the Sri Lankans win the three-match series with a game to play. The 38-year-old Herath was the star performer after picking up only the second Test hat-trick by a Sri Lankan.

Decisive spell

Australia, who resumed at their overnight score of 54 for two, struggled throughout the morning session

against both Herath and his fellow spin bowler Perera, the duo sharing eight wickets between them. Off-spinner Perera bowled overnight batsman Usman Khawaja in his second over of the day before Herath took his first wicket by clean bowling the Australian skipper Steven Smith. But it was Herath's seventh over of the innings which proved decisive as he dismissed Adam Voges, Peter Nevill and Starc off consecutive deliveries to put Australia on the mat.

"It was a good achievement. I have only taken a hat-trick only playing for school and not anywhere else. So, very pleasing to do that against the number one-ranked team," a smiling Herath told reporters. Herath, the only member from Sri Lanka's 1-0 series win against Australia in 1999, said winning the rubber with the current side would be more relishing. "First Test is always special. At that time, we had some big stars. Arjuna (Ranatunga), Aravinda (de Silva) and Sanath (Jayasuriya). "But we have not much experience here and I am really pleased with what I have done," he added.

Only Mitchell Marsh, who was the last man out for 27, offered much resistance for the Australians during the morning's play. The visitors also struck early in the Sri Lanka second innings as the paceman Starc bowled his heart out on a flat pitch. The left-

arm paceman took six for 50 but the Sri Lankans were still able to set what should be a match-winning target.

'Big achievement'

"After 17 years we are on the verge of winning the series. I am lost for words... winning against the number one team is a big achievement," said Herath. Dilruwan Perera top-scored for Sri Lanka with 64 and he received good support from his skipper Angelo Mathews who followed up his half-century in the first innings with 47. Australia's response got off to a dreadful start when Joe Burns became Herath's fifth victim of the day in the opening over of the Australian second innings.

And the decision to send in Nathan Lyon as a night-watchman backfired when he was bowled for a duck before Usman Khawaja followed him back to the pavilion one ball later. "Disappointing. Full stop. Not up to international standards that performance today," Australian coach Darren Lehmann said yesterday. "Obviously still a long way to go, hopefully. But certainly we haven't played as we would have liked. Sri Lanka have played well and we haven't." Australia, the world number one team, had only ever lost one Test against Sri Lanka before the current series. The final match is due to be held in Colombo from August 13. —AFP

FORGET PSG, QATAR KEEPS EYE ON BELGIUM'S EUPEN

DOHA: With the resumption of 2018 World Cup qualifiers on September 1 and a possible La Liga debut for the country's brightest young star, it's a big few weeks for Qatar. But just as important for the Gulf state's football development is what happens at tiny Belgian Pro League club, KAS Eupen. It is the first time 'The Pandas' have been in Belgium's top tier-pitting themselves against heavyweight clubs such as champions FC Bruges and Anderlecht—since being taken over by Qatar's Aspire Academy in June 2012. On Saturday, Eupen, from Belgium's small German-speaking community, play their first home game of the season at the 8,363-capacity Kehrwegstadion against a grand old name of Belgian football and former winners of the old European Cup Winners' Cup, Mechelen.

The season began badly with a 3-0 defeat at Zulte Waregem, compounded by the sending-off of Ghanaian winger, Eric Ocansey. But Belgian football watchers believe Eupen have a good chance of survival. "Only one team goes down this year and the sporting director said they will be taking things step-by-step," says Mark Rodden, who commentates television coverage of the Belgian Pro League.

"They would be happy to stay up this season, giving them the platform to consolidate their place in the top flight on a more long-term basis." Club officials, though, claim that staying up is just one aim for the season. Asked what the target is for the campaign, Aspire Academy's Andreas Bleicher responded: "Further individual development of the young talents... besides the team consolidating in the Belgian top flight."

More interesting than PSG?

Despite the high-profile ownership of Paris Saint-Germain by Qatar Sports Investments, Qatar Airways' shirt sponsorship deal with Barcelona and the purchase of Malaga by a member of Qatar's ruling Al-Thani family, Eupen is arguably the most interesting footballing acquisition by the energy-rich Emirate which will host the 2022 World Cup finals. The renowned Aspire Academy, based in Doha, has spent millions trying to develop young Qatari and international sports stars over the past 12 years. Several of Qatar's Olympic team about to compete in Rio, including the country's best hope for its first ever gold, high jumper Mutaz Barshim, are Aspire graduates. But it has been most prominent in football.

And Eupen has been the showcase for a significant number of those who have passed through Aspire. "So far, in total, 13 Qatar Aspire talents and 25 scholarships from the Aspire Football Dreams project are and have been with KAS Eupen since 2012," says Bleicher, Aspire's Chief Advisor of International Football Affairs. Aspire Dreams is a scouting project, identifying talented 13-year-olds across 18 countries, mostly in Africa, including Senegal, Mali and Gambia. Bleicher adds that 44 Aspire graduates have represented 10 different countries at full national level.

This season four Qataris are expected to be in Eupen's squad, including Fahad Al-Abdulrahman, a defender who has represented his country at Under-23 level. Bleicher insists it is not Aspire or Eupen's aim to produce players for Qatar's national side. Even so, it may be a significant by-product. Last season, Aspire graduate Akram Afif scored eight goals for Eupen during their promotion push and the 19-year-old has been rewarded with a transfer to Spain's Villarreal, who subsequently loaned him for the season to La Liga rivals Sporting Gijon. If he plays at any point in La Liga, he will be the first Qatari ever to do so.

Afif has also just been drafted into Qatar's national squad as the country chases its first ever qualification for the World Cup in Russia in 2018. Players from Belgium, Venezuela, Nigeria and Ivory Coast and Spanish manager Jordi Condom contribute to the international flavour at Eupen, which may not be a coincidence, says Rodden. "There are not as many restrictions on non-EU players in Belgium. "There's a good tradition of young foreign imports starting off in Belgium before moving on to bigger and better things—think Yaya Toure at Beveren—and I think that's probably the owners' goal. "They'll want to develop some of these players over a couple of years and then sell them on for big money." —AFP

LOURINHO CONFIDENT ABOUT POGBA CHASE

MANCHESTER: Jose Mourinho expressed confidence yesterday that Manchester United will sign Paul Pogba in time for the Premier League season and criticized rival managers' reactions to the mooted world-record transfer. United and Juventus are believed to be putting the finishing touches to a deal for the France midfielder expected to exceed £100 million (\$130.4 million, 117.7 million Euros).

Mourinho described other managers, such as Liverpool's Jurgen Klopp and Arsenal's Arsene Wenger, as "unethical" for talking openly about the Pogba fee and questioning his colossal price tag. Whatever the validity of their claims, Pogba's arrival at Old Trafford appears imminent and Mourinho is hopeful that his squad will be complete in time for United's trip to Bournemouth a week on Sunday. "Yes, we have 22 players and we are going to have 23," said Mourinho when asked if a signing was close. "I don't like to speak about other clubs or players from other clubs. Other managers like to do that. They like to speak about my club and my players. I am very pragmatic on this. All that matters is what happens in my house and not in my neighbor's house."

"Paul Pogba is a Juventus player until he isn't, officially, so we stay like this. The market closes on August 31, but I think my club is trying to do everything to close our market before the 14th. "Normally, next week, we will have our squad closed." Wenger described the potential Pogba fee as "completely crazy", while Klopp said he wanted no involvement in such an inflated transfer market-comments that clearly did not sit well with United's manager. "I only speak about us," said Mourinho. "I heard already two of my colleagues from other clubs speaking about us. I do not like that. It is not ethical."

Schweinsteiger sidelined

He added: "There are things I do that (people say) are not ethical and when others do it, everything is normal, nobody says that. I do not speak about the others. They can do what they want. "Our market was good. We made decisions—decided to bring four players, not 10 — that are Man United level. Four that we think can really improve the squad and not just be one more. This is the profile of our market. "A young defender that needs time to be a top one, but who has top potential. A creative player that we know the quality (of). "A super striker, and we are going to get a very good midfielder player. We try for balance. I am happy with my squad. I am happy with the effort of the club. The others, it is their problem."

With those signings-in order, Eric Bailly, Henrikh Mkhitaryan and Zlatan Ibrahimovic-already in at United ahead of Pogba, certain players will find themselves surplus to requirements under Mourinho. One of those is thought to be Germany veteran Bastian Schweinsteiger, with reports Mourinho has discarded the respected midfielder, opening the United manager up to criticism. "It is the same as in every club in the world," said Mourinho when asked about Schweinsteiger. "The manager decides his squad and chooses a certain number of players to face the season. That is it. "I normally like to work with 20 players, plus the three goalkeepers, which is what I have done for 15 years, because we have so many players. "But at the same time we have so many competitions and especially the Europa League. That is a competition that changes a lot at the start of the season, with 15 matches and playing on the Thursday. "There is a big risk of a lot of travel. You play Premier League on Sundays. I made the decision to be with 23, plus three goalkeepers, which is still a lot. I had to make my decisions. It is simple." —AFP



MINNEAPOLIS: McDonald's Kids hold up an AC Milan flag ahead of the International Champions Cup soccer match between AC Milan and Chelsea FC on Wednesday, Aug 3, 2016. —AP

BERLUSCONI AGREES WITH DEAL TO SELL AC MILAN TO CHINESE

MILAN: Silvio Berlusconi agreed yesterday to sell AC Milan to Chinese investors under a deal set to end his trophy-laden three decades in charge of the Italian giants by the end of this year. Fininvest, the Berlusconi family's private holding company, announced that after months of negotiations a preliminary agreement had been signed between the media tycoon and the prospective buyers. The deal values Milan, which has some 220 million Euros of debt, at 740 million Euros (\$825.4m), and will lead to a badly-needed cash injection of 350 million Euros over three seasons, Fininvest said in a statement.

A total of 100 million Euros of the sale price is to be paid on completion, which is scheduled to happen by the end of this year. Chinese and Italian authorities will have to rubberstamp the deal but this is not expected to raise any significant obstacles. The preliminary accord was signed by Danilo Pellegrino, the Fininvest CEO, and Han Li, a representative of the Chinese investors. "Throughout the negotiations Fininvest has maintained its position established by Mr Berlusconi to provide AC Milan with a structure from which it can compete with the world's top clubs," Pellegrino said.

The group has been named as Sino-Europe Sports Investment Management Changxing, and includes businessman Yonghong Li, the Haixia Capital Capital group and other private and public Chinese

companies. The buyers paid 15 million Euros immediately to secure the deal and are due to pay a further 85 million Euros as a deposit within 35 days. The projected injections of funds will be a welcome boost for a club that remains one of the strongest brands in European football but no longer delivers the results to justify that status. The cash-strapped club struggled to a seventh-placed finish in Serie A last season and last won a domestic title in 2011.

A selling club

Seven times champions of Europe (five of those triumphs came under Berlusconi), the Rossoneri lifted their last Champions League trophy in 2007. Since then their fortunes have dwindled in parallel with those of the former prime minister, who was barred from political life after his 2013 conviction for tax fraud. Berlusconi turns 80 in September, has recently had open heart surgery and has been seeking to offload part or all of his stake in Milan for over two years.

Even before that he had been scaling back his financial commitment to the club he acquired in 1986, with serious implications for its ability to compete at the highest level. Andrea Pirlo was released to go after the last domestic title was secured in 2011 because the president would not sanction any more than a one-year contract extension for the Italy playmaker, who was to go

on to help Juventus become the dominant force in Serie A. Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Thiago Silva departed for Paris Saint-Germain a year later. It was all a far cry from the money-no-obstacle approach Berlusconi took to assembling squads during Milan's glory days.

The late 1980s Milan built around the Dutch trio of Ruud Gullit, Frank Rijkaard and Marco van Basten and the Dejan Savicevic-inspired generation that hammered Barcelona 4-0 in the 1994 Champions League are ranked among the finest club squads in history. Yesterday's deal follows hot on the heels of Milan's city rivals Inter Milan being bought out by the Chinese investment group Suning in June. Earlier yesterday, owners of Premier League outfit West Bromwich Albion agreed to sell the club to Chinese investment group Yunyi Guokai (Shanghai) Sports Development Ltd. Chinese companies have also acquired stakes in Manchester City, Atletico Madrid and Slavia Prague, as well as buying second-tier English clubs Aston Villa and Wolverhampton Wanderers. The Milan deal also comes against a backdrop of deepening ties between China and Italy. Prime Minister Matteo Renzi has made increased trade and investment links with Beijing one of his top priorities and the numbers of Chinese visitors to Italy have surged on the back of last year's World Expo in Milan. —AFP

CHAMP LEAGUE PLAY-OFF DRAW COMPLETE

PARIS: Pep Guardiola's Manchester City got a relatively easy tie as the Champions League Group phase play-offs were drawn in Nyon yesterday as they landed Bulgarians Steaua Bucharest. The other British side in the draw Scotland's 1967 European Champions Celtic play Hapoel Beer-Sheva of Israel in their desert stadium, while Ireland's Dundalk take on

Polish Champions Legia Warsaw. The plum ties cast 2004 Champions League winners Porto against Italy's Roma while Spain's fourth placed side last season Villarreal take on French third placed side Monaco.

Two time UEFA Cup winners the German outfit Borussia M'unchengladbach take on Young Boys of Berne while Salzburg drew Croats Dinamo Zagreb.

Ajax face Russian club Rostov, Copenhagen take on APOEL Nicosia of Cyprus and Bulgaria's Ludogorets take on Viktoria Plzen of the Czech Republic. The play-offs are contested over two legs on the 16/17th and 23/24th of August with the winners going into the lucrative Champions League groups phase. —AFP



RIO DE JANEIRO: The Christ the Redeemer statue and Sugar Loaf Mountain are pictured between trees as the sun rises. —AP

GAMES A TEST FOR OLYMPICS' APPEAL IN A GLOOMY WORLD

RIO DE JANEIRO: Even if only for two weeks, can "Faster-Higher-Stronger" overpower deadlier, scarier and bloodier? Can the Olympic Games still offer the world momentary levity, distract from terror, shootings, poverty and other worries in globally grim times? If not, what use is the multibillion-dollar celebration of youthful endeavor and mostly niche sports? Through no fault of their own, the athletes who will march in massed, joyful ranks behind their nations' flags in Friday night's (early morning in Kuwait) opening ceremony for the first Olympic Games in South America shoulder expectations beyond their own ambitions for gold, silver, bronze and personal bests.

No Olympics in recent memory has opened under so many dark clouds, both within recession-battered Brazil and beyond. Headliners Usain Bolt and Michael Phelps are back for more medals. But no feat of theirs, or the other 10,500 Olympians, between the first medal awards on Saturday and the Aug. 21 closing ceremony will paste over recent horrors of 84 people murdered with a truck in Nice or the shooting massacre of 49 people in a Florida nightclub. Sports are, and always will be, trivial compared to such atrocities that have come depressingly thick and fast of late. "The Olympics may help me take my mind off things," said Parisian lawyer Remy Durand, reflecting over lunch Thursday on the Champs-Elysees. "But it's not going to change my overall mood lastingly, after the attacks in recent weeks and months in France."

Yet Olympic organizers can't be faulted for trying, with their "Together we can change the world" slogan and OlympicPeace hashtag. Cold War boycotts aside, the games remain a symbol of global togetherness, even if an increasingly commercialized one. By putting religion and politics aside, the Olympics still can remind the world's people of their shared humanity, not their divisions. Picture Berlin in 1936, when white German long jumper Luz Long bonded with black American Jesse Owens when Adolf Hitler wanted to peddle racial supremacy. Or Sydney in 2000, when

athletes from North and South Korea walked together behind one flag in the opening ceremony, momentarily putting aside more than half a century of enmity. Or Barcelona in 1992, when white South African Elana Meyer ran over to plant a kiss on Ethiopia's Derartu Tulu. Meyer had won silver to Tulu's gold in the 10,000 meters to become her country's first post-apartheid individual medalist.

Refugee athletes

On Friday, at the opening gala of these Olympics at Rio's Maracana Stadium, 10 refugee athletes will march as one team behind the white Olympic flag - a reminder to the world that they aren't solely defined by their lack of a place to call home. While not as grand as opening ceremonies past, Rio still expects to wow. "The Athens ceremony was classic, and Beijing was grand, was musical. London was quite smart. We're going to be cool," said creative director Fernando Meirelles. Still, the games have their naysayers. Doping scandals - from sprinter Ben Johnson losing his 1988 Olympic gold medal over steroids to Russia's recent state-organized subversion of anti-doping efforts - have stained all Olympians and heightened cynicism of their feats and worth.

On behalf of all of this summer's competitors, a Brazilian athlete will pledge at the opening ceremony that they will compete "without doping and without drugs, in the true spirit of sportsmanship." The same promise has been made at all games since 2000 but may ring false among fans, especially with Russia's flag fluttering among the others; the International Olympic Committee rejected calls for a blanket ban on all Russian athletes. The IOC, as it has in the past, will store some 4,500 drug-test samples to be taken during these games, so they can be thawed out and retested in years to come. Then there's the expense of the games. Big spending and the waste of unused venues in ex-host cities have forced Olympic organizers onto the defensive and left them with a shrinking pool of taxpayers willing to foot the bills. The \$10 billion to

\$12 billion spent on Rio's games should have gone to better causes in a city rife with poverty, critics say.

Dark flipside

After Rio, the Olympics rumble to Tokyo in 2020, leaving Rio de Janeiro's 6.5 million people - the racially mixed, socially divided "Cariocas" - with the same concerns the world was largely oblivious to before the Olympic echo chamber turned the Zika virus and favelas into household words. Few outside Brazil cared about untreated sewage and teeming viruses in Rio's picture-postcard Guanabara Bay before its polluted waters were chosen for Olympic swimming and sailing. Rio's alarming murder rate and turf wars between drug lords and police weren't so high on the globe's agenda before athletes and hundreds of thousands of Olympic visitors discovered that the prospect of being in harm's way has long been the darker flipside of Brazilian Samba, carnival and caipirinha cocktails.

Despite the problems, Olympic ideals aren't dead. Pope Francis told pilgrims on Wednesday at his weekly audience at the Vatican that in a world "thirsty for peace, tolerance and reconciliation," he hopes the games can inspire everyone to pursue a prize that is "not a medal but something more precious - achieving a civilization in which solidarity reigns, founded on the recognition that we are all members of one human family."

The US women's basketball coach, Geno Auriemma, called the Olympics "a two-week haven where people can get away from it all." "Every time you get here, get settled in, nothing seems to matter to any country other than the competition - as it should be," said Auriemma, now at his third games. "These two weeks, the joy and spirit of competition seems to win out." And even on the streets of Rio, some Brazilians are beginning to embrace the moment and all that it means. "Finally people are beginning to feel the Olympic spirit," said Ilene Pessoa, a college administrator who lives in Rio's Copacabana neighborhood. "The eyes of the world are on us." —AP

VISITORS IN RIO WILL FIND ALL 5 SENSES TRIGGERED

RIO DE JANEIRO: Right after getting off the plane, sweat beads will start to gather on your forehead. That's just Rio de Janeiro's ever-present humidity saying "hello." Look around and you will be enveloped by shades of green - lush tropical forests jammed between buildings of all sizes - and tones of blue along the miles of inviting coastlines.

Towering over the 2016 Summer Olympics host city is the Christ the Redeemer statue. After a few days, you might chuckle when a hotel brochure or tour guide tries to sell you something by saying it "includes" a view of the statue. Jesus is everywhere here, as is plenty of temptation and sin. In Brazil, prostitution is legal, though that doesn't mean that you will see women and men hawking their bodies all over the city. In fact, walking around, you are more likely to come upon churches, especially of growing evangelical denominations like Pentecostals.

Up in the hills, you can see small dwellings that look like stone huts jammed one after the other, in red and green and pink and orange and many other colors of the rainbow. The slums of Rio, known as favelas, are the most colorful places in the city, culturally vibrant and filled with interesting people. They are also the city's poorest areas, often controlled by drug-traffickers and plagued by violence.

No matter where you are in Rio, you might hear gunfire. It could be drug dealers battling it out for turf, or military police conducting an operation. Firefights mostly happen in favelas, but sometimes spill out into the "zona sul," or southern part of the city, home to more well-heeled Brazilians and where tourists flock. While you might be tempted to capture all the vibrancy of Rio on your smartphone, take a good look around before pulling it out. The "Cidade Maravilhosa" has long been plagued by violent muggings and robberies that can happen at any time of day and in any neighborhood.

Luxury and seediness

A walk along the famed beach in Copacabana reveals both luxury and seediness: Rio's iconic area of yesteryear still shines but also has its share of hobos, panhandlers and hard-luck cases. Keep walking further west to get to Ipanema beaches. And if you are in the mood to see and be seen and spend more money, go a little further to get to Leblon, Rio's most expensive neighborhood. It's winter in the Southern Hemisphere, the equivalent of February up north. But the beaches still have plenty of people, both local and foreign, taking dips. And with good reason: Temperatures are frequently in the mid-80s and sometimes even low 90s.

Here you will see some of Rio's stereotypes in real life: dental-floss bikinis for women, tight speedos for men and bodies that ooze fitness and sensuality. But the beaches have so much more than that. There are pickup soccer and volleyball games and capoeira martial arts. The beats of the drum circles will make you feel like you're in movie. Speaking of rhythms, in cafes, food stands and bars, it's common to hear the soothing sounds of Caetano Veloso or Gilberto Gil, just two of the country's talented musicians known worldwide. The classics are embraced but there is so much more for the ears: pop, funk and everything in-between, especially in any of the thousands of yellow cabs circulating in the city. —AP



RIO DE JANEIRO: Visitors look out over Guanabara Bay, home of the 2016 Summer Olympics sailing events, as they stand atop Sugarloaf Mountain. —AP

US ATHLETES STAR STRUCK BY BOLT

RIO DE JANEIRO: Gabby Douglas and Simone Biles may be reigning Olympic and world champions in gymnastics but meeting Jamaican sprint star Usain Bolt in Rio proved an overwhelming experience for the US teammates.

"He walked into the cafeteria, and Aly (Raisman) and Gabby (Douglas) about flipped the dinner table and screamed 'It's Usain!' like little girls," said 19-year-old Biles, a record 10-time world champion tipped to be one of the stars of the Rio Games. "I was like, 'You guys, you have to calm down, (do) you know what it's like to be in that position?' But it was very cool," continued Biles, who is competing in her first Olympics. "It's the Olympics, but if you think about it your brain's going to fall out, you're going to freak out. So we are trying to treat it like a championships."

Biles was equally impressed by rubbing shoulders with six-time men's world all-around gymnastics champion and Olympic gold medalist Kohei Uchimura of Japan. "Everyone knows who he is. He's a legend and it's very exciting to watch him (in com-

petition)," she gushed. "It's awesome seeing him around the (Olympic) Village because he's just so chilled, and every time he's in the cafeteria he's like, 'Yeah, like whatever, you know.' "He just carries himself very well and we all look up to him, because he's a normal human being like the rest of us but he's done so much." "We say, 'Hey, Kohei' every time we pass him, and he just does a head nod."

Four years ago, Biles was watching another African-American gymnast, Douglas, win all-around gold at the London Olympics. And she admitted she couldn't believe how far she has come in the past four years winning a third all-around and team title at worlds last year. "Every day in the room Laurie (Hernandez) and I are like, 'OK, this is a joke.' We're waiting to be woken up (as if in a dream)," she said. "We try not to (go on social media) unless we're posting a picture, but it's definitely a way to get our mind off gymnastics, but other than that we're just chilling in the room and having fun together."

Douglas, 20, became the first African American



Usain Bolt

woman to become the Olympic all-around champion in London. She and Raisman-the 2012 floor exercise gold medalist-are competing in their second Olympics. "It really feels the same. Me and Aly were just talking about walking in (the arena)," said Douglas. "It just really feels like London. The set-up is just like London. It's just like deja vu." —AFP

JELLYFISH NO BOTHER FOR SWIMMING'S MINNOWS

RIO DE JANEIRO: While swimming legend Michael Phelps flies first class, earns millions from lucrative sponsorship deals and is aided by scientific training methods, spare a thought for the sport's plucky minnows. For swimmers from nations such as Mongolia and the Maldives, simply finding a pool to train in is a challenge, making their appearance at the Rio Olympics a truly staggering achievement in itself.

In an indication of the difficulties athletes in the Maldives face, their swimmers have to train in the Indian Ocean-often at night-off the capital Male. "In Maldives we train in the sea, we don't have a swimming pool," national champion Aminath Shajan told AFP. "Some days we train with all the trash that's floating around," she added. "And sometimes jellyfish bite us." But team mate Nishwan Ibrahim still feels more comfortable in the 25-metre ocean pool made of floating blocks they share it with the fish and coral.

"It's a dim light in the night time, there's waves, rubbish," he said. "When you breathe you might get water in your mouth-or worse. "I've also seen big rays and jellyfish, you can get scared. But when you get used to it, it's not that scary. It's easier to swim in the sea, when it's calm and clear, because it's more buoyant." With the Maldives, a nation of under 350,000, lacking the financial means to improve the situation, both swimmers have spent time overseas training for Rio, Shajan in Thailand, and Ibrahim in South Africa alongside Olympic champion Chad Le Clos. "I'll definitely ask him for advice before I swim," smiled the 19-year-old, who swims the men's 50 meters freestyle. "I don't know what I'll ask but I'll think of something."

Dashing no-hoper

While no real comparison to Eric Moussambani, the dashing no-hoper from Equatorial Guinea dubbed "Eric the Eel" who melted hearts at the 2000 Sydney Olympics after thrashing around hopelessly in the heats of the men's 100m free, Maldives swimmers have triggered similar outpourings. At the Asian Games two years ago, Ibrahim got a standing ovation from the Korean crowd after completing the last lap of the 200m medley heats in complete solitude-only to discover he had been somewhat churlishly disqualified for an illegal turn.

Ibrahim will be joined in the 50m freestyle by intrepid Mongolian Dulguun Batsaikhan, who prepared for Rio in a river far from his home in the capital Ulaanbaatar due to a lack of proper facilities. "I have only big fishes for training partners," said the 29-year-old, who had to slum it in the build-up to Rio, driving 450 kilometres to plunge into the Selenga River. "It's a bit cold. But it's okay. My philosophy has always been that water is water."

Shajan, meanwhile, wants to improve her own national record in the women's 100 meters freestyle-and top it off by taking a selfie with swimming legend Michael Phelps. When Maldives coach Ismail Faruahan proudly flashed a photo he had taken with the American the night before, the pint-sized 22-year-old shot back: "I'm really, really jealous actually. Maybe I'll edit my face onto it!" —AFP

AS RIO LOOMS, GYMNASTICS PARTY MIGHT BE IN COLLEGE

RIO DE JANEIRO: Sophina DeJesus won't be on the floor when Olympic gymnastics begins this weekend. Her career likely ended in April when she wrapped up her senior year at UCLA by helping the Bruins to a fifth-place finish at the NCAA championships. And DeJesus is OK with that. Spend the better part of your life in a gym and eventually you get to the point where it's time to move on. Besides, the 21-year-old managed to do something this spring the three-time world champion Simone Biles, reigning Olympic champion Gabby Douglas and the rest of Team USA that plans to crash the medal stand in Rio over the next two weeks has yet to accomplish, at least not yet: She went viral.

In a sport that largely only enters the public consciousness for two weeks every four years - and even less frequently at the college level, where interest can be fervent if not widespread - DeJesus launched a 90-second remix of an old favorite on Feb 5 in a dual meet against Utah. On the judge's sheet, DeJesus' floor routine that night looked just like most others. Three tumbling passes. A series of smaller elements scattered in between. All the necessary requirements designed to post a big score. In practice, however, it was something else entirely. Portions of her curly hair dyed blue, the former child hip-hop dancer unleashed a series of moves ripped straight from MTV, (at least the part of MTV that still shows videos).

It was lit

She "whipped." She "nae nae'd." She saluted. She dabbled. It was, as the kids might say, lit. And the crowd - not to mention the teammates that mobbed her before her score of 9.925 was even posted - completely lost it. The internet did, too. A few million YouTube views later (currently 14 million-plus and counting), DeJesus found herself on a couch chatting up Ellen DeGeneres and trying to explain how she took her floor routine and put it on fleek. "This was my last year," DeJesus said. "I need to end this year with a bang. I wanted to do these cool dance moves and hope everyone can go along with me."

So UCLA coach Valorie Kondos Field let her do just that, working with DeJesus to put together a set that highlights DeJesus' unique

charisma. "It was 'Let's just feel all the latest dance crazes and mash'em together,'" Kondos Field said. "You come to me with something and I'll craft your routine and I'll make it gymnastics respectable." While not as technically demanding as routines done at the elite level - where gymnasts are required to do four tumbling passes instead of three - it also created some serious buzz. Kondos Field believes the immediate visceral response came with an underlying message: perhaps it's time for occasionally staid International Gymnastics Federation code of points to live a little.

Fierce Five that stormed the podium in London four years ago, competed that year with a floor routine set to "Phantom of the Opera," her neck nearly spasming as she constantly (and dramatically) lifted her chin more than a half-dozen times. She laughs at the memory, knowing her routine will look far different when she joins Kondos Field at UCLA in the fall. "I want to show a different side of me, that'll be fun," Ross said. "I want to do something that's going to be remembered."

Small place in sports

While gymnastics is typically one of



FORT WORTH: In this April 16, 2016, file photo, UCLA's Sophina DeJesus celebrates after her floor exercise routine during the NCAA women's gymnastics championships. —AP

"We want to respect the sport but where I think the international scene could loosen up a bit is to make the routine, give them a theme, make them more entertaining," Kondos Field said. Kondos Field isn't suggesting girls start breakdancing on the balance beam, but while tumbling runs have evolved over the decades - watch Biles and US teammate Aly Raisman regularly test the laws of physics in Rio - the music and the dance at times might as well be stuck in a time warp.

Kyla Ross, who won gold as part of the

the most watched events at the Olympics, it retreats to its popular if small place in the sports world once the flame goes out. It's telling that DeJesus hopped on "Ellen" before Biles, who didn't get an invite until she racked up 15 world championship medals. There's a lot of noise out there in sports. DeJesus found a way to cut through the clutter. "The majority of the people that viewed it weren't just die hard gymnastics fans," Kondos Field said. —AP

WEIGHTLIFTING AIMS TO SHUN DOPING BURDEN

RIO DE JANEIRO: Olympic weightlifting will open under a doping cloud on Saturday with Russia and Bulgaria banned, frustrating officials who strived to clean up the sport in time for the Rio Games. World governing body the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) launched a major crackdown on performance-enhancing drugs for the Games, but admits its reputation remains tainted. "It's true that many people say that weightlifting is doping, but I hope this perception will change sooner rather than later," IWF director general Attila Adamfi told AFP on Thursday. "We've made the tough decisions."

That includes banning the Russian and Bulgarian teams, both traditional powerhouses, for repeated doping offences. It also punished North Korea, Romania, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Moldova by reducing the allocation of lifters they can send to Rio. Yet Kazakhstan and Belarus will

take part, despite IWF concerns, because the International Olympic Committee was unable to complete retesting of samples from the Beijing and London Games before Rio begins.

"What I think and what people might think morally is the right thing is not the same as what can be implemented legally," Adamfi told AFP. "We have to follow the right procedure." It's a familiar problem for weightlifting, which was one of the nine sports included in the first modern Olympics in 1896. While a rich source of medals — 15 are up for grabs in Rio comprising eight men's weight categories and seven women's — the sport's reputation for drug abuse is rivalled only by cycling and sprinting. Bulgarian weightlifting teams were sent home in disgrace from the 1988 Seoul and 2000 Sydney Olympics and withdrew voluntarily ahead of the 2008 Beijing Games. Doping was so rife after the 1992 Barcelona Games that weightlifting's govern-

ing body changed all its weight classes, expunging all its Olympic and world records in an attempt to turn a new page.

'It takes time'

Adamfi, who took on his role in 2014, concedes weightlifting still faces a major issue but says it has also pioneered anti-doping measures now being adopted by other sports. These include publicly naming athletes after their initial "A" sample tests positive, strict out-of-competition testing and blanket sampling of all lifters before and after the Olympics. "Sometimes I feel we are too transparent, but I still believe this is the best way," Adamfi said, arguing weightlifting's openness gives it more positive results than sports with less stringent anti-doping measures. "If I go out and I tell you I had five vodkas last night, you might say I had a lot. But if I tell you I went out with friends and everybody else had 15, five does not seem so much." —AFP



RIO DE JANEIRO: Two members from a US Diplomatic Security team watch as Serena Williams, from the US tennis team, plays a shot during a practice session at the Olympic Tennis Centre ahead of the 2016 Rio Olympic Games. —AFP

DJOKOVIC, MURRAY & SERENA LEAD HISTORY CHARGE IN RIO

RIO DE JANEIRO: Novak Djokovic, Andy Murray and Serena Williams lead a charge for Olympics history from today which will help lift the gloom caused by a raft of pull-outs from the Rio tournament. World number one Djokovic can complete the Golden Slam by adding a maiden gold medal to a sweep of the four majors he achieved at the French Open in June.

Defending champions Murray and Serena Williams, the injury-hit Rafael Nadal and Venus Williams are all in a position to become the first players to win more than one singles gold since tennis returned to the Games in 1988. Top seed Djokovic appears to have the toughest task when he faces Juan Martin del Potro in his opener today. The Serb was defeated by the giant Argentine in straight sets in the bronze medal match four years ago. Djokovic has an 11-3 record against Del Potro, although

the two have not met for three years.

Del Potro, the 2009 US Open champion, comes into Rio with a world ranking of 145 having been as high as four in 2011 before his career was almost ended by four wrist operations. "This match is going to be completely different. My game is not as good as I played four years ago," said Del Potro. Djokovic said he never had any intention of pulling out of Rio where five of the world's top 10 — Roger Federer, Stan Wawrinka, Milos Raonic, Tomas Berdych and Dominic Thiem — will be missing. "It's my number one goal. It would mean the world to me to crown my career with gold, it would rank as one of my highest achievements," said Djokovic. Murray, too, always intended to play even though he has not set foot on a tennis court competitively since winning a second Wimbledon in July.

Grand Slam breakthrough

His Olympics victory in 2012 set the foundation for his eventual Grand Slam breakthrough. After downing Federer for gold, he went on to become the first British man to win a Grand Slam singles title in 76 years when he triumphed at the US Open. The 29-year-old has backed that up with the 2013 and 2016 Wimbledon titles. "It was great winning Wimbledon but time to move on now and focus on this event and the next few months," said the Scot. Murray, who is Britain's flag-bearer at Friday's opening ceremony, starts his campaign on Sunday against gritty Viktor Troicki of Serbia.

Nadal, the 2008 champion in Beijing, had to sit out the 2012 Games with a knee injury — a withdrawal which also meant he had to cede flag-bearing duties. —AFP

NBA STARS OPEN GOLD CHASE AGAINST CHINA

RIO DE JANEIRO: It would be easy for the US team of NBA stars to overlook China in today's opening game of the Rio Olympics after routing the Asians twice in pre-Games exhibitions. But the Americans, who have not lost in 10 years, look at such games as a chance to grow and build, first and foremost by not taking anyone for granted in their path to a third consecutive Olympic crown. "Every team is a threat," US guard Kyrie Irving said. "We understand it's going to be a fight every single day and I'm looking forward to it."

The US squad ripped China 106-57 at Los Angeles and 107-57 in Oakland in warm-up games just after the squad was selected. How well they do in their Group A match against China will tell how far they have come. "These games are very important," Irving said. "Every single game is a chance for us to get better. We have to find out lineups. We have to find out just what rhythm we want as a team. And, going in, what we want to expect from one another. In order to do that, we have to play high level games and against other great countries." And the Chinese squad as NBA experience in Yi Jianlian as well as experience on how to play the Americans already.

"They are physical. They play hard," said US center DeAndre Jordan. "We know Yi Jianlian, who was playing in the league for a while. And I really like Zhou Qi, the young kid the (Houston) Rockets are drafting. Both of the point guards are really aggressive. They will definitely be a tough opponent. We can't take those guys lightly. We have got to come out and play USA basketball." Other Group A men's games include Serbia against Venezuela and Australia, with six NBA players, against host Brazil.

'Beauty of international play'

The US NBA squad has an 80-1 record under Coach Mike Krzyzewski, the 69-year-old veteran from Duke University who finishes as coach after the Rio Games. "I've learned from my players. I've learned from the international community. I've learned about the beauty of international play," Krzyzewski said. "Over the last 11 years I've gotten better as a result of being given the honor of coaching, so it has been a beautiful thing for me."

Between fatigue after a long NBA season and health concerns after talks with family, many top NBA players said no to Rio, including LeBron James, Stephen Curry and James Harden. But former NBA Most Valuable Player Kevin Durant, who left Oklahoma City to join Golden State last month, doesn't see this team as any less formidable because it lacks a few familiar stars. "It would be challenging even if they were here, but we have some great players here," Durant said. "Just because they haven't been here before, or might not be MVPs, we've got some damn good players on this team. "It doesn't matter what anybody says, I got nothing but confidence in everybody here, and I feel as though we have a great chance to do something special."

And Irving, who teamed with James to mount the greatest comeback in NBA Finals history and bring the Cleveland Cavaliers the title, has "King James" just a phone call away. "I'm talking to him almost every single day while he's somewhere doing some vacation stuff while I'm over here," Irving said. —AFP

BRAZILIAN ATHLETES NOT DOPE TESTED

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil's athletes were not subject to dope tests for almost a month before the Rio Olympics, the country's sports ministry has said while refuting allegations it was a political decision to ensure the Games were not plunged further into crisis. Brazil's sports ministry confirmed no tests were carried out between July 1 and July 24 due to a World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) suspension on a drug testing laboratory in Rio de Janeiro, The Times reported yesterday.

WADA said it was "concerned" and has sent a letter to Brazil's sports minister asking why the tests had been stopped. "We sent a letter to the minister of sport and the

executive director of the Brazilian national anti-doping agency, pressing our concerns and demanding to know why testing had been stopped in Brazil," WADA deputy director Rob Koehler told the newspaper. "The response was not satisfactory... the explanation that it had come about due to the changing of the guard in the ministry and the agency was not acceptable to us.

"We informed the pre-Games task force and we told them to ramp up increased tests. It was unacceptable that it stopped. That was not a good move... the fact no testing was happening was a concern." South America's first Olympics have been mired in a drug scandal with Russia's track-

and-field athletes and weightlifters barred from the Rio Games over doping offences. The European country narrowly avoided a complete ban over allegations its government and FSB security service systematically covered up widespread cheating.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) chose not to impose a blanket ban on all Russian athletes but directed sports federations to allow them to compete if they met a set of criteria, including a clean doping past and sufficient testing at international events. Luis Horta, the former head of Portugal's anti-doping agency who was given a role as an adviser to Brazil, alleged he faced pressure from the country's sports ministry and

Olympic committee to reduce testing.

A statement from Brazil's sports ministry refuted the allegations, while adding that three overseas laboratories were approached but were unable to help with the testing of samples. "The Ministry of Sport and the Brazilian Doping Control Authority strongly refute the accusations made by Mr Horta," it said. "With the suspension imposed by WADA to the laboratory on June 22, the tests planned for the period between 1 and 24 July were compromised (the suspension was only lifted on July 20), as analyses could not be submitted. "Therefore, the planned tests ended up not being done in that period." —Reuters

FROM PLANE TO PITCH: NIGERIA WINS OPENER

MANAUS: The Nigerian men's soccer team didn't show any fatigue from a last-minute trip that brought the players to Brazil just hours before their Rio Olympics opener, beating Japan 5-4 Thursday night. A mix-up at the airport forced Nigeria to make a late flight from Atlanta to Brazil. The team arrived in the jungle city of Manaus about six hours before overcoming jet leg and the heat and humidity in the Amazon city to win a thrilling game. The team's spokesman posted a picture on Twitter of the team boarding the plane with the message "here we go" and later displayed images of members going through immigration and collecting luggage.

The team faced the uncomfortable situation of spending the day of its debut at the Olympics aboard an airplane on a more than six-hour flight and facing a Japan team that was in Brazil for several days preparing for the contest. There are conflicting reports about how the team ended up in this position. Bunmi Jinadu, founder of United Soccer Africa, disputed reports that the team missed its original flight because of a money issue between the Nigerian government and a charter company.

'Communications mix-up'

Delta Air Lines cited a "communications mix-up" that grounded the team's original Friday flight. Jinadu said the problem stemmed from poor planning and coordination on the part of the Nigerian team in leaving Atlanta, where it has been training to prepare for the games. He said the team had assumed it could simply buy plane tickets to Rio at the last minute - just like Nigerians do in their home country to book travel. They then encountered a crush of travelers and lack of flights at the busy Atlanta airport, where several Brazil-bound trips were originating. The team thought it had a backup plan on Wednesday, but the plane wasn't big enough to accommodate the team, Jinadu said.

The flight the team finally boarded was on a chartered Delta jet. A spokesperson for Atlanta-based Delta Air Lines said it stepped in to help the team get to its destination - free of charge - after learning of the flight issue. The plane normally is used to transport NBA teams, and the same aircraft will fly the US men's basketball team back to the US after the Olympics. Atlanta was the site of Nigeria's greatest soccer triumph as it won the gold medal there in the 1996 Olympics. —AP



MANAUS: Nigeria's Sadiq Umar dribbles past Japan's Tsukasa Shiotani during a group B match of the men's Olympic football tournament between Japan and Nigeria at the Amazonia Arena. —AP



RIO DE JANEIRO: In this Friday, July 29, 2016 file photo, members of the Russian Olympic delegation line up to board a bus after arriving at the Rio de Janeiro International Airport to compete at the 2016 Summer Olympics. —AP

271 RUSSIAN ATHLETES TO BE ALLOWED IN OLYMPICS

RIO DE JANEIRO: The International Olympic Committee on Thursday approved 271 Russian athletes to take part in the Rio Games after a major doping review eliminated 118 competitors. Russia, accused of operating a huge state-orchestrated doping system, will now have its smallest Olympic team for more than a century for the Games which start on Friday (early morning Kuwait time). Russian Olympic Committee president Alexander Zhukov said the team was "probably the cleanest in Rio" because of all the tests and checks they have undergone.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport is still hearing some Russian cases so the number could rise. But the IOC said "rigorous" extra testing would be imposed on Russians allowed into the Games. "Any non-availability for this program will lead to the immediate withdrawal of the accreditation by the IOC." Russia entered 389 athletes for the Games. But a report for the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) blamed the Russian sports ministry and secret service of running the doping program and set off the biggest doping scandal in Olympic history.

The IOC ordered individual federations to decide which athletes are clean enough to compete and their final lists were vetted by a three-member IOC panel. Two Russian swimmers named in WADA's bombshell McLaren report were included among a 31-strong squad for the Olympics, world swimming body FINA said. Canoeist Andre Kraitor was also put back in the team after winning an appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport on Thursday.

Brazil held, Pele suffers

The Russian team will be the smallest since the 1912 Games in Stockholm. The doping storm has overshadowed the buildup to Friday's opening ceremony in Rio's 60,000 capacity Maracana stadium. Russia meanwhile became a part of the political and social tensions ahead of Friday's opening ceremony. A Russian vice-consul in Rio killed a mugger who attacked him during a struggle, police said. Security forces are on alert for protests are expected around the Maracana where the ceremony, starting at 2300 GMT, is to feature

the likes of supermodel Gisele Bundchen and transgender beauty Lea T.

"It's going to be a beautiful ceremony, very Brazilian, very Olympics, and very sportsman-like," Rio 2016 spokesman Mario Andrada told a press conference. But the ceremony could be targeted by protests directed against Brazil's interim president Michel Temer, who took over from Dilma Rousseff while she battles impeachment proceedings. Temer has said he expects to be heckled when he declares the Games open. Brazilian media reports say that music will be turned up as soon as he finishes speaking to mask any booing.

Ill-health may prevent Brazilian football legend Pele from taking part in the ceremony. Pele said he had been invited to light the Olympic flame at the ceremony. "He has muscle pain which is affecting his mobility. He has gone to the doctor to see how things are," Pele's spokesman said. Foreign dignitaries began arriving in Rio on Thursday, with French president Francois Hollande lending his support to Paris's bid to host the 2024 Games. —AFP

Sports



Games a test for Olympics' appeal in a gloomy world

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BRASILIA: Brazil player Neymar gestures on the field during the Rio 2016 Olympic Games First Round Group A men's football match Brazil vs South Africa, at the Mane Garrincha Stadium. — AFP

BRAZIL BOOED OFF AS NEYMAR FLOPS

DRAW AGAINST 10-MAN SOUTH AFRICA LEAVES FANS ANGRY

RIO DE JANEIRO: Brazil and superstar Neymar were booed off as their quest for a maiden Olympic football gold medal began with a 0-0 draw against 10-man South Africa on Thursday. Barcelona ace Neymar is by far the biggest name in the competition and has been tasked with restoring pride to Brazilian football after a catastrophic 7-1 semi-final defeat to Germany on home soil at the 2014 World Cup. However, he endured a frustrating afternoon on a sandy and slow surface in Brasilia as South Africa held out despite Mvula's red card half an hour from time prompting the crowd to jeer the hosts off on the final whistle.

"For us the draw is a defeat," said Neymar. "The team went on the field to win, we know our responsibility, we know it isn't going to be easy. "It is not just a case of turning up and winning the gold medal." Group A is now in a four-way tie on one point after Iraq and Denmark also played out a scoreless draw. In contrast to the swaths of empty stands across the six cities being used to host the men's and women's football tournaments on the opening two days, the hosts commanded a near-capacity 70,000 crowd.

However, the Brazilian side boasting Neymar, Manchester City's new £27 million (\$35.4 million) signing Gabriel Jesus and Marquinhos of Paris Saint-Germain did not provide the expect-

ed victory procession. South Africa's Lebo Mothiba had a host of chances to cause an almighty upset, but failed to make a ragged Brazilian defence pay for early nerves. "The first game is always the most difficult due to the anxiety of the competition starting," added Neymar. "I think the anxiety hurt us a bit."

Neymar proudly sported the captain's armband and had Brazil's best two efforts of the first half with strikes from outside the box that forced South African 'keeper Itumeleng Khune into stunning saves. And Khune said he would tell his grandchildren of the day he stopped the Barcelona star. "I am so happy to make my appearance, make my mark," said Khune. "Definitely my grandchildren will watch the DVD of this match."

Strong performance from S Africa

South Africa dominated the early stages of the second half with Mothiba and Captain Keagen Dolly coming close. But their chances appeared to have gone when defender Mvula was sent off for two quickfire yellow cards. Brazil ramped up the pressure. Jesus somehow turned the ball onto the post with the goal gaping, whilst a dipping drive from Neymar landed on the roof of the net. However, South Africa resisted to add problems on the field for the hosts to a

Games build-up already marred by fears surrounding the Zika virus and Brazil's political turmoil. Portugal's stunning summer after winning Euro 2016 could get even more golden as they saw off Argentina 2-0 to the delight of the Brazilian crowd in Rio.

Both sides are looking to the future with Lionel Messi having announced his international retirement with Argentina after three final losses and Portuguese hero Cristiano Ronaldo now 31. Gonzalo Pacioncia's low drive put Portugal ahead before a horrible error from Argentina goalkeeper Geronimo Rulli allowed Pite's long-range effort to sneak between his legs to secure the three points six minutes from time.

Honduras beat Algeria 3-2 in the other Group D game. Germany played out an entertaining 2-2 draw with 2012 gold medalists Mexico under a torrential downpour in Salvador. Three goals in 10 minutes in the second half put Mexico 2-1 ahead as Oribe Peralta and Rodolfo Pizarro struck either side of Arsenal's Serge Gnabry's reply for Germany. However, the only World Cup winner on show at the Olympics Matthias Ginter, who flew 20,000km from Borussia Dortmund's pre-season tour in China to Brazil, earned Germany a point. South Korea smashed Fiji 8-0 in the other match in Group C with Ryu Seung-Woo scoring a hat-trick. — AFP